

MASS MoCA

For Immediate Release
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2009 Bang on a Can Summer Music Festival Faculty

Gregg August (bass) lives in New York and is actively involved in the classical as well as Latin and jazz scenes. He performs with the Orchestra of St. Luke's and Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, and is the assistant principal bass of The Brooklyn Philharmonic. He has performed chamber music with The Brentano Quartet, the Lincoln Center Chamber Music Society, and for 2 years was the principal bassist of La Orquesta Ciutat de Barcelona in Spain. At the same time he has played and recorded with Ray Barretto, Paquito D'Rivera, James Moody and Kenny Burrell. At present he is the bassist with Ray Vega and his Latin Jazz Sextet. Gregg has released a record of original music featuring Ray Barretto and Frank Wess. He received his Bachelor and Master's degrees from The Eastman School of Music and The Juilliard School respectively.

David Cossin (percussion) was born and raised in Queens, New York, where he started to play the drums at age five. Through the years, Mr. Cossin's diverse interest in classical percussion, drum set, non-western hand drumming, composition, and improvisation have led to performances that encompass a broad spectrum of musical styles. He studied classical percussion at Manhattan School of Music. He has recorded and performed internationally with such groups as Talujon Percussion Quartet, Bang on a Can All-Stars, NewBand (micro-tonal music played on the Harry Partch instrumentarium), the New Music Consort, Tan Dun's NchiCa-Orchestra, Sudden Site, and Bblush (a German accordion polka lounge band). He has participated in festivals throughout Europe, Mexico, Taiwan, Japan, and the United States. David has worked on many theater projects, including Blue Man Group, The Lion King, Peony Pavilion (Peter Sellars/Tan Dun), and Mabou Mines. He has recorded music for the films *Fallen* and *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* (Ang Lee) both composed by Tan Dun.

Katie Geissinger (voice) performs a wide variety of contemporary and classical music and theater. She has toured festivals all over the world with Meredith Monk since 1990, in concert and in pieces such as *Atlas* (Houston Grand Opera), *The Politics of Quiet* (for which she is a Bessie recipient), *mercy* (with the installation artist Ann Hamilton), and *impermanenc*, Monk's most recent release on ECM. With Theo Bleckmann, Katie represented Monk at China's first ever UNESCO concert, and they both premiered and toured in *Bang on a Can*, Ridge Theater, and the cartoonist Ben Katchor's *The Carbon Copy Building*, an Obie-winner that was

released last year on Cantaloupe. Katie also performed in the world tour of Philip Glass and Robert Wilson's *Einstein on the Beach* (Elektra Nonesuch), which was revived in concert at Carnegie Hall last December. Other appearances at Carnegie Hall were of a more classical bent: Bach's *Magnificat* with the conductor-less Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, and the *Witch* in Honegger's *Le Roi David*. Katie has sung works of Vivaldi, Handel, Monteverdi, Respighi, and Part under Kent Tritle at Sacred Music in a Sacred Space in New York City, and performed with the Waverly Consort and the Washington Bach Consort. She has also appeared at BAM in Jonathan Miller's staged production of Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*, with additional performances next spring. Katie has performed on Broadway in Baz Luhrmann's production of *La Boheme* and the recent *Coram Boy*, and off-Broadway in many Gilbert and Sullivan operettas. She also premiered the currently touring *The Rosenbach Company*, a rock musical with music and lyrics by Mark Mulcahy and cartoons by Ben Katchor, and sings cabaret, most recently a show called *Rendezvous*, with music by Piaf, Aznavour, and Brel. Future performances include premieres of Monk's new work, working title *Songs of Ascent*, at the Walker in Minneapolis, and in California, Brazil, and Europe.

