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ASPHALT ORCHESTRA MAKES WEST COAST DEBUT

Asphalt Orchestra Brings Indoor Staged Show *Unpack the Elephant* and Outdoor Guerilla Set to the Los Angeles Area in September



Asphalt Orchestra, Photo: 2011 by Konstantin Sergeev.
 Available in high resolution upon request.

Unpack the Elephant

Thursday, September 13, 2012 at 8pm
 Great Hall, Valley Performing Arts Center
 California State University | 1811 Nordhoff St. | Northridge, CA
 Tickets: FREE admission, tickets required; available at
 818.677.3000. Info: www.valleyperformingartscenter.org



Asphalt Orchestra, Photo: 2009 by Stephanie Berger.
 Available in high resolution upon request.

Outdoor Guerilla Set

Friday, September 14, 2012 from 12-1pm
 Presented by Arts Brookfield
 12pm: Bank of America Plaza, 333 South Hope St.
 12:25pm: Figueroa at Wilshire, 601 South Figueroa St.
 12:45pm: FIGat7th, 735 South Figueroa St.
 Downtown Los Angeles
 FREE. Info: www.artsbrookfield.com/Los_Angeles

Asphalt Orchestra: www.asphaltorchestra.com
Bang on a Can: www.bangonacan.org

Los Angeles, CA (August 20, 2012) — **Bang on a Can's** polymorphic avant-marching band **Asphalt Orchestra** will make its West Coast debut on **September 13 and 14**, bringing both its inventive indoor show and its guerilla outdoor performances to the Los Angeles area. Asphalt Orchestra presents *Unpack the Elephant* onstage at the **Valley Performing Arts Center at California State University Northridge** (1811 Nordhoff St., Northridge) on **Thursday, September 13 at 8pm**. On **Friday, September 14 from 12-1pm**, Asphalt Orchestra morphes into an outdoor flash force performing in downtown Los Angeles, presented by **Arts Brookfield** on the plazas of three Brookfield buildings at: 12pm, **Bank of America Plaza** (333 South Hope St.); 12:25pm, **Figueroa at Wilshire** (601 South Figueroa St.); and 12:45pm, **FIGat7th** (735 South Figueroa St.).

Unpack the Elephant on September 13 brings Asphalt Orchestra's iconoclastic spirit to the stage with an electric show featuring music by **Frank Zappa, David Byrne and Annie Clark, Björk**, and new music by members of the band,

directed by **Mark DeChiazza** and **Andrew Robinson**. The show is a wild musical ride driven by the tunes with Asphalt physically bringing the music to life. Configurations are created and torn apart, alliances are drawn and redrawn, and along the way, Asphalt Orchestra reveals a new form altogether – a mobile-musical-dramatic ensemble, bringing their unstoppable sound to the stage.

Asphalt Orchestra's outdoor show on September 14 springs jazz, prog-rock, and world music on the transient masses of downtown Los Angeles and features music written for the band by luminaries including **David Byrne and Annie Clark, Goran Bregovic, Tatsuya Yoshida** and more. These signature radical outdoor extravaganzas, choreographed by **Susan Marshall** and **Mark DeChiazza**, capture the "sheer visceral power" of the "Sousa on Crack" marching band (*New York Times*), grabbing the focus of expecting audiences and unexpected bystanders alike.

About Asphalt Orchestra

Asphalt Orchestra is a radical new street band that brings ambitious processional music to the mobile masses. Created by the founders of the "relentlessly inventive" new music presenter Bang on a Can (*New York Magazine*), Asphalt Orchestra unleashes innovative music from concert halls, rock clubs and jazz basements and takes it to the streets and beyond. The band brings together some of the most exciting rock, jazz and classical players in New York City who *The New York Times* called "12 top-notch brass and percussion players."

