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LAWRENCE D. 'BUTCH' MORRIS: TESTAMENT: A CONDUCTION COLLECTION NEW WORLD 80478-2

FIRST

In 1968 I had this notion that music could be read like a book. You know, you might pick up a book you don't know and arbitrarily turn to a page and start reading--perhaps there is a story there--or something that sparks your interest, then you go to another page, and there is something else, maybe a description of a character. If you buy the book you can read it all. To me, art is the life of the imagination. I went to a painting and immediately focused on a particular detail; that detail became the entire painting. All of this because at the time I was asking myself, How can I make the music I'm writing more flexible? History has it that once it's written down, that's the way it goes. Well, I was never keen on an enforced tradition that would dictate history. Especially when it came to culture (art). To redefine must mean that somewhere down the line you must have believed in something you no longer believe in, so you redefine it--or something was defined for you, so you came to believe that definition. I never even bothered to look up the definition of music or musician until I started to write this paper. I don't like it, but it's certainly in step with the law. My definition of a musician (if you're interested) is someone in the service of music and/or someone who has surrendered to a sound or sounds that make that person tick. Four years ago I was asked when I decided to be a musician, and for the life of me, I couldn't answer that question. And I still can't. I am not here to redefine music but to define what music is to me. I

CURIOSITY

picked up some music notation that I had written and approached it the same way I did that book and that painting and I isolated several areas, I then took each area and developed them through improvisation. (I am not crazy about that word, either--I prefer to think of an improviser as an intuitor, and the act of improvising as intuiting--but I'll continue to use the word "improvisation" in this text. You'll know what I mean.) I then read the piece left to right, left to right, down (as one would read notation). It worked quite well and helped to soothe, but still did not answer my question. Now to do this with other instruments--new challenge: how to make yourself understood--this again worked well, but I found myself wanting to tell the instrumentalist to stay in this or that area longer, or change the articulation, dynamic, or pulse of the phrase. I resisted, but I was beginning to hear a new life for my notations.

In 1971 I moved from Los Angeles to Oakland, where I encountered a larger community of like-minded musicians. Here I met two very important people who were instrumental in the development of what I now call Conduction, Charles Moffett and Jackie Hairston. Charles Moffett had a rehearsal band at what was called Club 7; we played compositions, but from time to time Charles would literally conduct the compositions and ensemble improvisations; I say literally, because he would slow them down or speed them up or give accents for the band to



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play. I had never seen anyone conduct this way before--usually the conductors I had worked with before would beat time or give or remind us of a dynamic. The sign I now use for "sustain" and the gesture I use for "literal movement" come from Mr. Moffett's vocabulary.

Jackie Hairston was my conducting teacher. I don't think she ever had an idea of what I was looking for, because the questions I asked seemed to puzzle her, like "If I want the violins to enter here, but not the cello, how do I do that?" or "If I wanted an instrument to repeat a particular passage how do I do that?" My questions were always met with the same response: "If the composer had wanted that to happen, the composer would have written it." Well, I thought if the composer was the conductor, and it was me, how could I do it? Her response was, Why would I want to do that? Flexibility I said, I'm looking for flexible music. Needless to say, it became a joke in the class, and even today it is still a joke to many a class. Even so, I valued her questions and answers and as a teacher I owe her a great debt, she kept me thinking. Now, I go see Charles and ask him questions, and he'd say without pause, You can do that like this or like that--or to do that or get that effect, you could do this. I was falling deeper and deeper in love with the thought of making music this way. Charles Moffett had become the main stimulus for my questions; I also owe him a great debt.

I worked on these ideas until 1976, when I came to New York. Here I got involved in what was called the "loft scene." In this period there existed bands called "energy orchestras," where 10 or 15 or 20 musicians would get together and blow for hours at a time. This was amazing. But from time to time I'd hear something happen and think to myself, I wish we could save that and use it again later in the performance. But that was unheard of, there was no going or looking back. That music was lost to the ages and into the ears of the listeners. But I kept thinking, how could you do that--or that--or that? Yes I had seen Sun Ra and Frank Zappa and I had heard of the work Lukas Foss had done with his Improvisation Chamber Ensemble, and even heard a recording that Leonard Bernstein had done called *Two Improvisations for Orchestra*. The thirst for the answers to my questions had become sickening.

In 1977 I began teaching a workshop in Rotterdam, Holland. We mostly played my compositions, but we also did a lot of ensemble improvisations. At this time I began to use the signs and gestures to guide the improvisations, to give a structure that free improvisation had never done. The answers began to come, but so did more questions. This was as healthy an appetite as I could ever wish for. In 1979 I was instructor of jazz and improvised music at the Conservatoire Royale in Liège, Belgium. Here too, we had ensemble improvisations and the vocabulary was growing. Whenever I could, I would go to see someone

conduct, but I've rarely seen a conductor who looked like he was "making music." Yet I know that's not their job. This is where this definition stands apart. I was looking to *make* music, not interpret it. Even if I was working from notation, I was looking to make it a new work every time. It dawned on me that I was no longer looking for the soul of a music but for its aura. In this same period I was trying to work out specific compositional ideas--crayon series, forecasting, polar harmony, and temple variations. These were exercises for me that became fountains from which a lot of my composition was born, I also worked in an area that I called rhythnote, where I'd just write rhythm and let the improviser decide what notes to choose. This actually comes from a teacher I had in junior high school. Every day in our music theory class the teacher would rhythmically tap out a melody on her desk with a ruler, and say, What's the name of that song? She'd immediately go on with the day's lesson. During the course of the hour the students would guess or sing songs that were related to the rhythm that we'd heard--sometimes we got it, sometimes not, but she kept us thinking all the time. This of course was a great lesson for me, and it directly relates to the way I give rhythm figures tapped out in midair to the ensemble.

Working in Holland and Belgium, I realized how different the players were, their interpretation of material and their response to the gestural vocabulary. This again started my mind buzzing. This is not jazz, this is not classical--not free, it is what it is. Everyone can find their home in this music, everyone could interpret it any way they liked (within reason). The one thing that it does have, no matter where it's done, that makes it akin to jazz is combustion and ignition. To me this is the essence of swing. In 1984 I decided to use this Conduction method in concert but not to use my notations (music). I had already decided on a string quartet. I was standing in a store and I heard a Beethoven string quartet, so I bought the manuscript--Opus 130 Presto. Without changing a note on the page, four string improvisers and myself gave a lovely rendition. I only added rehearsal numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. I used three signs/gestures: repeat, sustain, and improvise. I could send any of the players to any of the rehearsal numbers at any given time--I could also change the speed of what was being played. I don't think I was the only one to enjoy this concert on June 15, 1984, at the Manhattan Healing Arts Center.

It was at this time that I started thinking more about the combustion, or heat, that this system creates. The communication between eye, mind, and ear, between people--the psychology and imagination. I started to read physics books, primarily to create a rationalization for what I was doing and thinking. Here I found "conduction." It served dual purposes. One, it served the music--conducted improvisation. Two, it served the physical aspect of communication and heat.

February 1, 1985, at The Kitchen in New York, I performed Conduction #1, "Current Trends in Racism in Modern America--A Work in Progress," with a 10-piece ensemble. This was the first time I had decided to use the gestural vocabulary exclusively with no notation. This is documented on the Sound Aspects record label. The performance was achieved with the use of the signs/gestures--sustain, repeat, dynamics-come in/or feature improvisation, and a sign that I no longer use that meant for all to play (improvise). The idea at this point was (and is) to further develop an ensemble music of collective imagination--not in any way to downplay a soloist, but to have the ensemble featured at all times. I felt strongly then as I do now that collective improvisation must have a prime focus, and the use of notation alone was not enough for the contemporary improviser. Free jazz and collective improvisation were grand moves in the history of music, you can't write this out. I think more than anything, they created more questions and answers to and for the direction of composition for improvisers. The idea that a music's outcome be predetermined (notation) is long a dead issue with me. It is enough for me to know that the musicians who participate in Conduction are there to serve the music we make at the time that we make it, and that they will be served by its outcome. I've seen sabotage in the multitude--and people who want anarchy before they know the law. There is no place for that in this music, as there is no place for that in any other music, art, or culture. Therefore, for this music I look and listen for ensemble players. Ensemble players who can make a decision for the good of the music and its direction.

In the Fall of 1987 I was in Holland to do Conductions #7 and #8. Misha Mengleberg, one of the most seasoned improvisers of our time, gave me the score "Impromptu 5" and asked me to conduct it at the Concertgebouw. I was and am honored by this gesture. Except for my collaborations with David Murray, no one had asked me to conduct their notated work. It fit like a glove.

The recording that begins this collection is with the ROVA PreEchoes Ensemble. This was one of the more responsively attentive ensembles I had worked with to date.

1989 brought a week-long residence at the Whitney Museum at Philip Morris with a handpicked ensemble. This was great, because up until this time I had never worked with musicians of my choice for more than two days at a time. This ended with Conduction #15.

Six distinctly different conductions happened in 1992--and each had its own reward. With Conduction #21 in Philadelphia, a mostly jazz-centered ensemble, we assembled and disassembled the many elements of swing. #22 in Kassel--Documenta 9--we went into the ring and out into the field--we used a lot of well-used electronic sound to create "Gloves and Mitts." #23 opened many doors to thought in my mind. This was the first time I had heard music as mobile. The music were plates of sound dangling off the ceiling, and all I had to do was move them. New gestures were developed after this concert. #25 is vastly different from #26 even though they are with the same ensemble. The Turkish musicians were with us all the way--as you will hear.

Steve Cannon and I spent long hours trying to work a

Chorus of Poets into one of his theater pieces. We didn't know quite how we were going to do this--but I got a call from the Whitney Museum at Philip Morris to do something for a New Year's Eve celebration, so I invited his "Stoop" poetry workshop to participate in three conduction rehearsals to familiarize them with the vocabulary of conduction. At the same time we chose five subjects for the poets to focus on and write about. #27 is the fruit of that labor and for me it stands as a pillar to house a new theater for poetic drama.

In 1993 there were twelve conductions. And of those I must take my hat off to the Maarten Altena Ensemble. Their work and devotion to improvised music is immense and powerful. If only every country had an ensemble with such devotion.

The New World Ensemble at Florida State University School of Music performed conduction #41. They had been working together for some time, and had an excellent ensemble sound and blend. I say had because I understand they no longer perform together. What a shame, because only here and in conduction #45--Le Chaux de Fonds--had we established such wondrous pianissimo, so much music in the cracks. The first few gestures/signs in this piece are: pan-sustain-pan-sustain--literal movement, and repeat. The repeat is designated memory one--you can always tell what has been assigned to memory because of its recurrence. Listen to the guitar entry, then shakuhachi, its feeling is so different from the preceding movement, but it's a direct connection from and into the ensemble music direction. Over the guitar (now repeating) and shakuhachi there are a series of pans and pauses--sustain-pan--pause. The guitar introduces a new section, this time with saxophone: ensemble pan-pan-sustain-guitar again with trombone--two trombones-guitar, electric guitar, ensemble improvisation, then we return to memory one, and so forth. The low graphic information leads us into another section of staccato, then return to memory one. We expand this memory until you hear the trombone line that I asked to be repeated--with ensemble, then solo--then I asked the ensemble to repeat the trombone line. I slowed it down, made a memory designation number two, sped it up--back to memory one--to memory two, split the ensemble in two parts and had them play memory two in short canon-like entry. Brought them together: accelerando--formata--memory one-- and so forth. I commend all the musicians in the ensemble for their fine contribution to this work, and thank the Florida State University School of Music for inviting me.

Conduction #50, the last in this series of conductions, is one of my favorites (see instrumentation in Conduction Chronology). This is truly "another" sensibility, one that leaves the mind wide open.

There are so many aspects of nuance in this music. I've often felt I was in a triangle with ensemble and audience that reverberated energy, each passing it on to the other. There is no claim here, there is no end all-be all, but I do think with notation and improvisation and the many ways to put the two into service for one another, we come closer to a communion in music.

THEORY AND CONTRADICTION

NOTES ON CONDUCTION

I grew up in a time where bebop, post-bop and rhythm and blues consumed my musical life. They remain the inspiration for much of what I do. It's the sound, lyricism, heat, and organization of these musics that are fundamental to what I call "Conduction." With the sound, I am a captive of nostalgia, and with the nostalgia come visions, but once in this reflection I no longer hear that music—I hear something else—and I can't always say what that something else is, so I go looking for it. It was here that I found Conduction.

The music of my childhood, although it made me, is not mine—it only lives in my recollection as nourishment for the future of my work, as does all music that I love. And it is this, the nourishment, that is so crucial to the fuel of my questions and answers, my sonic projectory.

