

William Parker

William Parker is a master musician, improviser, and composer. He plays the bass, shakuhachi, double reeds, tuba, donso ngon and gembri. He was born in 1952 in the Bronx, New York. He studied bass with Richard Davis, Art Davis, Milt Hinton, Wilber Ware, and Jimmy Garrison. He entered the music scene in 1971 playing at Studio We, Studio Rivbea, Hilly's on The Bowery and The Baby Grand, playing with many musicians on the avant-garde school Bill Dixon, Sunny Murray, Charles Tyler, Billy Higgins, Charles Brackeem, Alan Silva, Frank Wright, Frank Lowe, Rashid Ali, Donald Ayler, Don Cherry, Cecil Taylor, Jimmy Lyons, Milford Graves and with traditionalists like Walter Bishop, Sr. and Maxine Sullivan. Early projects with dancer and choreographer Patricia Nicholson created a huge repertoire of composed music for multiple ensembles ranging from solo works to big band projects. Parker played in the Cecil Taylor unit from 1980 through 1991. He also developed a strong relationship with the European Improvised Music scene playing with musicians such as Peter Kowald, Peter Brotzmann, Han Bennink, Tony Oxley, Derek Bailey, Louis Sclavis, and Louis Moholo. He began recording in 1994 and leading his own bands on a regular basis founding two ensembles, In Order To Survive, and The Little Huey Creative Music Orchestra. In 2001, Parker released O'Neal's Porch, which marked a turn toward a more universal sound working with drummer Hamid Drake. The Raining on the Moon Quintet followed, adding vocalist Leena Conquest and the Quartet from O'Neal's Porch. Most notable among many recent projects is the Inside Songs of Curtis Mayfield. He has taught at Bennington College, NYU, The New England Conservatory of Music, Cal Arts, New School University and Rotterdam Conservatory of Music. He has also taught music workshops throughout the world including Paris, Berlin and Tokyo and the Lower East Side. Parker is also a theorist and author of several books including the Sound Journal, Document Humanum, Music and the Shadow People and The Mayor of Punkville.

As Steve Greenlee of the Boston Globe stated in July 2002, "William Parker has emerged as the most important leader of the current avant-garde scene in jazz." He is working in many of the more important groups in this genre, some of the most prestigious being his own, i.e. The Curtis Mayfield Project, Little Huey Creative Orchestra, In Order to Survive, William Parker's Quartet and other groups. Mr. Parker is one of the most important composers in our time period, he is also a poet whose words are beginning to be heard in various media: in print, in song and in his theatre piece, "Music and the Shadow People."

In '95 the Village Voice characterized William Parker as "the most consistently brilliant free jazz bassist of all time." However from the beginning of his career Mr. Parker has commanded a unique degree of respect from fellow musicians. In 1972 at the age of 20, Parker quickly became the bass player of choice among his peers. Within a short time he was asked to play with older, established musicians such as Ed Blackwell, Don Cherry, Bill Dixon, Milford Graves, Billy Higgins, Sunny Murray, etc. In 1980 he became a member of the Cecil Taylor Unit, in which he played a prominent role for over a decade.

Mr. Parker has released over 20 albums under his leadership. Not surprisingly, most of his albums have hit #1 on the CMJ charts. In 1995 after years of obscurity as a leader, he released *Flowers Grow In My Room*, on the Centering label. This was the first documentation of the Little Huey Creative Music Orchestra. This CD hit #1 on the CMJ charts and *The Little Huey* began to travel. They have performed in the Verona Jazz Festival and Banlieues Bleues among others. William Parker's new Quartet has hit with rave reviews for both albums "O'Neals Porch" and "Raining on the Moon."

These releases and their success highlight William Parker as an outstanding composer and band leader. From the beginning of his musical career, William Parker has been prolific; composing music for almost every group with whom he has performed. His compositional skills span a range including operas, oratorios, ballets, film scores, and soliloquies for solo instruments. He has also successfully explored diverse concepts in instrumentation for large and small ensembles. William Parker is a poet, with three volumes published thus far: "Music Is," "Document Humanum," and "The Shadow People."

