

Lawrence Douglas Morris, February 10, 1947, Long Beach Ca.  
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WWW.CONDUCTION.US

**LAWRENCE D. "BUTCH" MORRIS:  
RESUME OVERVIEW OF MAJOR WORKS**

**Fellowships:**

Music OMI Master Artist (Omi, New York, 2006)  
Atlantic Center for the Arts Master Artist (New Smyrna Beach, Florida 2006)  
Civitella Ranieri Fellow (Umbertide, Italy 2001).  
Music OMI Fellow (Omi, New York, 1997)  
DAAD Fellow (Berlin, Germany 1995–96),

**Honors:**

Joan Edwards Distinguished Visiting Professor for the Arts for 2007  
Marshall University, Huntington, WV  
2006 Herb Alpert Award in the Arts  
Ambassador of Music Award 2003 Lunar New Year Festival Committee, New York, NY  
Association for Independent Music Award 2002 Best Mainstream Jazz Recording  
German Critics Recording Award 1987 “nine below zero” by Horvitz-Morris-Previte  
“Boris Vian Award 1980” for Europe-America Big Band,” France

**Grants:**

Meet the Composer, Composer Performance Grants (1979-1981, 1983, 1985, 1986, 2000, 2005) Meet the  
Composer/Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund (1997)  
Mary Flagler Cary Trust (1990)  
National Endowment for the Arts, Music Theater Program (1987)  
New York Foundation for the Arts, Composer Fellowship (1987)

**Affiliations:**

ACA – National Council of Atlantic Center for the Arts – 2007  
CUE Art Foundation – Advisory Council, Words and Music Program – 2007  
Music OMI – Advisory Board – 1998  
TRIBES MAGAZINE – Advisory Board - 1990  
ROVA – Advisory Board – 1987  
BMI – Member – 1976

**Articles:**

XTREME MUSIC – “What is Life” – 2008  
ARCANA II – “The Science of Finding” – 2007  
CONTEMPORARY MUSIC REVIEW Vol. 25 – “Conduction Is” - 2006

**“Nothing compares to (or prepares one for) the magnitude of Morris’ personal vision of  
conduction”..... “Morris brings context to improvisation”. Sam Prestianni, Metroactive Music**

Lawrence D. "Butch" Morris is recognized internationally as the principal theorist and practitioner in the evolution of Conduction®, and a leading innovator in the confluence of jazz, new music, improvisation and contemporary classical music. Mr. Morris's work redefines the roles of composer, conductor, arranger and performer, and bridges the gap between the composer, interpreter and improviser.

Since 1974, his career has been distinguished by unique and outstanding international contributions to television, film, theater, dance, radio, interdisciplinary collaborations, concerts and recordings.

He has worked with countless musicians and composers, choreographers, visual artists, writers, theater and film directors and performers.

As a composer, he is widely known for his notated compositions and has been especially acclaimed for pioneering and developing the art of **Conduction®: (conducted interpretations) is a vocabulary of ideographic signs and gestures activated to modify or construct a real-time musical arrangement or composition. Each sign and gesture transmits generative information for interpretation, and provides instantaneous possibilities for altering or initiating harmony, melody, rhythm, articulation, phrasing or form.**

Employing more than 5,000 musicians in 23 countries and 63 cities, resulting in 22 CDs over a 20-year period, Conduction has amply demonstrated its capacity for cultural diplomacy by uniting communities and serving as a powerful example of a new social logic based on collective interpretation and personal interaction.

**“The universal nature of Morris’ Conduction Vocabulary is obvious....but the unorthodox beauty is what resonates the most”.**  
**(CD Review, April 1996)**

#### **Notable Collaborations**

Musicians/composers: Alice Coltrane, Gil Evans, Philly Jo Jones, Cecil Taylor, Steve Lacy, David Murray, Don Pullen, Christian Marclay, Horace Tapscott, Reggie Workman

Choreographers: Min Tanaka, Fred Holland, Dianne McIntyre, Sally Silvers, Donna Uchizono, Kazuo Ohno, Blondell Cummings, The Alvin Ailey American Dance Center, Meg Stuart.

