

## **Leslie Savoy Burrs BIO**

Leslie Savoy Burrs has captivated audiences across the United States and Europe with his exciting, distinctive sound -- an inspired combination of classical virtuosity and dazzling improvisation. He has appeared as guest soloist and composer with the Philadelphia Orchestra, Baltimore, Atlanta, Louisville, New Jersey and Richmond Symphonies. In addition, his performances with the Duke Ellington Band, The Philly Pops and the Moers Jazz Festival in Germany distinguish him as an artist of great depth and versatility.

Acclaimed as an award-winning performer, composer and educator, Mr. Burrs has many commissions to his credit, one, of which resulted in a new American opera entitled *Vanqui* (with internationally renowned author, John A. Williams providing the libretto) for Opera/Columbus with a grant from the Lila Wallace Readers Digest Foundation and another, *The Geron Fantasy* for Orchestra for the Charleston Symphony with a grant award from Meet the Composer. Musical great Max Roach commissioned him to write a new composition for the Uptown String Quartet. *Song for Winnie* was subsequently recorded by the Uptown String Quartet on Philips Records and has been performed nationally and internationally.

Mr. Burrs has served as artist-in-residence at major universities such as the University of California at Santa Cruz, University of Pennsylvania, Clemson University and others. He has also served as artist-in-residence for the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, the Arts Council of Richmond and the Arts Councils of Jacksonville, Tampa and Miami. In 2006 a multi-media concert production of Mr. Burrs' opera *Vanqui* will be presented at the University of Maryland as part of the Clarice Smith Performing Arts' Defining Moments, American Sensibilities series. He is the recipient of the 2004 Pennsylvania Council on the Arts Fellowship Grant. In 2002, Mr. Burrs was the first composer ever to receive the National Opera Association's coveted Legacy Award for his American opera, *Vanqui*. Mr. Burrs was commissioned by Denison University in 2001 to compose a three movement work for orchestra and choir entitled *Declarations of Joy*. He was awarded the 5-County Arts Fund Grant from the Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance for the 2001-02 season. He was commissioned by the contemporary music ensemble *Relache* to compose *Voyeuristic Absurdities (From Mingus to Diallo)*. This work premiered in Philadelphia March 2001.

Mr. Burrs has released the critically acclaimed CD recording *Impressions of Another You* on the Dreambox Media recording label.