

Press Release
March 2007
Cologne publisher *buddy's knife jazzedition*
presents two new publications

In March 2007, *buddy's knife jazzedition* presented its first two books produced in English for the international market: *signs along the road* by Henry Grimes and *who owns music?* by William Parker. Both are strikingly original works of impressive spiritual depth – unique documents by free-jazz musicians who have become legends in their own time.

The authors

Henry Grimes

There is a fine line between self-emancipation and existential oblivion, as the life of Henry Grimes and the poems of *signs along the road* clearly illustrate. A gifted bassist who played with the likes of Rollins, Monk and Mulligan, he also sent tremors through the free-jazz world with the definitive style of his bass work in pioneering ESP recordings by the Albert Ayler Group. And then came his free fall through the oft-cited but virtually non-existent “social network”. Henry Grimes disappeared from the public eye for decades, until a social worker and jazz enthusiast rediscovered him in L.A. in 2002. He has since returned to the stage again – with a breathtaking presence.

William Parker

William Parker was and remains firmly established in New York's downtown scene. He is not only one of the most important composers and bassists in the field of free improvisation but also plays a leading role as an integrating figure in the current New York avant-garde jazz scene. Parker is regarded as the leader, the uncrowned king, the father and high priest of young jazz musicians on New York's Lower East Side. *who owns music?* is a collection of William Parker's political writings, essays on music theory and poems. He writes as a musician, a teacher, a son and a father, but above all as a man who is intent upon making his own indelible imprint on the world.

The publisher

buddy's knife jazzedition was founded in Cologne by the journalist and ethnologist Renate Da Rin in 2006. She edited and published Henry Grimes' *signs along the road* (in collaboration with Grimes' manager and companion Margaret Davis) and William Parker's *who owns music?*. The text layout was done by Suzy Günther, a graphic designer from Düsseldorf. The homepage was designed by Dan Arenzon & Giosafat of Barcelona. The firm's congenial webmaster is Wolfgang Löster of Mannheim. Karin Rosik and Eva Lisicki of Cologne provided editorial assistance.

Our motto is “craftsmanship is an aspect of morality”, a phrase coined by Ralph Ellison. Our craft is making books. And our goal is to make books that embody mutual respect and the vital freedom of the human spirit.

The name

The term “buddy's knife” refers to the knife as a tool used to sever bonds. But it is also a symbol of the danger to which revolutionary free spirits expose themselves. Those who, like

Buddy Bolden, dedicate themselves to the liberty of improvisation, always run the risk of being swallowed up by it.

Motivation

What could motivate one to found a publishing company devoted to jazz, free jazz, and avant-garde, improvised music?

- The love of free jazz, respect for the musicians who create and perform it and enthusiasm for improvised music
- The need to bring books on this subject into the world; because no one else does it. This cannot be accomplished without small publishers. Major publishers shy away from small printings for niche target groups. So it is up to us!
- The desire to offer musicians and especially free-jazz musicians a framework or a platform for their writings
- A sense of regret that, although mainstream jazz now has a greater impact on public perception, free jazz has yet to achieve the status it deserves
- There is presently not a single jazz publisher in Germany who produces current new books on free jazz. That makes buddy's knife even more important as a platform, as this style of music is associated with an unparalleled inner drive and ethic that play a leading role in both personal and social development.

The future

Future projects will continue to focus on improvised music – because we rediscover ourselves at the point where freedom and the loss of freedom collide. The spirit of improvisation that finds expression in free jazz is embodied in an act of liberation that should play a significant role in our everyday lives.

Current plans call for the presentation of our new projects in autumn 2007.