Visual Artists: Alison Saar, David Hammons, A.R. Penck, Markus Luperts, Jorg Immendorf.

Theater/Film: Avery Brooks, Harold Scott, Christoph Marthaler, Michael Kahn, Alessandro Cassin, Robert Altman, The Wooster Group. Writers: Allan Graubard, Greg Tate, Jessica Hagedorn, Ntozake Shange, Javier Barreiro and Sekou Sundiata.

**“This music is completely surprising and simply overwhelming.....building the most incredible crossings of styles”.**  
**(Neue Musikzeitung, October 1998)**

#### **Composer in Residence, Conductor in Residence, or Visiting Lecturer (selected):**

Princeton University, Princeton, New Jersey, February 2008

RAMAPO College, New Jersey, February 2008

California Institute of the Arts, Valencia, California, January 2007

San Francisco Performing Arts Library & Museum, February 2007

Marshall University, Huntington, WV, 2006

Museo Internazionale e Biblioteca della Musica di Bologna, Bologna Italy, May 2006

Southern Connecticut State University, New Haven Ct, 2006

Yale University, New Haven Connecticut, 2006

Wesleyan University Orchestra, Middletown, Connecticut, 2006

New York University, New York, 2005

HKB Orchestra, Hochschule der Kunst, Bern, Switzerland, October 2005.

The New School for Social Research, New York, 2004 & 2005

Guido Cantelli Conservatory of Music’, Novara, Italy, 2004

Queensborough Community College. Queens, New York; April 2002.

Sydney Kahn Summer Institute at the Kitchen, New York City, 2000.

Istanbul Bilgi University, Istanbul, Turkey, 1998–2001.

Mills College, Oakland, California, 1998.

Taller de Musics School of Music, Barcelona, Spain, 1998.

Emory University, Atlanta Ga. 1998

Borough of Manhattan Community College, New York, 1997–98.

London Skyscraper, London England, 1997; resulting in Conductions No. 81 – 87.  
Manhattanville College, New York, 1997.  
University of Westminster, London, 1997.  
South Bank Arts Center, London, 1997.  
Orchestra della Toscana, Florence Italy, 1996; resulting in Conductions No. 57, 58, 59  
Institut for Neue Musik, Berlin Germany, 1996.  
Mito Museum, Mito, Japan, 1995; resulting in Conduction No. 48.  
Composer/Conductor in Residence: Wuppertal Art Orchestra. Wuppertal, Germany; February 1995; resulting in Conduction No. 47.  
Le Chaux de Fonds Conservatory of Music, Le Chaux de Fonds, Switzerland, 1994; resulting in Conduction No. 45.  
Florida State University School of Music, Tallahassee, Florida, 1994; resulting in Conduction No. 41.  
Composer/Conductor in Residence: Maarten Altera Ensemble. Amsterdam, The Netherlands; May 1993; resulting in Conductions No. 33 – 37.  
Composer/Conductor in Residence: The Angelica Festival. Bologna, Italy; May 1993.  
The Academy of Music at St. Polten, St. Pollen, Austria, 1992.  
Composer in Residence: Festival Internazionale Montalcino Teatro, Sienna, Italy; December 1989–January 1990.  
Whitney Museum of American Art at Philip Morris, New York City, 1989; resulting in Conduction No. 15.  
Tufts University, Medford, Massachusetts, 1988.  
Conservatory Royal, Liege, Belgium, 1980.