Michael Gordon (composition) was raised in an Eastern European community on the outskirts of Managua, but moved to Miami when he was eight. Gordon's compositions demonstrate a deep exploration into the possibilities and nature of rhythm and what happens when rhythms are piled on top of each other, creating a glorious confusion. John Adams, who has conducted Gordon's works with the London Sinfonietta and the Ensemble Modern Orchestra, calls these raw and complicated sounds "irrational rhythms." Gordon's interest in adding dimensionality to the concert experience has led to frequent collaborations with other artists. In *Decasia*, a multimedia orchestral work with films by Bill Morrison and spectacle by Ridge Theater, the audience stands in the middle of a three-tiered, triangular structure surrounded by 55 musicians and large projection scrims. *Decasia* was recently featured at the Los Angeles Philharmonic's Minimalist Jukebox Festival. His work *Gotham* explores the rich imagery of New York City with large sonic textures and Morrison's stunning film employing vintage footage. Works for music theater and opera include *What To Wear* – his recent collaboration with director Richard Foreman – which recently premiered at the RedCat Theater in Los Angeles. Other works include *Aquanetta*, about the 1940s B-Movie starlet, for Oper Aachen; *Lost Objects*, an Oratorio for Baroque Orchestra in collaboration with David Lang, Julia Wolfe and director Francois Girard, which was seen at the 2004 Next Wave Festival at BAM; and *Van Gogh*, vocal settings from the letters of Vincent Van Gogh, recorded by Alarm Will Sound, soon to be released on Cantaloupe Music. Upcoming projects include a new work for the Los Angeles Philharmonic (January 12-13, 2008); *Lighting at our feet*, a music/ theater work in collaboration with Ridge Theater based on the words of Emily Dickinson (BAM Next Wave December 9-13, 2008); and 'popopera', a collaboration with the Dutch based dance troupe Emio Greco/PC. Gordon is co-founder of Bang on a Can.

Composer and multi-instrumentalist Derek Johnson (guitar) originally hails from Boulder, Colorado and currently resides in Indianapolis, Indiana. His compositions have been performed throughout the United States and Canada by leading instrumentalists and ensembles including the Nouvel Ensemble Moderne and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra's MusicNOW ensemble, and have received honors from BMI, ASCAP and the Yvar

Mikhashoff Trust for New Music. Derek is currently active as an electric guitarist performing with various ensembles covering a wide range of musical genres including the Basilica Project (chamber music meets grindcore), the goodhandsteam (post-rock free improvisation) and the Bang On a Can All-Stars. Derek recently completed his doctorate at the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music in Bloomington, Indiana and teaches Composition and Music Theory at the Ball State University School of Music in Muncie, Indiana.

David Lang (composition) is the recipient of the 2008 Pulitzer Prize in music for the little match girl passion, commissioned by Carnegie Hall for the vocal ensemble Theater of Voices, directed by Paul Hillier. One of America's most performed and honored composers, his recent works include writing on water for the London Sinfonietta, with libretto and visuals by English filmmaker Peter Greenaway; the difficulty of crossing a field – a fully staged opera for the Kronos Quartet, staged by Carey Perloff and the American Conservatory Theater; loud love songs, a concerto for the percussionist Evelyn Glennie, and the oratorio Shelter, with co-composers Michael Gordon and Julia Wolfe, at the Next Wave Festival of the Brooklyn Academy of Music, staged by Ridge Theater and featuring the Norwegian vocal ensemble Trio Mediaeval. His most recent CD is ELEVATED (on Cantaloupe), three atmospheric and meditative pieces plus a DVD of the same three pieces interpreted by noted visual artists William Wegman, Bill Morrison, and Matt Mullican. Lang is co-founder and co-artistic director of Bang on a Can.

Conductor/composer Brad Lubman (conducting) has played a vital role in modern music for two decades. He has worked with a great variety of illustrious musical figures including John Adams, Luciano Berio, Pierre Boulez, Elliott Carter, Elvis Costello, Oliver Knussen, Meredith Monk, Steve Reich, and John Zorn. Lubman has appeared with numerous orchestras and ensembles including Ensemble Modern, Musik Fabrik, Hamburg Symphoniker, Deutsches-Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, Los Angeles Philharmonic New Music Group, Brooklyn Philharmonic, and the Steve Reich Ensemble. He has recorded for BMG/RCA, Bridge, CRI, Koch, and Nonesuch. Lubman's music has been recorded on the Tzadik label. Mr. Lubman was a Fellow in Composition at the Tanglewood Music Center in 1990 where he studied with Oliver Knussen. Lubman is Associate Professor of Conducting and Ensembles at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester. He is represented by Karsten Witt Musik Management.

