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**WAYNE SHORTER**  
**NEA Jazz Master (1998)**

**Interviewee:** Wayne Shorter (August 25, 1933-)  
**Interviewer:** Larry Appelbaum and audio engineer Ken Kimery  
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**Shorter:** ...his first three months' royalty on "Sunny"... It was something... He didn't have to play the bass. He said, "I'm not playing the bass..." He played in this club, at a restaurant... They'd shot a long scene in there, and did the...well, the thing that was...the Billy Strayhorn thing...you know, that Duke Ellington recorded... "Something in Paris." [SINGS REFRAIN]

**Appelbaum:** From *An American In Paris*?

**Shorter:** [CONTINUES TO SING REFRAIN] That song that a lot of singers find hard to sing.

**Appelbaum:** "Lush Life."

**Shorter:** "Lush Life." There was some stuff in there. And Shawna(?—0:54) was playing the piano... She was between takes and everything. She was playing...she's...

**Appelbaum:** She can play.

**Shorter:** Yeah. And tap dancing and all that. But she was like sand-dancing, and waiting for things and all that. I said, "Hey, why don't you put her in..."

**Appelbaum:** Did Ben Tucker co-write "I'm Comin' Home, Baby"?

**Shorter:** Ok. He wrote it.

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**Appelbaum:** Oh, yeah?

**Shorter:** Do you remember the mechanicals, “Notice Of Use” thing... There was something about that. The flute player...

**Appelbaum:** Herbie Mann...

**Shorter:** ...recorded it, and he was in court. There was a court thing, and it was hinging on the first recording, whoever recorded it at first, and the Notice of Use... They straightened all that stuff out since then. Even if you had a copyright, the Notice of Use thing could be a roadblock. So he had to prove... He won the case, I think.

**Appelbaum:** Good for him. I hope he didn’t sell the rights to that.

**Shorter:** No. Ben was... He was a buyer. I mean, he wrote that, but he... I said, “How did you get Bobby Hebb...where was Bobby Hebb...?” He said Bobby was not savvy at that time, you know. He wasn’t a businessman. Anyway...

**Appelbaum:** Anyway. Before we start, is there anything you particularly want to talk about, or things you don’t want to talk about?

**Shorter:** I’m talking about... Right now, whenever I do something, it’s not really about music for music’s sake any more. When you’re talking about music and this-and-that, and the sound and chords, and how does something come, and... It’s more like what it’s related to. Like, a lot of young guys, and girls... For instance, it... You can start it rolling right now.

Like, Art Blakey, when somebody was playing sometimes... Back then, in 1959, I used to...somebody was playing... We were in a club, and somebody else was playing, and they would walk up to Art and say, “How did you like... Mr. Blakey, could you tell us what you think?” And he would say to a drummer, for instance, “You have a lot of technique...” With that voice of his, you know, “You got a lot of technique and everything, but where are you? I don’t see you.” This is not a real young, a young-young...relatively young, but still old enough to have... They meant... They kind of knew what he meant. “What do you mean... Like, when Benny Golson wrote ‘Along Came Betty,’ he saw somebody walking...? That’s what you mean?” And Art said, “I’m talking about your...some experiences...”

I have a tape of Charlie Parker talking, giving a music lesson. I don’t know if you’ve heard of that one. He’s giving a music lesson. The guy, he’s talking, and he asked Charlie Parker, “You mean I’ve got to learn all these scales? There are so many scales. The major and relative minor scales and all this stuff?” And Charlie Parker had...pronounced...he said, “Yes, you have to do that, you have to do that.” He said, “Once you learn all those scales, forget them.”

Someone was interviewing Bird and he said, “What are you thinking about when you  
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play?” He said, “Mountains, valleys, streams,” and stuff like that. He didn’t go into side-street or the cement jungles talking all that stuff. But he did... You might expect him to say, “flying like a bird” or something. But that’s as free as he got... Like, mountains and streams, that was on the way to, like, being free of himself or whatever.

The same question was asked of Miles by another young... We were in a club somewhere, and they said, “Miles Davis...” We all walked in this club, and this kid is playing on the bandstand. “Miles Davis is in the house.” So when they had an intermission they came down... It was a horn player or whatever, piano... The guy asked...the little boy...little boy...he wasn’t little...he was maybe 23, 24... “Mr. Davis, what do you think of the set we played, and how I played?” and everything, and Miles took him to the side, and he didn’t loud-talk...you know, denigrate... He said [MILES’ VOICE], “When you played, do you dance...” No. “Do you talk to your girlfriend like that?” [LAUGHS] The guy’s eyes lit up and he said, “I think I...yeah, I know what you... I didn’t think of that.”

From those days, and those scattered conversations that I’ve heard, whenever music was talked about, or art, in Miles’ house... He had those little scores of Shostakovich and...the classical stuff... In fact, Miles wanted to do the section from...uh...one of the classical composers... He really wanted to do it. He wanted Gil Evans to get it, but Gil was sick, too, so... But he had all that stuff. Also he had books on architecture...not a whole bunch, but some on the kitchen table...he had one here, one there... Counting all the many times I’ve been to his house. And I didn’t know, he was in another room sometimes, drawing. So after he passed away, here comes these... He was doing that, too!

So when I do interviews lately, or am invited to do a Q&A thing at someplace, a university, or one of those residences in Europe or something like that, there’s a lot of English spoken... I ask the kids, girls and guys, what are they reading. “What kind of books do you read?” Then later on I’ll say, “What is music for, do you think?” What is music for other than to entertain, to make a living, make a lot of money sometimes, or fame, or something like that? What is it for? And before they answer I say, “what is anything for? What do you think anything...” I’ve been grappling with that, you know. “What is it for?” I want to see what they say.

When I first started talking like that, one of the first things a guy said, “I read auto mechanic... I like cars.” I’m at the university in San Francisco, and Angela Davis was teaching there. At that time... She had a twin sister, too, or has it—and she was there. And we were talking like that... I was talking a little bit like this, back and forth with the audience, and somebody raised their hand. I couldn’t see the...I saw the hand—and Carlos Santana was there. He wanted to take this whole...you know, somewhere. Later on, we talked about it... He and I have been talking on the phone about the human...the development of the humanitarian, you know, stuff...the human aspect of what you’re doing, no matter what profession it is.

Even lately, I’ve been hearing some people getting letters from people who, they’ve known 20 or 15 years ago... I got some letters from a dentist, a doctor, and he said, “The art that  
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has been coming out of the United States, the art that has been trying to survive... He was talking about Jackson Pollock, jazz, maybe even dance. He said, "It's a hard thing. Dance is supposed to be through..." Now they've got this thing, it's like (?—10:15) dance and all that... What do they do? Teach? He said, "This challenge for art to survive, coming from this country, inspires me to become a better doctor and a better husband and a citizen." This was an Austrian. And I heard the same kind of response, even more lately, from other people. Hey, this guy is saying he saw somebody somewhere, he saw a group somewhere and everything like that, and he wants to do this and everything... He wants to be an artist in what he does. What is he... He said he's a male nurse in one of the facilities in Europe somewhere. He's more and more...

So Danilo Perez, I know you've heard about this... I don't know if you heard it. He had a foundation, the Perez Foundation in Panama. Last night, the head of UNESCO was there, the lady and her husband...from Bulgaria... We were in Paris when Herbie was inducted into the Goodwill Ambassadorship, the global ambassadorship role. I was going to...we were in Europe...

Oh yeah. Danilo and I, about a month ago, we did a Skype thing... They had something at the UNESCO in Paris, and we did a skype thing there, and some of the students from Berklee were in Paris, and they were talking about this-and-that, and talking about music, and they played something, something like a jazz thing, and they stripped, they just stripped it and just played the rhythm, and then replaced the jazz with one of Tito Puente's Latin things and everything. Then Danilo spoke, and they were speaking back and forth for just a little...about five minutes... Herbie was there. There was a whole big thing going on there. And they requested Danilo's participation with his global institute. He's President of the Global Institute...initiative...some global initiative, something like that...

We're going to go to Panama in January for his festival. Roberto Duran is... He's there. I've met him. He said, "You need me..." This is a...

