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**Bang on a Can Announces
Fifth Bang on a Can Marathon Live Online
All Commissions | All World Premieres
Sunday, February 21, 2021 from 1-5pm ET**



Four Hours of LIVE Music at live.bangonacan.org

**Presented in association with
WNYC's New Sounds, hosted by John Schaefer**

Note: An embed code for the Bang on a Can Marathon livestream will be available to press upon request, to allow for hosting the livestream on your site.

Brooklyn, NY — **Bang on a Can** teams up with **WNYC's New Sounds**, hosted by **John Schaefer** to present its fifth **Bang on a Can Marathon – Live Online** – on **Sunday, February 21, 2021** from **1-5pm ET**. All 16 pieces on the program will be world premiere performances of newly commissioned works, streamed from musicians' homes around the country and across the world. On its first four live online Marathons in 2020 (May 3, June 14, August 1, and October 18) Bang on a Can presented a total of 95 performances, including 31 world premieres of new

commissions and over 130 composers and performers. Bang on a Can plans to continue these Marathons, streaming online at live.bangonacan.org, as long as the closure of presenting venues continues, and perhaps beyond. The 4-hour live Marathon will be hosted in part by New Sounds' John Schaefer along with Bang on a Can Co-Founders and Artistic Directors **Michael Gordon, David Lang, and Julia Wolfe**, who say:

*New Year! New Hope! New Commissions! On February 21, Bang on a Can presents an entire marathon of PREMIERES! 16 brand new works by 16 pioneering composers. Tune in to hear 4 hours of nonconformist, noncommercial, mind-blowing music. **Alvin Lucier! Jennifer Walshe! Matthew Shipp! Ingrid Laubrock! Gabriel Kahane!** and many many more.*

This concert is FREE! But please do consider purchasing a ticket. That helps us pay more players, commission more composers, and make more music.

The pandemic is still here. An entire ecosystem of composers and performers needs our attention, our love, and our financial support! All Marathon performers and composers are participating live and being paid by Bang on a Can.

Every piece on the program is a world premiere of a newly commissioned work:

ALVIN LUCIER *new work* performed by MARK STEWART
AMIR ELSAFFAR *new work* performed by KEN THOMSON
BORA YOON *new work* performed by herself
EVE BEGLARIAN *new work* performed by LARA DOWNES
GABRIEL KAHANE *new work* performed by ARLEN HLUSKO
GREGORY SPEARS *new work* performed by DAVID BYRD-MARROW
INGRID LAUBROCK *new work* performed by herself
JAKHONGIR SHUKUR *new work* performed by ROBERT BLACK
JENNIFER WALSH *new work* performed by herself
JOEL THOMPSON *new work* performed by ANTHONY ROTH COSTANZO
JOHN HOLLENBECK *new work* performed by DAVID COSSIN
KRISTINA WOLFE *new work* performed by MOLLY BARTH
MARÍA HULD MARKAN SIGFÚSDÓTTIR *new work* performed by CHI-CHI NWANOKU
MATTHEW SHIPP *new work* performed by himself
MOLLY HERRON *new work* performed by MAYA STONE
ROHAN CHANDER *new work* performed by VICKY CHOW

Bang on a Can Marathon February 21, 2021 featuring:

Alvin Lucier, Amir ElSaffar, Bora Yoon, Eve Beglarian, Gabriel Kahane, Gregory Spears, Ingrid Laubrock, Jakhongir Shukur, Jennifer Walshe, Joel Thompson, John Hollenbeck, Kristina Wolfe, María Huld Markan Sigfúsdóttir, Matthew Shipp, Molly Herron, Rohan Chander, Anthony Roth Costanzo, Arlen Hlusko, Chi-chi Nwanoku, David Byrd-Marrow, David Cossin, Ken Thomson, Lara Downes, Mark Stewart, Maya Stone, Molly Barth, Robert Black, Vicky Chow.

Marathon Program Info [Full Schedule to be announced soon]

Celebrating (just a bit early) **Alvin Lucier's** 90th(!) birthday! With such iconic works as *I Am Sitting in a Room*, Lucier has spent a lifetime laying bare the foundations of what music is and how it works. A pioneer of experimentation, his work lives at the intersection of ambient music, sound installation and conceptual art. He is writing a new work for the Bang on a Can All-Stars' guitarist **Mark Stewart**.

