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### about this thing

The Transbay Creative Music Calendar is a volunteer-produced free monthly journal for non-commercial creative new music in the San Francisco Bay Area. In addition to our comprehensive listing of upcoming events, we publish articles and reviews about local music and the people who create it. We talk about a wide range of modern music, including: experimental, improvised, noise, electronic, free-jazz, outrock, 21st century compositions, and sonic art. Each month, 1,000 copies of the Transbay are mailed to individuals and hand-delivered to over 45 performance venues and public locations throughout the Bay Area. Contact us for a free subscription.

### Volunteers needed right away!

The Transbay needs editorial and production staff, perhaps combined in the same person. If you have writing and digital print skills, please contact us at [mail@transbaycalendar.org](mailto:mail@transbaycalendar.org).

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## December 2009

### GUERRILLA RECORDING



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from the transbay creative music calendar

REVIEW BY JACOB FELIX HEULE | AUGUST 25 @ HEMLOCK TAVERN

## Orhima / Pharmakon / R. Jencks

It had been a long time since I had visited the Hemlock Tavern. It seems that enterprising avant gardists have largely given up on trying to present their music in this particular rock music context; the loud bar atmosphere on the other side of the plastic curtain is only the most obvious obstacle in the way of sensitive music emerging here. But there is no need for politeness tonight; I am here to hear a metal band – a black metal band that a Bay Area noise fan would consider a supergroup. Orhima features members of acoustic grind duo Ettrick, Nerds-fueled tablecore Tralphaz, and microcephalic face-synthesist Bran (...) Pos, respectively on drums, guitar, and vocals. Lit by nought but a single bright lightbulb center stage on the floor, the blackened, bloodied drummer pounds out simple, brutal rhythms, while a dispassionate goth flutter-strums his guitar into a wash of white noise. Barefooted and velvet-cloaked, the weirdo singer wails wild howls of the criminally insane. Their music filled me with joy. Tastefully simple heavy rock music with crazy vocals and creepy background music filling in the space between songs. A variety of tempo changes, both gradual and abrupt, add variety. This is, I believe, only their third show with this finalized line-up. With a bit more experience, they will be a brutal juggernaut. They're off to a solid start.

I hear murmurs of "female power electronics" as Pharmakon, a young New Yorker, sets up. More than a few people are excited to hear her, so I decide to stick around to see how the actuality matches the preceding reputation. The Hemlock has provided this young lady with a large white table with a graffito: "Twat?" O fate! She sets up on the floor. A dark synth line from a Casio SK-5 toy keyboard begins the set; it's nice to see the actual movement of two fingers producing this music, neither pre-recorded nor

sequenced. Soon she deploys her special skill: terrified womanish screaming. She is certainly well-practiced in this art; approach her not in a dark alley. Bursts of electronic noise erupt, and a wall of distortion now dominates the sonic atmosphere. Now back to the head; the bass synth line returns, and more bursts of noise conclude the piece. The set is very short, perhaps five minutes, which seems tasteful given the extremely abrasive nature of the music, and her status as an up-and-coming performer rather than a seasoned master.

R. Jencks surprises me with a quick set-up. I'm shooting the breeze at the water cooler when I hear tormented screams bellowing out from behind the shower curtain sealing off the music room. Inside, Mr. Jencks is onstage, wildscreaming into two handheld mics, recording loops. His rage is palpable. He looks sincerely angry, and in between screams he looks exhausted. For unknown reasons he kicks over a table and throws a mic stand. It feels slightly dangerous. This tension sustains interest in the performance through many minutes of nothing more than primal scream therapy. Eventually I start to perceive subtle pitch shifting affecting the deeper layers of the dense loops: the earliest howls are dropping in pitch. This slow progression has taken so long it seems as if this slight development will be the totality of the set. But now heavily distorted tones, harsh noise, rip out of the speakers. Jencks abruptly cuts the vocal loops, and concentrates on amazing electronic sounds: shredding high-pitched tones, and feedback through delay and distortion. Simple, unchanging sounds, but Jencks is cycling through them quickly, nimbly. His years of experience with this music are evident. A dark, droning synth tone creeps in, underlying everything. It occurs to me that this set contains all the same