Asphalt Orchestra's debut performances stretched 10 packed nights at **Lincoln Center Out of Doors Festival** in New York over the summers of 2009 and 2010. Since then they have performed throughout the US East Coast and Canada, at London's **Barbican Centre**, the **TED Women** conference in Washington D.C., New York's **Alice Tully Hall** and **Metropolitan Museum of Art** and more. Their repertoire ranges from music by pop wizard **Björk**, to jazz legend **Charles Mingus**, rock progressive **Frank Zappa**, Brazilian iconoclast songwriter **Tom Zé**, Zimbabwean provocateur **Thomas Mapfumo**, Swedish metal band **Meshuggah**, and new pieces written for the band by **David Byrne and Annie Clark (St. Vincent), Yoko Ono, Tatsuya Yoshida (Ruins), Goran Bregovic, Tyondai Braxton (Battles), and Stew and Heidi Rodewald** (Broadway and Spike Lee's *Passing Strange*).

Featured on the cover of *The Philadelphia Inquirer* as "not your mother's marching band," Asphalt Orchestra has also been praised in *Newsweek, The Economist, New York Magazine, The New York Times, Pitchfork, The Wall Street Journal, The Onion*, and *Time Out New York*, as well as interviewed and showcased on WNYC's "Soundcheck," *Philadelphia Weekly*, *PBS SundayArts*, and *Time Out New York's* "The Volume."

Asphalt Orchestra's debut album was released in 2010 by Cantaloupe Music. The group is co-directed by Ken Thomson and Jessica Schmitz.

ASPHALT ORCHESTRA is:

JESSICA SCHMITZ, piccolo/co-director

Described as an "intrepid entrepreneurial player" by *New York Magazine* and "graceful and athletic" by *The New York Times*, Jessica Schmitz has collaborated internationally across a wide spectrum of musical arts as a flutist, curator, and producer. Jessica has performed as a soloist, chamber musician, and orchestral player with groups including Bang on a Can, Alarm Will Sound, Signal Ensemble, So Percussion, Ne(x)tworks, Sequitur, American Modern Ensemble, and Gamelan Dharma Swara. She has worked with composers such as Steve Reich, Yoko Ono, Meredith Monk, Tyondai Braxton, Michael Gordon, David Lang, Julia Wolfe, Goran Bregovic, Helmut Lachenmann, and Steve Mackey, among many others, and has commissioned dozens of new works premiered throughout the US and abroad. In recording, she can be heard on Rock Band video game, Cantaloupe Music, and Orange Mountain Music, and Mode Records. As an active curator and producer, Jessica has partnered with organizations including Lincoln Center, TEDWomen, Bang on a Can, Warsaw Autumn, Wordless Music, MATA, Juilliard, and Unsound Festival. www.jessicaschmitz.com

ALEX HAMLIN, soprano saxophone

Alex's arsenal of instruments includes the baritone, tenor, alto, soprano saxophones, flute, piccolo, clarinet, bass clarinet and bassoon. Performing in NYC and abroad throughout Japan, India, Russia, Europe and North America, Alex has shared the stage with SPOON, Duffy on "Late Night with Jimmy Fallon", St. Vincent on "Late Show with David Letterman", Yo La Tengo, The Radio City Orchestra, Fela!, Red Baraat, The Spirit of Ray Charles, ICE, Fireworks Ensemble, Argento Ensemble, Alarm Will Sound, Euphonique Saxophone Quartet, Antibalas, and Colin Stetson. He is a founding member of JERSEYBAND, AMY LYNN & THE GUNSHOW, the HOG Trio for which he composes, arranges, and co-produces. Among these projects Alex has co-produced nine CD releases. He recently recorded for The National "High Violet," Alarm Will Sound "Arhythmia," William Britelle's "Television Landscape," Eric Biondo's "Beyondo,"

Little Jackie, Ben Galina's "Salo," Payton MacDonald, Project Jenny Project Jan, and Music for Picture. Alex earned a performance degree in Jazz and Classical Saxophone from the Eastman School of Music where he studied with Ramon Ricker. He currently resides in Queens.