The act of making spontaneous music, the act of contributing to a specific result, to direct or outline a course, but not control it—is to convey information that is in all ways interpretable. It is cartography for an improvisation, for the improviser—an ensemble music. I bring a structure and form to the ensemble. In this collective imagination there is a collective (and individual) decision-making process.

"Conduction" not only relates to the act of "conducted improvisation," it is also the electric charge and response from body to body—the immediate transmission of information and result. This is an ancient form of communication that can be used again to further this music (although we see it every day in some form, and if not every day—every spring).

Part of the idea is to develop the mind in such a way that it becomes critical to the construction of something we have yet to hear or see—to something we've felt or thought. It's a survey—we determine boundaries, then let them go. It is a body of ceremony—ritual, a book of rites.

Acoustic interaction between musician—conduit and audience. Audience, because they are present—they can see, they can feel—everyone receives the information at the same time. Therefore the mind can make decisions on what can or will be sounded. Then the mind can change its self or allow its self to be influenced by another. Risk, not chance.

The challenge of getting somewhere that you are not. The challenge of remembering why you are here—not to subordinate the ensemble, but to make sure all understand the vocabulary so that we can take responsibility for the direction of the music—and to surrender to the music. Surrender (which may be the most

difficult thing to do) is the important aspect in the negotiation of a construction. That does not adapt to a structural existence . . . ?!!

This system was not designed to impose an aesthetic, but to allow for the creation of a medium that redefines itself and the spirit of quality—a quality that radiates a unique property—every time.

In other words, constant preparation—preparation for the next, and the next for the next—for something we did not hear and for something we have never heard.

The more I prepare, the more I understand the conspiracy of the "laws of the changing winds." And in no way am I instigating a "new music" as concept, but seeking individual and collective growth as a means to produce or substantiate a need unknown.

Music is the language I am dealing with, and "Conduction" as a vocabulary for the production of the interpretive language of music. Music as constant invention.

I don't see this as a prefabricated form of "world music," but as a cultural dialogue, at its height. No matter who the participants are.

We must surrender to be possessed, if by no one else other than ourselves—primal perfection. The limitations are only set by who wants, and who doesn't want, to go there. But who wants to go to a world that isn't? Or to constantly create a place or a music with "no tense"? This music should always have the possibility and choice of a direction—environmental orchestration, extreme flexibility, at the discretion of the organ. Again, the collective decision—a constant reevaluation of the moment.

Looking for the flexibility in notation is another reason I've come in this direction. How intimate with the moment can we be or become? How is it possible to write a piece of music, travel five thousand miles and perform it in an environment that might reject it even before it's been heard? But then how is it possible to take that same music five thousand miles and let the environment help to influence its direction—to make it intimate with the environment, to let the character of the environment find its way into that music?

To do this, there must be a community of camaraderie—there are no secrets, only individual and collective perseverance. Again, a music with no tense, from wherever you hear. A sonic code found only in team play, trust and challenge—focus and construction. The decoding of tongues, to magnify all combustible elements—in that moment of ignition, embody ignition—without its knowledge or consent.

conduc'tion (-duk'shun), *n.* 1. Act of conducting or conveying, as water through a pipe. 2. *Physics.* Transmission through or by means of a conductor; also conductivity; — distinguished, in the case of heat, from *convection* and *radiation*. 3. *Physiol.* The transmission of excitation through living tissue, esp. in a nerve.

Conduction (conducted Improvisation) is a means by which a conductor may compose, (re)orchestrate, (re)arrange and sculpt with notated and non-notated music.

Using a vocabulary of signs and gestures, many within the general glossary of traditional conducting, the conductor may alter or initiate rhythm, melody, harmony, not to exclude the development of form/structure, both extended and common, and the instantaneous change in articulation, phrasing, and meter. Indefinite repeats of a phrase or measures may now be at the discretion of the new *Composer on the Podium*.

Signs such as *memory* may be utilized to recall a particular moment and *Literal Movement* is a gesture used as a real-time graphic notation.

Conducting is no longer a mere method for an interpretation but a viable connection to the process of composition, and the process itself. The act of Conduction is a vocabulary for the improvising ensemble.

In the past fifty years, the international community of improvisers has grown at such a rate that it has forged its own in defining its present future. The geographic exchange of musics (not category) has enriched this community and holds it steadfast in its mission to be the medium with an appetite for expressing the moment. It is this *Collective Imagination* that is presenting the new challenge to technology and tradition with the hope of helping in the humanitarian need to broaden the language of communication.

Here and now we have the possibility of helping to open new doors of employment to a community that has patiently awaited its turn to pave the way to the *New Tradition*, a product equal to the challenge.

Yours in Art,
Lawrence D. "Butch" Morris
Composer/Conductor of Improvised Music

INTRODUCTION TO CONDUCTION VOCABULARY

The conduction vocabulary developed from the need (or desire) to interact and/or to create a spontaneous improvisational dialogue with the music, musicians, and environment.

First, and most important, there is no music to look at. There is only the conductor, and the conductor needs your attention 100 percent of the time. It never fails that someone will always look away when the music needs them the most.

Conduction is process and product, ensemble music, teamwork. It is a music of personal histories and individuals. It is not limited to style or category. It is not jazz, blues, pop, classical, free, and so forth, although it may encompass all or none of them. Finally, all are misleading. It is the conductor's responsibility to mold this simultaneous synthesis of sound and organization into one ensemble. Your personality should always be in your music. When you are not playing, you should be thinking of what you would be playing. You must make music all the time, whatever you think music is.

Respond to what (you think) you hear or see or understand. Execution must be deliberate and decisive.

Conduction is an ensemble music. Its vocabulary is interpretive. The student must pay attention to the language of the body and the baton.

CONDUCTION VOCABULARY—SIGNS & GESTURES

Down Beat is used after a preparatory command. Usually given with the baton, but may be given with the left hand or body.

Sustain (chord or continuous sound) left hand extended, palm up, followed by *down beat*.

Repeat (three circumstances) 1) If you are not playing—you must create something to repeat 2) If you are playing something—the conductor would like to hear it again 3) If someone is playing something, and the conductor would like you to play it—the sign for repeat is given with the left hand to form the letter “U.”

All are given with *down beats*.

Mock (or mimic) (similar to repeat #3) You are to mock a player or sound. The conductor will point to the left ear, then to the player or area of sound to be mocked. This is followed by a *down beat*.

Dynamics (loud - soft) Raising the palms up for loud, down for soft. There is immediate response to this gesture, with no *down beat*.

Or, a clenched fist in the chest area for loud, left hand finger to lips for soft, both given with *down beat*.

Memory If a particular section or phrase is to be committed to memory the conductor will point, with left hand to (left) temple and designate a number with left hand (using fingers as the number). When this action (left hand to temple and number) is repeated with a *down beat*, you are to recall that

particular area. Whatever you were playing when the number designation was given is what you will return to when it is given with *down beat*.

Hold (don't play) Left palm facing ensemble. This is usually given when the conductor wants to give a preparatory command. This is done to give the ensemble ample time to understand the direction.

Change in tonality (key or tonal center) Left hand thumb up or down, with *down beat*.

Division of Ensemble Slicing motion with left hand, to separate or divide the ensemble in parts or sections.

Time (pulse) is given with the baton, tapping rate of desired time. This may be given with a *down beat* or asked for as an immediate response.

Rhythm is given with the baton as if beating a rhythmic figure in mid-air. The left hand marks the beginning of the phrase. A *down beat* is given to begin, generally preceded by a *hold*.

Develop (or go on) is given to indicate when the musician is to develop a phrase, a repeat, or sonic area. This is done by pointing with the right hand to the extreme right (flank), arm extended. This may be done with or without a *down beat*.

Continue in this way Pointing finger of left hand—(two) little circles directed at the musician you wish to continue a developmental process.



Expand is used to develop a phrase or area, then to bring it back. This is done by placing both hands in front of the body (extended arms) together (for the phrase) then separating the hands for the development.

Entry (come in or feature) A wave of the hand, as if to beckon—to improvise. The response is immediate.

Literal Movement The sign for this command is to place the baton parallel to the body, in front of the face, after which the baton serves as a tool for mid-air graphics. In *literal movement*, and all graphic information, the lower the baton, the lower the sound on the instrument. The higher the baton, the higher the sound. The *down beat* is the beginning of the gesture.

Panorama (pan or panning) The sign for *pan* is the baton upside-down parallel to the body, the *down beat* is when the baton moves across the ensemble. 1) If you are not playing—when the baton enters your physical (body) field, you play. When the baton is out of your field, you stop. 2) If you are playing when the sign for *panorama* is given—it is the exact opposite of #1. As the baton enters your field, you stop playing. When the baton departs, you begin.

Melodic Movement is a gesture used to suggest melody. This can be done in a variety of ways—I have used it by beating time with the left hand and giving graphic information with the right hand. This is done with a preparatory command, without stopping the movement, giving a *down beat*.

In theory, all gestures are open to interpretation. However, a graphic movement such as:  should not sound like: 

All of the music in this collection was created using this vocabulary, yet this is only a small amount of information for transmission. The improviser must bring a personal skill to the interpretation and the conductor must have a feeling for which direction to take it.

As you can imagine, there are a lot of questions in a conduction workshop or rehearsal. I try to let the ensemble answer their own questions so as not to limit its interpretive response.

All inquiries about Conduction can be made directly to:

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INTRODUCTION, TAKE ONE

Lawrence D. “Butch” Morris is a phenomenon who holds the distinction of sustaining his uniqueness against devilish odds. Add here the difficulties encountered when one attempts something more than what he is initially recognized for—in this case, a noted improviser—and the stature of Mr. Morris’s accomplishments grow. Quite simply, the brilliance of his playing opened up other provocations which, in Conduction, seem to have found their true form: embodying an orchestral event as an improvisation whose medium is the conductor-composer.

Sound does possess capacities for magic. That is why the stakes are high. I mean this, as well, in the classical sense: as a mediator that brings about changes in life and things. Is not that why certain sounds and musics move us so deeply? Because we hear in them something we desire to emulate, something that opens up to us unusual emotions and thoughts, new sensations, tastes, colors, a heightened ability to dream with eyes open?

To comprehend this is laudable; to discern a way out of the ordinary to invigorate it for our time and sensibility is quite another. That Butch Morris continues to offer his portion of that gift to us is a wonderful thing. And the event and ephemeral community that spring from it? The kind of receptivity and responsiveness that Conduction requires, the rapport it evokes, on the brink, balanced ever so precariously between cacophony and revelation, seduction and consummation, is also unique. In a very real sense, it allows us to envision a kind of society that mirrors and transforms the

sometimes ludicrous, strangely pathetic, humorous, horrifying, multifarious spectacle of everyday life.

But this is part of Conduction’s appeal. It offers the kind of sanity that great passions prefer and that the poetic clarifies, however and whenever it enters the fray. It is as much the sanity that dreams embody when we let them speak with the same forces or faces that they were born with as the irrationality we disembodied when we choose instead to say little or to stay mute. That Conduction avails itself of both, preferring what is most human over what might be called most beautiful, makes it more compelling. And it is this which grants to Conduction liberties found in the most vivacious encounters. Certainly as you listen you will find out for yourself how you measure it and how, in turn, it measures you.

As such, *Testament: A Conduction Collection* is not to be taken lightly or perhaps it is to be taken with excessive lightness, a lightness akin to flight itself. In any event, birds that fly for pleasure also do so to eat and to guard their territory, among other actions. Extraordinary creatures! They take the one with the other and then find the one *in* the other. Their exultation allows them such largess. Have they ever known a moment when they were forced to discriminate for one and not the other? Butch Morris, too, is part of that company. The practicalities of his music making do not interfere with the greater implications at work, and which he prepares for and lets loose whenever and wherever he can.

Listen closely, perhaps you’ll catch the beating of the air beneath the powerful strokes of the ensemble’s wings. Perhaps you’ll wonder why the high-pitched squeals and heavy bass bows arcing down deep into the earth at your feet don’t, at the same time, dispute just who’ll soar and when. Perhaps you’ll begin to ask the same sort of questions that they do when they’ve finished searching for answers. Perhaps, an aerialist yourself, you’ll know just where you stand or float in the open, natural orders whirring about you. Perhaps, given the choice, you wouldn’t want it any other way.

Magic, poetic magic, demands as much. It is a reciprocity that places all involved, players and audience alike, in an exceptional state.

For this moment, too, what difference really exists, for instance, between the dazzling warble of a thrush, the rumbling crack of a frozen lake just beginning to melt, the roar of a tornado, or the undertones of the solar wind?

