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**Thom Blum** has been composing electroacoustic music since around 1972. His early teachers included James Tenney, Ingram Marshall, and Curtis Roads. Recent performances and installations include "Sound Portraits" (aural renderings of 18th C. Indian paintings), for the San Francisco Asian Art Museum (2015), the 2015 ISMIR Conference (concert) in Málaga, Spain, the Hörlursfestival in Solleftea, Sweden (2015), and the 2016 San Francisco Tape Music Festival. He is co-founder of the International Computer Music Association and is a member of the San Francisco Tape Music Collective.

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**Anders Tveit** is a composer and musician working with different projects related to both electroacoustic composition and improvisation. Where the use of self-developed software for real-time processing and spatial audio has a central role in the personal musical expression. As a musician, he has worked with everything ranging from the international renowned Trondheim Jazz Orchestra, Audun

Kleive, Shannon Mowday, Parallax, Pd-Conception to more ad-hoc improvisation duos. In addition to being a performing musician featured on several CD releases, he has composed multichannel electro-acoustic music and sound installations featured and performed at Ultima Contemporary Music Festival, GRM-Paris, NoTaM, ZKM-Karlsruhe, KlangFest - Liechtenstein, Lydgalleriet-Bergen, Henie Onstad Art Center, Kunstnerenes Hus, University of Greenwich, Oslo Konserthus and more.



THE GOOD, THE BAD,  
AND  
THE BING



## **PROGRAM**

**Sferics**

**Maggi Payne**

**Paraa bicachilu' ni**

**Roberto Morales**

**Marvelous Agents of Sound**

**Justin Yang**

**Chorale for Ola and Tomek**

**Cliff Caruthers**

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**Fernando Lopez-Lezcano**

**Cascade**

**Thom Blum**

**Ombre Cinesi II**

**Anders Tveit**

**Cliff Caruthers** continues to search for direct and tangible relationships to complex technologies, creating narrative soundscapes and psychologically charged atmospheres from recordings of real and imagined environs. His work has been featured at the Society for Electroacoustic Music in the United States (SEAMUS), the San Francisco Electronic Music Festival, The San Francisco Tape Music Festival, Deep Wireless 2006, Noise Pancakes, Quiet American's Field Effects series, and the Prague Quadrennial 2007, and has been a member of the San Francisco Tape Music Collective since 2002. A California resident since 2000, Mr. Caruthers has established himself as a preeminent sound designer in the Bay Area, working with Berkeley Repertory Theater, American Conservatory Theater, California Shakespeare Theater, Cutting Ball Theater (associate artist), The Acting Company, Guthrie Theater, Aurora Theatre Company, Crowded Fire, San Jose Stage Company, Marin Theatre Company, and TheatreWorks. His music for Earth: A Primer was featured at the GDC's Experimental Gameplay Workshop in 2015.

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Reviled for his "shapeless sonic tinkering" by the Los Angeles Times, clarinetist, composer, improviser, and computer musician **Matt Ingalls** is the founder and Artistic Director of sfSound and the San Francisco Tape Music Collective. He received Deuxième Prix, Lauréats des Puys (Catégorie Humour) in the 1994 Concours International de Musique Electroacoustique de Bourges and was the first recipient of the ASCAP/SEAMUS Commission and Recording Prize. A professional software engineer, his audio tools Soundflower, MacCsound, and Aardvark Synth have been used widely throughout the world.

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**Fernando Lopez-Lezcano** enjoys building things, fixing them when they don't work, and improving them even if they seem to work just fine. The scope of the word "things" is very wide, and includes computer hardware and software, controllers, music composition, performance and sound. His music blurs the line between technology and art, and is as much about form and sound processing, synthesis and spatialization, as about algorithms and custom software he writes for each piece. He has been working in multichannel sound and diffusion techniques for a long time, and can hack Linux for a living. At CCRMA, Stanford University since 1993, he combines his backgrounds in music (piano and composition), electronic engineering and programming with his love of teaching and music composition and performance. He discovered the intimate workings of sound while building his own analog synthesizers a very very long time ago, and even after more than 30 years, "El Dinosaurio" is still being used in live performances. He was the Edgar Varese Guest Professor at TU Berlin during the Summer of 2008. In 2014 he received the Marsh O'Neill Award For Exceptional and Enduring Support of Stanford University's Research Enterprise.

## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

**Maggi Payne** composes music for concert presentation, video, and dance, and is a video artist, photographer, recording engineer, flutist, and Co-Director of the Center for Contemporary Music at Mills College, in the San Francisco Bay Area, where she teaches composition, electronic music, and recording engineering. Her works have been presented in the Americas, Europe, Japan, and Australasia. She received Composer's Grants and an Interdisciplinary Arts Grant from the National Endowment for the Arts; video grants from the Mellon Foundation and the Western States Regional Media Arts Fellowships Program; and honorary mentions from Concours International de Musique et d'Art Sonore Electroacoustiques de Bourges and Prix Ars Electronica. Her works appear on Aguirre, Innova, Lovely Music, Starkland, Asphodel, New World (CRI), Root Strata, Centaur, Ubuibi, MMC, Digital Narcis, Music and Arts, Frog Peak, and/OAR, Capstone, and Mills College labels.

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**Roberto Morales** is interested in algorithmic, real time and free time composition. His musical knowledge in folkloric music from Mexico, combined with the classical training made possible to mature new instrumental techniques in Mexican harps, flute and piano. Morales has written music for theatre, dance, movies, TV and radio, and has been commissioned to write music for European and Mexican ensembles like Wire Works and the Symphony Orchestra of Guanajuato. As a performer and improviser, Morales has participated on his own and collaborated with other composers such as Mari Kimura, George Lewis, Chris Chafe among others. He was co-founder of the first computer music studio in Mexico City and founder of LIM in Guanajuato. He's organized festivals such as "Callejon del Ruido" in Guanajuato and "Media Music Fest" at Mexico City. His music can be found in ICMC recordings, Victo label [www.victo.qc.ca](http://www.victo.qc.ca) (Leyendas in collaboration with Mari Kimura) and the most recent publications in Computer Music Journal

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**Justin Yang** is a composer/improviser/theorist/technologist. His work and research focus on system based models of composition, employing technology to create multi-participatory works which explore issues of ensemble improvisation, real-time and distributed scoring, multi-nodal collaboration, and animated and graphic notation.

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## PROGRAM NOTES

### **Sferics**

**Maggi Payne**

Sferics are electromagnetic waves caused by lightning occurring in the opposite hemisphere that propagate via the Earth-ionosphere waveguide. If the energy enters the magnetosphere it bounces multiple times, with high frequencies traveling faster than lower frequencies, resulting in downward sweeps rather than the crackles produced by sferics. Proton whistlers rise in frequency. These electromagnetic phenomena, along with tweeks, produce frequencies that lie within the human audio range, and can be converted to audio using VLF (very low frequency) receivers. Both Voyager 1 and 2 plasma wave instruments detected whistler-like activity as they passed Jupiter in 1979. It seemed appropriate to celebrate Juno's 2016 arrival at Jupiter by composing a work using recordings of whistlers available from NASA as well as sferics captured by my VLF receivers. These fascinating sounds are noisy—often full of static, crackling, popping, grittiness, choppiness, and irregular fluctuations. It struck me that they were very similar to sounds produced by the white and pink noise generators from the Moog IIP and Aries synthesizers and my shortwave radios, which I also used in this work. I time-stretched many whistlers up to 20 times their original duration, allowing them to more slowly rip the fabric of space and time.

### **Paraa bicachilu' ni**

**Roberto Morales**

"Where did you hide it" in Zapoteco. This piece is a sample of an auto generative installation at the Museo Universitario de Arte Contemporáneo (MUAC) for 24 channels and is inspired in Riemann hypothesis which implies results about the distribution of prime numbers. It uses samples of ocarinas, voice, snail shell, tibetan singing bowl and synthetic instruments in which the processing of the sound is never the same. Some of the hidden patterns of the prime numbers are utilized for the compositive part of the piece giving as a result, a very open and organic endless structure.