KEN THOMSON, alto saxophone/co-director

Ken Thomson is a Brooklyn-based clarinetist, saxophonist, and composer. In demand as a composer and freelancer in many settings, he moves quickly between genres and scenes, bringing a fiery intensity and emotional commitment to every musical situation. Called "the hardest-working saxophonist in new-music show business" by *Time Out NY*, he co-leads the Asphalt Orchestra. His oldest running co-led project, Gutbucket, has toured to 19 countries and 32 States over 13 years. Slow/Fast, his quintet dedicated to his compositions and the cracks between contemporary classical music and jazz, has just recorded a second CD; its first (2010) garnered a long-form review in *The New York Times* highlighting the "intricately wrought and incident-steeped" compositions and "gutsy precision of the playing." He is a faculty member at the Bang on a Can Summer Music Festival, and performs with the heralded Ensemble Signal modern chamber orchestra. As a composer, he has been commissioned by the American Composers Orchestra, Bang on a Can, the True/False Film Festival, and others, and has received awards from ASCAP and Meet the Composer. He is a Conn-Selmer Artist, and endorses Sibelius software. www.ktonline.net

PETER HESS, tenor saxophone

Peter Hess has lived in Brooklyn since 1997 as a composer and performer (clarinets, saxophones, flutes and percussion). He is a member of Balkan Beat Box (Crammed Disk), Barbez (Tzadik Records), Slavic Soul Party, World/Inferno Friendship Society, and has toured extensively in the US, Europe, Mexico, Japan, and South America. Leader of avant-balkan quartet Guignol, Peter also co-leads Collide saxophone quartet and is a founding member/composer of Anti-Social Music. He has also appeared with Alarm Will Sound, International Contemporary Ensemble (ICE), Darmstadt Ensemble, and James Jabbo Ware (AACM). Peter is an active session player and arranger for numerous indie rock bands including TV on the Radio, the Hold Steady, Son Volt, the Virgins, Songs:Ohia, Hem, and many others, appearing on over 80 records and film scores. His arrangements for woodwinds and strings can be heard on Bored to Death (HBO) and Make 'em Laugh (PBS). He is a graduate of the Oberlin Conservatory of Music (96). www.myspace.com/29839703

BEN HOLMES, trumpet

When not playing with the Asphalt Orchestra, trumpeter Ben Holmes leads the Ben Holmes Quartet, which plays new jazz music inspired by his study of music from many different times, places and people. He also co-leads Tarras Band (a klezmer group in the classic mid-20th century American style, dedicated to the repertoire of the great Yiddish-American clarinetist Dave Tarras), and a folk/classical/pop/improv duo with the accordionist Patrick Farrell. As a side person, he has amassed considerable experience in the contemporary Jazz and World Music scenes, having recorded and/or performed with Slavic Soul Party!, Justin Mullens' Delphian Jazz Orchestra, Banda de los Muertos, Brooklyn Qawaali Party, the Frank Carlberg/Nicholas Urie City Band, One Ring Zero, Gogol Bordello, Balkan Beat Box, Vampire Weekend and many others. www.ben-holmes.com

STEPHANIE RICHARDS, trumpet

An emerging talent to the world of new and improvised music, trumpeter and composer Stephanie Richards has performed as soloist from the stages of Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center to MTV hip-hop sets with Kanye West and Common. Stephanie's theatrical tendencies often result in compositional collaborations of sight, sound or movement, as reflected in her most recent works involving water as an instrument and music for carousel and ten musicians. She has performed with artists ranging from performance artist Mike Kelly and comedian Denis Leary to composer Helmut Lachenmann and Butch Morris. Stephanie has premiered works across North America and the UK, held residencies at Stanford University, the University of San Diego and serves on the executive board of FONT alongside Dave Douglas. She is Chair of the Berkeley Carroll-Brooklyn Conservatory Partnership program, winner of the International Trumpet Guild Young Artist Award and appears as an upcoming artist in "Das Trompeter-Taschenbuch"; a compilation of trumpet players of the world published by Schott-publishing house. Stephanie's academic credits include the Interlochen Arts Academy, the Eastman School of Music, McGill University and the California Institute of the Arts. www.stephrichards.com

TIM VAUGHN, trombone

A nine-year veteran of the New York scene, Tim Vaughn has performed and recorded with various ensembles encompassing a broad range of musical styles including Balkan, Afro-Cuban, Latin-American, pop, rock, avant-garde and straight-ahead jazz at venues including Dizzy's Club Coca Cola at Lincoln Center, Carnegie Hall, and the main stage at the Montreal Jazz Festival. In 2009, Tim received a master's degree in jazz from the Manhattan School of Music. He is now a faculty member at the Manhattan School of Music's pre-college division, and also teaches through the New York