basic elements as Pharmakon's, and nothing more. Jencks sustains the single synth note a very long time, letting the harsh noise fade away. After ample droning, he quickly recapitulates the whole set. There are more brutal screams followed by more harsh noise, then the synth drone is again left as a solo voice. More onstage furniture is flung. This performance has not been cathartic for Jencks; it has merely fostered, stimulated, his rage and aggression. The looping layers of screams from the beginning of the set return, and the drone is abruptly cut. Fog suddenly starts filling the room. Has this familiar aspect of his set been saved for the conclusion (perhaps forbidden by the club, and executed after it is too late for them to pull the plug on him), or is it cuing the beginning of an entire new section, as did the introduction of the distorted electronics? Synth tones and speech are audible, rising out of the chaotic looping screams. It is starting to feel like a terrible 1980s movie sample will conclude the performance, but then I realize this is the spooky intro (with Vincent-Price-impersonating narrator) to Motley Crue's Shout at the Devil. The album's title track starts playing, and the whole audience is mystified. Some are visibly more excited by this music than by anything else they've heard tonight, but I, on the other hand, have always agreed with Robert Christgau's impression of the album as, "utter dogshit even by heavy metal standards." Vince Neil screams, "Shout at the..." over a snare roll, and the music is cut. What an absurd ending! Inexplicable. Perhaps a nod to the opening metal band, to accompany his genre similarity with Pharmakon. ●

# the transbay Creative Music Calendar

## Thursday December 3

Luggage Store New Music Series • 8pm \$6-10  
**Outsound Presents Full Moon Concerts - Long Night's Moon**  
8pm: Organ of qwerty  
9pm (sharp!): 60 x 60 International Mix

Hemlock Tavern • 9pm \$7  
Martin Bisi, an indie and avant garde record producer from Brooklyn (Sonic Youth, John Zorn, Material/Bill Laswell), performs with his own band. Also appearing: "Leigh Gregory & Memory's Mystic Band" and Dominique Leone

## Friday December 4

Berkeley Art Museum • 7:30pm \$5  
Fullman will perform recent compositions for solo and ensemble on wires stretched across the gallery, turning the museum itself into a resonating instrument. With Theresa Wong, Dave Douglas and Gretchen Jude.

Studio 1510 • 8:00pm \$15  
Internationally acclaimed avant-jazz pianist Joel Futterman, known for his exceptional technique and profoundly inventive musical explorations, will be making a rare Bay Area concert appearance. He will be paired up with long time collaborator locally based multi-reed player Ike Levin for an evening of "Musical Dialogues & Explorations" during which they will showcase their highly distinctive and imaginative approach to spontaneously composed music. Two shows beginning at 8:00 PM.

Oakland Public Conservatory of Music • 8:00pm \$5 (16 & under free)  
First Fridays: Monthly at OPCM [Oakland Public Conservatory of Music]  
**FREE-JAZZ, FREE-IMPROV OPEN STAGE & OPEN MIC!** Friday, December 4, 2009 8:00-11:00 pm. Open to all musicians who embrace the sounds and spirit of Ornette Coleman, John Coltrane, etc. Open also to vocalists, dancers, artists, photographers, poets, etc. Host: Bill Crossman, pianist & member OPCM Faculty

Mills College Littlefield Concert Hall • 8pm free  
Recent works by Roscoe Mitchell, Fred Frith, Eric Glick Rieman, Daniel Wolf, others.