Their differences perhaps are of degree and usefulness. Their interrelationships also call for a re-creation, with the one heard, and dramatically at that, in the other. Neither is lost, yet each is transformed.

There are moments, too, when during a Conduction, Butch Morris will seem to distance himself from the event, listening perhaps to something not so precisely present but implied by what preceded it and by what may come. Such freedom to accept or refuse immediacy while sustaining the momentum that makes it happen is both endearing and exceptional. The machine in acceleration need not determine the imagination that devised it. Humor enters here, as well as another possibility which lesser creators do well to fear, so prevent themselves from expressing: failure, opacity—a possibility quite necessary to establishing the

kind of risk that enables and intensifies.

Nor do Conductions fail or succeed by any single melody or compunction to melodies, rhythmic elaborations or chance encounters. They are harmonic events that develop from a special seed planted from the moment Butch hears it: the silence before the first note, a veritable sense of place and of immanence.

Where this comes from is his prerogative, where it goes is the challenge he accepts.

HOW ...

Conduction is a porous medium, a membrane of sound for passing through. For the listener it provokes many responses, an imaginary landscape formed by the music in the body, mind and heart. This landscape, which can vary within any one Conduction, assumes exemplary guises to the degree that the listener is able to give in to the images that reveal and command. In effect, the listener *dreams* into the music, recreating some part of it. It is not so much that Conduction reveals the hidden selves we carry within us, but it is a vehicle by which we can come to know more about who we believe we are and how we desire to become. Dreaming with eyes open as the music courses through us also brings to Conduction an atmosphere both dramatic and poetic. Swept up into the piece, the listening grows ever more active. Thus it is my pleasure and peril to formulate these notes within the terms of the landscape I inhabit: sometimes poetic, sometimes critical, and thoroughly my own.

*If we don't know where we are, neither do they ...
A slow, somber landscape of echoes and fabrications ...
And from the other side of silence ...
An audible grief lashes out like a dismembered arm
searching for its body ...
Madrid, five years before ...
Cure me, come closer ...
We fall upright, livid, like great promises, precious
moments ...
Caryatids, gargoyles ...
Nightmares wear harlequin costumes ...
They roll across the dirt with the ease of hurricanes
whirling out from miniature duels ...
Because hairdos like morning webs burn each
other up ...
A faceless phantom who puts on your face ...
And in the distance a Viennese opera vaulted into still-
ness, an 18th-century mesmerist perfectly oriental ...*

*A lone bell ...
... and the slow disenchantment ...
The great pedant ticking of the sea's heart ...
... a lone bell ...*

*... shh! There's a harp in labor as only harps know
how, with cymbals for nurses and delicate springs flower-
ing on each and every image ...*

RISK, NOT CHANCE ...

If there is one horizon that twentieth century art can claim, perhaps it is chance. Yet at century's turn it still remains a Pandora's box that few have the audacity to open. While chance is a formidable means by which many of the most moving works have come to us, it is rarely granted more importance. A seed from which much can grow, whether we wish it to or not?—certainly. John Cage, at least, appreciated the joke. But he did not stop there. Involving chance within a number of his works, he let it fly free. At the same time, he qualified chance events within an esthetic that, while seemingly other than musical, always returned to it one way or another. The contradiction would eventually obscure the advantage gained.

Where chance was previously ignored except as instigator, it would now be put to use, a way of creating music or of fabricating a condition for sound events. Nonetheless, a “scoring” game fueled by a series of throws, while freeing the creator to daydream, with all its associated delights, also relieves him from confronting the haunting problem of embodiment. An enchanting “neutrality” intervenes. And chance, once so liberating, goes the way of other esthetic criteria, neither more nor less: a means to influence an expression however “non-artistic” that expression is.

Chance also poses an extraordinary question that, when confronted by what is not chance, acts accordingly. As an interdiction of the creative will, games of chance offer further possibilities, and which by their very nature incur the dramas of risk.

The great addictive passions brought to bear on roulette, for instance, or other like games, should not be lost in a collective expression as momentous as Conduction. For in roulette, chance is not the measure, only the counterpoint. It is the giving in, the almost laissez-faire betting where amount does not matter, nor the cultural values of worth attached to it, and the struggle not to take any bet back, that lends to the moment its veritable tensions.

By opening us to risk, chance returns us to what before we might have only refused. And where the chance of success or failure is greatest, so follows the risk.

At the height of anticipation, intimately vulnerable to sudden urges but focused precisely upon the board, the wheel, and the spinning of that small silver ball, a human theatre evokes its tales. And they are told and measured, depending on who the teller is, against the accepted terms of the stakes.

A cautious but programmatic player may, in time, command attention if he continues where others would not, with an obsessive persistence—like the slow burning flame of a candle that, when placed too near to the skin, chars to an open wound, but through the hours. A quick, compulsive player rarely lasts long enough, on the other hand. The betting passion spent, there is little else to be gained. Such encounters leave much to be desired. Absent is the charge of development, of a foliation from an ever more pregnant root. And sooner than not he is gone, the game left to others less fickle in their pleasures. Left, too, is the player for whom the game stages the drama, not only for himself, but for those around him—the player who consumes the game as a

social event where each participant enriches the general anxiety in the diminutive choreography of sitting, perfectly attentive to the prize of *letting go*. And it is this player who, while selfishly construing the game, also seeks to reinvent it for all concerned, but on his terms—with the capacity to invoke a collective state of risk that requires a mutual allegiance toward that end alone.

Were that to happen during a roulette game, an astonishing sight would unfold. The harmonic or conflictive bearings of the group would be sieved through one personality as if the game itself required his connivance.

That this happens as a matter of course within the context of Conduction, where imagination and skill are wagered in place of dollars, does not diminish the consequences.

The risk can even be said to be greater—for failure here cannot simply be bought off or paid back. The evocative draw of the moment determines the character to be spent—acutely, passionately, empathetically—and the quality of the stakes. That is what attracts players equal to the task. In its way, it also duplicates the search for a community that, while coherent to its own, speaks poignantly to those who have come along for the ride: the audiences eager to be surprised, shocked, inspired by the conducted effervescence before them.

What risk, then, tips its hat here?

The risk of lifting the baton but having little to say; of failing to find a tone magnetic to the group and its conductor; of losing or gaining all and thus having no need to continue; of boredom with an assumed risk that is rarely spirited enough to transform itself elsewhere; of delectation when fury is in the offing; of not listening to the music behind, beside, in front; of waiting till waiting no longer is a risk; of setting out with conditions; of arriving too soon or too late; of judging others just as they begin to judge you; of absenting yourself from your body as it speaks through hands, lips, fingers; of not accepting that triteness and profundity are after-effects, never culminations; of hearing, seeing, touching, even smelling what you could not before and desire to again; of an encounter that culminates in mutual seductions; of gaining and losing the freedom to be anything other than what you already are; of silence suspending any movement to the contrary; of returning the game of risk back to its origins, around a table, with a roulette wheel, or on a stage sprouting chairs and music stands; the risk of rarely fulfilling risk enough.

Because this risk entails communion, attentiveness, and a rapport as complex and unique as the self you wish to become. In the end, too, it is the justice of this rapport that makes of Conduction a striking confirmation of all that preceded it, in terms of improvisation, and of all it broaches, in terms of music thoroughly distilled by a composer before being played. For Conduction, as Butch Morris has practiced it, entails both with equal ferocity. And that is why his oeuvre holds much importance for improvisers and composers, players and conductors. It is, so to speak, the risk that charges its vibrant, tender, and terrible heart.

I can almost hear Butch saying again to those who know but might've forgotten and to those who've forgotten that once they knew—quietly, carefully, and with a certain aveng-

ing tone—“Risk, not chance . . .”

“Risk” is a password. Sometimes it satiates the glow-worms rotating in the grass like quick, criminal loves.

It means now, never; always, then, here. It coils and uncoils, echoes, fabricates, fornicates. It is a fetish, a feat, a phantom, a fountain that touches something at the very heart of our thirst . . .

THEATER THROUGH MUSIC.

FIRST MUSIC, THEN THEATER . . .

I have never felt that music per se was enough for Butch Morris. Nor does his prowess as composer, conductor, arranger, and instrumentalist pose limitations here. Rather, it enables him to clarify certain analogies within performance, and has always provided moments whose attractive power is beyond compare. And I speak of a context within any Conduction that provokes a recognition that something else has entered a space defined previously by melody, rhythm, intonation, or any other strictly musical form.

Perhaps the only thing that differs for Butch Morris is that he understands this, knows why it happens, and makes use of it as a motivation within each Conduction. Certainly he does this to great effect, and returns to it time and again as if his efforts would be less without it.

By depicting music as the origin of theater, at least as he sees it, he gives us something more than the normal egotism of the composer. He returns to us a recognition that has been lost and refound throughout the history of Occidental culture. And one which flowers usually within periods, unlike our own, where myth and life are not so easily distinguishable.

Within the heat of music lies the capacity for an embrace of other arts. There is nothing inconsequential about this. We can sense in the poem a musical double; in the sculpture, a choreography; in the painting, colors as resonant as chords, and so on. We are moved, sometimes profoundly, by such analogies, that also carry within them an emotional history waiting to be revealed. Are these extraneous to the character of the art itself?

Theater is based on the development and resolution of conflict. Music requires no less, although in its strictly social sense—as too many composer/musicians use it—“conflict” assumes the character of a position about any number of topical issues while the sound acts more as a support, and is that much less because of it.

Not so for Butch Morris. Sound, and the music of “sound plateaus,” is preeminent. Within it, whether by a sudden turnabout or by the deepening of a sustained tone, conflictive aptitudes arise. And as they do so, intimations of character, of a cast of characters, follow suit. The one evokes the other, subverts the other, erases the other, resolves the other. We enter a region of such resonance that the absence of actors barely raises an eyebrow—their apparitions, sometimes frightening, endearing or seductive are more than enough. As part of any Conduction and, I might add, what

makes Conduction more intriguing to its various audiences, Morris also recognizes this as an aspect central to Conduction itself and its relation to strictly jazz-inspired or strictly notated orchestral music. In this regard, Conduction presents a challenge with more than enough duels fought to its credit. It is a challenge not to forgo the complexities and exaltations of embodiment. It is also a challenge not to limit embodiment to the human form alone.

“First music, then theater” also suggests a methodology for dramatic creation that opera, for one, does not satisfy. Operas are usually composed as musical tableaux of a previous event. The tale having been told, music is now its medium, with a libretto soon to follow. Make the event, or events, and their telling flower from within the music, however that can be accomplished, and you have an opening that Conduction can enter through. It is an opening that implies theater immediately via the rich collaborative atmosphere of Conduction, but now between each theatrical element and on the same plane.

This vision of theater *in metamorphosis*, that also intensifies each contributing mechanism, is not new—far from it. But in a period such as ours, where theater is much less influential than music, to have this given back to theater by a composer is a sign of hope worthy of respect.

Is the future of Conduction tied this much to theater and theatrical modes? In the narrow sense of the term, the theatre we are accustomed to, no. As an envisioning of a kind of theatre that we are transformed by—an extra-lucid, poetic, rebellious theatre—I believe it is.

In the jungle, the moon steps lightly between thick, furry leaves that droop from the heaviness of night and heat. Sirens, who rarely lose their way, tempt even themselves to stop and stare at the green, luminous eyes circling just above their heads. Tonight, they think, is different. Tonight, with all their caution ground to dust between their fingers, they will search again for a man, a woman, to satisfy their hunger. And as they search they will dream of how it was and what is to come. Make no mistake. Their claws are as dangerous as the beauty of their hair; the stealthy pad of their feet, and the shadows of their victims that they keep in a small pouch of woven grass hanging from their necks.

What does it matter that they are all but forgotten? In the distinct immensity of their thought foghorns from far-off cities gambol with picket fences set on fire by a careless child. Here and there, the lacy, streaming clouds spell their names in the wefts of the sky: Cindy, Gretchen, Elisa. Here and there, they bend down, moaning, to the damp earth and lick up the lost tears of the stars. Here and there, they throw their wonderful heads back upon their shoulders and laugh, knowing all too well that dawn will exile them to the testaments of their passions and the lubricity of their silence.

They walk, perfectly nude, tasting with the tips of their tongues, like fledging birds, the perfumes by which they know they have arrived. Some, given to dance, throw themselves about in the clearings they chance upon. In brief rendezvous they forget the compassion that their breed instills, and tear at each other in diabolical fren-

zies. And then, as if wishing to make up for what overcame them, they suckle the wounds that weep from the flesh of their comrades. They do this with the same kind of ritual satisfaction they would expend on any lover they fancied for a thrill. “If this blood is tasty,” they think, “that will be so much more!”