Pops orchestra's musical outreach program, conducting master classes at various schools in the region. Tim is currently a member of Slavic Soul Party, Gato Loco, Sugartone Brass Band, and Adam Lane's Full Throttle Orchestra, and has performed with Bobby Sanabria's Afro-Cuban Jazz Orchestra, Asphalt Orchestra, Folklore Urbano, and various big bands in the city. Tim's freelance career has continued to propel his technique and approach through immersion in various styles of world music and improvisation.

JEN BAKER, trombone

Trombonist Jen Baker is a new music specialist who is interested in redefining the role of the performer in experimental music. She has commissioned/performed numerous solo and chamber works, including a collaborative theater piece (for trombonist, soprano, and dancer) recently premiered at Princeton. As a soloist, she performs and tours Lyrical Vibrations, which is a combination of compositions and improvisations based on the use of multiphonics. Her album Blue Dreams is a collection of some of these pieces. She has also recorded for Werner Herzog's Encounters at the End of the World, David Byrne, and the Mountain Goats. Baker has performed and collaborated with Stuart Dempster, Pauline Oliveros, Fred Frith, Cecil Taylor, William Winant, Joelle Leandre, and Alvin Curran. She has toured with the witty theater/rock opera Beowulf, A Thousand Years of Baggage, and has also performed in many international festivals. She freelances in New York City and received degrees from Oberlin Conservatory and Mills College. www.baker7jenz.com

KENNETH BENTLEY, sousaphone

Kenneth Bentley was born in Round Rock, Texas on August 26, 1976. He graduated in the spring of 1999 with a Bachelor's degree in Orchestral Performance from The University of Texas at Austin. During his summers at UT Austin, he worked for the Walt Disney Company at the theme parks in California, Paris and Tokyo. In the fall of 1999, Kenneth moved from Texas to New York where he completed a Master's degree in Classical Music from the Manhattan School of Music in 2001. Kenneth joined the Young Blood Brass Band in 2004 and toured America and Europe with Young Blood from 2004-2006 and 2009. Currently, Kenneth resides in New York City where he freelances on Tuba and Electric Bass and plays sousaphone with the SugarTone Brass Band and the Asphalt Orchestra.

SUNNY JAIN, snare drum

Voted as a rising star percussionist in the 2011 *Downbeat* magazine critics poll, Sunny Jain is a highly respected drummer, dhol player and composer. He leads the pioneering 9-piece Brooklyn Bhangra Funk party band, Red Baraat, and his Sunny Jain Collective has been touted as a lead voice for the burgeoning Indo Jazz. Recently, Sunny recorded "Open Your Eyes" by Salman Ahmad of the famed Pakistani rock group Junoon, featuring Peter Gabriel. In 2010, his *Taboo* and *Chaal Baby* CD's were chosen by critics as top jazz and world music releases. Sunny has received commissions by the Aaron Copland Music Fund and Chamber Music America and was a recipient of the Arts International Award in both 2005 and 2003. He played dhol in the first ever Indian Broadway show, *Bombay Dreams* (2004) and made his Hollywood debut playing dhol in the movie, *Accidental Husband*, starring Uma Thurman, Colin Firth, and Isabella Rossellini. Sunny was designated a Jazz Ambassador by the U.S. Department of State and The Kennedy Center in 2002. He is also the author of 2 instructional drum books for Alfred Publishing (*The Total Jazz Drummer* and *Drum Atlas: India*). www.sunnyjain.com

NICK JENKINS, bass drum

Born in Charleston, SC, Nick Jenkins is a percussionist and composer with an extensive musical presence along the East Coast. A graduate of the College of Charleston, Nick plays an integral role in driving the pulse of the Charleston music scene, co-founding, recording and touring genre-blending bands such as Morimoto, Run Dan Run, Leah Suarez's Toca Toca, Lindsay Holler's Western Polaroids, Short Shorts, and Jack of Knives, among others. Nick is a recent recipient of the New Music Collective's "New Works Program" Commission Award (Summer 2009). He also volunteers with Charleston's *Jazz Artists of Charleston*. Reaching outside of SC, Mr. Jenkins took his first international tour with Toca Toca playing alongside former Duke Ellington drummer, Emmanuel Abdul Rahim. paperjenkins-music.blogspot.com