## Saturday December 5

Artists' Television Access • 8:30pm \$7  
Animal Charm; The Freddy McGuire Show; Packard

## Sunday December 6

SIMM Series • 7:30pm \$10/\$8  
7:30pm Behind the 8-Ball  
CJ Borosque, Arachnid Arcade, Jim Kaiser  
8:30 The Unusual Suspects: Gianni Mimmo(IT) saxophone, Gianni Lenoci(IT)piano, Bob Marsh cello/voice/other, Rent Romus saxophone/accordion, Jim Kaiser bicycle wheel, Sebastian Krawczuk bass, Karen Stackpole drums/percussion, Duncan Dobsen turntable

## Monday December 7

Makeout Room • 8pm free  
**The Monday Makeout Presents: Year-end SACRIFICE to the GUITAR GODS;** Ross Hammond TRIO: Ross Hammond - guitar / Lisa Mezzacappa - bass / John Hanes - drums ; Lucio Menegoni's SNOWBALL POND; MATTHEW HEULITT TRIO: Jonathan Herrera - bass / Bryan Bowman - drums / Matthew Heulitt - guitar

Studio 1510 • 8pm \$6-10  
RECIPROCAL UNCLES (Italy) Gianni Mimmo - saxophones Gianni Lenoci - piano w/Scott R. Looney, Damon Smith, Gino Robair & Kjell Nordeson

## Tuesday December 8

First Tuesdays at Tom's Place • 7:30pm donation  
Sarah Cahill (pno), Scott Looney (pno), Killick and Gino Robair (H'arpeggione and perc)

Uptown • 9pm donations  
**Active Music Series** at the Uptown presents Oakland Active Orchestra and Gogo Fightmaster. Oakland Active Orchestra is a collaborative ensemble performing original compositions and improvisations. This will be the third concert for the OAO, which holds a monthly residency at the Uptown. Gogo Fightmaster is a band made up of the formidable Aaron Bennett, tenor saxophone; John Finkbeiner, guitar; Lisa Mezzacappa, bass; Vijay Anderson, drums; and Aram Shelton, alto saxophone.

## Wednesday December 9

Flux 53 • 7pm free  
Hump Day Jam -- Your mother should know

Meridian Gallery • 7:30pm \$10 general; \$5 students/seniors  
**Meridian Music:** Composers in Performance presents Sarah Rose Stiles.

Studio 1510 • 8:30pm \$6-\$10  
Two trios: Matthew Goodheart/Matt Ingalls/George Cremaschi and John Ingle/George Cremaschi/Kjell Nordeson

## Thursday December 10

Mama Buzz Cafe • 7pm \$5-10 sliding scale  
Savory Music  
GreX: Explosive and bewildering duo music made with guitar, piano, hands and voice, melding improvisation, live samples, and minimalist, collage, and quick-change composition into something else. Essentially garage rock harmolodics (?).  
Powerdove: Sparse, affecting, powerful acoustic vocal/instrumental music.  
Wiener Kids: Intense, manic, and ridiculously hard-swinging improv/composition by 2 reeds/drums trio.

Luggage Store New Music Series • 8pm \$6-\$10  
8pm: Ellen Weller (San Diego) CJ Borosque duo  
9pm: The Pmocatat Ensemble and Chorus

## Friday December 11

21 Grand • 8:30pm \$6-10 sliding scale  
Jacob Wick (trumpet, from NY); trio with: Kyle Bruckmann (oboe, English horn)  
Gino Robair (energized surfaces, voltage made audible)  
A trio of: Bran Pos (electronics), George Cremaschi (bass, electronics), Matt Ingalls (clarinets)

## Saturday December 12

Meridian Gallery • 8pm \$10  
Phillip Greenleaf & Jon Raskin: 1+1  
Lisa Mezzacappa & Nightshade: Cory Wright, clarinets / John Finkbeiner, guitar / Kjell Nordeson, percussion / Lisa Mezzacappa, acoustic bass / Tim Perkis, electronics

## Tuesday December 15

Flux 53 • 8pm \$10 suggested donation  
Bob Marsh and Gino Robair - Trio and Large Ensemble

## Thursday December 17

Luggage Store New Music Series • 8pm \$6-10  
A Night of Intermedia Performance  
8pm Tom Hall (Australia)  
9pm Trevor Healy- guitar Jeff Smith- computer, Aram Shumavon- live video

## the persistent caveat

Schedules are subject to change, and the reasons can be totally appalling, flying in the face of human reason.