Then they rise, dust themselves off, give each other the quick, delicious kiss of their solitude and separate. For them, and for the others, there is only one thing left, which they all hear at the same moment and which spikes their desperation: a saxophone, without mercy, deveining the blues with an upswelling tremor of spectral accomplices. And the encounter becomes the measure with which they judge their delight.

* * *

They have arrived, one after the other, panting, the sweat rolling off their flesh. The forest just behind them a dark, impenetrable line that curves with the same premonitory lust of their thighs, calves, waist and up to the tart pulse of their nipples.

Beside a large lake, on a makeshift stage bordered on one side by coconut palms and on the other by a scrim painted to resemble the midnight fables of any city on the run, play thirteen musicians to a conductor who, like the sirens at their moments of sudden meditation, is as still as an anchorite and then, sensing the moment, sustains an effect that gathers into itself all the momentum that brought them here. For he speaks the same language that they pass between themselves, in secret, after the hunt, during their leisure.

It is a language of slim clarions dressed to the nines, strung with bayou fetishes and left to harden in the blood-beat of a subway train. It is a language that they, knowing how perilous their hunts can be, offer only to themselves.

And they approach, gathering about the stage, each choosing one musician, and only one, to captivate through the ensuing hours. And the music, the music, creeps under their skin, dissolving their conceits with the slow acid of sheets infested with sex.

* * *

Take notice, sirens, the ages have not abandoned you. Only in your solitude did you believe in your exile. Only in your despair did you escape to the jungles that inhabit our dreams. Here, great discovery! your nude bodies—teeth to air, eyes to visions—feel more naked. Here, fleeting, sparse impressions—branchtree harp, fountain bassoon—infect your freedom. Here, opulent lips conjure the silence that touched your thirst, back there, in the shelter of lianas and elephant-eared leaves. Here, what possesses you now, this strange effervescence, will forever color what satiates you then.

With the sun nothing is forgotten or forgiven. . . .

A CULTURAL DIALOGUE AT ITS HEIGHT . . .

Conduction occurs within an atmosphere of intensities. A slight, if delicate, violin glissando is not, for all that, any less than a full-throated cry vibrating from the bell of a trombone. The special qualities of any instrument—piano, harp, turntables, and so forth—are framed just so, within the ensemble, Morris's palette being generously rich and diverse. Add the collaboration of indigenous musicians of traditional cultures, especially from Turkey and Japan (Conductions 25, 26 and 28, 50), and the drama grows apace.

Here, I am magnetized by a sensibility of dialogue between cultures and traditions; a dialogue inspired by what it and we have yet to know; a dialogue that, while still provisional, questions cultural roots and their assumed prerogatives—questions that intrigue as they are asked and then made to ignite as the heat of Conduction is raised ever higher, ever more subtly.

What then is the precarious rapport at work in the moment?

Can instrumentalists define themselves purely by what they play without provoking cultural considerations perhaps marginal to their playing, but which also can enrich the experience of listening?

Must indigenous musicians isolate their contributions under the spell of tradition? Is it possible to expect anything else without losing the charm of an exoticism that is still charming, and more charming the less it is perceived as exotic?

How do Western improvisers reorient themselves, given the absence of any tradition that recognizes them as other than marginal, when confronted say, by, the Turkish Sufi ney, which has centuries behind it, ecstatic associations steeped in history and a legacy of distinction?

What differences exist between the experience of instrumentalists from more ancient traditions and the alienation of Western improvisers, and which has so much characterized their response toward cohesion/community via anarchic, internationalist biases that, self-invented, sometimes speak more to the wounds of their struggles than to any sort of congenial resolution with society at large? And is this because of a general inability of others to *listen* free of expectations and inhibitions?

What, when faced with such issues, can actually be accomplished by an ensemble? And how does collaboration here turn into the kind of theatre where differences are intensified, each illuminating the other, and in a manner perfectly reciprocal?

Given all this, it is notable that musicians within cross-cultural ensembles can captivate each other with such ease. J. A. Deane's comment on his 1992 experience in Turkey (Conductions #25, 26) is revealing: "The Conduction vocabulary has simple signs that translate through many languages. There's no problem there, at least after Butch explains the logic behind it. Butch also builds up ensembles with the least experienced people first. Then he layers in other elements. I remember when the four Turkish musicians first heard my live sampling, Butch cut them off. With a drum machine on top of it, well, it was

new to them. All four turned around as if to say 'What's going on?' They had smiles on their faces though."

Regarding the 1993 Japan Conduction, #28, Morris put it another way: "Sometimes these instruments are used exclusively for special occasions: Noh or Kabuki, what have you. That's what made this Conduction so unique. They [Japanese musicians] didn't have any problem interpreting me. I had to realize that when I wanted this kind of thing, I couldn't ask [a] particular musician to do it. He wouldn't play it on the instrument. It did only one kind of thing and not what I wanted, so I had to ask someone else. I had to adjust my thinking in terms of sound. I'm not talking about Western versus Asian instruments, either."

Here, sensitivity to tradition, or its lack, does not also allow for exclusion. It really is a matter of sound, developing ensembles, as Butch puts it, "based on sound." Thus, it is insufficient to set the stage for a ney solo, taken in mode Dastagh, say, and leave it at that. Nor does the swift logic of Conduction ever come to rest there. It passes into the upswelling of an as yet to be clarified tremblor or punctuates with its last calls a silence broken by the staccato plucking of muted strings. That the ney snakes up from the ensemble under the conductor's direction, which is then subdued to accentuate the reed, is an orchestral device, nothing more. The background enhanced, a foreground then engages our attention. That the featured player, in counterpoint, returns to what he knows best via traditional modes—a wonderful contradiction to what preceded it—can also be seen in several contexts via Conduction, some more poignant than others. The ney, too, embodies quite special characteristics that have always drawn me to it, especially its association to the human voice.¹

But the revelation of this lyric, which would be satisfactory in its own context, becomes a pole of attraction or repulsion within the Conduction dynamic. Nor do I believe it ingenuous to place such a culturally valued instrument at the service of Conduction, save that shifting relationships between the two not suffer a facile recognition, which would place both in greater jeopardy of failing to clarify the intensity displayed. That the traditionalist returns to his roots as if to touch base before entering echoes again the same question that has animated Butch Morris throughout his career: "How far are they [or you] willing to take it outside their [or your] tradition?"

Nor is it surprising that finding "where" to take it is difficult, and the more so in Conduction: a place born *within* a moment that transforms. In the same light, if the context cross-culturally is a series of musical propositions, its dialogue(s) arise from the harmonies or disharmonies between instrumentalists, the sounds before and after, the ensemble's willingness to take their cues and run with them, the audience's receptivity to an event that they, too, participate in, the very architecture of the hall itself, and, as one focal point, the capacity of the conductor to sculpt the momentum that he conjures with each gesture or that he recognizes as occurring before him. The ensemble here having finally matured in

¹The ney became a featured instrument during a period of Islamic orthodoxy when singing, particularly by women, was censored. I know of no other instrument that emulates the vocal subtleties of a singer's voice so well. From one reed the language of the birds can seem to pour from invisible lips.

its own self-sustaining, and as immediately distinct from the conductor as the ney is from a harp or French horn.

We should credit Butch Morris as well with relishing what other composers usually write out of their scores. Granting the ensemble the freedom to contrast its motivations to those of the conductor heightens the dialogue. But this *is* part of the drama that evolves during a Conduction. And when that Conduction invokes cross-cultural expressions, lack of understanding rarely diminishes the effect, which says as much about the quality of freedom Butch Morris inspires as his willingness to gamble certainty for surprise, neutrality for shock, and precision for metaphor.

Revealing the heart of an ambiguous relationship can be just as compelling, perhaps more so, than a denouement too rigorously prepared for.

Ambiguity is a constant between traditions. It can be a source of discord caused by preconception or it can evoke a rapport steeped in tensions that throw off flares of wonder.

No doubt, this dialogue also contributes to a larger concern, the dramas of consciousness enacted between cultures in the world today: a *source* that creators return to time and again—why is clear enough. Within Conduction, of course, it takes itself for what it is from the hands or lips of the musicians who accept it with whatever intensities of freedom they bring as an offering to the others about them. And as they dramatize this, this, too, demands something of them: that they take its diapason as a measure of their own worth, never forgetting that, as Morris has aptly put it: “You can play inside the ensemble and be just as determinant for the group and the music, and be just as convincing as any soloist.”

For indigenous musicians of traditional cultures, the encounter with conduction can be equally moving.

CARTOGRAPHY FOR AN IMPROVISATION . . .

The cartographer plots the illusion of possessing anything at all, delighting in the shapes, that emerge from his baton: transient seas, plains, mountains. They are his, his and the others who have come along with him.

The cartographer traces the mathematical image of a hidden dream. Shipwrecks his constant cousin. Toreadors on the loose . . .

He charts an ephemeral course whose final consequences are suddenly lost. Despair or joy? Nothing so definite. The sunsets here or there, the twenty shadows that hang like apples below an open sky . . . the masks scattered about, these masks of open metal stars rusting away . . .

Except that here is less than enough. The context a little skewed. The continent still wet.

This land is a dream, a dreaming, that calls to it memories within images, images surging through memories.

Sound, first and last, recreates it, a known/unknown shore, exceptional stage for the collective imagination of the conduction . . .

A poetic, scabrous, mutative cartography . . .

The cartographer traces a face and a body, multitudes of faces, multitudes of bodies, with each member of the

ensemble a limb, an organ, each movement of the score an expression of where they are, who they've become.

Desire compels the phantasmic being to forever unburden itself of distance. Suddenly it's next to you, arm on the table, breath on your cheek.

And then, greater pleasure, poignant danger, sonic leaves blooming behind the eyes, into the brain, curling about the spine, the nerves.

The cartographer plots the boundaries of a place newly felt, incomparable freedom his one sovereign science.

Place, body, gorge, face, river, breast, crater, lips, swamp, shoulder, desert, thigh, crest, hip, shore—the one invades the other, brands the other, commands the other. She stands up and the entire landscape slips down her back like so much rain in mezzotint. The clouds wrap her eyes and whistle them away. Her face now is as hollow as moonlight, as quick as morning mist. Her hips suckled into dust by thick, emulent forests. Her fingers, wild acanthus . . .

The cartographer accepts it all: the excessive smoke, the mawkish foils, the startled rendezvous, the precipice which appears where he never expected it, and that vertiginous mirror where bodies and scapes transform each other, resurrect each other . . .

Delight, struggle: the cartographer molds the shapes that emerge from his baton . . .

. . . FOR SOMETHING WE DID NOT HEAR AND FOR SOMETHING WE HAVE NEVER HEARD

It is one thing to create moving or beautiful music. To conjure the unknown is another venture entirely. That the two need not be exclusive is the promise of each Conduction. Still, the intent is *other*; and in it evolve strategies similar to those that founded modern poetry, for one. It is a poetry that, in revolting violently against any confusion that might restrain it, does so to return to language the savage, exuberantly metamorphic powers of the imagination.

At the same time, a predilection against being satisfied by esthetic criteria also takes its toll. Contained neither within the “jazz” nor “classical” communities per se, Conduction usually falls through the cracks. For those willing to straddle the fault lines, though, no matter how small or powerful the quake, the excitement is irrepressible. At this point, definitions blow hollow. Butch Morris, we must remember, has a voracious appetite. He takes what he wishes from the current scenes, refusing to align himself with any particular style or expectation save for the presence of surprise and a certain convulsive wonder. His independence is equaled only by his understanding of the traditions from whence he comes, his talent to provoke their apparitions whenever he has a mind to, or whenever he is asked to by his many noted colleagues. Conduction, of course, is the counterfoil. It is the medium that enables him to incite.

Part saboteur, magician, poetic criminal, lover, lyricist, psychologist, adventurer, chef, trickster, romantic, he demands much and usually gets it. When he doesn't, the lesson is valuable. Nor is he capable of resting on laurels received. He moves too fast or believes he does, which is

almost the same thing. Yet, however he does so presents its own difficulties. As he puts it: “The challenge is not to become a clique to myself.”

Immersed in the ensemble—its conscience and navigator, or as the focus of tensions that the music calls up—he is perpetually in rapport, a mediator that inspires the ensemble toward something more perhaps than what it believed of itself.

