

2 FOOT YARD

(Ensemble Members' Individual Bios)

CARLA KIHSTEDT

Violin, Voice

Carla has played the violin for most of her years on this planet. It has been the vehicle that has brought her through many approaches to music-making, from her beginnings in the classical world, to her present many-headed musical life. She has become a singer, composer and an improviser, and a member of several long-term projects, including 2 Foot Yard, Tin Hat, and Sleepytime Gorilla Museum.

2 Foot Yard (www.2footyard.com) is an intimate trio whose purpose is to explore and expand their own ideas of song-writing within the simple limitations of voice, violin, cello, drums, and guitar. Their debut CD was released on the Oracles series of Tzadik (www.tzadik.com), and they are self-releasing their second cd, *Borrowed Arms*. Tin Hat (www.tinhat.org) is an acoustic instrumental chamber group that dissolves the boundaries between classical, jazz, and folk musics, and between improvisation and composition. They have toured the U.S. and Europe extensively, and have released five albums— two each on Angel/EMI, and Ropeadope Records, and their fifth, *The Sad Machinery of Spring*, on Rykodisc/Hannibal. Sleepytime Gorilla Museum (www.sleepytimegorillamuseum.com) is a conundrum, a cult, an historical anomaly, and a Dadaist rock cabaret that constructs intricate and visceral music on an atypical array of instruments, many of them home-made. They tour extensively and ruthlessly, bringing their densely-packed ear-food to unsuspecting rock fans. Their third studio release, *In Glorious Times*, came out in May, 2007 on The End Records.

Aside from her various identities within these bands, Carla has worked as a composer both in collaboration with other artists, and alone. She has written and recorded two full-length works to accompany the dance performances of Jo Kreiter and Flyaway Productions, the first— *Flying Low*— was written with Shahzad Ismaily, and the latest— *Ravish*— was funded by a grant from Meet the Composer. She is currently, though slowly, writing a string quartet of short dances for the Los Angeles-based Eclipse Quartet.

Carla's most recent project is a collaboration with theater director Paul Bargetto (East River Commedia) and award-winning poet Rafael Oses called *Necessary Monsters*— a song cycle based on entries from *The Book of Imaginary Beings* by Jorge Luis Borges. This project was commissioned by Alverno Presents, the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, and the National Performance Network Creation Fund. It will be performed next at the Chicago MCA February 29th and March 1st, 2008.

In the classical realm, Carla will perform as a soloist next year with contemporary music ensembles premiering two pieces: with the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players, playing Jorge Liderman's "*Furthermore...*"-- a concerto for violin and small ensemble, and later with the Boston Modern Orchestra Project, performing Lisa Bielawa's new double violin concerto with Colin Jacobsen. Carla has had the opportunity to work with many wonderful musicians including Tom Waits, Satoko Fujii, Lisa Bielawa, Ben Goldberg, Carla Bozulich, the Rova Saxophone Quartet, and Fred Frith, whose new band *Cosa Brava* (including Carla, Zeena Parkins, and Matthias Bossi) will be touring in Europe next Spring.

This year she is the guest curator of the Music Unlimited XXI Festival in Wels, Austria, which she has titled *Music for Hands and Mouths*. She was an Artist in Residence at the Headlands Center for the Arts in 2003, and at the Civitella Ranieri Center in Italy in 2006. She was recently awarded a residency at the Ucross Foundation in Wyoming via the Alpert Award in the Arts, which she hopes to take advantage of early next year as a quiet respite from the road.

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MARIKA HUGHES

Cello, Voice

Marika Hughes' life has always been characterized by the seamless merging of disparate worlds. She has a natural affinity for many kinds of music due to the various musical environments that she was exposed to as a girl. Marika is the granddaughter of the legendary classical cellist Emmanuel Feuermann, and began playing the violin when she was 3. It wasn't long before the sonorous sounds of the cello seduced her away from the high strings. She was no stranger to the classical concert halls, and yet, grew up listening to jazz every night in and around Burgundy, a club that her parents ran in New York City. She was a pioneering double-degree student in the first years of the Juilliard/Barnard College program, studying both cello performance and political science. Since then, both pursuits have maintained an important role in her life.

After college, Marika moved to the Bay Area, where she developed an incredibly diverse musical life. She has played with many of the local symphonies including the Santa Rosa Symphony. She enjoyed a number of years with Quartet San Francisco, whose artful arrangements of tangos, jazz standards and popular songs, have won them critical acclaim and two grammy nominations. She has toured extensively with singer-songstress Vienna Teng (Rounder Records) and with the a capella vocal trio Charming Hostess, which has several records out on John Zorn's label, Tzadik. She formed the band Red Pocket with Jewlia Eisenberg (Charming Hostess) and they also have a CD on Tzadik. In addition to commercial and film scores, her discography includes recording for Santana, Mr. Bungle, Xiu Xiu and Faun Fables. With 2 Foot Yard, in addition to singing, writing, and arranging, Marika uses the cello to move seamlessly between the traditional roles of a chamber-musician and a bass-player.

SHAHZAD ISMAILY

Percussion, Guitar

Shahzad Ismaily, an American of Pakistani descent, was born and raised in Shickshinny, a quiet ex-coal mining town in Pennsylvania. He fell in love with music as an art for personal expression and cathartic self-actualization at an early age. Although he is self-taught, he thoroughly digested written treatises on theory, composition, expression, form, and acoustics while at Simon's Rock of Bard College studying pre-medicine. His interests soon took him outside the Western tradition, and led him to pursue study of traditional music in Bali (with I Sumarsam), Pakistan (Ustad Bismillah Khan), Japan (Kodo taiko ensemble), Morocco (Bachir Attar, Master Musicians of Jajouka), Brazil (Cyro Baptista) and India. As a composer, he has written works for small chamber ensembles, short film, dance and live theatre. He performs and records regularly on piano, electric bass, electric guitar, double bass, drums, percussion, and electronic textural instruments. He has worked with musicians Marc Ribot, Cyro Baptista, John Zorn, Eyvind Kang, Laurie Anderson, Jojo Mayer, Wolfgang Muthspeil and Butch Morris; choreographers and dance companies including Jo Kreiter's Flyaway Productions, Min Tanaka, Collision Palace (Amsterdam dance/music collective) and Frankfurt Ballet (co-composer Joel Ryan); and filmmaker Jim Mayer (documentary/HBO). He currently resides in New York City.

(September 2007)