### **Marvelous Agents of Sound**

**Justin Yang**

Real-time scoring always makes me think of this television episode I saw a long time ago. It was one of the revivals of the classic psychological thriller shows either the New Twilight Zone or the New Dead Zone, one of these. In the episode a young man moves in next door to an old man. There are rumours that the old man was crazy. The young man peeks into the basement and sees the old man running frantically around a large Rube Goldberg machine and muttering to himself and making adjustments to the machine and running to another part of the machine to make fixes. The old man says something like "There's going to be an earthquake in Turkey unless I get to it in time". The next day the young man sees in the paper that there was in fact a small earthquake in Turkey. Coincidences

keep piling up and the young man finally becomes convinced that this old man and his Rube Goldberg machine seem to be instrumental in keeping the world from tumbling into disaster. Of course just as the young man realizes this, he becomes possessed as the old man was, and starts running frantically around the machine adjusting things and pulling levers and turning dials to save the world. The old man then finally relaxes and grabs his hat and wanders off into retirement. Real-time scoring often feels like this - listening to imaginary voices in your head, making odd, illogical adjustments that somehow unpredictably keep the piece from tumbling into disaster.

**Chorale for Ola and Tomek**

**Cliff Caruthers**

We began to sing. Time slowed. There were many faces. Then none. We are transported.

“The song becomes the meaning itself through the vibratory qualities. When we begin to catch the vibratory qualities...the song begins to sing us...I don’t know anymore if I am finding that song or if I am that song.” Jerzy Grotowski

**Poem**

**Matt Ingalls**

One of my favorite tape music pieces is Edgard Varèse's *Poème électronique*, and I am always struck by the work's graceful presentation of gesture and silence. It seems all too often electronic music (including my own!) tends to sound as a continuous "orchestra", of sorts. I was inspired by the Varèse work to try to create a piece that sounded more like "chamber music". All the sounds in the piece are natural recordings, and have been processed with only basic editing and filtering. Nearly all sounds were recorded on the same microphone in the same room: the Composer's Studio at the Djerassi Resident Artists Program.

**The Cat**

**Fernando Lopez-Lezcano**

This is the latest version of a series of algorithmic performance pieces for pianos, computer and “cat” that I started working on at the end of 2008 (the proverbial cat walking on a piano keyboard). The performer - the cat - connects to six virtual pianos through a keyboard controller, our pedals and two modulation wheels, controlling them both directly and through algorithms. Throughout the piece different note and phrase generation algorithms are triggered by the performer's actions, including markov chains that a ghost cat (Schrodinger's cat?) uses to learn from the performer, fractal melodies, plain scales, trills and other simple algorithms. The sound of the pianos is heard directly, and is also processed using spectral, granular and other synthesis techniques at different points in the performance, creating spaces through which the performer moves. The original surround environment was 2D only (thus, the cutout of a cat), but has been upgraded for this performance, the first since 2014, to use full 3D surround. The soundfield is created with Ambisonics spatialization, and everything in the piece

(algorithms, sound generation and processing and graphical user interface) is written in the SuperCollider language.

## **Cascade**

**Thom Blum**

The structure of this piece emerged from numerous improvisations on the materials. A natural cascade or linkage from section to section took hold, wherein some perceived property of the current section was held constant in the next section, but other properties were changed to to their opposite extreme. In this way an arc for the piece developed. It goes something like this: Continuous broadband noise evolves into continuous narrow bands of pitched (or pitch-clustered) sound, which is then followed by discontinuous definite (and indefinite) pitched sound, and concludes with discontinuous unpitched/glitchy/noisy sound.

## **Ombre Cinesi II**

**Anders Tveit**

Is it she?

Is it not?

I stand gazing from afar:

timid steps,soft and slow,

how long she is in coming! !

-Emperor Wu of Han (156 BC - 87 BC)

According to the Chinese legend it is said that Emperor Wu of Han Dynasty mourned the loss of his concubine Lady Li to such a extent, that he lost his desire to reign. To help him get over the sadness the ministers of the court summoned a magician named Shao-weng, who sculptured a figure in the likeness of Lady Li. Her joints where animated using 11 separate pieces of leather, and adorned with painted clothes. Using an oil lamp the magician projected the figures shadow movement on a curtain, bringing her back to life. "Ombre Cinesi II" is the second part of a series of compositions where I have used data recordings of motion and physical properties of past musical performances and sound producing events as a method of conjuring new sonic narratives. Composed 2016, commissioned by EAU (Electric Audio Unit) with support from The Norwegian Composers Fund.