The music of composer, trumpeter and bandleader **Amir ElSaffar** flows seamlessly between cultures and genres. Born in Chicago, immersed in the sound and architecture of jazz, his music began to change as he explored the melodies and modes of his Iraqi heritage. For this performance, we will see and hear his new piece written especially for the Bang on a Can All-Stars clarinetist/saxophonist **Ken Thomson**.

Bora Yoon sings like the high priestess of some other planet. Intensely theatrical, in performance she often collides everyday objects with electronics, using technology to send her voice through ordinary things that she makes resonate with meaning.

A few years ago, downtown mainstay composer **Eve Beglarian** wrote a tiny work for pianist **Lara Downes** that was so delicate and exquisitely beautiful that we wished it would go on forever. Or at least - a little while longer. So we commissioned her to take this little gem and make it last.

Composer **Gabriel Kahane** is an avant storyteller. And his music goes wherever the stories lead – to wry songs about our modern lives, deep and serious investigations of who Americans really are right now, and tunefully exploring the way forward for American song. His new work will be performed by the Bang on a Can All-Stars cellist **Arlen Hlusko**.

Gregory Spears looks forward and back at the same time - he is a modern composer with a flair for the Baroque. The elegance of his music comes from how contemporary harmonies and tunes become delicately inflected with the ornaments of music from long ago. His new work will be performed by French hornist **David Byrd-Marrow**.

Since moving to New York from her native Germany, composer and sax player **Ingrid Laubrock** has been a big presence on the downtown avant-improv scene. Her compositions – like her playing – are restless and unpredictable, merging explosiveness and subtlety with sophistication and fire.

All the way from Uzbekistan, **Jakhongir Shukur** is a composer, conductor and a tireless advocate for the new. In 2004 he co-founded the Omnibus Ensemble, one of the most engaged and important avenues for new music in Central Asia, helping to make Tashkent into a center of musical activity and exploration. He is composing a new work for Bang on a Can All-Stars bassist, **Robert Black**.

Irish composer and singer **Jennifer Walshe** is a force of nature, a blast of energy and innovation. Much of the music she writes is for herself, for her own dramatic and virtuosically edgy persona, and because of this she ends up questioning the nature of identity itself, often inventing her own “composers” to write the music and then inventing the characters to perform it.

Composer **Joel Thompson** burst on the scene with his searing *Seven Last Words of the Unarmed*, a work for chorus and orchestra memorializing African American men killed by police. His music shows us the world around us, using sound to help us see it better. His new work written for this performance will be sung by **Anthony Roth Constanzo**.

Drummers, unite! Composer, bandleader and virtuosic drum set player **John Hollenbeck** transfers his angular and energetic style of playing to Bang on a Can’s own virtuosic drummer **David Cossin**.

Danish / American composer **Kristina Wolfe** is a sound archeologist, wandering the world and listening closely, recording found sounds, transforming them, presenting them to us simply and directly and letting us hear them as music. Her new work will be performed by passionate flutist **Molly Barth**.

María Huld Markan Sigfúsdóttir has performed on the Bang on a Can Marathon before – in 2006 she came as a member of Amiina, Iceland’s ensemble that looks like a string quartet and tours like a band. As a composer she brings her sensitive ear and exquisite timing to this new work for double bass, performed by UK-based bassist **Chi-chi Nwanoku OBE**.

Matthew Shipp is spontaneity itself. He is a deeply probing composer and virtuoso pianist whose work is almost wholly improvised – he is an improviser’s improviser, and the thrill of his performance is that his thoughtful, searching music is made right in front of us.

Composer **Molly Herron** makes music that often begins in the place of questioning things we take for granted in Western classical instruments. What could be a better example of something we take for granted than the bassoon? In this piece we will find out, through the premiere performance by bassoonist **Maya Stone**.

Young renegade composer **Rohan Chander** challenges the avant garde with loud aggressive gestures, digital corruption, and performative electronics. All his interests merge in this new work for the Bang on a Can All-Stars’ powerhouse pianist **Vicky Chow**.

Anthony Roth Costanzo is a spectacular singer, actor, producer, and educator equally at home as a leading performer on the world’s top opera festivals and stages, Broadway, and local theater productions. He’ll be singing a new work by composer **Joel Thompson**.

Bang on a Can All-Star **Arlen Hlusko**, a brilliant cellist with a powerful sound and a deep commitment to community engagement through music, teams up with songwriter and composer **Gabriel Kahane** for his new work.

