

thingamajigs

For Immediate Release

Contact: Edward Schocker

[510.545.6689](tel:510.545.6689)

edward@thingamajigs.org

Thingamajigs announces

18th Annual Music for People & Thingamajigs Festival Celebrating invented instruments and alternate tunings

“MFP&T is the only annual festival of its kind that investigates the unique world of artists working with unusual materials and tunings to create one of a kind music.” Edward Schocker

Thursday, October 1st 6pm

Friday, October 2nd 8pm

Saturday, October 3rd 7:30pm

Sunday, October 4th 7pm

Center for New Music, 55 Taylor Street, San Francisco

\$15 General \$10 Student/Senior Sliding scale (Free on Thursday)

Thingamajigs presents another year of exciting new musical works for homemade instruments, found objects, DIY inventions, and alternate tunings by some of the Bay Area’s most innovative artists. Instrument inventors are a rare breed; but at this year’s 18th annual Music for People and Thingamajigs Festival, a dozen of the finest experimental instrument builders will be entertaining all ages crowds at the Center for New Music (55 Taylor Street, San Francisco).

From local legends like Tom Nunn and Peter Whitehead to the freshest Mills graduates to giants of improvisation Neil Feather (MD) and Tim Kaiser (MN); from master inventors like Sung Kim and Cheryl Leonard to the man who literally wrote the textbook on experimental musical instruments, Bart Hopkin; this years festival is jammed full of variety, beauty, humor, showmanship and grace.

The Music For People & Thingamajigs Festival is an annual event featuring experimental and traditional musicians and performing artists who incorporate made/found instruments and alternate tuning systems in their work. Each year, MFP&T invites such artists to join in a festival of workshops, music making, and performances with the goal of reaching a large, diverse audience of all ages.

Now in its 18th year, Thingamajigs’ genre-crossing MFP&T Festival is the only annual event completely dedicated to music created with made/found materials and alternate tuning systems. Past participants include Carla Kihlstedt, Walter Kitundu, Pauline Oliveros, Brenda Hutchinson, Electric Junkyard Gamelan, and Laetitia Sonami.

Thursday, October 1st 6pm:

Center for New Music, 55 Taylor st, San Francisco (FREE). Festival opening reception at The Window Gallery* featuring instruments and performance by Sung Kim.

Friday, October 2nd 8pm:

Center for New Music, 55 Taylor st, San Francisco (\$15 general \$10 student/senior sliding scale). Artists include Cheryl Leonard, Bart Hopkin and Tom Nunn

Saturday, October 3rd 7:30pm:

Center for New Music, 55 Taylor st, San Francisco (\$15 general \$10 student/senior sliding scale). Artist include Alex Cohen, Luciano Chessa, Johnny Radio and Tim Kaiser

Sunday, October 4th 7pm:

Center for New Music, 55 Taylor st, San Francisco (\$15 general \$10 student/senior sliding scale). Artists include Taylor Gersbach, The Crank Ensemble, Peter Whitehead and Neil Feather/Rosie Langabeer

**The window gallery is a collaboration of the Center for New Music and Thingamajigs. The window gallery is curated by Bart Hopkin and David Samas.*

Further details can be found online at

www.thingamajigs.org

About our artists

Sung Kim (1975) is an improviser, sculptor, and instrument builder born in Seoul, Korea and raised in Washington, DC. In 1989, Kim studied ceramic sculpture at the Corcoran School of Art. It was at Corcoran that Kim started building his own variations of the guitar. Kim received his B.F.A. in sculpture from the school of the Art Institute of Chicago in 1999. It was in Chicago where Kim began to deviate from the guitar to explore other techniques, tonalities, and sympathetic resonance. It was also in Chicago where Kim started his collaborations with musicians to explore his instruments in an improvisational context.

Kim facilitates his musical and sculptural endeavors by owning and operating an architectural woodworking design/build studio in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Tom Nunn has designed, built and performed with original musical instruments since 1976, having received a B.Mus. and M.A. in music composition from the University of Texas at Austin and S.U.N.Y. Stony Brook, and postgraduate work at U.C. San Diego. His instruments typically utilize commonly available materials, are sculptural in appearance, utilize contact microphones for amplification, and are designed specifically for improvisation with elements of ambiguity, unpredictability and nonlinearity.

"Oratorea" is a Harry Partch style ritual oratorio largely composed by, and for the invented instruments of, Tom Nunn. As a performance it bridges the mystical realms of novel instrumentation with prophetic poetry by David Samas (invented instruments, voice) and Dean Santomieri (alternately tuned guitars, voice) and Bob Marsh (extended technique cello, voice). The magic of theatre emerges with ceremonial

butoh dancers Ronie Backer and Christina Braun. We will be joined by members of the Cornelius Cardew Choir.