We wait for moments like that. Beyond any appreciation of the music, it’s what takes us “out there,” and makes us accept it as if we wouldn’t want to be any other place—ditto for the ensemble. The transition from playing the music, adequately or sensitively, to the collective creation of a motif or landscape is enthralling. At times, it is as if the music, become porous to itself and the ensemble, uncovers its latent powers to entrance to the margins of possession itself; margins that burn, that are dangerous, because they cast up into the moment, for all to hear and feel, the silence the composer struggles against, and continues to struggle against until, finally distracted or exasperated enough, he lets go and finds it available to his needs and as abundant as his desires.

And it is here, too, that the composer and the conductor meet, exchange roles, consume each other’s shadow, differentiate again, and then because there really is no other way out, give over what each can offer to one man, one sensibility.

Discovery requires just this sort of deformation of accepted distinctions to *take over*. Nor can it come without a precipitous, even monstrous descent into oneself, “a prodigious and rational disordering of all the senses,”¹ whether by the word of the poet or the ensemble of a Conduction, and stirred in both, a basic ingredient!, to a volatile emotional temperature that gives out to a voice or voices that rise above the storm, and that are heard as if for the first time, in a theatre of origins, where dreams are born and myth takes wing.

“To me, this is evident,” Rimbaud wrote. “I witness the birth of my thought: I look at it, I listen to it: I give a stroke of the bow: the symphony begins to stir in the depths or comes bursting onto the stage.”²

For Butch Morris, his stage is the ensemble; “. . . for something we did not hear and for something we have never heard.”

When the unknown calls, Butch Morris is listening.

¹ Arthur Rimbaud, “Letter to Paul Demeny, May 15, 1871,” in *Illuminations*, translated by Louise Varèse, published by New Directions.

² Ibid.

NU CONDUCTION NOTES . . .

Butch Morris faces several major difficulties on his path toward founding for the composer-conductor a place of authority. Initially, there is the lack of a continuous playing tradition. Conduction appears on the margins of both the classical and the improvisational worlds. For the former it is a repudiation of training received and expectations established in the service of interpretation. For the latter it is a challenge that many individualists find intriguing, but perhaps less so when compared to their careers as soloists. That it offers a marvelous opportunity to rethink interpretation and individuality, drawing them ever closer together, unfortunately may not be enough on its own to bridge the divide. By requiring individualists to accept their role in Conductions as interpreters, while not in the slightest forgoing any opportunity to feature their uniqueness, is quite a proposal. And it places at risk received notions in both camps.

At the same time, Conduction is tied so intimately to Butch Morris that its possibilities for other composer-conductors to come can seem obscure. But then that obscurity is also double-edged. For as much as it returns Conduction to its creator, it does so in the name of creation, and of a sort to draw forth those whose dissatisfactions with current contexts grow apace. Thus, it will be most interesting to watch how Butch Morris continues in the coming years to counter the ease with which our culture elects its personalities, and usually conditions them to a role more acceptable to ever larger audiences. Whether this would happen in the United States or abroad is of little consequence. Co-option and recuperation are not always refused by what once was an authentic subversion of this or that style or tradition. The romantic’s dream of perpetually returning to subjectivity, for example, as a preeminent source of poetic revolt has, in our time, been too much confused with the simulacra of that revolt to mean much on its own. A quickening agent is needed, a further provocation, and one that, while exalting individualism, does so to serve a collective end that offers both an ascent into the composer-conductor and a revelation of an ensemble’s capacity to reciprocate by embodying itself through that being.

In another sense, Conduction crashes against centuries of receiving music as a monument to completion. Jazz improvisation, we must remember, is just about one hundred years old. A child of the beginning of the twentieth century, it reinvents itself several times, each with profound cultural implications. Ceaselessly metamorphic, it now invigorates itself not so much to return to any exclusive source, but as an approach to ever more varied musical possibilities.

The questions finally are: What will you accept, and why? For how long will you accept it? And how far will you go to sustain the kind of clarity necessary to foment truly creative options for individuals and ensembles?

For his part, and in which lies, I believe, the source of adventure we expect from him, Butch Morris is rarely content to accept from his musicians what they wish to offer alone. Nor does he require that they do his bidding without making it their own. In and through him and his accomplices, the doors are thrown wide toward the creation of a music that we have hopefully just begun to listen to.

CONCLUSION, TAKE 2

... his voice on the phone is quite persistent. "But I want to know why Conduction is important for you. When there won't be so much money available; when people will collaborate as they're not so used to ..."

Perfectly put. And the circle turns once again. 1995?—a quick hand in a shallow pocket. What's left? The chance to say something straight out—an act of communication, receptivity and response, pristine, "to give them a jewel," Butch adds.

Security has little place here. Years ago I wrote, "Let the wind take me I have nothing to lose." That's the sense of it. A door suddenly blown open, blown off its hinges. A liberty that stuns for having come so fitfully.

Conduction is its name. Its time is now and will always be *now*. The ensemble settling down, settling in, leaning up, attentive, attending ... launching forth.

The collective imagination of the ensemble.

As I said, a "drama of consciousness."

That speaks as much to itself as to the historical moment it flowers through. Because we're here. We've turned the corner.

And met a man whose joy makes dreaming imperative.

Conclusion? How could I? The music strikes, overflows, extravasates, calms, and reaps its fine dark whirlwinds that grow as subtle as a kiss after a too, too wonderful day.

Taken or given, the effect's about equal, however you look at it.

And I, that's easy, I can't get enough ...

Allan Graubard is a poet, playwright, writer, and critic. *Modette*, his music-theater collaboration with Butch Morris, was last seen May 1995 at Aaron Davis Hall, NYC, in the *New Visions, New Voices Series*. In 1993 he published *For Alejandra*, an evocation of noted South American poet Alejandra Pizarnik, and, in 1992, a collection of poems, *Glimpses from a fleeing window*. His plays have been performed in New York and elsewhere.

CONDUCTION CHRONOLOGY

CONDUCTION NO. 50, P3 Art and Environment, Tokyo, Japan, March 5, 1995. Ensemble: Shonosuke Okura (ohtuzumi), Michihiro Sato (tugaru syamisen), Yumiko Tanaka (gidayu), Hikaru Sawai (koto), Kim Dae Hwan (percussion), Yoshihide Otomo (turntables), Keizo Mizoiri (bass), Haruna Miyake (piano), Asuka Kaneko (electric violin), Tomomi Adachi (voice), Motoharu Yoshizawa (electric vertical bass), Ayuo Takahashi (zheng).

CONDUCTION NO. 49, P3 Art and Environment, Tokyo, Japan, March 4, 1995. Ensemble: Shonosuke Okura (ohtuzumi), Yukihiro Isso (nokan), Michihiro Sato (tugaru syamisen), Yumiko Tanaka (gidayu), Hikaru Sawai (koto), Kim Dae Hwan (percussion), Yoshihide Otomo (turntables), Keizo Mizoiri (bass), Haruna Miyake (piano), Asuka Kaneko (electric violin), Tomomi Adachi (voice), Motoharu Yoshizawa (electric vertical bass).

CONDUCTION NO. 48, ART TOWER Mito, Japan, February 26, 1995.

Ensemble: Sachiko Nagato (percussion), Mamoru Fujieda (computer), Kenichi Takeda (taisyu-koto), Kizan Daiyoshi (shakuhachi), Masaki Shimizu (bass), Tomomi Adachi (voice), Yoshinori Kotaka, Minako Oya, Shiho Nagoya, Aki Satho (violin), Shinya Otsuka, Hironobu Kotaka (viola), Koichi Fukada, Yoshihiro Okada, Kazue Shimada, Kazuyo Miyoshi (voice), Taeko Osato, Ken Takahashi (flute), Kiyoshi Onishi, Kiyoshi Ouchi (horn), Yutaka Fukuchi, Masashi Iwasawa (trumpet), Nobutaka Konashi, Junzi Sakurai (trombone), Yuko Fukasaku, Marie Abe (percussion), Yoko Yagisawa (piano), Hitoshi Sakamoto, Ryu Jun Ando, Ryo Tofukuji (contrabass).

CONDUCTION NO. 47, WUPPERTAL TESTAMENT, Wuppertal, Germany, January 26, 1995.

Ensemble: Saviya Yannator, Caerina De Re, Judith Amber (voice), Roderich Stumm (drums), Janek Klaus, Gunther Pitscheider, Andreas J. Leep, Andre Issel (bass), Barbara Meyer, Yngo Stanelle (alto sax), Andre Linnepe, Robin Scheffel (guitar), Justin Sebastian (trumpet), Karola Pasquay, Angelika Flacke (flute), Katrin Scholl, Gunda Gottschalk, Christophe Yrmer, Marco Cristofolini (violin), Stefan Kerne (soprano sax), Jam Keller (contrabass), Mathias Beck (cello), Axel Kottsieper (clarinet).

CONDUCTION NO. 46, VERONA SKYSCRAPER, Verona, Italy, June 27, 1995.

Ensemble: J.A. Deane (trombone, electronics), Stefano Benini (flute), Marco Pasetto (clarinet), Rizzardo Piazzi (alto sax), Francesco Bearzatti (bass clarinet), Zeena Parkins (harp), Myra Melford (piano), Riccardo Massari (piano), Bill Horvitz (electric guitar), Carlo Ceriani (acoustic guitar), Gianni Sabbioni (bass), Salvatore Majore (electric bass), Roberto "Bobo" Facchinetti (drums), Lê Quan Ninh (percussion).

CONDUCTION NO. 45, LE CHAUX DE FONDS, Le Chaux de Fonds, Switzerland, September 3, 1994.

Ensemble: Gwenaëlle Cuquel, Martina Albiseti (violin), Manon Gertsch, Daniele Pintandi (piano), Yan Greub (bassoon), Oliver Olgieti, Carlos Baumann (trumpet), Manuel Van Sturler, Francois Callin, Yonn Bourquin, Jean-Jaques Pedretti, Priska Walls (trombone), Dorothea Schurch (voice), Robert Dick (flute), Christy Doran (guitar), Olivier Magnenat (bass), Lucas N. Niggli (percussion), Alexandre Nussbaum (vibraphone), Martin Schütz (cello).

CONDUCTION NO. 44, ORNITHOLOGY (A DEDICATION TO CHARLIE PARKER), Tompkins Square Park, New York, August 28, 1994.

Ensemble: Terry Adkins, Kitty Brazelton, Marty Ehrlich, Daniel Carter, Rolando N. Briceno, Margaret Lancaster, Elise Wood, William Connell, Sabir Mateen, Bruce Gremo, Kahil Henry, Jemeel Moondoc, Sarah Andrew, Laurie Hockman (flutes), Christian Marclay (turntables), Arthur Blythe (alto saxophone).

CONDUCTION NO. 43, THE CLOTH, Verona, Italy, June 16, 1994.

Ensemble: Riccardo Fassi, Myra Melford (piano), Mario Arcari

(oboe), Stephano Montaldo (viola), J. A. Deane (trombone, electronics), Brandon Ross (guitar), Bryan Carrot (vibraphone), Martin Schütz, Martine Altenburger (cello), Lê Quan Ninh (percussion).

CONDUCTION NO. 42, LUST/SUCHT/LUST, Deutsches Schauspielhaus, Hamburg, Germany, May 21, 1994.

Ensemble: Nicola Kruse, Ulli Bartel (violins), Mike Rutledge, Jurgen GroB (violas), Claudius Molter (flute/alto), Wolfgang Schubert (oboe), Henning Stoll (bassoon), Jonas Mo (guitar), Thomas Breckheimer (harp), Jorn Brandenburg (piano), Claudio von Hassel (vibraphone), Martin Schütz (cello), J. A. Deane (sampling), Monica Bleibtreu, Martin Horn, Andre Jung, Albi Klieber, Martin Pawlowsky, Ozlem Soydan, Anne Weber, Inka Friedrich (voices).

CONDUCTION NO. 41, NEW WORLD, NEW WORLD, Opperman Music Hall, Florida State University School of Music, February 4, 1994.

Ensemble: Jesse Canterbury (clarinet), Mimi Patterson (clarinet), Scott Deeter (saxophone), Philip Gelb (shakuhachi), Gregor Harvey (guitar), Ethan Schaffner (electric guitar), Elisabeth King (voice), Daniel Raney (trombone), David Tatro (trombone), Michael Titlebaum (alto saxophone).

CONDUCTION NO. 40, Thread Waxing Space, New York City, November 12, 1993. Ensemble: Christian Marclay (turntables), Elliott Sharp (dobro), Chris Cunningham (guitar), Dana Friedli (violin), Jason Hwang (violin), Myra Melford (piano), Damon Ra Choice (vibraphone, snare drum), Reggie Nicholson (vibraphone, tom-tom), Michelle Kinney (cello), Elizabeth Panzer (harp), William Parker (bass), Mark Helias (bass).

