

BLACK FEBRUARY

Music is **AN OPEN DOOR**



**BLACK
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ABOUT

BLACK FEBRUARY IS A FILM ABOUT MUSIC, WHERE IT COMES FROM AND WHAT IT MEANS.



Vipal Monga's first feature-length documentary chronicles an unprecedented series of concerts performed in February 2005 by the legendary jazz composer Lawrence D. "Butch" Morris to celebrate the 20th anniversary of Conduction, his revolutionary technique for live music-making. Butch put on 44 performances in 28 days with 85 musicians pulled from all across New York's musical community.

Along with footage from these remarkable concerts that span a full range of musical styles from big band jazz to funk to electronic and symphonic works, the documentary features some of the leaders of the New York creative-music community, including Henry Threadgill, JD Allen, Brandon Ross, Graham Haynes, Howard Mandel and Greg Tate.

Although the film provides unique insight into Butch's musical process and opens a window onto New York's creative underground during that tumultuous month, Black February is more than a simple portrayal of those 28 days, or the biography of an enigmatic and complex musical legend. It's a film about the scope of a theory that is redefining what it means to make music. More than a testament to Butch's place as a leading figure in the evolution of jazz or a glimpse into New York City's dynamic musical counterculture, Black February is about the creative process and the struggles of all artists trying to distill the purest essence of themselves into their work.



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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. Butch's work redefines the role 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, including the musicians Alice Coltrane, Gil Evans, Cecil Taylor, Steve Lacy, choreographer Min Tanaka, and film director Robert Altman.

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 improvisation/interpretation) 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 26 Cds over a 25-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.



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VIPAL MONGA, PRODUCER & DIRECTOR

Vipal is a filmmaker and writer living in Brooklyn, NY. His earlier, shorter video and film work has been showcased across the United States and internationally. His short documentary about Christian street preachers, *Word on the Street*, was featured at the Brooklyn Academy of Music in 2003. *Down*, a dance-film collaboration with former Dance Theatre of Harlem and Boston Ballet principal dancer Tai Jimenez, was chosen as a festival favorite at New York's Rooftop Films summer series in 2004.



In 2002, he worked with former Ballet Frankfurt principal Francesca Harper on *The Fragile Stone Theory*, which premiered at the prestigious Jacob's Pillow dance festival. He's collaborated with Butch Morris and theatre director Scott Cohen on *My Great Descent*, which premiered at Mythic Journeys 2004 in Atlanta. He edited *Personality*, a feature-length documentary about Bollywood dancers, directed by Vinay Chowdhry, and has filmed videos and a concert for celebrated rock group Arcade Fire. *Black February* is his first feature film.

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ZACHARY LUDESCHER, EDITOR



Zachary is a Brooklyn-based filmmaker and co-founder of Dakoit Pictures. Zachary has edited numerous shorts, commercials, and documentaries, including the Mid-Atlantic Emmy Award-winning documentary *LifeLinkPSU: A Road to Independence*. In addition to his work on *Black February*, he produced and shot the web-series *Brooklyn*

is for Lovers, a sex comedy following five loosely connected Brooklyn residents. He is currently producing *Beer Nation*, a web series that follows the craft beer renaissance from the brewery to the pint glass.

VINAY CHOWDHRY, DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY

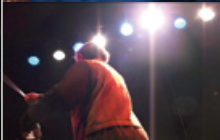


Vinay's first feature film, *Personality*, provides an acute glimpse into the lives of Bollywood background dancers. *Personality* has been exhibited at the MIACC, San Joaquin, and Bahamas International film festivals and will screen later this year in Bombay. A faculty member of the New School University's Media Studies Program and Media Arts Director at Little Red School House & Elisabeth Irwin High School, he holds an MFA from Bard College's Milton Avery Graduate School for the Arts and a BA in Film and Video from Pennsylvania State University. Vinay's work also includes

a 2002 short dance film on the partition of India and Pakistan, *Line of Control*, which expresses narrative through hybridized eastern and western dance styles. In 2009, he launched Dakoit Pictures, a full-service production and post-production company. Dakoit has recently produced the popular web-based series, *Beer Nation* and *Brooklyn is for Lovers*. Vinay lives in Brooklyn, NY.

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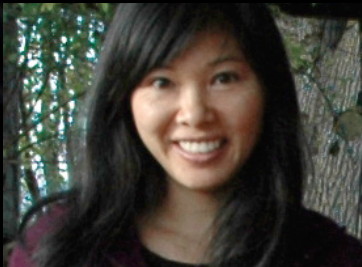
ANDREW MUNSEY, SOUND DESIGN

Andrew Munsey is a Brooklyn-based production/postproduction sound engineer and musician. Through an informal apprenticeship in high school, he spent his time recording music, which eventually led him to a more professionally collaborative relationship with his former teacher, the recording and broadcast engineer Szilard Boros. He received a BFA in Jazz Studies from California Institute of the Arts as a drummer, where he also began his work in postproduction sound for film. Works in film include contributions to *Trickster* (Eliza Hittman, 2008) and *Storm Tiger Mountain*, (Scott Cummings 2008). His most recent studio releases as a mixer include *When a Duck Loves a Jellyfish* (Dirty Squid, 2009) and *Oven Fresh* (Adam Bravo, 2010). In 2005, Andrew began working in television production as an audio tech and now works as a national network broadcast sound mixer.



LINDA PENG, ART DIRECTION

Linda is a graphic designer and photographer based in Brooklyn, NY. She studied graphic communications at New York University and has since worked on several commercial projects, including design and photography work for Corcoran and Vichy Cosmetics. Her photography has been published in several leading magazines and on the web. Linda's prior work in film includes set design for Sherman Lau's independent film *Zoey*.



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LAWRENCE D. "BUTCH" MORRIS

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A FILM BY VIPAL MONGA "BLACK FEBRUARY" LAWRENCE D. "BUTCH" MORRIS
EDITED BY ZACHARY LUESCHER DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY VINAY CHOWDHRY ARTIST ANDY LINDA PENG SOUND DESIGN ANDREW MUNSEY
WRITTEN PRODUCED & DIRECTED BY VIPAL MONGA



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PHOTO: LUCIANO ROSSETTI © PHOCUS AGENCY



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CREDITS

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A film by VIPAL MONGA

STARRING (In Order of Appearance)

LAWRENCE D. "BUTCH" MORRIS
ANDREA PARKINS
GREG TATE
HENRY THREADGILL
GRAHAM HAYNES
BRANDON ROSS
NEWMAN TAYLOR BAKER
HOWARD MANDEL
MAZZ SWIFT
KELLY PRATT
JD ALLEN

CREW

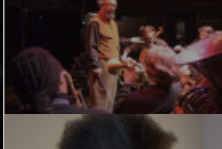
WRITER, PRODUCER & DIRECTOR
VIPAL MONGA

EDITOR
ZACHARY LUDESCHER

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY
VINAY CHOWDHRY

SOUND DESIGNER
ANDREW MUNSEY

ART DIRECTOR
LINDA PENG



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