Nicholas Photinos (cello) is a founding member of the Grammy Award-winning chamber music ensemble eighth blackbird. As a member of the group, he has won numerous competitions, including the Naumburg and Concert Artists Guild Competitions, has been featured on CBS's Sunday Morning and in the New York Times, performed throughout the US, Asia and Europe and currently gives 40-50 concerts annually. He teaches at the University of Richmond and the University of Chicago. Nicholas has taught at the 2007 Bang on a Can Summer Festival has also performed as a member of the Canton and Columbus Symphony Orchestras. He has toured with Bjork as part of the Icelandic String Octet, and his interest in jazz had led him to perform with violinist Zach Brock and singer Grazyna Auguscik, among others. Solo work includes recital performances throughout the country and appearances as soloist with orchestras in California and Ohio. His principal teachers include Andor Toth, Jr., Irene Sharp, Lee Fiser, Hans Jorgen-Jensen, and Grace Vamos. Nicholas is a

graduate of Northwestern University, the Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music and the Oberlin Conservatory of Music. He has recorded for the Cedille and Naxos labels.

Vicki Ray (piano) performs widely as a soloist and collaborative artist. She is a member of the award winning California E.A.R. Unit and Xtet. As a founding member of PianoSpheres, an acclaimed solo piano series dedicated to exploring the less familiar realms of the piano repertoire, her playing has been hailed by the Los Angeles Times for "displaying that kind of musical thoroughness and technical panache that puts a composer's thoughts directly before the listener." A long-time champion of new music Ms. Ray has had works written for by composers John Adams, Paul Dresher, Stephen Hartke, Kamran Ince, Shaun Naidoo and many others. In 1989 she was the first place winner in the National Association of Composers USA competition for performers of contemporary music. Ms. Ray has been featured on the Los Angeles Philharmonic Green Umbrella Series, with Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, the German ensemble Compania and the Blue Rider Ensemble of Toronto with whom she made the first Canadian recording of Pierrot Lunaire. Ray has played on various national and international festivals including the Salzburg Festival, the Berlin 750 Jahre Festival and the Ojai Festival where she premiered a new concerto with the Los Angeles Philharmonic and Sir Simon Rattle. Her solo recording from the left edge, a collection of works written for her by composers living in California can be found on the CRI label. As a pianist who excels in a wide range of styles Ms. Ray's numerous recordings cover everything from the semi-improvised structures of Wadada Leo Smith to the twisted groove base of John Adam's Road Movies, from the elegant serialism of Mel Powell to the austere beauty of Morton Feldman's Crippled Symmetries. Ms. Ray has been a member of the piano faculty at the California Institute of the Arts since 1991.

Todd Reynolds (violin) is violinist and assistant conductor for Steve Reich and Musicians and The Walter Thompson Orchestra. He was a student of the late Jascha Heifetz, a student at the Eastman School of Music, former Principal Second Violin of the Rochester Philharmonic, and holds a Master's degree from SUNY at Stony Brook. As an improviser and solo interpreter of new musics from classical to jazz and pop, Mr. Reynolds has appeared and/or recorded with such artists as Anthony Braxton, Uri Caine, John Cale, Steve Coleman, Joe Jackson, Dave Liebman, Graham Nash, Greg Osby, Steve Reich, Marcus Roberts, Wayne Shorter and Cassandra Wilson. In addition to his solo appearances at home and abroad, Mr. Reynolds appears as guest artist with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center and is often featured as violin soloist and chamber musician with Bang On A Can. Mr. Reynolds has premiered countless numbers of compositions by composers including Michael Gordon, John King, Steve Reich, Elliot Sharp, Julia Wolfe, and Randall Wolff, and recently appeared as soloist with Yo Yo Ma in Tan Dun's Water Passion after St. Matthew at the Barbican Center in London. He is a co-founder of Ethel, New York's hippest string quartet, and as composer/performer, Mr. Reynolds is currently developing Still Life With Mic, a theater piece which incorporates with his own composed and improvised music, elements of video and theater arts. He has recorded for Nonesuch, CRI, and Atlantic Records and can also be heard on Tan Dun's soundtrack for the film Fallen, starring Denzel Washington. On Broadway, he originated the role of "The Fiddler", playing and dancing on stage in the Tony Award-winning revival of Irving Berlin's Annie, Get Your Gun, starring Bernadette Peters and Reba McEntire. Currently he tours as part of the Mahavishnu Project, a five-piece jazz-fusion band which centers around the music of John

McLaughlin's Mahavishnu Orchestra, performs often with The Betty Buckley Band, alongside Kenny Werner, Billy Drewes, Tony Marino, Jamey Haddad, and, of course, Ms. Buckley herself. Mr. Reynolds recently returned from a week of educational residencies in our nation's capitol with Yo Yo Ma's Silk Road Project, performing and teaching with composer Bright Sheng, ethnomusicologist Ted Levin, and Yo Yo Ma, culminating in a season opening performance at the Kennedy Center.