YURI YAMASHITA, percussion

Percussionist Yuri Yamashita has worked across a wide variety of musical and artistic forms in North America, South America, Europe, and Asia. Yuri has played with many new music groups including Wordless Music Orchestra, VisionIntoArt, Newspeak, and Aspen Contemporary Ensemble, collaborating with numerous composers. She has been working closely with the composer Tan Dun performing with orchestras throughout the world such as the Metropolitan Opera, the Munich Philharmonic, the Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia, Santa Fe Opera, Teatro Carlo Felice, Shanghai Philharmonic Orchestra, among others. This fall, she will appear as a soloist to play percussion concerto with the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra. On Broadway, Yuri has been performing in *The Lion King*, *Mamma Mia!*, and has performed in Monty's Python's *Spamalot*. In addition to playing percussion, Yuri has a passion for singing Brazilian music: as a singer-percussionist, she enjoys performing combining the beauty of its language and the richness of Brazilian

rhythms. A native of Kobe, Japan, Yuri graduated from the Juilliard School, Mannes College of Music, and Kobe College.

About Bang on a Can

Bang on a Can is dedicated to making music new. Since its first Marathon concert in 1987, Bang on a Can has been creating an international community dedicated to innovative music, wherever it is found. With adventurous programs, it commissions new composers, performs, presents, and records new work, develops new audiences, and educates the musicians of the future. Bang on a Can is building a world in which powerful new musical ideas flow freely across all genres and borders. Bang on a Can plays “a central role in fostering a new kind of audience that doesn’t concern itself with boundaries. If music is made with originality and integrity, these listeners will come.” (*The New York Times*)

Bang on a Can celebrates 25 years during 2012, having grown from a one-day New York-based Marathon concert (on Mother’s Day in 1987 in a SoHo art gallery) to a multi-faceted performing arts organization with a broad range of year-round international activities. In addition to the 25th birthday of its founding, Bang on a Can is also celebrating the 20th year of its electric chamber ensemble, the **Bang on a Can All-Stars**; the 15th year of its membership-based commissioning arm, the **People’s Commissioning Fund**; and the 10th year of the **Bang on a Can Summer Music Festival at MASS MoCA**, a professional development program for young composers and performers led by today’s pioneers of experimental music. Each new program evolved to answer specific challenges faced by today’s musicians, composers, and audiences as a direct effort to make innovative music accessible and exciting.

“When we started Bang on a Can in 1987, in an art gallery in SoHo, we never imagined that our one-day, 12-hour marathon festival of mostly unknown music would morph into a giant international organization dedicated to the support of experimental music, wherever we would find it,” write Bang on a Can Co-Founders Michael Gordon, David Lang and Julia Wolfe. “But it has, and we are so gratified to be still hard at work, all these years later. The reason is really clear to us – we started this organization because we believed that making new music is a utopian act, that people needed to hear this music and they needed to hear it presented in the most persuasive way, with the best players, with the best programs, for the best listeners, in the best context. Our commitment to changing the environment for this music has kept us busy and growing for the last 25 years, and we are not done yet.”

Current projects include the annual **Bang on a Can Marathon**; **The People’s Commissioning Fund**, a membership program to commission emerging composers; the **Bang on a Can All-Stars**, who tour to major festivals and concert venues around the world every year; recording projects; the **Bang on a Can Summer Music Festival**, a professional development program for young composers and performers; **Asphalt Orchestra**, Bang on a Can’s extreme street band that offers mobile performances recontextualizing unusual music; **Found Sound Nation**, a new technology-based musical outreach program bringing together musicians from diverse backgrounds to share a common experience; cross-disciplinary collaborations and projects with DJs, visual artists, choreographers, filmmakers and more. Bang on a Can’s inventive and aggressive approach to programming and presentation has created a large and vibrant international audience made up of people of all ages who are rediscovering the value of contemporary music.

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