

# Source Letter

A monthly publication with news about the East Village community at large ©2004

Free in The Village

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Priceless Everywhere Else

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**FIRST OFF...** As cabin fever sets in, look thru the plastic on the windows & see that it's staying light out for a bit longer these days. The Super Bowl is over & baseball's spring training starts this month which, whether you're a sports fan or not, is the first "true" beginning of spring & more reliable than the groundhog!

## BLANK MEDIA SALE

### SOURCE STUFF FOR FEBRUARY

- CD'R's .50¢ ea. for 25 or more.
- DVD-R's \$1.40 ea. for 25 or more.
- VHS TAPES from 15 min to 120 min . Pro Grade.
- ZIP DISKS 100 mg or 250 mg, mac or pc format
- CD-RW's \$1.50 ea.



### COMMUNITY NEWS

**GET LISTED!** UPCOMING EVENTS, GIGS, ITEMS OF SPECIAL INTEREST. To submit, Stop by our store @ 331 E. 9th Street OR e-mail us at [santo@sourceunltd.com](mailto:santo@sourceunltd.com). Submissions must be received by Feb. 27th. Inclusion subject to availability.

- \* **HEAR AND BE HEARD...**The next meeting of The 9th Precinct Community Council will be held on Tuesday, Feb. 8th @ 170 Avenue C (entrance on E. 11th St.) at 7 pm.
- \* **WE'RE ALL MAKING A DIFFERENCE** with our ongoing food drive to benefit The Middle Collegiate Church Food Programs. All canned goods go directly to people who really need them. Let's keep it going!
- \* **LEND A HELPING HAND..** EAST VILLAGE VISITING NEIGHBORS provide help to seniors in our area. For info call 212-260-6200.
- \* **College Courses Online...** Interested in taking college courses from home? Find out what courses CUNY offers online. [www.dln.cuny.edu](http://www.dln.cuny.edu)
- \* **20 YEARS OF CONDUCTION..**Lawrence D. "Butch" Morris conducts **BLACK FEBRUARY 2005**, with different musical lineups at different musical venues each day in February!  
Info: [www.conduction.us](http://www.conduction.us)
- \* **CHANGE PARTNERS...**Singer Craig Rubano performs at Helen's Hideaway Supper Club, From Feb. 3 to 27. , with Alex Rybeck at the piano. Thurs.-Sat. at 9:30 pm & Sunday at 7:00. 169 8th Ave. (19th St.) 212-206-0609 [www.helensNYC.com](http://www.helensNYC.com)
- \* **William Electric Black's, CELLPHONES** (a rock musical) at La MaMa Etc., 66 E. 4th St. thru Feb. 13th. Thurs.-Sat. at 7:30, Sun. at 2:30 & 7:30. Info: 212-475-7710, [www.lamama.org](http://www.lamama.org)
- \* **MERRY FORTUNE** is teaching a writing workshop at Poetry Project starting Feb. 24. Workshops will be on Thurs. & last for 10 sessions.  
For more Info: 212-674-0910
- \* **CITYSCAPES**, artwork by Jo Pendola will be shown at the 3 to 1 Wine Bar through Feb. Opening Feb. 10th, 7pm-9pm. 82 East 3rd Street (bet. 1st & 2nd). [www.jopendola.com](http://www.jopendola.com)
- \* **SANTO GIGS...**Every Mon in Feb. with the NuBlu Orchestra conducted by Butch Morris. 10pm on @ NuBlu 62 Ave. C (4th St.). Info: 212-979-9925

### REMINDERS

Attn: Parkers: Alternate Parking is suspended on

- Feb. 9, Wed. - Ash Wednesday
- Feb. 11, Fri. - Lincoln's Birthday (Observed)
- Feb. 12, Sat. - Lincoln's Birthday
- Feb. 21, Mon. - President's Day

#### THE 311 HOTLINE

Dial for Non-Emergency Services such as Complaints about Noise, Sanitation, etc.

# Guest Column of the Month

## On Conduction by Lawrence "Butch" Morris

Jazz has driven the 20th century literally from one end to the other, and it has given birth to many offspring, re-inventing it/self time and again. No matter how many times it has changed, however, jazz has always been a medium for individual expression and collective interaction with its own characteristic spirit, which is swing, or rather the essence of swing. Born from the elements of spontaneity, momentum, combustion, ignition and propulsion (a sense of continuity), this essence has been called the "extra dimension."

The orchestral community has often sought out this extra dimension in hopes of rejuvenating its traditions. Yet for all the orchestral works written in the past century, only a handful have brought jazz and music for orchestra closer together or attained the monumental status that each tradition holds. In an age when the term "interactive" has come to mean "human and machine," it seems reasonable to hope that an acoustic medium of collective interpersonal intelligence could achieve a greater degree of cross-cultural dialogue and trans-social communication than it has to date.

To find a common ground between orchestral and improvised music, I believe one must return to the fundamentals to identify what is necessary for the two traditions to co-exist: that is, the opportunity for improvisers to improvise and for interpreters to interpret the "same material."

