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UPCOMING CONCERTS  
WEDNESDAYS @ 7

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**Shackle: Anne La Berge with Deckard**  
April 16, 2014

**Aleck Karis**  
April 23, 2014

**Chamber Opera**  
May 7, 9, & 10, 2014

**red fish blue fish**  
May 14, 2014

**Palimpsest**  
May 28, 2014

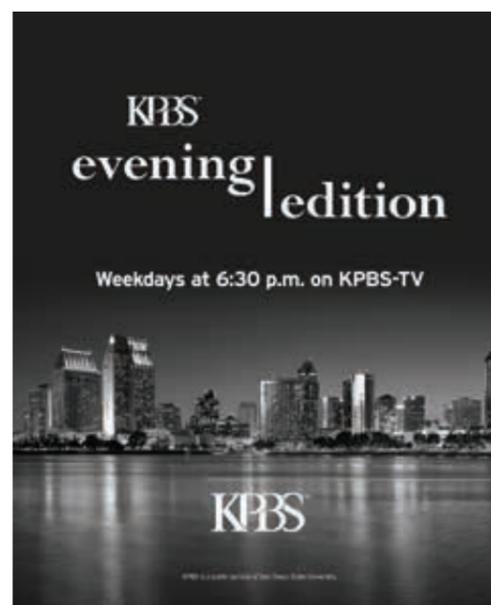
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**CONTACT US**

For information on upcoming concerts:  
Music Box Office: (858) 534-3448  
<http://music.ucsd.edu/concerts>

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Audience members are reminded to please silence all phones and noise generating devices before the performance. As a matter of courtesy and copyright law, no unauthorized recording or photographing is allowed in the hall. The Conrad Prebys Music Center is a non-smoking facility.



# ELLEN FULLMAN

THE LONG STRING INSTRUMENT

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April 5, 2014 | University of California San Diego  
Division of Arts and Humanities  
Department of Music  
CPMC Theater • 8:00 pm

PRESENTS

# ELLEN FULLMAN

PROGRAM

## Structured Solo Improvisation

Ellen Fullman

## *Through Glass Panes (excerpt)* for Long String Instrument and Box Bow players

Ellen Fullman  
with Tommy Babin and Carolyn Chen

## Structured Improvisations for Long String Instrument with Cello Trio

Ellen Fullman  
Featuring Charles Curtis  
with Jennifer Bewerse and Judith Hamann

## THE LONG STRING INSTRUMENT

The Long String Instrument fills the Experimental Theater with long strings from wall-to-wall. Fullman walks along the strings and plays by "bowing" lengthwise with rosined fingertips. The longitudinal mode requires enormous lengths to bring the tuning down into a musical range; middle C can be found at 42 feet, with every octave lower requiring a doubling of length. A uniquely designed brass clamp on each wire acts as a stop and changes the vibrating string length much like a capo on a guitar. Fullman's graphic notation system functions like a roadmap for the performer, aligning musical events in time and space with specific harmonic content. Strings vibrate in mathematical subdivisions of the total string length, setting off multiple modes at once. The performer's rosin-coated fingertips pass through these subdivisions, or nodal points, in a cascading spectrum, sounding partials associated with each passing location.

American maverick composer and instrument builder, Harry Partch, who spent the majority of his career in California, was an early inspiration for Fullman. Her tuning system and harmonic theory in just intonation are directly inspired by Partch. Furthermore, as Fullman states, "I felt compelled, like Partch, to devote myself to refining this idea into as sophisticated and evolved a musical instrument as I could produce, with it's own literature and techniques of articulation; and not just leave it as a novelty act." The latest evolution is in the resonator box design. Fullman has taken woodworking classes, as did Partch, and in Partch's own words has become a "composer seduced into carpentry". This UCSD installation represents the North American debut of Fullman's own carved and tuned hardwood resonators, which produce a strikingly more beautiful tone.

*Through Glass Panes* is constructed around a sequence of rhythmic patterns played using the "box bow". Homage to the harmonica, the box bow is a hand held hollow wooden box with a curved lower surface that I designed for playing my instrument percussively. Techniques based on hand drumming inform the articulations of the tool used to strike groupings of strings tuned to chords. The two box bow performers play hocketed parts that provide a stable harmonic grid from which to measure spectral changes in the sustained texture.

"Fullman's music is full of rich, swirling tones that can sound like an entire string section playing simultaneously, creating glorious harmonics, pulsations and clashes of sound that fill up whichever space you happen to be listening to it in. For all the logic involved, this never feels like an arid mathematical conceptual project, not even close: instead it sounds like something much more organic. The locations this music summons in the mind are far less cold, stark or industrial than the performance settings, and much more warm and natural, the layers piling up and decaying like mulch on the forest floor."

-Scott McMillan, *The Liminal*

## ELLEN FULLMAN

Composer Ellen Fullman studied sculpture at the Kansas City Art Institute where she first began exploring sound through the resonance of materials. While still a student, she combined performance art and instrument building in a wearable piece, the Metal Skirt Sound Sculpture, which premiered a year later at the New Music America Festival at the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis. Upon graduation, Fullman relocated to St. Paul Minnesota where she continued experiments leading her to the creation of the Long String Instrument. This originated as an enormous version of a child's can and string telephone. Based on the longitudinal mode of vibration, rather than the transverse mode common in traditional string instruments, the Long String Instrument cannot be tuned by tension or by gauge, but only through length and the alloy composition of the metal wire. These basic principles presented to her by the widely influential engineer, Bob Bielecki, have set her on a course of investigation that she has sustained for over thirty years.

Fullman has recorded extensively with this unusual instrument and has collaborated with such luminary figures as composer Pauline Oliveros, choreographer Deborah Hay, Francis-Marie Uitti and the Kronos Quartet. She has been the recipient of numerous awards, including: the DAAD Artists-in-Berlin Program residency, the Japan/U.S. Friendship Commission/NEA Fellowship for Japan, the McKnight Visiting Composer Residency from American Composers Forum, Meet the Composer Reader's Digest Consortium Commission, and twice awarded the Center for Cultural Innovation Grant. Fullman has performed in festivals, art spaces and museums including: the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston; Museum of Contemporary Art, Detroit; the Sonic Acts Festival, Amsterdam; Issue Project Room, Brooklyn; Instal, Glasgow; and Donaueschinger Musiktage. Releases include: *Fluctuations*, with trombonist Monique Buzzarté (Deep Listening Institute), selected as one of the top 50 recordings of 2008 by *The Wire*, and awarded an Aaron Copeland Fund for Music Recording Program Grant; *Ort*, recorded with Berlin collaborator Jörg Hiller (Choose Records), selected as one of the top 50 recordings of 2004 by *The Wire*; and *Suspended Music*, in collaboration with Deep Listening Band (Periplum). Upcoming engagements include a performance residency at the City University of Hong Kong with cellist Theresa Wong. Fullman will serve on the faculty of the Bard Summer MFA Program for the 2014 session. For more info go to: [www.ellenfullman.com](http://www.ellenfullman.com)

Currently based in Berkeley California, Fullman's concert at UC San Diego's Conrad Prebys Music Center on April 5 at 8 p.m. will be her first appearance in San Diego.