CONDUCTION NO. 39, Thread Waxing Space, New York City, November 11, 1993. Ensemble: Christian Marclay (turntables), Elliott Sharp (dobro), Chris Cunningham (guitar), Gregor Kitzis (violin), Dana Friedli (violin), Jason Hwang (violin), Myra Melford (piano), Damon Ra Choice (vibraphone, snare drum), Reggie Nicholson (vibraphone, tom-tom), Michelle Kinney (cello), Deidre L. Murray (cello), Elizabeth Panzer (harp), William Parker (bass), Mark Helias (bass), Fred Hopkins (bass).

CONDUCTION NO. 38, IN FREUD'S GARDEN, Muffathalle, Germany, December 11, 1993.

Ensemble: Myra Melford (piano), Zeena Parkins (harp), Bryan Carrott (vibraphone), Brandon Ross (acoustic guitar), J. A. Deane (trombone, electronics, live sampling), Motoharu Yoshizawa (electric vertical bass), Lê Quan Ninh (percussion), Martin Schütz (electric five string cello), Tristan Honsinger (cello), Martine Altenburger (cello), Edgar Laubscher (electric viola), Hans Koch (clarinet, bass clarinet, contrabass clarinet, soprano saxophone, tenor saxophone).

CONDUCTION NO. 37, AMERICAN CONNECTION 4, Utrecht, Holland, May 28, 1993. With the Maarten Altena Ensemble. Maarten Altena (contrabass), Michael Barker (recorder, blockflutes), Peter van Bergen (bass clarinet, tenor saxophone), Wiek Hijmans (electric guitar), Alison Isadora

(violin), Jannie Pranger (voice), Michael Vatcher (percussion), Wolter Wierbos (trombone); Michiel Scheen (piano).

CONDUCTION NO. 36, AMERICAN CONNECTION 4, Amsterdam, Holland, May 27, 1993. With the Maarten Altena Ensemble (s. above).

CONDUCTION NO. 35, AMERICAN CONNECTION 4, Antwerp, Belgium, May 26, 1993. With the Maarten Altena Ensemble (s. above).

CONDUCTION NO. 34, AMERICAN CONNECTION 4, Den Haag, Holland, May 23, 1993. With the Maarten Altena Ensemble (s. above).

CONDUCTION NO. 33, AMERICAN CONNECTION 4, Bussum, Holland, May 21, 1993. With the Maarten Altena Ensemble (s. above).

CONDUCTION NO. 32, EVA KANT DANCE, Angelica Festival of International Music, Bologna, Italy, May 18, 1993.

With the Ensemble Eva Kant. Paolo Angeli (guitar, bass tuba), Olivia Bignardi (clarinet, alto saxophone), Daniela Cattivelli (alto saxophone), Marco Dalpane (keyboards), Ferdinando D'Andria (violin, trumpet), Silvia Fanti (accordion), Filomena Forleo (piano), Pierangelo Galantino (double bass), Lelio Gianneto (double bass), Magareth Kammerer (voice), Claudio Lanteri (guitar), Andrea Martignoni (percussion), Mario Martignoni (drums, percussion), Salvatore Panu (trombone), Giorgio Simbola (bombardino), Massimo Simonini (records, CD, live sampling), Pino Urso (percussion), Nicola Zonca (marimba), Stefano Zorzanello (flute, soprano saxophone, piccolo).

CONDUCTION NO. 31, ANGELICA, Angelica Festival of International Music, Bologna, Italy, May 16, 1993.

Ensemble: Dietmar Diesner (soprano sax), Peter Kowald (bass), Wolter Wierbos (trombone), Steve Beresford (piano), Hans Reichel (guitar, daxophone), Tom Cora (cello), Han Bennink (drums), Catherine Jauniaux (voice), Ikue Mori (drum machines).

CONDUCTION NO. 30, JUST FOR FUN, Nissan Power Station Shinjuku, Shinjuku-ku, Japan, March 23, 1993.

With the Tokyo Ska-Paradise Orchestra. Asa-Chang (percussion), Cleanhead Gimura (guitar), Kimiyoshi Nagoya (trumpet), Masahiko Kitahara (trombone), Tatsuyuki Hiyamuta (alto saxophone), Gamou (tenor saxophone), Atsushi Yanaka (baritone saxophone), Yuichi Oki (keyboards), Tsuyoshi Kawakami (bass), Tatsuyuki Aoiki (drums), Toru Terashi (guitar), plus Yosuke Yamashita (piano), Keizo Inoue (bass clarinet), Motoharu Yoshizawa (bass).

CONDUCTION NO. 29, MAN MADE ISLAND, Xebec Hall, Kobe, Japan, April 11, 1993. Ensemble: Kawabata Minoru (saxophone), Masuda Tomoyuki (drums), Matubara Nozomu (saxophone), Shouji Masaharu (saxophone, shakuhachi), Fikuda Haruhiko (synthesizer), Iuchi Kengo (electric guitar, voice), Sugai Kasumi (saxophone), Sakamoto Etsuko (saxo-

phone), Asakura Mari (saxophone), Matsuyama Hiroshi (electric junk), Nimura Makoto (piano), Asami Mitsuto (alto saxophone), Igarashi Yuuichi (dance), Inoue Keizou (saxophone, clarinet), Yoshizawa Motoharu (electric bass).

CONDUCTION NO. 28, CHERRY BLOSSOM, P3 Art and Environment, Tokyo, Japan, March 28, 1993.

Ensemble: Yukihiro Isso (nokan), Shonosuke Okura (ohtsuzumi), Makiko Sakurai (shomyo, music box), Michihiro Sato (tugaru syamisen), Kizan Daiyoshi (shakuhachi); Haruna Miyake (piano), Asuka Kaneko (voice), Shuichi Chino (computer), Koichi Makigami (voice), Yoshihide Otomo (turntables, CD player), Kazutoki Umezu (bass clarinet), Sachiko Nagata (percussion), Motoharu Yoshizawa (electric vertical bass), Kazuo Oono (Butoh dance), Koichi Tamano (Butoh dance).

CONDUCTION NO. 27, A CHORUS OF POETS, Whitney Museum of American Art at Philip Morris, New York City, December 31, 1992.

Ensemble: J. A. Deane (musician/sound sculptor), and poets from the Nuyorican Poets Cafe/Workshop "The Stoop", featuring: Sheila Alson, Carmen Bardeguez, Kymberly Brown, Dana Bryant, Devon, Carol Diehl, Evert Eden, Mia Hansford, Bob Holman, Indigo, Lee Klein, Patricia Landrum, Tracie Morris, Carolyn Peyser, Susan Scutti, Edwin Torres, emily XYZ, Yictove, David Henderson.

CONDUCTION NO. 26, AKBANK II, Istanbul, Turkey, October 17, 1992.

Ensemble: The Süleyman Erguner Ensemble: Hasan Esen (kemence), Mehmet Emin Bitmez (ud), Göksel Baktagir (kanun), Süleyman Erguner (ney), Lê Quan Ninh (percussion), Bryan Carrott (vibraphone), J. A. Deane (trombone, electronics, drum machine), Elizabeth Panzer (harp), Brandon Ross (acoustic guitar), Steve Colson (piano), Hugh Ragin (pocket trumpet).

CONDUCTION NO. 25, THE AKBANK CONDUCTION, Istanbul, Turkey, October 16, 1992. Ensemble: (s. above).

CONDUCTION NO. 24, CONDUCTION AND RETROSPECTIVE, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, Virginia, February 16, 1992.

Ensemble: Karen Borca (bassoon), Bryan Carrott (vibraphone), J. A. Deane (trombone, electronics,), James Gates Jr. (saxophone), Bob Hoffnar (pedal steel), Cecil Hooker (violin), Taylor McLean (percussion), Myra Melford (piano), Zeena Parkins (harp), Brandon Ross (guitar).

CONDUCTION NO. 23, QUINZAIN DE MONTREAL, The Spectrum, Montreal, Quebec, Canada, April 11, 1992.

Ensemble: Tristan Honsinger (cello), Martin Schütz (cello), Eric Longworth (cello), Michelle Kinney (hybrid broom-cello), Ken Butler (hybrid broom-cello), Helmut Lipsky (violin), J. A. Deane (trombone, electronics, live sampling), Guillaume Dostaler (piano), Mike Milligan (bass), Pierre Dubé (percussion).

CONDUCTION NO. 22, DOCUMENTA: GLOVES & MITTS, Documenta 9, Kassel, Germany, June 14, 1992.

Ensemble: Christian Marclay (records and turntables), Lê Quan Ninh (percussion), J. A. Deane (trombone, electronics, live sampling), Martin Schütz (cello), Günter Müller (drums, electronics), Lawrence D. "Butch" Morris (cornet).

CONDUCTION NO. 21, THE PAINTED BRIDE CONDUCTION, The Painted Bride, Philadelphia, PA, March 21, 1992. Ensemble: The Painted Bride Workshop Ensemble.

CONDUCTION NO. 20, The Knitting Factory, New York City, June 28, 1991.

Ensemble: The Soldier String Quartet and Myra Melford (piano), Elliott Sharp (guitar), Elizabeth Panzer (harp).

CONDUCTION NO. 19, THE KLANGBRUCKE CONDUCTION, Kunstmuseum Bern, Switzerland, June 15, 1990.

Ensemble: Andres Bosshard (taped sound and switchboard), Dorothea Schurch (voice), Daniel Mouthon (voice), Phil Wachsman (violin), David Gattiker (cello), Hans Anliker (trombone), Conrad Bauer (trombone), Hannes Bauer (trombone), Jacques Widmer (drums and percussion), Günter Müller (drums and electronic percussion).

CONDUCTION NO. 18, PAINTINGS AND DRAWINGS, The Alternative Museum, New York City, May 1990.

Ensemble: Marion Brandis (flute), Vincent Chancey (French horn), Janet Grice (bassoon), Shelley Hirsch (voice), Bill Horvitz (guitar electronics), Jason Hwang (violin), Michelle Kinney (cello), Taylor McLean (percussion), Zeena Parkins (harp), Motoharu Yoshizawa (bass).

CONDUCTION NO. 17, GROTE POEL NO. 2, Cultureel Centrum Berchem, Antwerp, Belgium, August 6, 1989. Sponsored by WIM Antwerpen.

Ensemble: Derek Bailey (guitar), Heinz Becker (trumpet), Eric Boeren (trumpet), Dietmar Diesner (soprano saxophone, alto saxophone), Klaus Koch (bass), Yves Robert (trombone), Louis Sclavis (bass clarinet, soprano saxophone, alto saxophone), Julie Tippetts (voice), Sabu Toyozumi (drums), Benoit Viredaz (tuba).

CONDUCTION NO. 16, RENDEZ-VOUS ZURICH, New York, Rote Fabrik, Zurich, Switzerland, July 1, 1989. Sponsored by FabrikJazz.

Ensemble: Günter Müller (percussion), Andres Bosshard (electronics), Christian Marclay (turntables), Wayne Horvitz (keyboards), Shelley Hirsch (voice), Bobby Previte (percussion), Hans Koch (reeds), Martin Schütz (cello), Stephan Wittwer (guitar).

CONDUCTION NO. 15, WHERE MUSIC GOES II, sponsored by and presented at the Whitney Museum of American Art at Philip Morris, New York City, November 15 and 16, 1989.

Ensemble: Arthur Blythe (alto sax, guest artist), Thurman Barker (vibraphone, percussion), Marion Brandis (flute, alto flute, piccolo), Vincent Chancey (French horn), Curtis Clark (piano), J. A. Deane (trombone, electronics, live sampling), Janet Grice (bassoon), Bill Horvitz (electric guitar), Jason Hwang (violin), Taylor McLean (percussion, glockenspiel), Jemeel Moondoc (flute), Zeena Parkins (harp), Brandon Ross (acoustic guitar, octave guitar).

CONDUCTION NO. 14, Chapelle Historique du Bon-Pasteur, Montreal, Quebec, Canada, March 3, 1989. Sponsored by Traquen'Art.

Ensemble: 12 Montreal-based instrumentalists (workshop).

CONDUCTION NO. 13, Maison de la Culture Plateau Mount Royal, Montreal, Quebec, Canada, March 2, 1989. Sponsored by Traquen'Art.

Ensemble: 12 Montreal-based instrumentalists, (workshop).

CONDUCTION NO. 12, Maison de la Culture Plateau Neiges, Montreal, Quebec, Canada, February 26, 1989. Sponsored by Traquen'Art.

Ensemble: 12 Montreal-based instrumentalists (workshop).