Danilo went up in the mountains there. This is what I'm talking about, what music is for. He went up to find some kids, and there was resistance from... Some people wanted the children to do other things, like make them messengers or... Danilo was threatened, you know...among other people who were threatened...

Last night, we were at the Monk Institute, and friends of ours, which... My wife has gone to the Amazon with Sara DuPont. Her initiative to make people more aware of what... It's not just deforestation, but the follow-through of that, going for gold and leaving the mercury and all that stuff. We had some of the top-of-the-line scientists at the event last night, at the Monk Institute thing. Young... There's one from there, from Brazil or wherever...Peru...Enrique...and another one... And they will go in there under threat for their lives, and... It's just BRAVE, courageous. One is only maybe about 33 years old. We saw a film with them on the boat. Esperanza Spalding went with them at the beginning of this year. In a storm... I saw them in a storm in a small, narrow boat. My wife went two times. Also Herbie Hancock's wife went with the expedition. All these scientists, maybe five times, to Machu Pichu and all that stuff.

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We were in North Carolina just before we arrived for the Monk Institute thing. My band... Well, it's not my band. It's that we get together and play. We were at the Wake Forest University, and I'm saying to myself... It's the first time I've been there. It's in Winston-Salem, and the guy who started Reynolds and all that... But the kids, the university... We did a fundraiser for the Amazon, and I'm thinking, "This is a think-tank, man; this is REALLY happening." Kids from all over... It's not easy to get in there. They were saying that the kids, when they go into...what do you call it...to be interviewed, in certain areas, that some of them were shaking... They're brilliant, too, brilliant kids, but still, "Am I going to..."

We did a fundraiser there. Then, at the reception, some kids who were still applying, they were at the event, and they said...the people who were coordinating and all... One of the coordinator's father implemented...works at NASA...implemented the designs and stuff for Neil Armstrong to get on the Moon. She said... She had spent a lot of time there, and she said, "I saw some of the new inductees in their offices." She said, "They had their shoulders down because they had a good time at the concert and all that." She said, "I hope they're thinking it's not going to be all...I'm going to make it through this..." She was trying to say that some of these people, the kids who are brilliant, doubt themselves until they see... They're not fully-formed about what they want to do, but that they see something... Maybe they saw how Danilo handles himself when he's playing the piano, and they hear it...he has this foundation in Panama and everything like that... They get information about us that we don't know about. Maybe some of them heard that I got a doctorate at NYU, at the new Yankee Stadium, with Alec Baldwin!—he got his at the same day and everything. And the CEO of Xerox, the lady, she was brought up in the projects in New York City, and she said she grew up listening...her father listening to bebop... She's still CEO. Oh, I don't know if it's the whole Xerox thing, but enough...there's more than one, I think.

So when we talk... Ok, I played Detroit recently. They honored me there. I don't mean to be talking about myself... The director of the whole festival in Detroit, or enough of it, a portion of it, came to my house and he did an interview, and he said, "What we want to do in Detroit, and sort of illuminate beyond the city limits and all that, is a mentorship mindset." The word "role model" is not good enough any more. You know, the 'role model' ... It's kind of expedient to say, "You want to be a good role model." But mentorship... I was talking to some kids, and I was talking like you solo. I was actually talking to them thinking about their ego, and I was saying a lot of kids, young people who heard the word "role model"...it kind of rolls off the back and everything like that... But there are a lot of young people who might hear the word "mentorship" or "mentor," and look it up in the dictionary, or even if they don't look it up, there's an initial... Because when I was young, I heard the word "mentor"...I was 16 or 17...hearing it over and over... My ego said, "I don't need any mentor!" You think you're special. "I don't need nobody to mentor me. I'm mentoring myself." But as I got more knowledgeable about sometimes the workings of human nature, or looking in the mirror a lot at myself, I was finding out what the mentor is supposed...not be written in stone, but that process of mentoring a student or mentoring whatever...

So I was thinking, I tell them now, sometimes I see some of these faces who have resistance to hearing something that sounds like academia or some clinical Q&A stuff, and they  
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don't want to be there. But after I finish saying what I'm going to say now, they got really, "Yay," and clapping a little bit. I said, "Take the little kid who goes to the parade with his father, and the parade is coming down the street, and not too many people are there, and the kid can stand there and watch the parade with his father, and then the sidewalk gets real crowded, and the parade...bands are still coming, and so many people that they boy can't (or the girl cannot) see. So the father will take the boy and stand him on his shoulders, so he can show the boy what he's seeing. Then he leaves the boy on his shoulders so the boy can tell the father what HE can't see. They liked that.

Then I did that the student is supposed to surpass the mentor, because that's the mentor's wishes. This is like a win-win. You're giving and not losing anything. I said, "Yeah, and you're learning how to know the parameters, or you're getting acquainted with your ego, and ego run wild..." I was saying, like, when you're playing, and you're playing for music, you want to play to...like in the Olympics, you want to show what you can do...

I like that documentary where Sonny Rollins, he's talking about Nica De Konigswater... I mean, it was about her, but he was asked... I don't know if you saw that—that documentary, when he said he was asked, "Why do you play this bebop?" and he said, he doesn't play...he's not playing to show off (that's what he meant) or as to how well they can execute or this or that. He said he's playing this new music to be human. And to be human to me means, when you're in the recording studio you don't need any A&R people looking over your shoulder, or self-appointed producers coming in and all of that stuff.

That's what I'm talking about in the back-and-forth with kids about... Out of that, I start talking about when you play...when Charlie Parker said, "Forget all that stuff that you learned." He was actually saying forget your ego. Because when you're free of that, you have a story to tell. Your imagination is at work, your imagination about playing what you wish... It's to challenge yourself to play how you would wish the world to be.

There's a movie, Humphrey Bogart, the way he walks... Miles is watching it, he's watching Humphrey Bogart, watching it on the screen one time, and he said, "I like the way he walks, man. Maybe I can play that. Can you play that?"

**Appelbaum:** Or the way he throws a punch.

**Shorter:** Yeah, the way he throws a punch. Cagney, you know. Or something you read... The first book I read all the way through, when I was 12 years old, like at recess in grammar school...or lunch hour...was *Water Babies*. We made a recording... Then after I left Miles, here comes Miles out with this album called *Water Babies*. So Miles is retaining, if not... He didn't read that book, man. He's retaining something... Some of the comments he would say to me on the bandstand while Herbie's soloing and all that. He'd ask me, "You ever feel like playing music that doesn't sound like music?" Then the other time, "Can you play as if you don't know how to play?" You have to go to those extents to forget about that thing about being a perfection...to being the one that can do this and do that. "I can play like a violin on the

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saxophone.” I have a pretty good idea that Charlie Parker really listened to Art Tatum a lot.

**Appelbaum:** What makes you say that?

**Shorter:** Because it... It doesn't sound like he was trying to play like a pianist, but there's something about the essence of the harmonic story, that he could do his own...he was going for or working for his own way of creating that warmth and excitement and adventure and phrases and all that. Because when Charlie Parker played...

I was with Ray Brown one time. I played one job with him at the Russian River Festival. He told me he was at Minton's Playhouse, he said he was young, he walked in there, and Charlie Parker was in there and he saw him for the first time. He said, “Man, Wayne, I didn't know what he was doing, but it sounded CORRECT!” So I'm thinking of the word...listening to the word, “correct,” “it sounded correct”... Maybe when you elaborate on a word, carry a word to its Nth degree, “correct” could mean not just musically correct, but there's...it's like a film there, it's like it has like a head...a beginning, a middle and... He had that “once upon a time,” and then... A lot of guys you say, “What are you going to say after you do ‘once upon a time’?” You start your solo... Don't ever start a solo or playing with your handcuffs on.

I heard Dizzy Gillespie somebody... They had a jazz festival in Las Vegas one time. I was with Art Blakey and the Messengers, with Lee Morgan. Dizzy was behind the bar. He wasn't clowning. He was serving... He jumped behind the bar and started serving. Some other group was there, and they came to the bar, surprised to see Dizzy was acting like a bartender... Some of them played trumpet. They were talking with Dizzy, and Dizzy had... He heard them. They tried to push him against the wall to get him to say something about how they had performed. So Dizzy said, “don't try to play everything you know in one evening.” Then Dizzy said... He wasn't joking, but he said, “Hell, I can play everything I know in one measure.” I was wondering if they got... That's like one of those riddles, inverted riddles, something like that. It socks you.

