

When you hear someone crunching a carrot over the phone, or you know from the sound of their tone of voice that they are tired or upset, you are hearing a sound image. You do not say this is music, but know a lot from only hearing sound. If you imagine when you see a bundle of wire standing on end with some metal arms coming out of it, and a flat piece of metal on top of it as being figurative, you might imagine a cluster of clicks as an abstracted crunch, and the sound of a sigh resonant with emotion an abstract kind of singing. Sounds are heard in space, they are near or far away. The curve in time of their approach and retreat, are perceived as geometric. In short, it is natural to compose sounds and hear them as textures. My music merges textures with melodies, permutations of small structures and cadence to create a shifting mesh of sound images. Improvisation adds an element of spontaneity to my music, which is important to me, because it creates a magical empathy between the performers. —EH

ILEX was commissioned by Mutable Music and has been performed in New York and in San Francisco. Earl Howard's unique process of composing for improvisers and his remarkable interactive electronics involved us in a long and rewarding process of working together. Wu Man and Gustavo Aguilar are remarkable virtuosos and improvisors. I'm grateful to all my collaborators in the project for sharing their unique perspectives on improvisation with me. —TB

My introduction to performing contemporary music was through free improvisation, back in 1965 in a group with drummer and electronic music pioneer David Wessel. An early influence was the Art Ensemble of Chicago whom I first heard in 1968, leading to a lifetime association with Roscoe Mitchell documented on a number of CDs, including the recent duo *8 O'Clock* on the Mutable Music label. I first played with Borah Bergman as a guest on his album with Roscoe Mitchell, *First Meeting* on the Knitting-Factory label, and we have performed together since at festivals in Europe and at the Vision Festival in New York. Borah is a true original, with a formidable technique and a fierce dedication to improvised music. I've been a fan since I first heard him in New York in the early eighties. I've long admired the work of David Darling, whom I first heard in the 70s with Paul Winter's ensemble. In 2002 we both performed in J. D. Parran's *OmegaThorpe*, soon to be released on the Y'all label, which led to our mutual interest in working together again. I have always been struck by the deep humanity of David's work, conveyed with a beautiful tone and flawless technique on cello and electronics.



## THOMAS BUCKNER CONTEXTS

solo, duos with Borah Bergman & David Darling  
quartet with Gustavo Aguilar, Earl Howard, Wu Man

mutable 17520-2

THOMAS BUCKNER

CONTEXTS

### Contexts

Thomas Buckner, voice

3 improvisations

1 alone 13:18

2 with David Darling, cello 14:14

3 with Borah Bergman, piano 10:31

and a composition

4 ILEX 27:06

with Earl Howard, composer and electronics;

Gustavo Aguilar, percussion; Wu Man, pipa

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