CONDUCTION NO. 11, WHERE MUSIC GOES, The Great American Music Hall, San Francisco, CA, December 18, 1988. Sponsored by ROVA Saxophone Quartet.

Ensemble: ROVA PreEchoes Ensemble: Bruce Ackley (soprano saxophone), Dave Barrett (alto saxophone), Larry Ochs (saxophone), Jon Raskin (alto saxophone, baritone saxophone), Chris Brown (electric percussion piano), J.A. Deane (trombone, electronics), Jon English (bass), Jon Jang (piano), Bill Horvitz (electric guitar), BLK lion (guitar, electronics), Kash Killion (cello), Kaila Flexer (violin), Hal Hughes (violin), William Winant (percussion).

CONDUCTION NO. 10, sponsored by and presented at The Institute of Contemporary Art, London, England, November 9, 1988.

CONDUCTION NO. 9, sponsored by and presented at The Institute of Contemporary Art, London, England, November 8, 1988.

CONDUCTION NO. 8, THE FALL CONDUCTION, Club Theolonious, Rotterdam, Holland, October 20, 1987. Sponsored by Stichting Jazz and Geimproviseerde Muziek In Nederland.

Ensemble: Herb Robertson (trumpet), Leo Smith (trumpet), Konrad Bauer (trombone), George Lewis (trombone), Evan Parker (soprano saxophone), Ab Baars (clarinet) Fred von Hove (piano), Maartje ten Hoorn (violin), Maurice Horsthuis (viola), Tristan Honsinger (cello), Jean-Jacques Avenel (bass), Christian Marclay (turntables), Hans Hasebos (vibes), Han Bennink (drums).

CONDUCTION NO. 7, THE FALL CONDUCTION, The Bim Huis, Amsterdam, Holland, October 21, 1987. Sponsored by Stichting Jazz and Geimproviseerde Muziek In Nederland. Ensemble (s. above).

CONDUCTION NO. 6, THE RELÂCHE CONDUCTION, The New School, New York City, February 16, 1987. Sponsored by WNYC Radio's Americathon Festival.

Ensemble: Relâche, The Ensemble for Contemporary Music: Laurel Wyckoff (flute), Wes Hall (clarinet), Steve Marucci (soprano saxophone), Marshall Taylor (alto saxophone), John Dulik (DX5), Guy Klucevsek (accordion), Barbara Noska (mezzo-soprano), Chuck Holdeman (bassoon), Flossie Ierardi (vibes, tom-toms, snare, triangle, woodblocks), Bill Horvitz (guitar electronics), Jason Hwang (violin), Wilber Morris (bass), Tom Cora (cello), Zeena Parkins (harp), Wayne Horvitz (piano) Carol Emmanuel (harp).

CONDUCTION NO. 5, ESCAPE FROM PURGATORY, C.U.A.N.D.O., New York City, February 27, 1986. Sponsored by Plexus. An art co-opera with 200 visual artists and performers and 14 instrumentalists of Systems Orchestra.

CONDUCTION NO. 3, GOYA TIME, C.U.A.N.D.O., New York City, June 13, 1985. Sponsored by Plexus. An art co-opera with 14 performers, 22 visual and multi-media artists, 5 dancers.

Ensemble: Eli Fountain (vibes, percussion), Marion Brandis (flute), Myra Melford (piano), Wilber Morris (bass), Bill Horvitz (guitar electronics), Alex Lodico (trombone), Vincent Chancey (French horn), Steven Haynes (trumpet), Somalia (violin), Jason Hwang (violin), Ellen Christie (voice), Marve-Helen Bey (voice), Lisa Sokolov (voice); J.A. Deane (trombone, electronics).

CONDUCTION NO. 2, THE IMAGE OF NONE, The Performing Garage, New York City, March 27, 1985. Sponsored by The Wooster Group and Lawrence Morris.

A music-theatre work with ensemble: Alex Lodico (trombone), Jason Hwang (violin), Frank Lowe (saxophone), Bill Horvitz (guitar), Myra Melford (string board), Eli Fountain (vibraphone), Wilbur Morris (bass), Alva Rodgers (voice), William Brugman (voice).

CONDUCTION NO. 1, CURRENT TRENDS IN RACISM IN MODERN AMERICA, Work-in-Progress, February 1, 1985. Sponsored by and presented at The Kitchen, New York City.

Ensemble: Frank Lowe (saxophone), John Zorn (saxophone, game calls), Christian Marclay (turntables), Thurman Barker (marimba, snare), Curtis Clark (piano), Brandon Ross (guitar), Zeena Parkins (harp), Eli Fountain (vibraphone), Tom Cora (cello), Yasunao Tone (vocal).

RESUMÉ OVERVIEW

SELECTED CREDITS, 1987—PRESENT
CONDUCTIONS
MUSIC AFFILIATIONS
TEACHING
FILM VIDEO CREDITS
AWARDS AND COMMISSIONS
COLLABORATIONS
FESTIVALS

SELECTED CREDITS 1987 - PRESENT

1995

Composed the music to *Moonfire*, a film by Mark Hammond.

Conducted and supervised the music to *Kansas City*, a film by Robert Altman.

Composed the music to *Slowly This*, a film by Arthur Jaffa.

Composed the music to *Evil Town*, which won the New York Underground Film Festival and the Cannes Film Festival Best Short Film awards.

Workshop performance of *Modette*, a music-theater work in progress, Aaron Davis Hall, NYC.

Workshop performance of *My Darling Gremlin*, by Greg Tate at The Kitchen, NYC.

Conducted the David Murray Big Band, European Tour.

Recipient of a DAAD artist in residence, Berlin, Germany.

Composer/conductor in residence with the Wuppertal Art Orchestra, Wuppertal, Germany.

Conduction #46, "Verona Skyscraper," Verona, Italy

1994

Composer in Residence, Florida State University School of Music

Conduction #41 with The New World Ensemble, Opperman Music Hall, Tallahassee, Florida.

Composed the music to *Sucht Lust*, music/theater work directed by Christoph Marthaler, Deutsches Schauspielhaus, Hamburg, Germany.

Performed the music to "Excesstet," Deutsches Schauspielhaus, Hamburg, Germany.

Conduction #42: "Lust/Sucht/Lust," Deutsches Schauspielhaus, Hamburg, Germany.

Conduction #43: "The Cloth," Verona Jazz Festival, Verona, Italy.

Composed the music to *Take Off From a Forced Landing*, performed by the Dayton, Ohio, Contemporary Dance Company.

Artist in Residence at La Chaux-de-Fonds Conservatoire, La Chaux-de-Fonds, Switzerland

Conduction #45, Théâtre de la Ville, La Chaux-de-Fonds, Switzerland.

Composed the music to "Apfel im Dunklen," a video performance by Barbara Hammahn, Munich, Germany.

1993

Conduction #38, Munich Big Band Festival, Munich, Germany, December.

Composed the music to "Tangible Spirits," a video on the work of Alison Saar, for the Virginia Museum, December.

Conduction #39 & #40 at Thread Waxing Space, NYC, November.

Performed at the Total Music Meeting, Berlin, October.

Conducted the David Murray Big Band at the Saalfelden Music Festival, Austria and the Willisau Festival, Switzerland, September.

Composed the music to *My Darling Gremlin*, a play by Greg Tate—performed at Aaron Davis Hall in June, NYC.

Composer/Conductor in residence at The Angelica Festival, Bologna, Italy, May 13-18.

Composer/Conductor in residence with the Maarten Altena Ensemble, May.

Performed at the Thessaloniki Music Festival, May.

Presented conductions #28, #29 and #30, Japan, March - April.

Performed with the Horvitz-Morris-Previte Trio at the

Hong Kong Arts Festival, the Festival of Perth and The Basement in Sydney, Australia, February.

Composed the music to *Othello*, performed at the Great Lakes Theatre Festival, February.

Conduction #24: "Conduction & Retrospective" at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, February.

1992

Conduction #27: "A Chorus of Poets" at Whitney Museum of American Art at Philip Morris, NYC, December.

Conduction #25: "The Akbank Conduction" and Conduction #26: "Akbank II" at the Istanbul Music Festival, Turkey, October.

Solo and Duo tour of Japan with Motoharu Yoshizawa, including a performance with Min Tanaka, September.

Performed with Cecil Taylor Ensemble at The Saalfelden Music Festival, Saalfeld, Austria, August.

Visiting lecturer and composer in residence at the Music Akademie at St. Pölten, Austria, July.

Performed "Cardinal Points" by Christian Marclay at the Institut für Neue Medien, Frankfurt, June.

Conduction #21: "Gloves and Mitts" at Documenta Nine, Kassel, Germany, June.

Conducted the David Murray Big Band at Condon's Jazz Club, NYC, May.

Conducted The Butch Morris Ensemble at The Village Vanguard Jazz Club, NYC, April.

Conduction #23: "Quinzaine de Montréal" performed at the Spectrum, Montreal, Canada, April.

Conduction #22: "The Painted Bride" and conduction workshop at The Painted Bride, Philadelphia, March.

1991

Performed at the Saalfelden Festival, Saalfeld, Austria, August.

Premiered "Relationships for String Quartet." Performed at the Festival International des Musiques Actuelles, Nancy, France, May.

Performed at the N.Y. Hall of Science for the "Telefonia Satellite Concert"—Transatlantic performance, May. (Commemorating the 700 year anniversary of Switzerland.)

Composed and Performed Neue Kammermusik at the Witten Music Festival, Witten, Germany, April.

Dust to Dust—new release on New World Records, April.

Performed with 11-piece Vanguard Ensemble at The Village Vanguard, March.

Composer Commission, *Othello* by William Shakespeare, directed by Harold Scott, starring Avery Brooks. Premiered at the Shakespeare Theatre at the Folger, Washington, D.C., November.

1990

Performed at the Marantz Music Festival with Futan No Sentaku (Min Tanaka, B. Morris, Peter Kowald), November.

Performer in residence with X-Communication at the

Latin Quarter, Berlin, Germany, October- November.

Composer/Performer, "Spirits of Matera," a commissioned site-specific work premiered at the RAI Audio Box Festival in Matera, Italy, October.

Guest Performer, "Klangdreieck Bern," an environmental music project by Andres Brosshard, Bern, Switzerland, June.

Guest Composer/Conductor, *Improvisation*, a film by Jeremy Marr on improvisation in music for British Television Channel IV, May.

Composer, *Brace Up*, by the Wooster Group, NYC.

Guest Conductor, Earshot Music Festival, Seattle, June-July.

Composer in residence at the Festival Internazionale Montalcino Teatro, Sienna, Italy for the music-theatre production of *Il Presidente Schreiber*, December-January. Premiered at Teatro di Rifredi, Florence, January.

1989

Film scores for *Vida* and *Are You With Me?* Produced by AIDS FILMS, NY, November-December.

"Dust to Dust," a work for chamber ensemble, commissioned by New York America 1989. Premiere performance by the Brooklyn Philharmonic Orchestra at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, Brooklyn, NY, November.

Artist/Composer in residence, Conduction #15: "Where Music Goes II," Whitney Museum of American Art at Philip Morris, NY, November.

Homeing, record/CD release on the German Sound Aspects label, November.

European premiere of Morris' group Spring Quartet, Leverkusen Music Festival, Germany, October.

Horvitz/Morris/Previte Trio Tour, Germany, Holland and Austria, October.

X-Communication performance, Nickelsdorf Jazz Konfrontation, Nickelsdorf, Austria, July.

Swiss tour with Christian Marclay, June.

Opening performance by the Horvitz/Morris/Previte Trio, JVC Jazz Festival, NYC, June.

Conductor for the David Murray Big Band, Atlanta, May.

Musical Director for the ABC Television series *A Man Called Hawk*, January - April.

Horvitz/Deane/Morris Tour, Pacific Northwest, March.

Premiere of "Dice Formula," Greenwich House, NY, March. Commissioned by Semaphore.

Director/Conductor for conduction workshop sponsored by Traquen'Art. Conduction #12 performed at Maison de la Culture Plateau Neiges. Conduction #13 performed at Maison de la Culture Plateau Mount Royale, Conduction #14 performed at Chapelle Historique du Bon-Pasteur, Montreal, Canada, February-March.

"Premature Spring" performed by Spring Quartet, Newton Arts Center, Newton, Massachusetts, February.

1988

"Premature Spring" commissioned by Roulette with funds from the Mary Flagler Cary Trust and premiered at The Kitchen, NYC, December.

Director/Conductor, Conduction #11: "Where Music

Goes," sponsored by ROVA Saxophone Quartet, performed at the Great American Music Hall, San Francisco, December.