So that has to do with how you behave when you're not playing, too. You're an emissary of the country you come from. You're an emissary... If you're from the United States, you're an emissary... Art used to say ALL THE TIME, “Don't go to Paris...” He wasn't talking to us. He was talking to some other people he had... “Don't go all the way to Paris talking about how good the subway sandwiches in Philadelphia area.”

**Appelbaum:** The cheesesteak.

**Shorter:** Yeah. “Don't be... You're eating in a French restaurant or the hotel or whatever, and keep bragging about how great the subway [sic] sandwich... And about how they treat people. He was talking to someone thick-headed. He said, “you're still on the bandstand when you're walking down the street, and when you're playing...” We played a lot of club concerts then, too. “When you're playing in a club, don't be arrogant to the waiters and everything; we've got to come back here maybe 15 years from now, and that waiter is going to own the club—he's going to be the promoter.” So he was always really cool about Europe and Japan.

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There's something I didn't know about Art Blakey. When I was doing...asked to do certain (over the years) interviews, I caught myself going back about Miles a lot, and Weather Report...Miles... But kind of recently, I caught myself. Wait a minute. I had five years with Art Blakey, and in those interviews I didn't talk about it. But there was something about Art...

Ok. I practice Buddhism. I'll just leave it right there. But Herbie and I are...there's a dialogue that we have had with a president of this Buddhist SGI, Soka Gakkai International. It's going to be in English. First it's going to come out in Japan. But we did a triologue. And the president, his name is Daisaku Ikeda, he said in 1961-62-63, he was telling...it was in Japanese, but translated...

Every time I left Japan... I went to Japan two or three times with Art, and we'd go home—sometimes Art would stay there. I didn't know what he was doing. Daisaku Ikeda knew. He said, "Art Blakey would stay and work with the kids, some kids, with the drums and all that." Then later on, he said... That was back then. These kids now are adults and everything. And they never forgot him. They remember him... Yeah, they remember the Messengers. They're gray-haired people now and whatever. But there's like a laser on Art Blakey. He spent hours, 2 or 3 hours with them. And they said what they learned, just his behavior and his attention to what they were doing, some aspects of it were an attribute to them becoming strong, upstanding citizens in Japan today. They say, "And we thank you for that, Mr. Blakey." Among other... They had other people in...

So I started going back in my mind, and every chance that I get, I go back and remember some things, and when I'm talking about this, and life and music and all that... I saw what I almost missed and then didn't elaborate on it. "I remember the time when Art was doing this," and he did this, and he said this, and he said that... It had to do with your growth and your development. I said, I know now that I was not fooled by thinking, though, even if someone can be sometimes self-destructive, and you miss the real stuff that's coming out of a person... Because you think somebody is self-destructive. Charlie Parker was self-destructive and he was his own worst enemy...

Art Blakey had a governess. Her name was Joelle. I wrote one of the songs called "Joelle." She's from France. When I was in the Army, I got out and then joined the Messengers, she was still the ongoing governess for the children, the young children. She told me, around 1955, she had just started...in 1954-55, very young, she was sitting in Central Park, it was snowing, and there was a man sitting next to her in Central Park (along Central Park West, the sidewalk side, not in the park), and he was coughing up blood in the snow. And he had a package under his arm... (Have you heard this?) He had a package under his arm, a brown paper, big... She was saying, "I'm a governess for a great musician." So he said... I'm trying to remember how this went. He gave her the package, and he said, "Give this package to someone who you think deserves it." She was telling me that, and she went...and came out with the package, and she said, "I'm going to give it to you." She gave it to me. I had just joined the Messengers. It was '59. She kept that package from '54 or '55 or whatever. I opened it. It was brown paper. It was a

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big German violin book, a method book for violin, and there was music paper in there of “Sentimental Over You” with the modern bebop changes written underneath, and a breakable record of Marcel Mule’s... [SINGS THE EXERCISE] She said to me, “I think he told me his name was Charlie Parker” [MIMICS FRENCH ACCENT, Char-lee Par-kehr...] It’s “Charl-lee Par-kehr...” Oh, no. She said, “It must have been Charlie Parker.” She’d worked with Art Blakey, just got in...a flood of history... She couldn’t have absorbed a whole flood of history about jazz and Charlie Parker and all that stuff. She just arrived and got a job working as Art Blakey’s governess, so he’s not going to sit down, “This is all history, buh-buh...” But she got enough...

So I had these packages, and every time I moved, I would lose this and lose that, but it’s still there, ingrained in my memory. It must have been Charlie Parker’s handwriting. He had these changes over “Sentimental...” I just played the chords. It was “Sentimental Over You.” [SINGS REFRAIN] Then I saw these other changes, they were going like Thelonious Monk kind of changes. I said, “Oh, this is bebop!” Then I looked in the violin book, and I saw lines, and I said...

The time I spent with John Coltrane when I left the Army, he had invited me to his house... He had a harp book on his piano. That’s what he was... [SINGS REFRAIN] We were taking turns, just doing things, and he said, “Listen...” But Trane’s mind, his ego... I have another tape of him talking about “Om.” I was at his house. He said, “Don’t go yet.” So I spent the night one time there. He was talking about life a little bit, what did I think about it. “How are you thinking about it?” I wish I could...I wish this could happen... One time he said, “I wish, when people came to...” It was still the club thing then. He said, “I wish when people come to a club and they open the doors, everything is going on, the music is right there, it’s happening right there...”

That was the start of a lot of his recording. [SINGS OPENING OF “Chasin’ the Trane”] There it is! It’s self-produced. You produce your own records. I was hearing that he wanted to do this, and wanted to do that, he wanted to do a production company, he was doing that. He wanted to do some big band, a large... Same thing like I heard about Charlie Parker wanted to go study with composers in Europe and all that stuff. That’s not ego. That’s not...

We’re talking to... I’m going to be teaching once...Herbie and I...once or twice...whenever we can...a day or a month, or something like that...at UCLA, with the Monk... I go there October 3<sup>rd</sup>. Ron Carter already did something... Outside, before the semester started. You heard about the Monk Institute will be housed at UCLA now. They will do a two-year program, and they are going to be getting a real Masters Degree. They have to have a four-year college degree before they even audition for this Monk Master, called a two-year hands-on program thing. Herb Alpert has been supporting this. The whole school, they offer access to all of the departments, for all of the departments to be involved, if asked, for whatever reason, and the connection that the creative process has to do with anything... All of the departments will be glad to support, in their way... They’re saying no doors closed, none of this isolation thing. You know what I mean?

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Because over at USC, they were housing the Arnold Schoenberg Building, and I see Arnold Schoenberg's name there, and... I'm not going to go into politics and all that stuff. Some nice people graduated from there. Jerry Goldsmith, I think, and some other. But that's beyond, I would say, the front-office mentality or...

**Appelbaum:** Can I ask you: What do you think makes a good teacher?

**Shorter:** A good teacher?

**Appelbaum:** Whether in music or anything else.

**Shorter:** I think what makes a good teacher is they're a good listener. See, I'm wishing I could listen now. But since this is an interview with me, I'm talking. But a good listener. As an example. My brother went to Howard University. They say my brother was OUT. Alan Shorter is OUT THERE!! He did one of those term papers, you know, and whatever he wrote, the professor sent the paper back to him and it said...the professor wrote between a paragraph, "What do you mean by this?" Whatever it was. "What do you mean by this?" My brother returned it and wrote, "What do you mean, 'What do you mean by this?'" [LAUGHS]

My wife's daughter, she's in Brazil now... She's producing plays and musical vehicles for New York, and (?—43:46) and all that stuff... When she was here, she did a thing about John Brown, Harper's Ferry. She went to the French-English something school in California, and she's Brazilian, so she speaks four languages now. So she had a paper that she wrote, and it's about John Brown and his raid on Harper's Ferry and all this stuff like that. She went into...her comments into was he right or wrong, "was it right?" and everything like that... It came back, not a lecture, but "this is not what we're talking about here; we're not talking about duh-dah-duh..." So it seemed like it was like, "Don't investigate the resistance, but investigate...not to go beyond..." They wanted to stay with "this was illegal; what he did was ILLEGAL." So your mind is not going to... "Illegal" is still an illusion.