Bart Hopkin is an inventor and maker of musical instruments. He is director of Experimental Musical Instruments, an organization devoted to unusual musical instruments. In addition to building, teaching and consulting, he has written many books on instruments and their construction, and produced books and CDs featuring the work of innovative instrument makers.

Bart received a B.A. magna cum laude in Folklore and Mythology specializing in ethnomusicology from Harvard University in 1974, and later picked up a B.A. in music education and a teaching credential at San Francisco State University. He has faithfully attended the School of the Autodidact ever since.

Cheryl E. Leonard is a San Francisco based composer, performer, and instrument builder. Over the last decade she has focused on investigating sounds, structures, and objects from the natural world. Leonard is fascinated by the subtle textures and intricacies of sounds, especially very quiet phenomena. She uses microphones to explore microaural worlds hidden within her sound sources and develops compositions that highlight the unique voices they contain. Her projects often feature one of a kind sculptural instruments that are played live onstage and field recordings from remote locales.

Leonard holds a BA from Hampshire College and an MA from Mills College. Her music has been performed worldwide and her work with natural object instruments has been featured on several television programs and in the video documentary Noisy People. Her collaborative works with visual artists Genevieve Swifte and Oona Stern have been exhibited internationally. Leonard has received grants from the National Science Foundation's Antarctic Artists and Writers Program, ASCAP, American Composers Forum, American Music Center, the Eric Stokes Fund, and Meet the Composer. She has been commissioned to create musical instruments and compositions for Kronos Quartet, Illuminated Corridor, and Michael Straus. Cheryl has been awarded residencies at Oberpfälzer Künstlerhaus, the Djerassi Resident Artists Program, the Arctic Circle, Villa Montalvo, and Engine 27. Recordings of her music are available from NEXMAP, Unusual Animals, Ubuibi, Pax, Evolving Door, Apraxia, 23 Five, The Lab, and Great Hoary Marmot Music.

Tim Kaiser has been producing experimental art at various venues for the past 30 years. His video, installation and performance art projects have been presented in Germany, Brazil, Sweden, Hong Kong, Cuba, Canada, Philadelphia, New York and Chicago. Tim has toured his live musical performances throughout the US including New York, Chicago, Washington DC, Philadelphia, Detroit, Tulsa, Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, Baltimore, Providence, Columbus, Asheville, Portland, St. Louis, Nashville, Louisville, Orlando, etc....

He has received grants and awards from the Arrowhead Regional Arts Council, the Duluth Art Institute, the Tweed Museum of Art, the Minnesota State Arts Board, the McKnight Foundation, the Jerome Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts.

Tim has served on the boards of the Duluth Public Arts Commission, the Arrowhead Regional Arts

Council, Zenith City Arts and the Duluth New Music Institute. He has been a panelist for the Minnesota State Arts Board film and video review panel and a volunteer consultant to many arts organizations.

Articles and Reviews of Tim's work have appeared in Make Magazine, Wired, the Associated Press, Time Out NY, Nashville Scene, Duluth NewsTribune, Northland Reader, CityPages, ArtPaper, EnGadget, Vinyl, Minneapolis StarTribune, the Daily Collegian, the Smaland Posten, Synthtopia, GigantiCo, MNArtists, StreetTech, Sonic State, BoingBoing, and the New Art Examiner.

When **Johny Radio** is not teaching disadvantaged kids how to build boom boxes, he works on experimental music and art projects. He has organized several noise hacking events in San Francisco over the past 3 years, and formed a Noise Orchestra at Noisebridge hackerspace.

As a composer, conductor, pianist, and musical saw/Vietnamese dan bau soloist, **Luciano Chessa** has been active in Europe, the U.S., Asia, Australia, and South America. Recent record releases include PETROLIO, a monographic CD of chamber music released on March 11, 2015 by the Italian label Stradivarius.

Chessa is the also author of Luigi Russolo Futurist. Noise, Visual Arts, and the Occult, the first monograph ever to be dedicated to the Futurist Russolo and his Art of Noise (UC Press, 2012). Chessa's Futurist expertise resulted in an invitation by the New Yorkbased Biennial of the Arts PERFORMA to direct the first reconstruction project of Russolo's earliest intonarumori orchestra, and to curate concerts of music commissioned for this project. This production was hailed by The New York Times as one of the best events in the arts of 2009 and is now touring internationally.

