



SFCMP ANNOUNCES A NEW COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROJECT: SOUNDVOICE

In Partnership with Hospitality House, SFCMP launches a pilot program to provide adult learners both expanded musical literacy and personal agency through the power of story and the openness of sound-based musical processes

Contact: Rozella Kennedy, Executive Director - rkennedy@sfcmp.org

San Francisco, December 23, 2014 – **Soundvoice** is a community engagement and educational project created by the **San Francisco Contemporary Music Players (SFCMP)** that seeks to deliver a new level of relevance and celebration to San Franciscans in a participatory and collaborative celebratory format. Delivered in partnership with **Hospitality House** and funded by a James Irvine Foundation “Exploring Engagement” grant, Soundvoice will take place in Spring, 2014, culminating in a free public celebration to be held on May 17, 2015 at the Center for New Music.

Soundvoice is comprised of four components: 1) a learning phase (listening/new-music expository workshops conducted by SFCMP ensemble member); 2) a co-creative/educational phase (answering musical/sound queries, gathering and curating sounds, journaling and other inter-media outputs), 3) a collaborative weaving together of story and sound with a professional composer; and 4) a day-long performance/exhibition celebration at the Center for New Music.

Soundvoice seeks to provide a deep and authentic introduction/exposure to some of the idioms of new music while offering an opportunity for adult participants to enter the realm of creativity through building their own sound narratives that will be incorporated into a performed composition. The first two components of this process will offer participants five sessions on storytelling, new music, listening, and “capturing/curating” sound and story. These sessions will be offered in mid-April 2015 at Hospitality House on Turk Street in the Tenderloin.

The first of these will be led by acclaimed storyteller and community activist **Joe Wilson**, Program Manager of Hospitality House’s Community Building Program, modeled upon the trauma **Healing Organizing and Leadership Development (HOLD)** workshop, Wilson’s “Power of Storytelling” session will introduce the participants to important notions about storytelling and narrative.

Thus primed to the notion that “my voice matters,” each participant will then experience four additional listening/learning sessions led by SFCMP percussionist **Chris Froh** introducing *music concrète*, phasing and other elements of new music. Participants will be led to tell their own story through the narration of sound and to supplement their exploratory process through journaling, making art, or any other format that resonates with them.

In late April, participants will gather with the program staff, the teaching artist, and composer **Sam Nichols** for the third part of the project: a “**Design Day**” which will springboard a collaborative approach to weaving story and sound into a composed piece of music. Working with some of the class participants and staff from Hospitality House and SFCMP, Nichols will “collage” the works into a new musical score. The step of the

process is important to ensure the final musical score does not “appropriate” the work of the participants but rather uplifts and highlights them in a co-created format.

This new work will be performed at the culminating event of the project, “**Soundvoice Celebration**.” This free community event will take place on May 17, 2015 at the Center for New Music in the Tenderloin (55 Taylor Street, time TBA). Convening the participant/artists, their family, friends, and neighbors, as well as interested members of the arts and music community, Soundvoice Celebration will include performance of the new work (with SFCMP ensemble members), broadcast of recordings of raw sound materials from the participants (who are invited to talk with the audience about their sounds and stories), displays of writings, drawings, and other materials generated by the participants through this experience, and the special interactive component of the **Mobile Sound Lab**.

Created by artist **Liz Barton** the Mobile Sound Lab is a modular space where visitors can explore invented instruments and sounds, create recordings and upload them to a music-sharing site. Its inclusion in Soundvoice Celebration will provide an opportunity for attendees to “be artists” and close the circle between listening, inquiry, experiential learning and artistic practice and agency.

“We are thrilled about the potential of a model like Soundvoice to make what we do as a new music ensemble authentically relevant to community members who are not necessarily of the typical concert-going demographic,” says SFCMP Executive Director **Rozella Kennedy**. “In cultural institutional circles, there is much talk about shifting demographics and the importance of building community engagement, and this kind of activity is imperative for 21st century organizations to do. But what we love about a project like Soundvoice is that it begins to nudge us collectively even further, into a realm of co-creation of an artistic experience. Which is, simply put, a fantastic opportunity.

“It’s fantastic to partner with Hospitality House in delivering this first foray to our shared community. SFCMP’s offices are in the Center for New Music, right down the street from Hospitality House in the Tenderloin. The collaborative nature of our relationship is refreshing. Program Director **Ivan Vera** and his colleagues have helped us innovate and improve the way we think about the program design and delivery, so that their clients will be motivated to partner with us in this fun experiment! We believe helping people discover artistic identity and agency through using new music forms with their own bodies and stories could create a potential place of intersection so that people will care about what we do, but even further, will be personally proud of what they can do.”