I talk to the kids about fantasy and reality, too. I was saying, "When you play music..." I asked them, "How many people read fantasy and...not just sci-fi fantasy..." But I do hear mostly... I read... I like biographies, non-fiction, and duh-da-duh... So I say, "When you play free, so-called 'free' or try to attack freedom in music, it takes a lot of responsibility to be free. That means you have to study a lot."

This short thing about texting, and somebody saying... Your mother might say, "Put that texting contraption down, and call your girlfriend, call your friend." You heard it on *The View*. The kid said, "What are we going to talk about?" [LAUGHS]

One of the great writers, a few of them, when they started their preface, before their stories, there's Alfred...the Lord Dunciny(?—46:40), and Heinlein... His last book, I have it, I'm going to read it—*To Sail Beyond The Sunset*. Everything he wrote... He was saying that everything he wrote was actually looking for his wife. Even though he was married, it was like meeting her again and again and again.

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The wag-the-dog thing. You get to the wag-the-dog thing. I talk to the audience about, they say there's no such thing as living happily ever after. So this reality, to be REAL... Can you consider that the reality is the fairy-tale and the fairy-tale is the reality? Can you unfold yourself to that?

Or I say, "If you look at a word... If you speak English, you look at a word, just like..." I use the word "ambulance." But not how it looks in a backward mirror. "Ambulance." Or the word "history." And I say it over and over...and over...and over...and over... And then at one point, you don't know what that word means. I said, "That's an exercise in..." Something. I didn't know what it was. But it's an exercise in seeing how something becomes not really real. It's an illusion...it's a tool that you need, but there's a lot of illusions that uses you...the tool uses you.

So dumbing-down is part of that process. Lack of education. Dumbing-down. When you think you're going to create, and you need... I talk about, "You want to create..." But it doesn't take courage to show what you know. It takes courage to go beyond what you know. Because how can you rehearse the unknown? This is where the world is at today. There's no confidence. Scared what's going to happen tomorrow. I said, "We have to create a new singularity in the arts and everything, a singularity where we learn to deal with the unexpected, we negotiate we dialogue with the unexpected; we don't dialogue with something that's supposed to work, with formula, and use that formula to attack...to tame the unknown." I say, "we take the best from the past, and discard what's only a casing, clothing for the...and we use it as a flashlight to shine into the darkness of the unknown." If you need some... That's just one something thousandth millionth of the light that can be associated with the word "enlightenment."

People think they get the rhythm of this without going through the mental... I say... You talk in pictures, and they enjoy themselves.

I'm speaking about talking with people now, because it takes me away from... There's no need in saying, "how do I write scores at home," how do I do this, "What are you doing," "What are the hurdles you have to go through?" "Do you get creative blanks?" and all that. It's really a struggle to challenge the whole meaning of... We call it doing human revolution. Each person...doing the... Peeling off all of the illusionary stuff that we've been hijacked from the cradle. Heh-heh. But we haven't been completely hijacked. Because if we were... We even take these golden words of wisdom from our grandparents. They weren't completely hijacked. Some of the turtles made it to the sea. Some of us...

This is beyond nationalities and everything like that. This has been happening in jungles and everything. "Your baby will do this," dah-da-duh...you're being pushed to do this, pushed into doing that... And some of us escape! We have to for each other. "Why did you escape?" "I escaped for man- and woman-kind." But you have to know why. It takes courage to go into... But you're going to have to study. The people who make a lot of money and hits in pop music and rock-and-roll, who make a lot of hits and make a lot of money inheriting stuff...

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My contribution to this new car was the label. I thought of a name for it. Heh-heh. Still, the first thing you thought of for a name for the car would probably have to go take some time and courage to really study. Not to build a car, but read up on mechanics and everything, and the history of why did they mess with the Tucker...

I talk about resistance, and creating value, and said, “Did you notice...” You can tell you’re on to something creatively when you get extreme resistance trying to stop you from doing something. If you’re doing something called “free” and there’s no resistance, that’s too good to be true. They’re looking at you as a buffoon, you’re a fool, you’re a clown, you’re no threat to what you call the “corporate system.” I say that the corporate system is needed...

In this Buddhism, we don’t deal with blame. We don’t say, “DOWN with Columbia Records and Sony! DOWN with the auto companies. Down with...” They’re resistant to maybe doing the barter system again and all that. For the creative process in all human beings... A taxicab driver has a creative process that’s dormant. It will wake up. Doorman. Everything.

For the funding... We know that the corporate system wants a profit. But as individuals in the corporate system... We say, like, a plane...that’s resistance... A plane needs resistance to take off. So I said, “Think of the principle that the resistance aids the lift of a plane to take off. The corporate interaction with so-called business and creativity... Creativity needs this business, as in the principle of lifting. The corporate people think they want money and power, they want to live, do... They want things the way...we don’t want government involvement, mmm... They can think that. They can THINK that and believe that and live that. But the real function is for them to be...what do you call...a friend... In other words, there’s a word from the Sanskrit. A friend to the development of the whole inconspicuous nature of man- and woman-kind, of humanity, that their function...it’s functioning unbeknownst...

It gets really weird when you get an army to enforce what you want. But still, the function is still there. This is going beyond Right and Wrong and everything like that. There’s a use for it. You need an army to stop some stuff from killing your children; you know, even to protect your cave. But I’m talking about contracts and all that trickery, and the corporate world gets the upper hand with their lawyers on contracts, so they will get everything off the top, and something from the bottom, from the sides, a little from the middle... “We’ll give you 10 percent here.” Heh-heh.

But what kind of jars the corporate world is when I think a creative body of people do something seemingly without their help. “How did they get that far without our money?” Which I think they jumped onto hip-hop and everything almost before... It was going to be too late if they didn’t jump when they jumped. “Hey, we’re missing a whole lot of stuff.” But they’re still thinking the same mindset, “we’re missing the profits.” But by jumping in, they... No one knows all. I’m getting into cause and effect now. The cause and effect is so deep that it’s infinite, and so is appreciation. People say, “I really appreciate you...” That’s on top. That’s superficial. But a lot of people, we don’t know... I’m finding out that when we say “it’s infinite...” But it has a

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function, negative and positive... It's part of a mystical...

Oh, the singularity I'm talking about, too, is, we need a first at this time where every individual in the world becomes soloists or leaders. They lead. This is a process that's going to take some birthing, but we're going to have to become leaders, so that we find out that too many cooks in the kitchen is a lie. Because the kitchen is the whole...it's life. The first time that individuals think for themselves because of study, investigation...but the investigation will be fun. And a good date, a great date, happens when two people are in the moment without knowing it, but if you're trying to think about what you're going to say while the girl's talking, that's a bad date.

So the challenge of being in the moment is what we call... That word "jazz" is not a good enough word for being in the moment, but it suffices... But in the moment is so important to me because I see that the moment is a replica of eternity. You can't have eternity without moments. So the moment is eternity, and eternity is that pathway...it's a pathway strewn with adventure. Life is supposed to be a great big adventure with surprises all the way.

Now, tragedy and stuff like that, we have to STUDY(?—1:00:33) ourselves... Tragedy, when you really look at it, is temporary. Temporary. Play temporary. A lot of people play temporary. Because temporary always resolves. It has a beginning... To me, in Buddhism, there's no such thing as a beginning or end. So, more than temporary is constant. Look for the constant. Create the constant. You are constant. So constant is adventure, open, and... You know how the lemonade tastes just the greatest at the bottom of the glass? That can last. But we cut it off with the hijacking process that has happened with us from the cradle, you know, believe this, and believe that... This is beyond belief.

**Appelbaum:** We need to change tapes.

**Shorter:** Heh-heh. Time out! Crime out.

[END OF CD#1]

**Appelbaum:** In the model we were just talking about, it seems that corporate entities, that have a function, but are not everything, they sort of represent the ego, which gets in the way of stripping away illusion, which is also what you were talking about.