**When it comes to redefining jazz improvisation at its Most basic level, Lawrence ‘Butch’ Morris is writing an entirely new chapter. The breadth of colors and compositional styles which Morris obtains from various ensembles is breathtaking.**

**Art Lange, *Pulse***

#### **2008**

Conducted the Buffalo Improvisers at Asbury Hall, Buffalo, New York, 29 February  
Conducted A Chorus of Poets.It at MAT Rome, Italy 19 March.  
Nublu Orchestra Concerts, at Teatro Donizetti, Bergamo, Italy, 15 March,  
And Auditorium di Roma, Rome, Italy, 12 March.  
Conducted Nublu Orchestra Tour of France, Holland and Italy, July.  
Composed “Bring Light”, music for the installation [Swi:t] Home: A Chant by Elena del Rivero at the Corcoran Gallery, Washington DC, July  
\*\*Founding of “New Music Observatory”, Sant Anna Arresi, Sardegna, Italy  
August-September.

#### **2007**

Composed the musical score for the film “L’amour Cache”, France/Italy Co-Production, January.  
Conducted the Creative Music Festival Orchestra at RedCat Theater, Los Angeles Ca. 3 February  
Composed the music to “WARP TRANCE” for the Senga Nengudi-Fittz installation at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, Philadelphia PA, May  
Conducted the Putney School Orchestra At The Putney School, Putney Vermont, 4 May  
Conducted Sketch Salon at Barbès, Brooklyn, N.Y., 6 June  
Conducted A Chorus of Poets At Klean & Kleaner, New York, New York, 7 September  
Conducted A Chorus of Poets At The Living Theatre, New York, New York, 15 October  
Nublu Orchestra Tour: At NancyJazz Pulsations, Nancy, France 18 October 2007, At Sant Anna Arresi, Sardegna Italy, 27 August, At Cemal Resit Rey Koncert Salon, Istanbul, Turkey 24 October, At Skopje Jazz Festival, Skopje, Macedonia 21 October, At International Jazzfestival Saalfelden, Saalfelden, Austria, 25 August  
Guest Conductor of the Odyssey Chamber Orchestra of Krakaow, Poland, November

#### **2006**

Guest Conductor of ‘Angelica Festival Orchestra’, Bologna, Italy May  
Composed “Bring Light”, music for the installation [Swi:t] Home: A Chant by Elena del Rivero at IVAM, Valencia-Spain, October 2006.  
Conducted Marseille Skyscraper at Theater National Marseille, Marseille France, 14 December.

2005

BLACK FEBRUARY: 40 events, 9 ensembles, in 28 days to commemorate the 20th Anniversary of Conduction. New York, February.

2004

Guest Conductor of 'Laboratorio NovaMusica', Venice, Italy and Berlin, Germany, October/November

Guest Conductor of 'Orquestra Foco', Madrid, Spain, January/February

Conductor in Residence at the 'Guido Cantelli Conservatory of Music', Novara, Italy, March

2003

Conducted "Sheng Skyscraper" at The Venice Biennale, Venice Italy, September

Guest conductor of the "Roccella Ionica Festival Orchestra", Roccella, Italy, August

"Perpetual Peace", a sound installation/performance for 20 voices in Yerabatan cistern, Istanbul, Turkey, October

2002

Conducted the Zeitkratzer Ensemble, performing "Grafitti Composition" by Christian Marclay. Neue Nationalgalerie; Berlin, Germany; March.

Sound installation, "Nowhere Everafter." Tribes Gallery, New York City; April.

2001

Master Class/Conduction Workshop. Brecht Forum, New York City; April.

Sound installation, "The Perfumed Garden." Turkish Pavillion at the Venice Biennale; Venice, Italy; June.

Conducted the Ljubljana Radio Orchestra at the Ljubljana Jazz Festival. Ljubljana, Slovenia; June.

Composer, "Folding Space" for voice, 2 pianos, electronics and percussion. World premier in Lisbon, Portugal; August.

2000

Sound installation, "Bed of Sound." PS1, Queens, New York; July.

1999

Nominated "Composer of the Year" by the Bell Atlantic Corporation Jazz Awards.

1998

Conducted the "Tokyo Skyscraper." Tour: Minneapolis, MN; Atlanta, GA; Tempe, AZ; New York City; March.

Conducted the David Murray Big Band. Verona, Italy; May.