“I am very excited for Hospitality House to partner with SFCMP on this exciting project. Hospitality House believes that opportunities to engage in artistic and cultural activities create whole people and whole communities. We celebrate the opportunity to expose our participants to another facet of artistic self-expression, said Ivan Vera, Hospitality House Community Arts Program Manager

“I’m so excited to have an opportunity to share what I do as a performer with members of our Tenderloin community,” says percussionist Chris Froh. “I’ve dedicated my career to playing new music primarily because of the flexibility that it allows us to view the world as art. In our workshops together, I’ll share this perspective with the participants in hopes that they can use this lens to view their environment with curiosity and to seek opportunities to create their own work. And I’m just as excited to shift my own perspective on our artistic mission as I view our work through the community’s eyes. What a unique opportunity to engage and influence each other!”

Philosophy of Soundvoice

Modeled after the anthropological tool of “Photovoice,” where underserved and marginalized people (often in developing nations) are given a camera and taught how to use it so they may “tell their story” and gain voice and agency, Soundvoice builds upon recent successful outreach/engagement activities of SFCMP,

MusicCircus in Fall 2012 and Project Anton School Residency in spring 2014. (www.sfcmp.org/musicircus, www.sfcmp.org/project-anton-school-residency)

Most everyone likes some sort of music. We have all heard enough music in our life to know “the rules,” conscious or not. Even a few hours of listening to the radio triggers our subconscious awareness of how pop songs work, what chords build excitement and what chords release it. But new music loves to break these rules. Even if the piece has a chord progression to follow, it might break the conventions of pop music, or even harmony itself. Still other pieces will use noises not even made by musical instruments, an experience which will be still more alien to those unaccustomed to it. Some composers, such as John Cage and the American Experimentalists, challenged our notions about what is “music” and what is “performance” in ways that we take for granted today as consumers of pop- and high-culture alike.

Based in a tradition of breaking rules (all the way to Stravinsky, if not before!) new music’s openness and diversity has influenced nearly every genre in existence, from pop to hip-hop, jazz to electronic. The learning element of Soundvoice will explore some of these broken rules together.

“Soundvoice, is not actually about SFCMP bringing in “new audiences” for new music,” says SFCMP Artistic Director **Steven Schick**. “The model of this project seeks to be about “YOU” — participant, family member, friend, neighbor — how you can, through either directly co-creating or excitedly experiencing, incorporate some of new music’s expressions into your own life and consciousness. In short, the project is about how the freedom and flexibility of new music techniques and approaches can extend an opportunity for everyone to enter the arc of creativity and exploration.”

About the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players

Led by Artistic Director Steven Schick, the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players occupies an important place in the national cultural landscape. One of the most longstanding, continually performing new music ensembles in the country, SFCMP performs innovative and exceptional music for a wide spectrum of arts and music enthusiasts. Through performances, collaborative projects, commissions, and educational outreach activities, SFCMP aims to give audience members and friends opportunities to discover musical repertoire that is new to them – and to use these experiences as ways to better understand, interact with, and enjoy their lives and our world.

About Hospitality House

Founded in 1967, Hospitality House is a community center serving homeless and poor residents of San Francisco’s Tenderloin, Mid Market and Sixth Street Corridor neighborhoods. Our services meet the needs of the whole person by addressing emergency need, long-term stabilization, and connecting individuals to the unique culture and art of the area.

About Chris Froh

Percussionist Christopher Froh specializes in promoting and influencing the creation of new music through critically-acclaimed performances and dynamic lectures. Also a member of Empyrean Ensemble, Rootstock Percussion, and San Francisco Chamber Orchestra, Froh has premiered over 100 chamber and solo works by composers from 15 countries. His rich and diverse career also includes performances with the San Francisco Symphony at Carnegie Hall, Gamelan Sekar Jaya at the Stern Grove Festival, and session recording at Skywalker Ranch for a video game about monkeys and pirates. Chris has recorded with the San Francisco Symphony on SFS Media; as a soloist on Albany, Innova, and Equilibrium labels; and as a chamber musician on Bridge Records and Music@Menlo LIVE. As a soloist, he has appeared at festivals and recitals across Japan, China, Turkey, Europe, and the United States including featured performances at the Beijing Modern Festival, Nuovi Spazi Musicali, and Music@Menlo. He studied at the University of Michigan, Eastman School of Music, and Toho Gakuen Conservatory where he was a student of marimba pioneer, Keiko Abe. He teaches percussion and chamber music at UC Davis and CSU Sacramento.