**Shorter:** Mmm-hmm.

**Appelbaum:** So how do you use the ego or tame the ego to strip away illusion and go into the unknown?

**Shorter:** This is by interacting...um...interacting with one another, interacting with the least expected entity...interacting with the next-door neighbor that you have never spoken to, maybe because they're from another country, or they look different or anything like that...but interacting

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with them with... This is the name of the album that is going to come out, that I'm working on now. Interacting with them, and interacting with factions, aspects of life without a net. That's the name of my album, *Without A Net*.

A good friend of ours, she passed away, an actress. She was at the club we played in called...we played a club one time, in a long... Yoshi's. She was there. Her name was Vonetta McGee. She made a movie with Clint Eastwood called *The Eiger Sanction*, years ago. When she left, before she left, I was looking at her and she said, "You guys are playing without a net." And when she left...after four weeks later, she passed away. We went to her memorial and all that. Her husband is an actor, too.

We were with these scientists in North... I'll get to that question. But we were in North Carolina, and some of these scientists heard that word and they said, "Without a Net; is that a song title?" That's the title of the album!

So interacting... I said "beyond belief?" Some people say, "I don't do such-and-such because I don't have any faith in something; I don't have any faith in this; I don't believe in this." So you say maybe if... That's like, "I don't know how to swim." Well, they have to go into the deep end. "Without a net" is...it's the Yellow Brick Road. How do you do that? It's... It's for a businessman to do business as if he has never gone to business school. [MILES' VOICE] "Can you play like you don't know how to play, like you never took some music lessons?" They would call it a gamble without any guarantees.

To convince someone to take the leap without a net, to interact together and "I'm going to see what happens," it would take...it would take a corporate body, and the so-called creative body, to agree on one thing—that there is no net, in reality. They are unprotected, really. And even protection is an illusion. That's temporary, too. Well, we've been protected for millions of years. When someone says, "I want to be wealthy for a zillion years for my children and everything," duh-dah-duh, and I say, a zillion years is like a blink in the eye. It's a blink in the eye.

**Appelbaum:** Not to be people who are suffering.

**Shorter:** Yeah. In the moment beats the blink of the eye. It takes courage to go into that moment. But when you find out that a zillion years of having something your way...a blink in the eye is an ass-kicking that you don't want to go through. Because the ass-kicking is going to seem like it's forever, and some people call that "Hell"—and "Hell on earth." But you don't have to believe that, because it's beyond your perception to accept what you...you know...

Things are happening now to kind of form... Life is forming an answer to that question, in a sense, right now, and if we are smart enough, and the people who are so-called "cool" and "hip" and even people who [DEEPENS VOICE], "I have my philosophy together," people who think they can see this or see that, they're all going to say, "We're in this together, let's..."

I don't think... It may take hitting the bottom of the barrel for humility to emerge in  
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human existence, on a mass scale of human emergence... What is it going to take? Sometimes it takes a single person. They have the songs that “a world can change/with a single man...” It has happened historically, a single person...embracing a single sentence or something like that... Yeah! But then there’s always been usage. It becomes a feudal system again; you’ve got vassals and serfs and lords, and keeping it that way educationally.

**Appelbaum:** But speaking of education, you’ll be teaching, and your students will, of course, ask you, “How do I do this? How do I tame the ego? How can I ignore human nature?”

**Shorter:** Ok. I think you can start with, like... At the Monk Institute, when we auditioned these kids who are there now, the ones who are going to be for the two-year program, at the end we were talking to them, “what are you looking for?” And if we saw... The answers came back, the responses, mostly on... Well, sometimes they can hide it. If they want to use that as a stair-step for their career, “I want to score for movies”... It’s like a me-me-me-me thing.

This time we’ve got... I was teaching, doing some part-time teaching at some place, some institute or whatever, and the other one... I want to make sure that the people who are coming along with us and after... We’re hearing some sincere... One guy came in to audition with the trombone, and Jimmy Heath...the guy walked in in his suit, and he said, “Hey, Wayne, he looks like an insurance man.” But when he played, it had some of that Kai Winding-J.J.-Frank Rosolino stuff and himself, and Al Gray...he had all that stuff in there. Young guy, too. He said... Everybody’s chair went back like that—“whoa!”

I think these examples kind of spell out something about what do you do about the ego. There was a xylophone player from Chile. He played “Sophisticated Lady.” They all played... I had to go to the washroom for a second, and I kind of missed it, and I came back, and Herbie said... He was there. Kenny Burrell, he was one... Herbie said, “Wayne, you...this guy...” He played something else, and I heard what they were talking about. Here comes Jimmy Heath, and he said, “Where did he get all that street stuff from in Chile?” Almost like New York...he has a history... From Chile! And there’s a drummer... The piano did something like Herbie did with his shit! [WHISTLES]

Initially we saw something about... To answer that question: We saw examples of behavior that taught...for that moment... I’m going to go on October 3<sup>rd</sup> to be...in the first classes there, just 3 hours with them... An example of how they follow through about this ego thing. There’s some substantial amount of humility that they can illuminate. I’m going to follow through on that, without baiting. I’m not going to bait them. But I want to see.

These people exist already. It seems like they’re kind of hard to find. But now, the way things are, I think...and to answer your question... There’s more than one kind of people coming out of closets. These people are coming out of closets, Some really thinking people, sensitive, coming out. It’s like, “Is the coast clear? Can we come out now?” And here we were, a nest of scientists, caring about the Amazon, with their lives on the line, knowing that one night...you know, people don’t want them there, like the Mafia, between and the government and all that

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stuff, they... Young. In their thirties, early thirties... I'm saying, "where are they coming from?"

Then these think tanks—that's a big closet. They're coming out of those closets. But it's not just head. Not just head. Because we went to a reception here... To answer the question: We went to a reception after we did the fundraiser in North Carolina, Winston-Salem, whatever. Girls! Of course, saxophones... They had a band. They were playing...

And in Japan... When TWA crashed and my wife passed away on that one, I went right to Japan. Maybe four weeks here, and then went to Japan, and in the club, when they had the Blue Notes in Japan, there was a line of people wanting me to sign their instrument, about... Mostly they were young girls, with horns, alto saxophones and everything.

Danilo just came from South Korea with his wife, Patty, she does alto sax... He said she can PLAY, too! She took the course at NYU, Music Therapy, to get her Masters, and they're home-schooling their children, the children are studying Chinese and everything—Spanish, Chinese, and English. He said that Patricia (her name is Patricia), whose mother is one of the leading neuro-surgeons in Chile... I'm not saying you have to have all this stuff in your dreams and everything, but... They have three children now, and she went to South Korea with her husband, with Danilo, and he said, "Patty is playing, man! She's playing."

John Patitucci's wife is a cellist. Her ego was under... She put her ego to...to raise the children and everything. When John and I talked, he said, "My wife..." Sachi, her name is. She's part-Japanese and everything. She said, "Sachi's got to get back to the cello." So John goes up to Berklee and drives up there and teaches and everything; he's trying to make more room so his wife... People are watching this.

People have to OBSERVE humility. That's how you're going to...is see it... They ain't gonna show it on television. Maybe some good movie that you luck up on. "Ooh, that looks, um, independent..."

For instance...here's something... Daisaku Ikeda, that guy I was talking about, when he was 19, he heard about this philosophy. Someone asked, "That Buddhism you're doing, is it a religion...?" So the actor who played in...he played a detective...it was a comedy... He was at our house here, at a meeting, and someone asked him that question. "The Buddhism that we're practicing is a philosophy which I try to practice religiously." I always tell people, "What's greater than a religion of being alive." Life is the ultimate... You can say it is a religion. But it's the philosophy.

Daisaku Ikeda, he was 19, and he became the President. He's 80-something now. Some of the people he was around, they said, "Gosh, I'd like to be like that; I'd like to have those attributes; he made it all those years..." So this practice is going on in 192 countries now. The person he saw was the second president. His name is Josei Toda. He wrote, as 19...he said, "The intellectual, philosophical tenets and all that, that was not what attracted me to this philosophy. What attracted me was Mr. Toda's behavior." The man before Toda, his name was Tsunesaburo  
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Makiguchi. He was a schoolteacher, an arithmetic teacher in Hokkaido. He got from the first Buddhist writings, the last one, the *Lotus Sutra*, the 80,000-Sutra, the Lotus one...he was checking it out, and he said, "the government is wrong." Tojo and all those guys—they're wrong. They put him in jail. He died in jail. They put him and Toda in jail. A lot of people don't know the history of that.