Conducted the David Murray Big Band. Moers, Germany; Big Band plus Izmir Symphony, Izmir, Turkey; June.

Conducted the "Holy Ghost" ensemble. Texaco Music Festival, New York City; June.

1997

Conducted the Visions Festival Ensemble. New York City; June.

**“What Morris accomplishes is a work so vast in its tonal spaces and colors, recordings can barely contain it. In Morris' egoless conduction, new tone poems and symphonies are being structurally erected as multilingual towers of expression and collective architecture where tonality is the bendable surface from which the foundation emerges.**

**In conduction — and perhaps only there — is it possible to achieve the feat of a musical community dissolving its separate identities in order to communicate in freedom as an individual unit of creative expression”. — ALL MUSIC GUIDE, 2002**

**“Testament (10 CD Box Set) challenges not only conductors' orthodoxy but the very vitals of music and music-making—no tradition is left untouched.... When the musical history of the 20th-century comes to be written, Testament will provide one of its most essential chapters.” —The Wire**

**Lawrence D. "Butch" Morris DISCOGRAPHY**

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

<i>LEADER</i>	<i>RECORDING NAME</i>	<i>RECORDING LABEL</i>	<i>DATE</i>	<i>POSITION</i>	<i>Conduction Induction #</i>
Butch Morris	Conduction®/Induction(2 CD)	RAI Trade	2007	con-com	135/In 2/1
Butch Morris	NuBlu Orchestra	NuBlu	2007	con-com	
Butch Morris	Laboratorio Novamusica	Galatina Records	2007	con-com	143/1, 143/2
Butch Morris	Holy Sea (2 CD)	Splasc(h)	1999	con-com	57,58,59
Billy Bang	Vietnam Reflections	Justin Time	2005	con	
Laco Tayfa	Bergama Gaydasi	Double Moon	1999	prod	
Butch Morris	Tit for Tat	For 4 Ears	1998	com; con	70
Butch Morris	Berlin Skyscraper (2CD)	FMP	1998	com; con	51,52,54,55
Butch Morris	Burning Cloud	FMP	1996	com; c	
Butch Morris	Testament: A Conduction Collection (10 CD)	New World Records	1995	com; con	11, 22, 23, 25, 26, 28, 31, 35, 36, 38, 39, 40, 41, 50
Butch Morris	Dust to Dust	New World	1991	com; con; arr	
Butch Morris	Homeing	Sound Aspects	1989	com; con; c; arr	
Butch Morris	Current Trends in Racism in Modern America	Sound Aspects	1986	com; con	1
Butch Morris	In Touch...But Out of Reach	Kharma	1979	com; c; arr	
Horvitz-Morris-Previte	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	
Jump Arts Orchestra	The Jump Arts Orchestra Conducted by Lawrence 'Butch' Morris Conduction #117	JA	2002	con	117
Billy Bang	Vietnam...The Aftermath	Justin Time	2001	con	
Diego Cortez	Stuzzicadenti 1997-99	BarNone	1999	com; c	
Taller De Musics	Musica a Metronom 1998	Metronom	1998	com; con	92
Aquarius Ensemble	Aquarius Ensemble	November Music	1997	com; con	88, 89, 90
Various Artists	Vol. 1, #6 / Cond # 59E2	Resonance	1997	com; con	
A.R. Penck	New York, New York	Utopia	1996	c	
Cassandra Wilson	New Moon Daughter	Blue Note	1996	c	
Various Artists	Verona Jazz	NETTLE NTL 001	1996	com; con	
Carol Emanuel	Tops of Trees	Koch Jazz	1995	com	
Charlelie Couture	Dawn Town Project	Chrysalis	1995	c	
David Murray	South of the Border	DIW	1995	com; con	
Various Artists	Sax Legends Vol 1	King Records	1995	com	
Ali / Melford	October Revolution	Evidence	1994	com	
Frank Lowe	Live from Soundscape	DIW	1994	c	
Various Artists	Angelica	CaiCai	1994	com; con; c	

**“...you do really feel you’re at the beginning of a new and exciting musical language” (Gramophone Magazine, April 1996).**

### **Artist Statement**

Jazz has driven the 20th century literally from one end to the other, and it has given birth to many offspring, reinventing 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, propulsion (a sense of continuity), interaction, transmission, and communication, this essence has been called the “extra dimension.”