About Liz Barton and Mobile Sound Lab

Mobile Sound Lab is space that allows visitors to freely explore their own creativity and the unlimited nature of sound and music. Creator of the Mobile Sound Lab, *musician, composer, instrument builder, educator and visual artist* Liz Barton collaborated with visual artist, Skye Bergen, to create the [first Mobile Sound Lab](#) in Sacramento, CA. The Lab is a mobile unit, where people can explore a world of invented instruments and found objects and sounds, record and loop these, and upload them to Soundcloud, entering a collaborative community composition made of sounds never heard before. The first installation of the Mobile Sound Lab was at Bows and Arrows Collective in Sacramento in January 2014. Most recently Mobile Sound Lab traveled to [Maker Faire 2014](#) in San Mateo, CA where it received a ribbon for Best in Class. More information at lizbartonmusic.com.

About Sam Nichols

Composer Sam Nichols has received commissions from a number of ensembles and organizations, including the Left Coast Chamber Ensemble, Earplay, and the Composers Conference at Wellesley College. He recently won the 2011 Lee Ettelson Composer's Award for his string quartet, *Refuge*. He's also received awards and fellowships from the League of Composers, the University of Illinois (3rd prize, 2010 Salvatore Martirano Memorial Composition Prize), the Composers Conference, and Montalvo Center for the Arts, among others. He's been involved in a number of electronic music projects, producing several multi-media installations in collaboration with sculptor Robin Hill, and also performing with percussionist Chris Froh. Upcoming projects include a concerto for cellist David Russell and the UC Davis Symphony Orchestra (Christian Baldini, music director). He works as a lecturer in the UC Davis Music Department; he also teaches in collaboration with the Cinema and Technocultural Studies program. In the spring of 2011 he received the UC Davis Academic Federation Award for Excellence in Teaching. He lives in Woodland, CA, with his wife (SFCMP-commissioned composer Laurie San Martin) and their two daughters.

About Joe Wilson

Joe first came to Hospitality House in the early 1980s where he was a shelter resident, volunteer, and eventually the Shelter Manager. After leaving the organization and serving the community in various roles for almost three decades, Joe returned to the organization in 2012 to lead the newly-formed Community Building Program. Before returning to Hospitality House, Joe was the Assistant Organizing Director for the 1.6 million-member American Federation of State, County & Municipal Employees (AFSCME) and the Director of the California Child Care Campaign to organize nearly 75,000 family child care providers. For eight years, Joe was Associate Director at Coleman Advocates for Children & Youth, where he oversaw a multi-year child campaign that secured nearly \$120 million in local and state money for working families. He has been involved in the creation of numerous organizations, including the Coalition on Homelessness and the Coalition for Ethical Welfare Reform. In 1987, he co-wrote a study that led to the formation of Community Housing Partnership. Over the years, Joe has served on numerous boards, and he is currently a Board member for the San Francisco Coalition on Homelessness.

About Steven Schick

Percussionist, conductor, and author, Steven Schick was raised in an Iowa farming family. For forty years he has championed contemporary music by commissioning or premiering more than 150 new works. He was the founding percussionist of the Bang on a Can All-Stars (1992-2002) and served as Artistic Director of the Centre International de Percussion de Genève (2000-2005). Schick is founder and Artistic Director of the percussion group, "red fish blue fish." Currently he is Music Director of the La Jolla Symphony and Chorus in addition to serving as SFCMP's Artistic Director. In 2012 he became the first Artist-in-Residence with the International Contemporary Ensemble (ICE). Schick founded and is currently Artistic Director of "Roots and Rhizomes," a summer course on contemporary percussion music held at the Banff Centre for the Arts. He maintains a lively schedule of guest conducting including appearances this season with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, the Nova Chamber Ensemble and the Asko/Schönberg Ensemble. Schick will be music director of the 2015 Ojai Festival. Among his acclaimed publications are a book, "The Percussionist's Art: Same Bed, Different Dreams," and numerous recordings of contemporary percussion music including a three-CD set of the complete percussion music of Iannis

Xenakis (Mode). Mode released a companion recording on DVD of the early percussion music of Karlheinz Stockhausen in September of 2014. Steven Schick is Distinguished Professor of Music at the University of California, San Diego. He was named Artistic Director of SFCMP in 2011.