I've got a history of India... The Phoenicians went all the way around and landed there. And the first recorded person who was enlightened as a Buddha, the name is Shakyamuni... But I'm talking about... I'm not trying to sell something here. But it's like the behavior. It's watching the behavior. When Charlie Chan, in the movies, his son would say, "How did you solve that case, Pop?" And he would say, "simple deduction, my son. Simple deduction." At one of the first meetings I went to, at a Buddhist meeting, they said, "the Western world thinks inductively, and the Orient is deductive." I said, "What is that..." He said, "Well, I lived on 10 South Street when I was a child," 10 South Street in Newark, New Jersey, "and I thought that 10 South Street, Newark, New Jersey, was the whole world. That's inductive thinking. The part of something gets treated as the whole."

I'm going to specialize in orthodontomy in school. You must specialize, specialize. That's the whole. You keep the dots just connected way.

But deductive, they say, oh, this life is a whole, and the parts come into it. You did that algebra problem backwards? From inside-out?

So that was just a way of... So this... Not to think that politeness, being polite, is an indication of having humility. Sometimes, oh, that's just a cover, because say...the Asians doing, "so sorry," being very polite and that, heh-heh. But there is a real something that even historically the Samurai... There's a Samurai, his name was Musashi, he was one of the greatest Samurai, and he stopped fighting, although no one could beat him... But he said he was actually searching for enlightenment. Then he held on with humility... When he said, 'gomennasai,' 'I'm very sorry,' he meant it. I have the movie, I sent for it... great actor...he played in *Grand Prix* before he died... Toshiro Mifune. *Yojimbo* and all that stuff.

So the humility, I think, the answer is that it has to be observed. And asking for it, like... We need more good movies and books calling for it, the cause, and the effect will come out. But it's an emergency now, so we have to exert ourselves...it says "exert yourselves in the way of the Buddha," the Buddha nature...

It's very interesting, the Buddha nature, since it sleeps dormant, but since you call it this name, it comes out.

**Appelbaum:** Can I ask you a question about that?

**Shorter:** Yeah.

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**Appelbaum:** If Buddha is here with us today, and who's to say he's not, what would you like to ask him, or talk with him about, or do with him?

**Shorter:** Well, you know, it's not a person. That's what we find out. They always say there's God, Allah, and Buddha. Shakyamuni was saying he has a...we all have a Buddha nature which could be... He said this almost three thousand years ago. He said it's going to be asleep in every individual now, but it can be brought out. When we ask the question of the Buddha within us, there is a mirror that we're looking at, and this mirror is called the *gohanzen*. This mirror is a reflection of your life condition inside. The life condition... The reflection of an enlightened life condition that we all possess but hasn't... This *gohanzen* is a scroll. It's not something that you worship. To give an example of that, they say it's like a mirror, like a woman... If a woman worshiped her image in a mirror or this paper, instead of putting lipstick on her, she would put it on the mirror. As time goes on, as we practice and we say the name of the Lotus Sutra, we say the name of it... Because the name of the Lotus Sutra is a whole...

In this book, all the words and pictures are contained in the title. That's for people who couldn't read or see...then once they heard the name, they would say the name, and they said some of these people... There were two brothers, the Ichikama brothers, back in... I've learned a lot about Asian history. If you called one, the other one would come. They were ignorant. But they heard the name of the Lotus Sutra, and they would say it. These two brothers became enlightened so fast, they became like helping people and doing... They were like before, "HAI, you want this...you want to help..." Faster than these intellectuals.

In the beginning of... I'll just stop right here. But in the beginning of the one of the wordings of the Sutra, it says, "This portal of...doorway of this philosophy is very difficult for the intellectual, the intelligentsia to enter. But they will." But they don't want to study... I want to study in the libraries and the monasteries. I'm not going to tell you what I know. This is my union. This is my secret. That's Hinayana; the other is Mahayana, of the people.

**Appelbaum:** For some of the musicians you've been talking about today, whether it's Art Blakey or Miles Davis or maybe Joe Zawinul or Charlie Parker...do you think they all had Buddha nature in them?

**Shorter:** Yeah. Oh, yeah.

**Appelbaum:** Does everyone?

**Shorter:** Yes.

**Appelbaum:** Or is it something special about their nature?

**Shorter:** No. You know what? The world... All the universities... Now, here is something that was decreed in the world, that the Lotus Sutra... They decreed, many universities, that the Lotus Sutra was the first historic document...they call it a document...that speaks of the equality of all

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people, men and women, gender, everything. Equality. Before that time, they had...back in India, the men had 500-and-something sins and some other things that they had to overcome, and women had 2,500, and a woman can never be enlightened until she comes reborn as a man and all that. So then Shakyamuni came along and said, "To hell with that! Unh-uh. That ain't that way at all."

But I liked that. I said, "Wait a minute. He didn't write nothing down." In the moment, when it happened to him... It happened to him when he was 19. He was a prince, and he looked over the wall... They wouldn't let him out of the wall. And he looked and he saw people suffering, and he said, "Why is there birth, suffering, old age, and death? Why is that?" He sneaked out of the palace one time and never came back. He came back later, but he was 92 when he died, and he didn't... His mother and wife, Yashodhara, they all thought, "let's do it together." So it's all very mystical.

But the humanity, it points... Oh, man. I got some stuff with scientists. They talk about... I've got Stephen Hawking's stuff, where he talks about the Universe created itself. Did you interview that one? Heh-heh. But he's bringing all the other scientists into it. He's bringing what they have arrived at, what they accomplished, and then he starts, "the universe created itself." I have a tape of him talking, side A and side B, and when I put Side B on he starts saying, "Are there boundaries in space?" I turned it off and said I was going to hear that one later!

**Appelbaum:** What do you think the answer to that question is?

**Shorter:** There are no boundaries. There are no boundaries. But I made a record with a guitarist from Japan, and his friend used to bring Stephen Hawking to Japan, Tokyo, from Oxford or whatever, to do lectures with the wheelchair and all that stuff. This guitarist made a record and asked me to play on the record with him, and he said, "Oh, by the way, I got Dr. Hawking; he is going to open the record for us." So I have one at home. It's on Toshiba. Stephen Hawking opens the record. He says, "There are at least 200 million-billion-whatever stars in our galaxy," and he goes on, and then the music starts... We went to Nathan East's studio to record something, the overdubs, and... The guitarist is married to a great actress in Japan. She was there. When he was recording (he had, like, a partition, glass and all that), he jumped, and she said, "He hears it." I said, "Hears what?" He told me that when he lived in Hawaii, he was...two hours...he can't account for two hours... He was sleeping upstairs... He has an upstairs and downstairs duplex. He was sleeping, and he woke up in the morning, and all his bedclothes and sheets were at the bottom of some stairs. He can't account for two hours. He has an indentation here, here, and behind his ears. He would hear something, DING-A-LING-A-LINGA... While he was recording, he heard. So I got a piece of music paper, and I said, "Let's write it down." I wrote it down, the notes. Then it was my turn to record and I played those notes. It's still on the record, within there. He's in Japan now with his wife.

He used to go on expeditions with Whitney Streiber, who did *Communion* and all those. He and Whitney Streiber went to the house that Tesla used to live in, New York, the apartment building, down... They found in the basement part of the electric coil that Tesla sat in the middle. For additional information contact the Archives Center at 202.633.3270 or [archivescenter@si.edu](mailto:archivescenter@si.edu)



of, in the electrical storm. Then he asked me to go with him to Alaska, to the DEW Line (I was DEW Line when I was in the Army) to witness the Aurora Borealis with Whitney Streiber and some other scientists. But I couldn't go. I was going on the road. Then he got married and moved to Japan.

I'm going to Japan in March, and I think he'll... When we go to Japan, we always get a cake from her. She's a well-known actress there. He's settled down. They have two children. He says he's always watching...he's measuring his daughter's waist to see if...checking her out as she grows. Her name is Monet(?—30:28). He says, "I'm checking out Monet(?)." And the other one, too. It's, "I'm checking..." "Are you still checking them?" "Yeah." "Ok."