"He (William Parker) is something of a father figure" stated Larry Blumenfeld in a *New York Times* article this past May. He has looked for and encouraged young talent and has been a mentor to some of the younger musicians. Most importantly, for Mr. Parker has been the workshops/ performances for young people that he has conducted, both in the USA and in Europe. This has been for him amongst some of his most important work and greatest successes."

Jason Kao Hwang

Jason Kao Hwang is a composer, violinist and educator, has created works ranging from jazz, classical, "new" and world music.

Asian Improv Records recently released *EDGE*, a CD of Mr. Hwang's new jazz quartet. His chamber opera, *The Floating Box, A Story in Chinatown* (2005, New World Records), was named one of the top ten opera recordings of 2005 by Opera News.

Mr. Hwang's seminal ensemble (1990-2004), *The Far East Side Band*, featuring taiko, kayagum, tuba and his violin, released two CDs of his compositions, *Urban Archaeology* (1996, Victo Records) and *Caverns* (1994, New World Records). *The Far East Side Band* performed at the Beijing International Jazz Festival, Chicago Asian American Jazz Festival, Boston's Institute of Contemporary Art, Whitney Museum, Asia Society, Freer Gallery, Visions Festival, World Music Institute (NYC), Jazz Spektakel Wuppertal (Germany), Jazzgalerie Nickelsdorf Konfrontationen (Austria), duMaurier Ltd. International Jazz Festival (Vancouver), International Festival Musique Actuelle (Victoriaville), and many other stages. Mr. Hwang also recorded with his trio, *Unfolding Stone* (1990, Sound Aspects) and quartet, *Commitment* (1981, Flying Panda). His scores commissioned by the Nai-Ni Chen Dance Company, have premiered at the New Jersey Performing Art Center and Baruch College. His composition *Flight of Whispers*,

commissioned and performed by Music for Homemade Instruments, can be heard on eXchange: China (1999, CRI), a compilation CD of Chinese American composers.

Mr. Hwang has received support from Meet the Composer, National Endowment for the Arts, New York State Council on the Arts, New Jersey State Council on the Arts, Rockefeller Foundation, New York Community Trust, Mary Flagler Cary Charitable Trust, Greenwall Foundation, Puffin Foundation, Margaret Fairbanks Jory Copying Assistance Program of the American Music Center, and the Fund for U.S. Artists at International Festivals and Exhibitions.

As violinist, Mr. Hwang has worked with Anthony Braxton, Henry Threadgill, Butch Morris, Reggie Workman, Vladamir Tarasov, Tatsu Aoki, Frances Wong, William Parker, Sirone and Dr. Makanda Ken MacIntyre. He currently performs with William Hooker's The Gift and Pheeroan Aklaflaff's Malcheck Muzikum.

As an educator, Mr. Hwang has taught at many grade levels. He has taught Asian American Music, a course he originated for the Department of Social and Cultural Analysis of New York University. Mr. Hwang has lectured at Westminster College and Brooklyn College. During his Meet the Composer/ New Residency (1998-2000), his high school students at the Museum of Chinese in the Americas created a CD of music, oral histories and poems, which was featured on WNYC's Morning Edition. From 2002 through 2005, Mr. Hwang worked with Young Audiences/ New York, teaching elementary school students composition and improvised music. Mr. Hwang has also led teacher development workshops for both Young Audiences of New York and Midori and Friends.

Rob Brown

Rob was born in Hampton, VA in 1962. He has been playing the saxophone since the age of 11. He moved to NY in 1984 and since then, has been actively leading groups or working as a sideman with Matthew Shipp, William Parker, Joe Morris, Whit Dickey.

Others that Rob has performed and/or recorded with are Cecil Taylor, Anthony Braxton, Denis Charles, Bill Dixon, Butch Morris, Reggie Workman, Henry Grimes, Roy Campbell Jr., Hamid Drake, Fred Hopkins, et. al, as well as various dance groups, poets, and performance artists. He has toured Europe extensively. He is a 2001 CalArts/Alpert/Ucross Residency Prize winner and has received many Meet The Composer Fund grants. In 2006 Rob was awarded a Chamber Music America New Works grant.