London-based bassist **Chi-chi Nwanoku OBE** is an internationally renowned music citizen - performer, educator, BBC radio host, and more. Chi-chi is the Founder, Artistic and Executive Director of the Chineke! Foundation, which supports, inspires and encourages Black, Asian and ethnically diverse classical musicians working in the UK and Europe. She will premiere a new work by Icelandic composer **María Huld Markan Sigfúsdóttir**.

Bang on a Can All-Star percussionist-drummer-producer **David Cossin** is a superstar specialist in new and experimental music. For this performance he premieres a new work by fellow drummer **John Hollenbeck**.

David Byrd-Marrow, virtuoso horn player, avid advocate for new sounds, and core member of International Contemporary Ensemble, premieres a new work by **Gregory Spears**.

Bang on a Can All-Star and reed guru **Ken Thomson** is a passionate performer and also a composer increasingly known for his harmonic and rhythmic complexity and a punk-rock aesthetic. He will be tapping into his jazz chops for this new work by **Amir ElSaffar**.

Pianist **Lara Downes** is a trailblazer on and off-stage whose musical roadmap seeks inspiration from the legacies of history, family, and collective memory. Downes' fierce commitment to arts advocacy and education has led her to collaborate with countless genre-defying artists worldwide. Lara is the creator and curator of Rising Sun Music and host of the NPR Music video interview series AMPLIFY with Lara Downes. She'll premiere a new work by longtime Bang on a Can collaborator **Eve Beglarian**.

Bang on a Can All-Star and musical wizard **Mark Stewart** is a virtuoso guitarist, singer, instrument inventor, who plucks, bows, beats, and breathes life into countless sound-making devices. For this performance he will premiere a new work by the conceptual/ambient/experimental pioneer **Alvin Lucier**.

Based in both Troy, NY and Nashville, TN, bassoonist **Maya Stone** is a woodwind wonder woman. A lifelong advocate for new works, she has commissioned and premiered new solo works for bassoon ranging from contemporary, classical, gospel, and the in-between. She will be performing a brand new work by **Molly Herron**.

Molly Barth is a fierce flutist fueled by a passion for new sounds, new works, and new experiences. She has premiered innumerable new works for flute as a soloist and in chamber ensembles including as a longtime collaborator with Eighth Blackbird. Here she'll be performing a new work by **Kristina Wolfe**.

Founding and current Bang on a Can All-Star bassist **Robert Black** tours the world constantly creating unheard of music for the solo double bass. For this performance he will premiere a new work by Uzbeki composer **Jakhongir Shukur**.

Vicky Chow, powerhouse pianist of the Bang on a Can All-Stars, premieres a brand new work by innovative composer **Rohan Chander**.

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 has 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. “When we started Bang on a Can, we never imagined that our 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, and we are not done yet.”

In addition to its festivals **LOUD Weekend at MASS MoCA** and **LONG PLAY**, current projects include **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 at MASS MoCA**, a professional development program for young composers and performers led by today’s pioneers of experimental music; **Asphalt Orchestra**, Bang on a Can’s extreme street band that offers mobile performances re-contextualizing unusual music; **Found Sound Nation**, a new technology-based musical outreach program now partnering with the State Department of the United States of America to create **OneBeat**, a revolutionary, post-political residency program that uses music to bridge the gulf between young American musicians and young musicians from developing countries; cross-disciplinary collaborations and projects with DJs, visual artists, choreographers, filmmakers and more. Each new program has evolved to answer specific challenges faced by today’s musicians, composers and audiences, in order to make innovative music widely accessible and wildly received. 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. Bang on a Can has also recently launched its new digital archive, [CANLAND](#), an extensive archive of its recordings, videos, posters, program books, and more. Thirty-three years of collected music and associated ephemera have been digitized and archived online and is publicly accessible in its entirety at <https://canland.org/>. For more information about Bang on a Can, please visit www.bangonacan.org.

About WNYC's New Sounds

Hailed by the *New York Times* as “a genre-defying radio program that has played an outsize role in the city’s new music scene for nearly four decades,” *New Sounds* has been hosted by John Schaefer since 1982. The show has welcomed guests like Ravi Shankar, Meredith Monk, Philip Glass, Brian Eno, Keith Jarrett, Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, and Youssou N’Dour to its studios, and was termed “the #1 show for the Global Village” by *Billboard*. Since 1986 the show has presented an annual series of live concerts, and has now become WNYC’s multiplatform home for the 21st-century music enthusiast, with a daily radio broadcast at 11pm ET on WNYC 93.9 FM and wnyc.org; the twice-weekly podcast series *Soundcheck* consisting of live performances and interviews; and a 24/7 stream at www.newsounds.org.

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