So it's a very interesting... Listen! The guy has to come and... This is part of the things that motivate the story you tell. When I was 18, there was a union guy. He used to collect at the end of the week and all that. One Sunday, he knocked on our door... Yeah, it was a Sunday. Day off. There he is, standing there, the union guy. I say, "What's with the union guy?" He had a valise, a big valise. He said, "I have a proposition." He opened the valise. My mother let him in; we knew his name and everything. We had a round kitchen table, and he opened this valise and took out this blueprint, and put it on the table, and it was round. It had all these...I was 18...the markings and everything, like equations. Later on, they were like the word "equation"... I said, "What is this?" He said, "Sarah Vaughan was from Newark. James Moody..." James lived down the street from me. I didn't know. I was 15. I had no idea to become a musician. I didn't know he lived down the street. His sister was in grammar school with me. Sat right over there. She was Vivian Moody. He said, "I want all the people to get together and see if we can get a concert, and raise enough money to build this." I said, "To build it?" My mother was talking to him, "Why do you want to build this?" He said, "So we can go home."

He talked, and he talked... I'm trying to be... Because I like science fiction. I got fresh and I said, "How does the thing go?" He said, "by dividing the magnetic lines of force at right angles." Later on, when I went to NYU... He finally left and everything.

I'll tell you something else strange, too. I had Doctor Odradner(?—32:42) in physical science. He worked on the first cyclotron at Columbia. I'm sitting there, and Lou Gossett is sitting next to me in class. I raised, "Doctor..." He's talking about something electromagnetic... I said, "Dr. Odradner(?), what does it mean to divide lines of force at right angles?" He said, "Who you been talking to? See me after class." And after class, he said, "You know, if we could do that, we could put Mobil, Texaco, all of them out of business. But we don't even know what electricity is yet."

Before Walter Davis died... Do you know Walter Davis? He used to make his own clothes and everything. He made suits and everything. He cured himself of this-and-that. He gets on the phone with me and he said, "Wayne?" He said, "I'm ready." I said, "what do you mean?" "I'm ready to build this spacecraft. We've got to build this spacecraft." That's where I'm at, too I said, "Ok, let's build it. How are we going to do it?" He said, "We're going to get some people together, we're going to get some money, we're going to do some fundraising, and we're going

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to build this.” He said, “I’ve got the plans.” Then he passed away. That was odd. After all that time. He never went to class, he and his twin brother, in Orange, New Jersey—East Orange. They’d just go take the final exams. He would take Bud Powell’s place when Bud couldn’t make it.

This is... You don’t know. So there’s a lot of... When somebody is playing now, I’m almost demanding... I don’t want to ask them. I want to see what kind of story you’re telling me. “You got a story?” Even one made up, or something that influences your contribution to the mystery of us. The mystery of us is a great adventure. The quest...the pursuit of the constant... Don’t let the temporaries fool you!

When I signed some papers to take my mother’s ashes and my wife’s ashes...no, we did that in Florida...my brother’s ashes to a place out of the country, the man who signed the papers, he signed the papers... I’m standing at the desk. He’s Japanese. In California. Then he got up. He had the white shirt on. He said, “Want to do some exercise with me?” Like in Japan, how they do it. The whole office. I said, “Ok.” We did about five minutes of that. He said, “Thank you.” As I was leaving, I went to the elevator, somebody in the elevator said, “He just lost his wife five days ago. He knows what’s going on in your... He’s showing you something.” He was born in this philosophy. That’s why. Ok? He knows about the temporary and the constant. He’s going to see his wife. He says his wife is on vacation.

It’s serious, man! It’s ok!

So that... Some writers have been daring... Some reviews just lately... In Detroit, someone wrote, these guys, Danilo all of them, are reaching for the impossible. So I’m saying, “Why not?” If you can do that without looking like egomaniacs on the stage, go for it, because you’re going to do that undressed. You have to be ready to forget all your foundation. Don’t be showing off your musical foundation, “I studied this and I know this...” If there’s a train wreck, let the train wreck...show the audience struggle. Don’t be ashamed. Just show some struggle. You’re reaching and you can’t do it, you’re going to struggle. Then in the struggle show victory. Then you’re going to break through it! Then if they get it, they say, “Wow, that stuff you guys were going...” Then they say, “Mmmm...I was with you... URGGHHHH!!!” That’s what I want to do with this... A few people do that.

Herbie went on a tour with Lang Lang. He said in the dressing room, four classical pianists, kids, came back, Asian, and they said, “We’re improvising now.” They said, “We’re playing jazz... We do that and...” There was a little girl sitting in the front, a violinist. She was an American girl, and her mother, after...in Marciac...no, in the south of France... The little girl was standing there after we played, and the girl started talking, and the mother put her hand over her mouth, like, “speak when you’re spoken to.” The girl said, “that’s all right, Mommy.” And she looked right straight at us and she said, “I know what you’re doing.” She had a little violin under her arm. “I know what you’re doing!”

Dudamel, he’s the Director of the L.A. Phil, he’s going out with the Simon Bolivar  
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Sistema, young people... Have you heard the Sistema do the Shostakovich dance?! It's on your iPad. Oh, man! I'm telling you. Then it's the Fifth... They're 17-18-19 years old now. Danilo is going to play Carnegie Hall with some of them, maybe 16 of them, from the Dudamel...part of that orchestra.

I heard Herbie play *Rhapsody in Blue* at the Disney Hall with the L.A. Phil, and Dudamel conducted something before that from South America [SINGS RAPID-FIRE REFRAIN], and he conducted the *Rhapsody in Blue*, and when they finished... I'm up in the balcony...not the balcony, but I was situated... They walked off-stage like buddies, and they were talking. Later on, we went to the...they had a state-of-the-art... They raised a lot of money. It was a fundraiser, about \$3 or \$4 million. They had a Folies Bergere thing, a show, and a group on the stage doing "Thriller" and this-and-that. We had the table together, with Herbie, his wife, my wife, Frank Gehry, who designed the place, Dudamel, and John Williams, and his daughter. Someone asked, "What were you and Herbie talking about when you walked off the stage?" Dudamel said, "Let's go boogie." So John Williams got up... I thought he was going to leave. I said, "Ok, you're going to leave now?" He said, "No, I'm going to boogie." He went to start dancing with his daughter, and Dudamel was dancing with his wife. I said, "There's a..."

I always say, "the wheel is turning." When I was in Ann Arbor, Michigan, it was a Weather Report date... We were...what do you call it...we had a promoter, a lady there... I walked by in the hallway...there was a rehearsal going on, somebody was doing *Daphnis and Chloe*, a small chamber... Behind the door, they were doing like the first couple of bars, 4 or 5 bars. Then something different was going on. So the lady, the promoter, said, "My daughter, plays the french horn in that group; let's open the door a little bit and see what they're doing." She opened the door. She said, "Oh, what they're doing is practicing improvising in between measures."

They're practicing improvising. So in Boston now... There's things happening little by little where entire large groups and orchestras, they are entertaining improvisational...improvising in baby steps... Improvising. There's some way you can have, whether it's strings or... The people furthest away from each other, you can hear each other immediately. But they are going through an ear training. It's a dialogue where the development of improvising, and then reading music, and then another segment where the art of improvising, not with finality, not arriving somewhere, but reaching, and in the process you throw out the window, "I don't improvise; I can't sing..." You sing; you don't sing. Or you're supposed to go to sleep at the ballet. You're supposed to go to sleep at the opera. Throw all that out. Unh-uh. If the orchestra wakes up to new things, everybody else is going to wake up.

I've been working with the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, too. No conductor. That's in January at Carnegie Hall. I've been commissioned to write an extensive piece for the L.A. Phil. It's extensive, this thing. It's a piece called called "Gaya, The Planet Gaya," with Esperanza Spalding, she's going to do the libretto, and the quartet—it's all together. That's going to be done at Disney Hall the first week or second week in February. Then the Detroit...the Nashville... They're partnering with the commission... I think they want to do it in Washington, too. Four or more orchestras, doing the same thing at appointed times...appointed, but, you  
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know...