As musicians we all speak a common language. We may speak in different dialects, vocabularies, categories or styles, but the language is music, and music, whatever the tradition from which it springs, has certain intrinsic properties (beyond harmony, melody and rhythm). Although these properties may ultimately resist analysis, music will always allow musicians to communicate from vastly differing perspectives.

Is this information sufficient to begin a new era of investigation and collaboration? I believe that the answer is yes!

The most common misunderstanding concerning Conduction is that it is only for improvisers from the jazz or improvised music community. This is not true. Although Conduction was incubated within the improvised music community, it grew not only to encompass the ideas of that community but also to expand beyond them.

In order to maximize the potential of existing and probable musical direction, I needed to be able to make real-time modifications to written scores, to construct, deconstruct and reconstruct compositions—to change the pattern or order of sounds and, consequently, the larger form. The Conduction vocabulary made it possible to alter or initiate rhythm, melody, harmony, form/structure, articulation, phrasing and meter of any given notation. Once this lexicon had been established, it then became possible to eliminate notation altogether to pursue ideas based on collective interactive confrontations for the purpose of constructing composition in real time.

A process of *encounter* emerged to address composition from an interpretive and/or improvisational point of view as two dimensions of continuous territory. The result is a music that can reflect all known and unknown facts relevant to the sonic world while raising cognition, creativity and potential to capacity; a legitimate relationship between a defined compositional logic and collective musical needs that applies to each community I work in.

In its present stage of evolution, Conduction is a vocabulary/lexicon, a process and a product. It serves as a conduit for the transmission of symbolic information. The process motivates musicians not only to render, arrange and construct, but also to evolve their own vision, model and tradition, placing idea with idea; working toward a collective organizational goal with responsibility dispersed throughout the decision-making process. Thus spontaneity, momentum and combustion all work together to produce ignition, propulsion and convection.

To call Conduction an experiment is a grave error. Any time you synchronize the spirit and still give it liberty, you open many doors to the primus, where the intimate necessity of possibility reigns, where we find and realize our individual and collective freedoms.

From the perspective of the conductor, the act of Conduction is the art of *\*enviroming\**: the organization of surrounding things, conditions or influences. My task is not only to illustrate (teach) Conduction in the workshops (rehearsals), but also to observe the cultural, social, and historical potential, both in the individual and the collective, and to arrive at a specific momentary logic that will organize itself into the structures and many substructures that (can) exist in a composition.

Jazz is my heritage, my condition, and my tradition. I have inherited it; I will carry it on.... At the same time, I am advocating an ensemble of musicians from diverse traditions who share a common ground and goal as servants to music, who's aim is an extra dimension that will represent a point where all musicians can create on equal footing.

This common ground is not as untested as it may seem. Indeed, Elliott Galkin, in his *History of Orchestral Conducting*, shows that Conduction and the classical tradition share the same roots. What I learned from this book, years into the development of Conduction, is that "chironomy" existed as far back as 1500 BC, or even earlier: "In its earliest applications... chironomy was intended to indicate the course and characteristics of melody through the use of specific spatial movements. In effect, it served as a substitute for notation. The gestures that were devised at that time constituted the earliest system of visual signs by which musical direction was achieved."

In recent years, Lucas Foss (Improvisation Chamber Ensemble), Leonard Bernstein ("Three Improvisations for Orchestra," Columbia Records LP 6133), Sun Ra, Frank Zappa, Alan Silva, Doudou Ndiaye Rose and Charles Moffett are but a few who have broken ground in this area, with others coming to the forefront in the last 19 years.

After more than one hundred-fourty Conductions, averaging three to five workshop/rehearsal days before a performance, I see only potential: potential for Conduction and for the future of music and musician; potential because there has never been enough time to realize every requirement, or total understanding, within workshop limitations. When I began I couldn't imagine where the music and the musician are now. But today I can imagine light years into Conduction, both as concept and process, and I can envision many more levels that can be achieved.

By no means do I suggest Conduction as an alternative to existing musical-educational methods or styles, but rather the investigation of a new social-logic that can unite and enhance existing traditions, a neo-functionalist approach to ensemble music, a process and a music that stands, more than ever, as a viable *supplement* for music, musician and education. I offer this as my contribution to the extra dimension.

*Butch Morris is a Conductor, Composer & Teacher,  
and lives on the Lower East Side*



**Satch's Corner** Where you can read about some good cd's, books & videos which can be purchased at [www.sourceunltd.com](http://www.sourceunltd.com) through our affiliate program with amazon.com

**AND IT'S DEEP TOO...RICHARD PRYOR** Richard Pryor is the Bob Dylan of comedy, and this six disc box set shows why. From his early routines on, Pryor takes the basic differences between people-- men & women, winos & straight people, blacks & whites, and gives unique, truly insightful comments about what they are and why they exist. He never stoops to clichés or easy toilet jokes and set the bar high for all those that followed. If you've never heard any of his routines or just know of Pryor from the movies, you've gotta' hear this stuff.. It's hysterical, will keep you laughing .....and it's deep too! See you next time on the corner...

**Closing Statement: Be not afraid of growing slowly, be afraid only of standing still.**