

**In Memoriam: Dexter Morrill  
(1938-2019)**

by Chris Chafe

Dexter Morrill was a trailblazing musician with a knack for computers. Dex's recent passing reminds us of how lucky we are when we have the chance to work with pioneers and then follow in their footsteps. The extended world around Dex included a big family and a group of wonderfully creative musicians, and it was my good fortune to get to know many of both groups. Immediately, Dex's verve and music struck all who knew this composer/performer, and he was someone predisposed to sharing everything he made. He was a huge influence and is sorely missed. This sounds kind of trivial, but I was recently painting a place and it came to mind while I was doing it how he once told me painting was never done, that he paced the task one side of his house a year. Shortly after wrapping up my what I was doing, word came that he had passed on. Hanging with Dex implanted all sorts of life lessons. Above all, it's the lessons around music which endure so strongly. These are lasting things to celebrate.

Dexter G. Morrill, Charles A. Dana  
Professor of Music emeritus at Colgate

University, was born in June 17, 1938 in North Adams, MA. He began trumpet lessons at age eight and by 19, studied with Dizzy Gillespie at the first Lenox School of Jazz. At Colgate University '60, he studied composition with William Skelton and led a Dixieland jazz band, the Colgate Hi-Five. He began graduate studies at the Leland Stanford Junior University and studied composition with Leonard Ratner and orchestration with Leland Smith, completing his MA in 1962. From 1962-64 he was a Ford Foundation Young Composer Fellow in Missouri, and later taught at St. John's University in New York, that commissioned his Three Lyric Pieces for violin, premiered by Ruggiero Ricci at Lincoln Center in 1969. Morrill studied composition with Robert Palmer at Cornell University and received his DMA in 1970. He returned to teach music at Colgate in 1969 and established one of the first main-frame computer studios in the world, with help from colleagues at Stanford. He collaborated with John Chowning and Leland Smith at Stanford; Max Matthews and conducted analysis/synthesis of trumpet tones. He was a guest researcher at IRCAM in Paris, France in 1980, and received several

composition grants from the New York State Arts Council and the National Endowment for the Arts. Morrill worked on a special jazz project for Wynton Marsalis, and authored *A Guide to the Big Band Recordings of Woody Herman and The American String Quartet – A Guide to the Recordings*. In 1984, he received a NEA grant to compose his most prominent work, *Getz Variations*. It was written for, and premiered by saxophonist Stan Getz, and incorporated jazz improvisation and computer-generated sounds. During the 1980s, Morrill developed a MIDI trumpet instrument with Perry Cook, and performed in many concerts around the world. His compositions received performances in the United States, Canada, Australia, Argentina, Brazil, Great Britain, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and most West European countries, and for ensembles including the Northern Illinois Philharmonic and the Syracuse and Baltimore Symphonies. Throughout his career, he was active in composing for ensembles and conventional instruments and recording works with solo artists. Dexter passed away July 2, 2019, of complications from Progressive Supra Nuclear Palsy (PSP).

### **In Memoriam: Mark Ballora (1962-2019)**

by Dafna Naphtali and Margaret Schedel

Ballora was an influential computer musician, data sonification expert, researcher, author, composer, a tireless and ingenious comic/prankster, devoted father and husband, and a very beloved Professor at Penn State. An alum of Theater Arts program at UCLA, Ballora completed two masters degrees at NYU (Music Technology, Music Composition) before moving on to McGill University to complete his PhD. He joined the faculty at Penn State University in 2000, since then teaching courses to a generation of students in music technology, history of electroacoustic music, musical acoustics, and software programming for musicians, and authoring several books.

Even in our community of kind weirdos who love sound, Mark stood out as one of the kindest and most wonderfully weird composers of electroacoustic music. Schedel always pictured a nimbus of ideas swirling around his head, so it was not so surprising when older pic-