Alex Cohen is a composer/multiinstrumentalist/performance artist. He has evolved from a meager human guitarist into a crazed prophecy seeking mystic. He is an adept solo performer, known for using extended techniques on guitar, often performing with multiple guitars at the same time. Since 2007, Alex has been performing with the JazzFusion outfit, Organ Yank. Currently, he has been regularly performing with A Huge Statue of Jesus, along with fellow multiinstrumentalists/composers Kim Nucci and Adam Adhiyatma. Alex received his BM in Jazz Studies from Oberlin Conservatory, and is currently pursuing his MA in composition at Mills College. Outside of his own projects, Alex has performed with Eyvind Kang, William Winant, Chris Brown, Vincent Davis, Corey Wilcox, Sullivan Fortner, and Will Mason.

Sound Mechanic **Neil Feather** has been creating radical and unusual musical instruments since 1970 and is increasingly known outside of Baltimore as one of the most original musical thinkers of his day. His instruments each embody uniquely clever acoustic and engineering principles, and are visually arresting. The music he plays on the instruments is equally original, embodying new principles and resulting in a nearly alien idiom of music.

Neil Feather has been involved in Baltimore's fertile and eccentric culture since moving there in 1985. He was a founding member of the Red Room Collective and the High Zero Foundation, a group committed to the presentation of experimental and improvised music. He has a long history of

collaborative projects and solo concerts.

Feather's work has always been fully rooted in art and music together in concept, execution and performance. He won the 2014 Sondheim Art Prize and the 2014 Trawick Art Prize. He was included in a major exhibition "Art or Sound" in the 2014 Venice Biennale.

Peter Whitehead is a composer, songwriter and instrument builder. While traveling in S.E. Asia in 1989 he realized he could combine sculpture, performance and music by constructing and playing original instruments. Having experimented with playing 'found' objects before this, it was at this time that he began to construct his first instruments. Many of his creations are derived from folk instruments or are based on images of ancient instruments that no longer exist, although the materials used to construct them are modern or industrial.

Whitehead has composed songs and scores for film and dance. He has also composed for and performed with a number of prominent choreographers and dancers including Mikhail Baryshnikov, Susan Marshall & Company, Anna Halprin, Charles Moulton/Janice Garrett and Sarah Shelton Mann. His work has appeared in several films including "City of Ghosts" directed by Matt Dillon and "Following Sean" directed by Ralph Arlick. Thanks to digital technology his music has been used for Television and Radio in over 30 countries.

Larnie Fox is the Executive Director of Arts Benicia and the former Director of the Children's Fine Art Program for the City of Palo Alto at the Palo Alto Art Center. He is also a visual and sound artist known for monumental bamboo sculpture, sound installations and performances. His kinetic/sound sculptures and new instruments have been shown in numerous one-person and group shows and performances in the SF Bay Area and Salt Lake City, Utah. Collaborations with his wife Bodil have included set design for Theatre of Yugen's "Cycle Plays" at Theatre Artaud and a giant kinetic dragonfly for the DuPage Museum near Chicago. He is a founding member of 23five, a San Francisco based organization that promotes sound art and currently directs the Crank Ensemble, a fourteen member group that performs on handcranked instruments he built. Larnie Fox holds an M.F.A. in Painting and Drawing from the University of Utah and lives with his wife Bodil in San Francisco's wellknown Excelsior district.

Taylor Gersbach, originating from Texas, has her BFA in Sculpture and Community Art from California College of the Arts. She is an odd instrument maker, songwriter, and musician.

About Thingamajigs

Thingamajigs is a genre-crossing arts organization that promotes, presents and performs music and other art forms created with made and found materials or alternate tuning systems. Since 1997 we have presented world premiere works and performances by over 100 local, national and international artists. Known for our adventurous and genre-crossing programs, many of our artists have gained international recognition with two MacArthur Fellows, Gerbode Foundation's Emerging Composers Awardees, and a McKnight Composer Fellow, to name a few. Our Annual Music for People & Thingamajigs Festival is now in its 18th year and is the only festival of its kind in the country.

In our years of existence, Thingamajigs has partnered with and been commissioned by many other community organizations such as Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, Oakland Museum of California, Berkeley Art Museum/Pacific Film Archive, Stanford Lively Arts, Mills College Art Museum and the Port of Oakland.

CALENDAR EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE:

18th Annual Music for People & Thingamajigs Festival

Presented by Thingamajigs Thursday, October 1st 6pm Friday, October 2nd 8pm Saturday, October 3rd 7:30pm Sunday, October 4th 7pm Center for New Music

55 Taylor Street, San Francisco

Tickets \$15 General/\$10 Student/Senior (free opening reception on Thursday) Reservations and Information [510.545.6689](tel:510.545.6689), boxoffice@thingamajigs.org

Further information can be found online at www.thingamajigs.org