Please confirm details provided in this publication

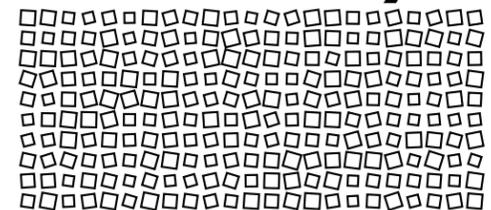
## Wednesday December 23

Flux 53 • 7pm free  
Hump Day Jam -- You know you want some

## Thursday December 31

Luggage Store New Music Series • 8pm \$6-10  
No concert tonight -- happy Blue Moon and New Year!

# Tuesdays



## at Tom's Place

December 8, 7:30 PM (doors open at 7)

*Sarah Cahill, solo piano*

*Scott Looney, solo piano*

*Killick, h'arpeggione (w.*

*Gino Robair, percussion)*

3111 Deakin Street, Berkeley, CA  
Directions: <http://4-33.com/directions.html>

BE MOST WELL-ROUNDED  
UNTO EACHOTHER

## dude see also

[anouman.net/sfshows/](http://anouman.net/sfshows/) [scraper site]  
[creepsville.com/cal](http://creepsville.com/cal) [noise and weird music]  
[dardardar.org](http://dardardar.org) [shows under \$12]  
[jon.luini.com/thelist/](http://jon.luini.com/thelist/) [still!]  
[theioldershitwasbetter.com](http://theioldershitwasbetter.com) [it's true]  
[zumonline.org](http://zumonline.org) [from the mind of geo. chen]

## venue information

**21 Grand**  
416 25th Street, Oakland [near Broadway]

**Artists' Television Access**  
992 Valencia Street, San Francisco

**Berkeley Art Museum**  
2626 Bancroft Way 2621 Durant Avenue Between Col-  
lege and Telegraph

**Brava Theater**  
2781 24th St, San Francisco [at York]

**Climate Theatre**  
285 9th St, San Francisco [at Folsom]

**Flux 53**  
5306 Foothill Boulevard, Oakland [at Fairfax]

**Golden Trapper Keeper Lodge**  
1687 Hayes, San Francisco [at Central]

**Heco's Palace**  
705 Peralta Street, Oakland

**Hemlock Tavern**  
1131 Polk Street, San Francisco

**The Independent**  
628 Divisadero Street San Francisco

**Luggage Store Gallery**  
1007 Market Street, San Francisco [at 6th]

**Makeout room**  
22nd Street between Mission and Valencia, SF

**Mama Buzz Cafe**  
2318 Telegraph Ave at 23rd Oakland

**Meridian Gallery**  
535 Powell Street, San Francisco

**Mills College**  
5000 MacArthur Blvd Oakland, CA 94613

**Musicians' Union Hall**  
116 9th Street, San Francisco [at Mission]

**Oakland Museum of California**  
1000 Oak Street, Oakland

**Oakland Public Conservatory of Music**  
1616 Franklin Street, Oakland

**ODC Dance Commons**  
351 Shotwell Street, San Francisco

**Sunshine Biscuit Factory**  
Unit 223 81st Street, Oakland [near San Leandro Ave]

**Studio 1510**  
1510 8th Street Oakland

**Tom's Place**  
3111 Deakin Street Berkeley

**Uptown**  
1928 Telegraph Ave at 19th St Oakland



Outsound and the Luggage Store Gallery Present  
the Full Moon Concert Series  
December 3, 2009 – Long Night's Moon

With a PERFORMANCE by:

John Hanes

and a presentation of

the 60 x 60 International Mix -  
60 pieces, one minute or less,  
by 60 composers from around the world.

8:00 p.m. at the Luggage Store Gallery  
1007 Market Street @ 6<sup>th</sup> Street  
San Francisco, CA  
Admission: \$6.00 - \$10.00 sliding scale

[www.transbaycalendar.org](http://www.transbaycalendar.org)