Guest lecturer, "Speaking of Music" series, The Exploratorium, San Francisco, December.

Director/Conductor, Conductions #9 and #10 sponsored by and presented at the Institute of Contemporary Art, London, November.

Commission for dance score for *What I Like About Us*, a dance-theatre work by choreographer Fred Holland. Premiered at The Kitchen, NYC, October.

X-Communication Tour of Western Europe, August-September.

Horvitz/Deane/Morris Trio performance at the Pori Festival, Finland, and Nickelsdorf Jazz Konfrontation, Austria, July.

"Berlin Left to Right & Right to Left," a work for six saxophone ensembles, commissioned by the city of Berlin, West Germany. Conducted the premiere performance at the Akademie der Kuntz, presented as part of the year-long commemorative celebration "Berlin, The Culture Capital of Europe," May.

Springer Art Gallery performance honoring the work of artist/painter/musician A. R. Penck, Berlin, West Germany, May.

"Trail of Tears," a work for a 28-piece ensemble, commissioned by the Massachusetts Council on the Arts and Humanities New Works Program. Developed and premiered at Tufts University, Medford, Massachusetts, April.

Commission for the Sound in Motion Dance Company for the score to Dianne McIntyre's new dance work, *Running, Running*, April.

Horvitz/Deane/Morris Trio Tour, Germany and Switzerland, March.

Lawrence Morris-Jerome Cooper Duo performance, Institute of Contemporary Arts, as part of the Boston Globe Music Festival, Boston, March.

Visiting lecturer, Tufts University, Medford, Massachusetts, January-April.

1987

Systems Orchestra performed "Homeing" FMP's Total Music Meeting, Quartier Latin, Berlin, November.

Director/Conductor, Conduction #8: "The Fall Conduction" performed at Club Thelonious, Rotterdam; Conduction #7: "The Fall Conduction" at Bim Huis, Amsterdam, October.

Conductor of the October Meeting Orchestra sponsored by the Bim Huis. Premiered "Impromptus" by Misha Mengelberg at the Concertgebouw, Amsterdam, October.

Conductor of the David Murray Big Band, the International Jazz Festival of Zurich, October.

"Futan No Sentaku" Wuppertal Music and Dance Festival, Wuppertal, Germany, October.

Solo/Duet performance with Henry Threadgill, Cooper-Hewitt Museum, NYC, October.

Conducted Alice Coltrane Ensemble, John Coltrane Memorial Concert, Cathedral of St. John the Divine, NYC, September.

Performance for electric sound, solo voice and cornet, Central Park Summerstage, NYC, September.

Guest conductor, Minneapolis Improvisor's Orchestra at the Walker Arts Center, Minneapolis, May.

MUSIC AFFILIATIONS

Founder/Director of Spring Quartet (flute, bassoon, violin, French horn), Systems Orchestra, and the New York Sea of Improvisors.

Member of X-Communication, the eight-member collaborative group.

Conductor/co-Music Director, David Murray Big Band/String Ensemble.

TEACHING

Visiting lecturer and composer in residence, Tufts University, Medford, Massachusetts.

Instructor of Jazz and Improvised Music, The Conservatoire Royale, Liège, Belgium; Director, Henri Pousseur.

Composer in residence, Florida State University School of Music.

FILM/VIDEO CREDITS

Composed the music to *Moonfire*, a film by Mark Hammond.

Conducted and supervised the music to *Kansas City*, a film by Robert Altman.

Composed the music to *Slowly This*, a film by Arthur Jaffa.

Composed the music to *Evil Town* which won the New York Underground Film Festival Award and the Cannes Film Festival Best Short Film Award.

Film scores for *Vida* and *Are You With Me?* by AIDS FILMS.

Musical director for ABC Television series, *A Man Called Hawk*.

Video score for "Travels in the Combat Zone" video by Doris Chase, text by Jessica Hagedorn. Aired on PBS television in 1983.

AWARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Commission to commemorate the installation of the Lewis Galleries, Conduction #24 at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, Virginia, February 16, 1993.

Residence Grants, Conduction #15 at the Whitney Museum at Philip Morris, from Mary Flagler Cary Trust, Meet the Composer, and the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, 1989.

Commission, "Premature Spring" from Roulette with funds from the Mary Flagler Cary Trust, 1988.

Commission, "Berlin Left to Right & Right to Left" for the city of Berlin, West Germany, May 1988.

Commission/Grant, "Trail of Tears," New Works Program, Massachusetts Council on the Arts and Humanities, 1988.

Commission, Fred Holland Dance Theatre, score for

"What I Like About Us," 1988.

Commissions, Diane McIntyre's Dance Visions, Inc., scores for "Running, Running," 1988; "Their Eyes," 1987; "Take Off From a Forced Landing," 1986.

Development Grant, music theatre program, National Endowment for the Arts, 1987.

Composer Fellowship, New York Foundation for the Arts, 1987.

Awards, *Downbeat Magazine*, "Composer Deserving Wider Recognition," 1986; "Arranger Deserving Wider Recognition," 1980-81, 1984-85.

Composer Performance Grants, Meet the Composer, 1979-present.

Boris Vian Award for Europe-America Big Band 1978.

Commissions, Amy Weiner, score for "The Imaginator" and Dr. Beatrice Zarges for "Chartreuse," 1985.

COLLABORATIONS

Musicians/Composers

Alice Coltrane, Misha Mengelberg, David Murray, X-Communication.

Dancers/Choreographers

Min Tanaka, Cheryl Banks, Beppie Blankart, Blondell Cummings, Fred Holland, Jessica Iwanson, Dianne McIntyre, Collen Mulvihill, Donna Uchizono.

Writers

Javier Barreiro, William Brugman, Alessandro Cassin, Jordan Deitcher, Sandro Dernini, Allan Graubard, Ntozake Shange, Sekou Sundiata.

Visual Artists

A. R. Penck, Marcus Luperts, Jorg Immendorf, Alison Saar, Gretta Sarfaty, Lynn Shelton.

TOURED AND PERFORMED WITH:

Han Bennink, Rhys Chatham, Tom Cora, Harry Dewitt, Johnny Dyani, Gil Evans, Bobby Few, Fred Frith, Philly Joe Jones, Steve Lacy, Frank Lowe, Misha Mengelberg, Charlie Morrow, David Murray, Don Pullen, Allen Silva, Cecil Taylor, Charles Tyler.

FESTIVALS

Festival of Perth, Australia, 1993; Hong Kong Arts Festival, 1993; Istanbul Music Festival, 1992; Documenta, Kassel, Germany, 1992; Saalfelden Music Festival, Austria, 1991, '92, '93; Wittan Music Festival, Germany, 1991; New Music America, 1984, '87, '89; JVC Jazz Festival, NY 1989; Kool Jazz Festival, NY, 1979, '80, '82, '83, '85; Sound Unity Festival, NY, 1984; Tufts University Festival, Boston, 1985; Leverkuszen, Germany, 1989; Nickelsdorf, Austria, 1982, '86, '87, '89; Pori, Finland, 1988; ARS Electronica, Linz, Austria, 1986; Berlin, Germany, 1979, '82, '84, '86-'90; Moers, Germany, 1980, '82; Groningen, Holland, 1978, '80, '82-'87; North Sea (Den Haag), Holland, 1980, '82; Laren, Holland, 1978, '79

On the following recordings, Butch Morris is represented either as composer (com), conductor (con), cornetist (c) and/or arranger (arr).

Butch Morris. *Dust to Dust*. New World Records, 1991. (Com; con; c; arr)
Butch Morris. *Homeing*. Sound Aspects, 1989. (C; com; con; arr)
Butch Morris. *Current Trends in Racism in Modern America*. Sound Aspects, 1986. (Com; con)
Butch Morris. *In Touch...But Out of Reach*. Karma, 1979. (C; com; arr)
Ellen Christie. *The NYC Artist's Collective Plays Butch Morris*. NYCA Records, 1984. (Com; con; arr)
A. R. Penck. *3 + 2 = XXX*. Dimensional Sound Studio, 1983. (C)
A. R. Penck. *Hollywood Blvd. Concert*. Best s.d., 1988. (C)
Peter Kowald. *When the Sun is Out You Don't See the Stars*. FMP, 1992. (C)
Peter Kowald. *Duos America*. FMP, 1991. (C)
Andres Bosshard. *Telefonia*. For 4 Ears, 1991. (C)
Andres Bosshard. *Klangbrucke Bern, Selected Soundscape No. 1*. For 4 Ears, 1992. (C; con)
X-Communication. *X-Communication*. FMP, 1991. (C)
Caetano Veloso. *Circulado*. Philips, 1991. (C)

Hans Koch and Martin Schütz. *Approximations*. Intakt, 1990. (C; com)
David Murray, Butch Morris. *Live*. DIW, 1992. (Con; arr)
David Murray, Butch Morris. *Live at Sweet Basil*. Black Saint, 1985/86. (Con; arr)
David Murray. *David Murray Special Quartet*. DIW, 1991. (Com)
David Murray. *The London Concert*. Cadillac, 1989. (C; com)
David Murray. *Deep River*. DIW, 1989. (Com)
David Murray. *Ming's Samba*. CBS, 1989. (Com)
David Murray. *I Want to Talk About You*. Black Saint, 1989. (Com)
David Murray. *David Murray Big Band Conducted by Butch Morris*. DIW, 1993. (Con)
David Murray. *South of the Border*. DIW, 1995. (Con; com)
David Murray. *The Hill*. Black Saint, 1988. (Com)
David Murray. *Recordings NYC 86*. DIW, 1986. (Com)
David Murray. *Morning Song*. Black Saint, 1984. (Com)
David Murray. *Ming*. Black Saint, 1980. (C)
David Murray. *Murray Steps*. Black Saint, 1982. (C)
David Murray. *Let the Music Take You*. Marge, 1978. (C; com)
David Murray. *Interboogieology*. Black Saint, 1978. (C; com)
David Murray. *Last of the Hipman*. Red Records, 1978. (C; com)
David Murray. *Holy Seige on Intrigue*. Circle, 1977. (C; com)
David Murray. *Penthouse Jazz*. Circle, 1977. (C; com)
David Murray Octet. *Home*. Black Saint, 1981. (C)
David Murray and Jack DeJohnette. *In Your Style*. DIW, 1986. (Com)
David Murray and Randy Weston. *The Healers*. Black Saint, 1987. (Com)
Motoharu Yoshizawa. *Gobbledygook*. 1990. (C)
Tiziana Simona. *Flakes*. ITM, 1989. (Com)
Horvitz-Morris-Previte play Robin Holcomb. *Todos Santos*.

Sound Aspects, 1988. (C)
Horvitz-Morris-Previte. *Nine Below Zero*. Sound Aspects, 1987. (C)
Horvitz-Morris-Parker. *Some Order; Long Understood*. Black Saint, 1983. (C; arr)
Bill Horvitz. *Island of Sanity*. Recommended/No Man's Land, 1982. (C)
Bill Horvitz. *Bill Horvitz Trio*. Dossier, 1985. (C; com)
Curlew. *North America*. Moers, 1985. (C)
Billy Bang. *Outline Number 12*. Celluloid/OAO, 1982. (Con; arr)
Billy Bang. *Sweet Space*. Anima, 1981. (C; com)
Elliot Sharp. *State of the Union*. Zoar, 1980. (Com)
Frank Lowe. *Lowe and Behold*. Musicworks, 1977. (C)
Frank Lowe. *Tricks of the Trade*. Marge, 1977. (C)
Frank Lowe. *The Other Side*. Palm, 1976. (C)
Frank Lowe. *Skizoke*. Cadence Jazz, 197?. (C)
Frank Lowe. *Exotic Heartbreak*. Black Saint, 197?. (C; com)
Steve Lacy. *The Owl*. Sarava, 1979. (C)
Johnny Dyani. *Grandmother's Teachings*. Jam, 1981. (C)
Jeff Gilson. *Europe America*. Palm, 1977. (C)

PRODUCTION CREDITS:

Executive producer: Arthur Moorhead
Producer: Lawrence D. "Butch" Morris
Associate producer: J.A. Deane
Special product manager: Frederick Lonberg-Holm
Digital mastering: Paul Zinman, SoundByte Productions, Inc., NYC
Cover design: Bob Defrin Design Inc., NYC

THIS RECORDING WAS MADE POSSIBLE WITH A GRANT FROM THE LILA WALLACE-READER'S DIGEST FUND. ADDITIONAL FUNDING WAS PROVIDED BY THE NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS AND THE NEW YORK STATE COUNCIL ON THE ARTS.

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