

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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Rova:Arts presents

*The Art of the Improvisers*

*Featuring Rova + Members of the Estamos Ensemble*

**Who:**

Rova Saxophone Quartet and Members of the Estamos Ensemble

**What:**

*The Art of the Improvisers* concert performance

**When:**

August 14, 2010, 8:00 PM

**Where:**

The Community Music Center, Capp Street Concert Hall, 544 Capp Street, San Francisco 94110

**Tickets:**

\$15 General; \$10 Students/Seniors

**Websites:**

[Rova:Arts](#)

[Estamos Ensemble](#)

[Community Music Center](#)

[Yerba Buena Center for the Arts](#)

### **Event Description:**

In a cross-cultural evening of improvised new music, Rova Saxophone Quartet will perform with an extraordinary group of visiting improvisers from Mexico for a special musical collaboration based on Rova's *Art of the Improvisers* format. This format enables improvisers of diverse backgrounds to immediately engage to explore and spontaneously create fresh musical forms. The musicians will play in various small and large group combinations, from duets to large ensemble pieces of eight performers. The event will be the first opportunity for the perennially collaborative Rova Saxophone Quartet to work with artists from Mexico, bringing this significant cultural exchange to Bay Area audiences.

In addition to the four Rova saxophonists, the concert will feature four members of the Mexican Estamos Ensemble, including: **Julián Martínez Vázquez**, violin; **Alexander Bruck**, viola; **Carmina Escobar**, electronics/voice; and **Emilio Tamez**, percussion. The guest musicians hail from different parts of Mexico—including Mexico City, San Luis Potosí and Michoacán. Each brings a broad range of musical experiences, contributing to the artistic diversity that will come into play at the concert. Given the instrumental and creative blends of the Rova Saxophone Quartet and the Estamos Ensemble, this first-time collaboration promises to be a colorful and provocative concert experience.

### **Rova Saxophone Quartet**

The acclaimed all-saxophone ensemble has fundamentally extended the horizons of music since forming in 1977. Positioning themselves at music's most dynamic nexus, Rova has become an important leader in the movement of genre-bending music that has its roots in post-bop free jazz, avant-rock, and 20th century new music, as well as, traditional and popular styles of Africa, Asia, Europe and the United States. With its potent mix of stellar musicianship and compositional creativity, Rova explores the synthesis of composition and collective improvisation. The result is adventurous works that are ardent and riveting, exhilarating and free-spirited. While its members compose much of Rova's music, the group has also collaborated with and commissioned new works by a wide range of creative artists.

Since its founding, Rova has released over two dozen recordings of original music. In noting Rova's role in innovatively developing the all-saxophone ensemble as "a regular and conceptually wide-ranging unit," *The Penguin Guide to Jazz* calls its music "a teeming cosmos of saxophone sounds" created by "deliberately eschewing conventional notions about swing [and] prodding at the boundaries of sound and space..." Likewise, *Jazz: The Rough Guide* notes, "Highly

inventive, eclectic and willing to experiment, Rova [is] arguably the most exciting of the saxophone quartets to emerge in the format's late '70s boom." More information at [www.rova.org](http://www.rova.org)

*Guest Performer Bios:*

**Julián Martínez Vázquez** is a violinist from Charapan, Michoacán and Mexico City. He was born into a family of folk musicians and began his professional violin studies at the National Conservatory of Music with Espin Yopez in 1994. He has been a member of several orchestras since that time and is the recipient of numerous awards and grants. In 2006 and 2008, he participated in the Darmstadt Contemporary Music Festival and, in 2008, performed with the Ensemble Recherche Akademie in Freiburg. Julián has specialized in the contemporary repertoire for solo violin and has published two articles about the folk music of Michoacán.

**Carmina Escobar** is a singer and multimedia artist from Mexico City who has engaged with a diverse set of musical styles, including medieval music, opera, contemporary music, folk music, electronic music and experimental, interdisciplinary collaborative work. As a soloist, she has performed concerts of contemporary repertoire for solo voice, and has premiered works by young composers in addition to her own compositions. In her own music, Ms. Escobar favors the use of electronic media and uses real-time processing of her voice integrated with *music concrète* elements. She has performed in festivals all around the Mexican Republic as well as in California. She currently resides in Los Angeles where she is working on her Masters degree in vocal performance at the California Institute of the Arts (CalArts).