The orchestral community has often sought out this extra dimension to rejuvenate its traditions. Yet of 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 individually holds. *In an age when the term “interactive” has come to mean “between 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 and identify what is necessary for ‘all’ traditions to coexist. That is, the opportunity for improvisers to improvise and for interpreters to interpret the “same material.”

As musicians, we all share a common language. We may speak in different dialects, vocabularies, categories or styles, but the language is music. Whatever the tradition from which it springs, music 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 the jazz or improvised music community. This is not true. Although Conduction was incubated within the improvised music community, it has grown not only to encompass the ideas of that community but also to expand beyond them.

To maximize the potential of existing and probable music, I needed to be able to make real-time modifications to written scores, to construct, deconstruct, and reconstruct compositions and 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 I established the Conduction lexicon, I could then, eliminate notation altogether to pursue ideas based on collective interactive confrontations for the purpose of constructing composition in real time.

What emerged was encounter, a procedure by which 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. This music demonstrates a legitimate relationship between a defined compositional logic and collective musical needs that applies to each community I work in.

*In fact, Conduction has been successfully achieved not only within Western instrumentation, styles and concepts, but also by utilizing and combining traditional instrumentations from Africa, Asia, Middle Eastern and with contemporary electronic technology.*

In its present stage of evolution, Conduction is a vocabulary / lexicon, form and forum, an analogous procedure of musical representation and organization, and a product. It serves as a conduit for the transmission of symbolic information. The process motivates musicians to render, arrange, and construct, as well as 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. Here the intimate necessity of possibility reigns. Here we find and realize our individual and collective freedoms.

From the perspective of the conductor, Conduction is the art of “environing” --- the organization of surrounding things, conditions, or influences. My task as Conductor is to illustrate Conduction in the workshops or rehearsals. By observing the cultural, social, and historical potential in both the individual and the collective, we arrive at a specific momentary logic. This logic 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 advocate for an ensemble of musicians from diverse traditions who share this common ground as servants to music. Our common goal is the extra dimension --- that point where all musicians 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 B.C., or even earlier. Galkin writes: “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.”

Since the 1950's, Lucas Foss (Improvisation Chamber Ensemble), Leonard Bernstein (Three Improvisations for Orchestra, Columbia Records LP 6133), Sun Ra, Frank Zappa, Earle Brown, Alan Silva, Doudou Ndiaye Rose, and Charles Moffett are but a few who have broken ground in this area, with more coming to the forefront in recent years.

After more than one hundred-fifty Conductions, I see only potential for Conduction, for music and for musicians and musicianship. When I began I could not imagine where the music and the musician are now with Conduction. But today, I can imagine light years into Conduction as idea, concept, and process...There are many more levels to be achieved.

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

LAWRENCE D. "BUTCH" MORRIS

**Morris is knitting a world-wide web. He hews to a pulse that varies like breath and heartbeat, sculpts something rare in real time – something new from pure sound.**

*Howard Mandel, Jazziz*

**Since 1985, Morris has been spreading the joys of “Conduction,” his wondrous conducting system for the spontaneous organization of improvised music. It’s united musicians from all over the world, and created a whole new aesthetic for jazz.**

*Jazziz (Vol. 15)*

**Morris has opened his own door to an improvisational latitude that, if deployed with the discretion he has displayed to date, could be a very important progress point in jazz development.**

*Barry McRea, Jazz Journal*

**Morris’ pacing was so astute that the final appearance of the main theme had the effect of a dam bursting.**

*Bob Blumenthal, The Boston Phoenix*