



Dave Burrell Biography

Distinguished composer-pianist Dave Burrell is a performing artist of singular stature on the international contemporary music scene. His dynamic compositions with blues and gospel roots recall the tradition of Jelly Roll Morton, James P. Johnson and Duke Ellington, as well avant garde composers Thelonious Monk and John Coltrane.

After majoring in music at the University of Hawaii, he enrolled at Berklee College of Music in Boston, Massachusetts in 1961. After graduating with degrees in composition/arranging and performance in 1965, he moved to New York City, where he quickly established himself as one of the most innovative and original pianists, collaborating with the emerging leaders in contemporary jazz, joining the groups of tenor saxophonists Marion Brown, Pharoah Sanders and Archie Shepp.

Burrell's Jazz Opera **Windward Passages**, written in collaboration with Swedish born librettist Monika Larsson, blends opera voices with world class jazz instrumentalists, a 21-piece jazz opera orchestra, dancers and chorus. Seldom has the classically trained voice played such a unique improvising roll as in this important, ground-breaking endeavor. Burrell and Larsson are currently developing a contemporary opera score titled **Listening to Lincoln**.

Burrell's dance drama, **Holy Smoke**, with blue-print by Monika Larsson, is being developed for contemporary dance. **La Vie de Boheme**, Burrell's arrangement of Giacomo Puccini's La Boheme, that he recorded on BYG Records, France in 1969, was recently presented at the Bordeaux Jazz Festival in France with Dave Burrell *Puccini Trio* featuring Giovanni Falzone, trumpet and Paulo Botti, viola.

Dave Burrell appears regularly on national and international radio broadcasts, NPR's Bi-Centennial Tribute to Jelly Roll Morton, **Dr. Jazz**; Duke Ellington's Centennial **Duke and the Piano**; Louis Armstrong's **The Wonderful World of Louis Armstrong**, and **Leonard Bernstein: An American Life**.

Dave Burrell was featured on NPR's nationally syndicated show **Fresh Air**, hosted by Terry Gross. Burrell performed the music of Jelly Roll Morton solo piano, **The Lomax Legacy: Folklore in a Globalizing Century** symposium, along with jazz author and scholar John Szwed, presented by **American Folk Life Center** at the **Library of Congress** and at the **Kennedy Center Millennium Stage**, Washington, D.C. **RAI**, Italy recently aired "Dave Burrell Plays His Songs" featuring singer Leena Conquest and lyricist Monika Larsson.

Recent solo piano performances: Le Mans Jazz Festival, France, Sala Venni, Florence, San Servolo Meeting, Venice, Italy, Berlin Brandenburg Jazz Festival, and his solo piano after hours performances **Dave Burrell 'Round Midnight** at Bimhuis, Amsterdam, Holland. The next weekly engagement at **Bimhuis** is scheduled for the fall of 2014. Recent duos include Leena Conquest: Catanzaro, Italy and Theatre Paul Eluard, Cugnaux, France; Archie Shepp: Duc des Lombardes, Paris, France; Han Bennink: Philadelphia Art Alliance; Silke Eberhard: Berlin Jazz Festival, Institute Francais, Berlin; and most recently, with bassist William Parker at the Sons d'Iver Festival Le Kremlin-Bicetre, France on February 1, 2014. Dave Burrell Trio performed at Casa di Popolo Jazz Festival, Montreal, and Poisson Rouge, New York.

As a composer-in-residence at *Rosenbach Museum and Library* in Philadelphia, Dave Burrell's commissions include "Look Again" - African-American History is American History: **Bill of Sale for a Slave**. (2007), **Syllables of the Poetry of Marianne Moore** (2008), **Western Extension of the United States of America 1811** (2009)

In 2010 Burrell launched the start of a 5 year project at *Rosenbach Museum and Library*, [The American Civil War 1861-1865](#). The first installment, **Portraits of Civil War Heroes**, premiered in 2011, followed by **Civilians During War Time** in 2012, with guest violinist Odessa Balan, and **Turning Point** with guest trombonist Steve Swell. **Listening to Lincoln** with guest soprano Veronica Chapman-Smith and lyricist Monika Larsson to premiere on April 10 and 12, 2014.

Burrell wrote an original score to Louis Massiah's documentary **WEB Du Bois: A Biography in Four Voices** (1996), Oscar Micheaux's 1925 silent black and white film **Body and Soul** (2006). The compositions are featured on his High Two recording **Momentum**. Dave Burrell and Leena Conquest appear in Frank Cassenti's documentary **Billy Holiday Forever** (Paris, France 2012).

Dave Burrell has recorded over 40 recordings under his own name between 1968-to present. Some titles include **High, High Two, Echo, La Vie de Boheme, After Love, In-Sanity, Only Me, Dreams, Black Spring, Lush Life, 'Round Midnight, Teardrops for Jimmy, Windward Passages, Daybreak, Brother to Brother, In Concert, Jelly Roll Joys, Esquisses for a Walk, Live at Caramoor, Changes and Chances, Recital, Expansion, Consequences, Margy Pargy, Momentum, Dave Burrell Plays His Songs, No Fools No Fun**, and most recent **Dave Burrell Conception** in 2013.

Dave Burrell appears on 130 recordings. He is renowned for his pivotal recordings with tenor saxophonists Archie Shepp: **Live from Pan-African Festival, There is a Trumpet in My Soul, Blasé, Kwanza, Attica Blues, Cry of My People, Montreaux One, Montreaux Two, Lover Man**, Pharoah Sanders: **Tauhid**, Marion Brown: **Jubalee, Three For Shepp, Live in Japan**, David Murray: **Hope Scope, Lovers, Deep River, Ballads, Spirituals, Remembrances, Lucky Four, Picasso, Windward Passages**. Other important recordings are 360 Degree Music Experience: **From Ragtime to No Time, In-sanity**, Grachan Moncur: **New Africa**, Sunny Murray: **Homage to Africa**, Bob Stewart: **Here and Now**, and **Consequences** with drummer Billy Martin. **The Inside Songs of Curtis Mayfield** and **Essence of Ellington** with William Parker's Ensembles. Horo Records in Italy recently released a duo recording, **No Fools No Fun** with Ellington-drummer Sam Woodyard from 1979. Dave Burrell appears on the Argentine saxophonist Roberto Pettinato's Sony/Columbia Argentina Records releases **Purity** and **Same Egg**.

A frequent lecturer, Burrell's Master Classes include Strasbourg Conservatory, Tremblay Conservatory (Paris), Conservatoire Municipal (Paris), Guildhall School of Music and Dance (London), Columbia University, New York University, Queens College, Bard College, New York. University of Pennsylvania, Swarthmore College, Bryn Mawr College, Duquesne University, School of Music, Pennsylvania. Brandeis University, Massachusetts. Rice University, Houston, Texas. DePauw University, Indiana. Library of Congress and Kennedy Center, Washington, D.C. Burrell's most recent commissions include Rosenbach Museum and Library, Philadelphia, and Whitney Museum, New York City.

Dave Burrell is the recipient of numerous grants and awards including National Endowment for the Arts, Philadelphia Music Foundation, William J. Cooper Foundation, New York State Council on the Arts, Pennsylvania State Council on The Arts, MidAtlantic Foundation, John Garcia Gensel Award, and the Pew Fellowship in Jazz Composition.

Dave Burrell joined the Steinway Artist Roster (www.Steinway.com) in 2007.