Violist **Alexander Bruck Santos** is one of the most active musicians in Mexico's fast growing contemporary/experimental music scene. Though classically trained, he feels equally at home performing rock, free jazz, and experimental music involving sound art and sound installation. Born in Cologne, Germany, into a family with a long musical tradition, Bruck Santos has made a living playing in symphonic orchestras since 1995. In 2001, he decided to devote himself entirely to music and went on to study viola privately with several renowned teachers. He is a permanent member of Mexico's National Symphony Orchestra and has recorded for Jazzorca Records, and the Mandorla net label. An active advocate of new music, this fall, Alexander will premiere works by composers Juan Cristobal Cerrillo, Ignacio Baca Lobera, Iván Naranjo, Dario Palermo and Gabriel Paiuk, as well as give the first performance of Julio

Estrada's *Yuunohui 'Ome 'Wah* with NYC percussionist David Schotzko at the Festival Internacional Chihuahua.

Born in San Luis Potosí, México, freelance drummer, composer and poet, **Emilio Tamez** has been involved for more than ten years in the development of an integrated form of percussive sound, fusing traditional textures and colors, sound-poetry, modern structuralism, jazz and free improvisation. His style knows no boundaries or fixed schemes. Instead, it blends elements from many cultures with an energetic performance attitude rooted in the artistic moment.

### **Estamos Ensemble**

Made up equally of musicians from Mexico and the U.S., *Estamos Ensemble* is one of two components of the Americas Comprovisers Exchange Network (ACEN), whose intention is to foster more communication and collaboration between musicians of our two bordering countries.

The verb *estamos* in Spanish means 'we are' in the non-permanent sense. This is intrinsic to the nature of the ensemble. Eventually, each year the Estamos Ensemble will be led by a different musician, who will hand-pick a fresh ensemble of new performers and composers. Each performance will be fresh in the hands of innovative improvisers and some of the most accomplished composers from both sides of the border. This concept is in the spirit of the project: always changing and open to new and different kinds of involvement.

The entire 9 piece ensemble will be performing at Yerba Buena Center for the Arts on August 19th at 8 pm. The concert "Estamos Porque Somos" will be a debut of 11 compositions written specifically for the group by world renowned composers from both Mexico and the US.

### **The Art of the Improviser**

The "Art of the Improviser" is a recurring series that features the Rova Saxophone Quartet working with improvising musicians from widely different musical and geographic backgrounds to create unique musical events. At these concerts, Rova partners with guests from the local and international community to create music together in the moment. Past guest artists have ranged from electric guitarist Nels Cline to harpist Victoria Jordanova, from bassoonist Sara Schoenbeck to koto player Shoko Hikage. At these events, the ensemble also performs in many different groupings, from duo to full ensemble, seeking the magic of the moment in many different guises.

The series' name comes from the title of one of Ornette Coleman's groundbreaking recordings and was inspired by Derek Bailey's "Company Week," in London, a festival that for 17 years brought together amazing improvisers from all over the physical and musical worlds to create spontaneous art music.

### **About Rova:Arts**

Incorporated in 1985, Rova:Arts, the non-profit umbrella organization of the Rova Saxophone Quartet, is devoted to extending the leading edge of musical expression and related artistic disciplines. Inspired and informed by the work of the Rova Saxophone Quartet, Rova:Arts administers the ensemble's activities, presents work by other forward-looking artists, commissions new works by established and emerging composers, and furthers the public's understanding of adventurous art through education and outreach. In its support of the Rova Saxophone Quartet, Rova:Arts has a long history of fostering creative and often surprising collaborations among Rova and other musicians, ranging from fellow Bay Area-based artists the Kronos Quartet, to jazz saxophone legend Sam Rivers and Burmese percussionist Kyaw Kyaw Naing.

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