

RUPA & THE APRIL FISHES

Biography



Coming from the land of earthquakes, social movements, social networking, peace-lovers and global corporate conglomerates, **Rupa & the April Fishes** embody the pluralistic and paradoxical sounds of the San Francisco Bay Area. The band came together in 2006, in the Mission District, a place of intersection where original dwellers, the Yelamu Indians, lived for 2000 years before the arrival of Spanish missionaries, followed by old San Francisco Irish families mashed up with relatively newer Latino, African American, Asian and Pacific Islander communities and the most recent group---the children of the middle and upper middle class, mostly white hipsters.

The band met through the closely tied arts community and started playing the bars in the barrio, attempting to forge a sound that would bring a strangely segregated city with a radical past into a joint space of engagement. Inspired by street music and the ethos of public art around the world, physician and bandleader Rupa started composing music in multiple languages in order to investigate the idea that what runs beneath the apparent differences is something deeper---our intrinsic need for human connection and shared celebratory experience. In a country where space for public noncommercial gathering is incredibly limited and shrinking, she sought out like-minded mischievous musicians to create opportunities for artistic dialogue. She found in drummer **Aaron Kierbel** a longtime creative counterpart who provides the essential heartbeat to the sonic adventures and together with the rest of the band, they are creating music that is bridging divides and pointing to the value of live and living music--in its force and delicacy.

The band's first performance was at the autonomous art space in SF, the Red Poppy Art House and since that incendiary show, Rupa & the April Fishes have been lighting up stages large and small---from the **Montreal Jazz Festival** to the **Subterranean Art House**, from **the Power to the Peaceful Festival** with **Michael Franti** to **El Lugar Del Nopal** in **Tijuana**, from **Sziget Festival** in **Budapest** to the **Mission Arts and Performance Project** in **El Garaje de la Folsom**. The band has toured extensively in the US, Canada, along the US-Mexico border and throughout Europe and has collaborated with visual artists, poets, circus artists, social shakers and other musicians. They have had the honor to share stages with **Nonstop Bhangra**, **Manu Chao**, **Gattamolesta**, **Los De Abajo**, **The Coup**, **Rebelution**, **Rodrigo y Gabriela**, **LoCura**, **Brass Liberation Orchestra**, **Brass Menazeri** and many other inspiring rabble rousers.

Their music is strictly organic, nuclear-free, post-nation, many-headed and decidedly unclean. Currently touring is Safa Shokrai (upright bass), Misha Khalikulov (cello), Rob Reich (accordion), Mario Silva (trumpet), Aaron Kierbel (drums), Rupa (songstress, voice, guitar)

"Clearly the work of a terrorist organization, eXtraOrdinary Rendition promotes dangerous anti-American notions such as multiculturalism, internationalism, and exuberant dancing." - *Utne Reader*

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