So we're pulling all the stops out. Danilo's writing. Let's get everyone in there. We need LOTS of people. I would say at the meetings, "We need more novelists, filmmakers, whatever...independent..." We need more of the blood and VEINS and everything of... We need more of that. We need more of the dreamers. Make them dreams come true. I don't care how old you are. I don't care WHAT age? "It's too late for me." What did you guys do when you went out... For older people. What did you do when you went out to play when you were kids, and you went back home and your mother would ask you, "What were you doing?" They'd say "Nothing. Oh, nothing. Oh, we're playing." So all these psychologists, they look at the whole thing different. They say play is very important. Psychology 101.

But that...that thing... Trane was playing, when they first started going, he was going DUH-DE-DIT, DOO-DA-DAH-DEH, DOO-DA-DAH-DEH... And people thought he couldn't play. [SINGS THAT REFRAIN] He was like describing how to actually play. He was pushing that other stuff out the way. Then the other thing started...

I think that Igor Stravinsky, when he started trying to do what he called "serial" after *The Rite of Spring* and all that, and a few others... Mozart was a jazz musician. The word "jazz" didn't exist, but he was doing [SINGS REFRAIN], the symphony right there in G-minor, 40... [SINGS IT]

I used to play stuff alongside of records when I was 16 on my clarinet. Stan Getz said he did the same thing. We were hanging out together before he passed, me and Stan. When he had the cancer, I took the hot towel with ginger wrap, you know, on the bed with him, out in Malibu, when he had the house out there. He said, "Man, it's nice to have a buddy with this stuff." I said, "Yeah." We had a good time. Then he called me from the Johnny Carson Show, he said, "I'm going to get married." It was a twin. He married one of the... Then he passed away. But we spent that time together. We spent some time in Brazil together, too. Just from a night. He played at the Caesar Park Hotel, and I joined him on the last set, playing that thing that Gretchen sang, but it was more in the box, you know...

**Appelbaum:** "Chega de Saudade"?

**Shorter:** Mmm-hmm. Chega. Che...heh... So, having an interview with kids...not kids, or your peers or whatever... To me, it has to be like a dialogue. I know this is in another format. But it's a dialogue, and to do it... To make this sound like a dialogue without having me sound like I'm... You can't sound like a know-it-all. It's like supposition. Everything that's throw out of court, this is what this is. This is pure supposition. Hah. But it's not. [LAUGHS]

**Appelbaum:** But this is just journey, what we're talking about.

**Shorter:** Yeah.

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**Appelbaum:** This is not judgment.

**Shorter:** Yeah.

**Appelbaum:** We're not evaluating this.

**Shorter:** Yeah. It's something to think on. Because when we read a book, a book that you're kind of enjoying and it's very interesting, you don't stop and say, "I want to change this; I would write this this way." You let it go... It depends on what you're reading, too.

**Appelbaum:** Do you analyze, when you listen to music, or read, or walk the streets...

**Shorter:** No...

**Appelbaum:** ...or just respond?

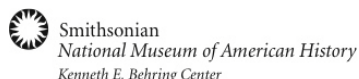
**Shorter:** I don't know. Maybe a little analytical stuff goes. But it has to be... The analytical thing has to be part of a fabric...which they're saying that Space is supposed to be now. Like a fabric of... The analytical thing has to be attached to something else, like the door, the hinge or something, then something else has a function within. I know what it is. It's a thousand... They say "three thousand realms in a momentary existence." Three thousand realms in a momentary existence. Which my life condition contains (if you're going to put a number to it) ten...no, nine...no, ten. Sometimes in the condition of Hell, Hunger, Animality, Rapture... There's a place called... Like, when you're studying, you say, "Put the food under the door! I'm busy! I'm making a monster!" Then there's another one that there's an aspiration for, and that's Altruism, Aspiration for Enlightenment, and Enlightenment. But when you're in Hell... Hell is a condition... Hell is circumstances. The other... There's ten. I think that's it. The other nine exist in each one.

So the number, 3,000, in the momentary... It's a moment where your hellish condition can be enlightened. Don't try to convert your evil nature, or the Devil as they say... Make demons and devils your allies. How do you do that? You say, "Well, it seems like..." We call it *hendoku-iyaku*, "turning poison to medicine." Don't try to avoid the poison. Turn it to medicine. "That sounds like *tai-chi* to me!" Heh. But it's really something when you try to say "it's not like *tai-chi*." [LAUGHS]

**Appelbaum:** When you listen to music or look at art or watch a film, what are you listening for, what are you watching, what are you looking at?

**Shorter:** You know what I'm listening for? Struggle and victory. Struggle and victory and overcoming. Or also, there's investigation. Or a question mark. A question mark in music... I'm listening for something that's saying, "No beginning, no end." The words "beginning" and "end" to me are like crutches, tools. They're artificial. They're to be used. Not to those ends, though. Or those beginnings. They're to use, but not to use us.

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**Appelbaum:** Isn't it human nature to create resolution?

**Shorter:** Yeah. To create resolution only when you really know the value that exists within that resolution. When you're creating value... Creating value... The truth means nothing unless the truth can be made...you can make value of the truth. When you know you're creating value, you will always be greeted with great resistance. Like ....(?—52:56).... say, it's value for you to go home after a long trip, and MMMM, "there's a snowstorm, we're going to have to land in Shannon, Ireland, for the night; we'll pay for your overnight hotel." "Oh, man, it's Christmas—I want to go home!" Or the guy... I have the movie, *The Black Box*, the guy who invented motion pictures, with Robert Donat. Heh... I just have the Powell stuff. I can play Powell stuff now. He died at the end, at a big meeting with these businessmen, they took the patent and everything, and this old man came in there... He said, "You are talking business, but make sure you have this invention; take it to your hearts..." "Sit down, old man!" The guy, "Shh, sit down and hear what he has to say." "Take this invention to your hearts with this business and everything." They got kind of quiet. Then he walked a few steps, and fell down and died. This is the end.

Laurence Olivier was in this movie for five minutes. He wanted to be in this movie. And 60 other... Glynis Johns, a whole bunch of people. So they...to see who he is, they went in his pockets and they said, "Hmmm, I don't know who he is. What did he have?" They said, "Two tickets to a theater."

Then they made an American version of that, and the guy died at the end, the same guy, and they found 37 cents in his pockets. He had a hole in his pocket. They said 37 cents. At the end there was a catch. As the credits were going up at the end they said, "At this time 37 cents was the sum total of the human body when..." What do you call it? Cremated. The ashes and the elements and the minerals cost 37 cents.

That's what I'm looking for in music. I'm looking for the 37 cents. I'm looking for... Somebody can say, "Hmm...was this guy born with a silver spoon in his mouth, the way he's writing?" It's the intention... You can't be judging all the time. The intention... I'm looking for chance-taking. Not just breaking the rules. Breaking the rules is different from taking chances.

**Appelbaum:** What's the difference?

**Shorter:** Like, you can hear somebody... You can hear "Happy Birthday" a certain way, "happy birthday," and there's taking chances, and then you can hear something, [SINGS ATONAL LINE] — that's breaking the rules. You hear "Happy Birthday" done in a way... Taking chances. It also depends on who's doing "Happy Birthday." You say, "I never thought he would do that." Or she. "It's kinda nice... It's different, isn't it." He had some altered chords; one little altered chord right there... Hey! It's something that knocks all of us off our little pedestal, and it's a long time between those knocks.

It's almost like when you're looking for a wife [SLAPS TABLE]. That's what you're looking for. I mean, to remember how it is to look for a wife, or the genuine... You always say For additional information contact the Archives Center at 202.633.3270 or [archivescenter@si.edu](mailto:archivescenter@si.edu)



that, “I’m looking for the...” Ridley Scott should start *Prometheus* at the end. That shouldn’t be the beginning. “Where is she going? That’s where I want to go!” But I think *Prometheus* was a bunt so he can knock the ball out of the park for the next one. He ain’t dumb. Neither is Charlize Theron, heh-heh.

**Appelbaum:** Ok, let’s... My name is Larry Appelbaum. Today is September 24, 2012. We are here with Wayne Shorter.

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[Transcribed by Ted Panken from a .wma file of the conversation.]

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