Ken Thomson (clarinet, saxophone), a Brooklyn-based clarinetist, saxophonist, and composer, plays saxophone and writes for the NY-based punk/jazz band Gutbucket, with whom he has toured internationally to 19 countries and 32 states over seven years, and released 3 CDs for Knitting Factory, Enja, and Cantaloupe Records. He is a founding board member of Anti-Social Music, a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting the work of emerging composers with a punk aesthetic. He is a frequent collaborator with chamber orchestra Alarm Will Sound (Benedict Mason, Michael Gordon, Nancarrow, etc.), the Bang on a Can All-Stars (Europe 2007), percussion wizards So Percussion (Reich, Lang, Andriessen), and more. As a composer, he has been commissioned to write a work for the American Composers Orchestra+Gutbucket that will debut at Carnegie Hall's Zankel Hall in October 2007. His through-composed rescoring of the 22-minute 1936 British film "Night Mail" was called "a masterful re-imagining of an old classic" by Indiewire.com upon its debut in March 2007 at the True/False Film Festival. His arrangement of Aphex Twin's "Gwely Mernans" for Alarm Will Sound was recorded on their acclaimed CD *Acoustica* (Cantaloupe Music), premiered at Lincoln Center Festival 2005, and later choreographed by Chicago's Hubbard Street Dance Company. He has had two works released on CD by Anti-Social Music, including "Song" (ASM Sings the Great American Songbook/Peacock Recordings), and an arrangement of Bob Massey's "The Mountain" (The Nitrate Hymnal/Lujo Records). In the July/August 2006 issue of the German-Dutch Sonic magazine, he was the "Top Interview," garnering a four-page feature in which critic Ulrich Steinmetzger remarked about his "intense performances" which "left behind astounded audiences... [who] witnessed him blow raw energy from the stage like few others can." The Boston Globe has called his improvisation "dazzling;" and Time Out New York has called him a "manic sax dervish." He has also performed in a variety of jazz, rock, chamber music and other settings; he is a member of the internationally-touring punk/cabaret band World/Inferno Friendship Society, klezmer duo Bop Kaballah, and the kids-rock band Dirty Sock Funtime Band (with 4 videos out now on Nickelodeon).

Julia Wolfe's (composition) music is muscular and kinetic and experienced through the body. She creates journeys like unfolding dramatic landscapes, a music meant to be entered into by the listener. Wolfe's work is distinguished by this intense focus on sound, the power of sound, the ways in which sound is related to memory and experience, the possibilities for new harmonies between familiar chords and micro tonal tunings or sounds found in nature and the urban world. With a care and attention to detail that is both masterful and highly respectful, Wolfe's music celebrates the extraordinary qualities contained within something as specific as a gesture or an inflection. Julia Wolfe's music is heard around the world in performances at the Next Wave Festival at BAM, the Sydney Olympic Arts Festival, Settembre Musica (Italy), the Holland Festival, Theatre de la Ville (Paris), the San Francisco Symphony, The Brooklyn Philharmonic, and more. Upcoming works include a new work FUEL for Ensemble Resonanz with a film by Bill Morrison, and an evening length work with film for the

Bang on a Can All-Stars. Recent collaborations with composers Michael Gordon and David Lang with writer Deborah Artman include Shelter written for musikFabrik and trio mediaeval with staging by the Ridge Theater Company; Lost Objects, an oratorio with Concerto Koln directed by Francois Girard; with Gordon and Lang The Carbon Copy Building with comic book artist Ben Katchor and the Ridge Theater. For The Carbon Copy Building, she received the 2000 Village Voice OBIE Award for Best New American Work. Wolfe received a 2001 Obie award for the music to Jennie Ritchie, a collaboration with playwright Mac Wellman and Ridge Theater.