

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Junkman Cometh

...and First Night Monterey is set to get its groove on.

First Night Monterey welcomes world-renowned percussionist, composer, recording artist, environmentalist and educator Donald Knaack to the 19th annual New Year's Eve arts celebration in downtown Monterey. The JunkMusic program is funded in part by the WESTAF TourWest grant program and is supported by the National Endowment for the Arts.

A classically trained percussionist who has been a member of the Louisville Orchestra and the Buffalo Philharmonic, Donald Knaack, (aka **The Junkman**) has spent most of his career playing and recording music on instruments of his own making created from recycled materials and found objects. He has created a style of percussion-driven music called **Junkmusic** that blends, with rare finesse, the grooves of world music with the beats of a drum circle. Most recently The Junkman has introduced a public performance element to his repertoire: **Junk Jams** -- large participatory ensembles where the audience members are both percussionists and singers and together everyone shares the joy of music-making and environmental awareness.

"The Junk Jam began as a way to bring out the musician in all of us," says the Junkman, "People grab these sticks and they grab some junk and it is amazing the rhythms that flow. It never fails to impress me how it brings the community together through music."

The Junkman has performed on stages as varied as The Vans Warped Tour (with Eminem and Ice T) to the Kennedy Center in Washington D as well New York City's Lincoln Center. He has been commissioned to compose works for famed choreographer Twyla Tharpe and was a featured performer at the United Nations Global Climate Conference in Cancun, Mexico. The Junkman has performed on the *Late Night with Conan O'Brien* show and been featured on *CBS Sunday Morning* as well as *Here and Now* on National Public Radio.

New Year's Eve will be the Junkman's first performances on the Central Coast and he is currently in the area on a two-week commission working with students and the community to spread a musical message about the environment. "I have only been here a very short time, but my eyes have been opened to the awareness that many people in the Monterey community have toward the oceans and the environment—especially the school kids I've met. It is very heartening because the future of the environment is going to be up to the children of today."

The Junkman's latest release *NatRes + MoNa + Ma* was been nominated for a 2011 Grammy Award in the Best Alternative Music Album category. The Junkman was also nominated for a Grammy in 1999. The video for the new single *Litterbug* is a rhythmic STOMP-inspired environmental message delivered by young singers and dancers set to the beats of the Junkman's percussion and has quickly become a favorite of educators, environmentalists and dance instructors.

First Night Monterey is delighted to be able to share the Junkman's talents and music with audiences over 5 performances and jams on New Year's Eve. In addition the Junkman will be leading 7 separate sound sculpture construction installations where community members from throughout Monterey County will help build the instruments for the performances. The instruments, which the Junkman dubs **Play Stations** will be built on site entirely from locally reclaimed and recycled materials donated by Waste Management. The program has been funded in part by WESTAF and the TourWest grant program with support from the National Endowment for the Arts.

Junkman instrument construction and installations:

Public Events:

Archer Park Community Center – First Night Monterey office

Wed. December 28th, 3-4:30pm -- Free

Thurs. December 29th, 6-7:30pm -- Free

542 Archer St., Monterey

831-373-4778

Youth outreach events:

Greenfield Science Workshkop Youth Group

December 21st and 22nd, 10:00--3:30pm

Marina Teen Center

December 27th, 28th and 29th, 10:00am-1:00pm

Junkman First Night Monterey performances:

Colton Hall Lawn

First Night Monterey Site #1

550 Pacific St. Monterey

Saturday, December 31st at 3:15, 4:00, and 4:45pm

Alvarado Street at GST

First Night Monterey Site #14

417 Alvarado St., Monterey

Saturday, December 31st at 7:45 and 9:15pm

Junkman Press Contacts:

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About First Night Monterey

First Night Monterey is a public value 501c3 non-profit arts organization that conducts year-round community outreach and arts education workshops that culminate at the landmark New Year's Eve celebration. First Night Monterey's mission is to foster the public's appreciation of visual and performing arts and celebrate families and community through workshops and the New Year's Eve celebration. First Night Mission Statement: To reveal and celebrate diversity through the First Night Monterey celebration and the First Night ArtWorks! program, using art as a catalyst to unify the community through creativity, imagination and participation. Visit www.firstnightmonterey.org for more information or visit our Facebook page.

Advance purchase admission buttons are on sale through December 10th at discounted prices: Adults 16 and older \$20 and youth \$12. Children under 5 are admitted free. Visit www.firstnightmonterey.org for tickets or these Monterey County stores: Safeway, Nob Hill in Salinas and Walgreens in Monterey.

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