

**Charles Edward Burrell**  
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**2003**

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**Processed By:** Tammi Haddad and Brent Wagner

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**Biographical Note:**

Born in April of 1920, in Toledo, Ohio, to Denver Howard and Reuben Burrell.

Raised in Detroit, Michigan.

In grade school, Burrell excelled in music. At the age of twelve, he heard the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra under renowned conductor Pierre Monteux on the family's radio. Burrell resolved to play one day for Monteux – his idol.

Played bass at Detroit's Cass Tech High School, where eighteen of the principal musicians of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra taught.

After high school, played jazz in Detroit's Paradise Valley at B.J.'s.

1941: Drafted into the all-black naval unit at Camp Robert Smalls, at Great Lakes Naval Base near Chicago.

Played in the unit's all-star band with Clark Terry, Al Grey and O. C. Johnson.

Took classes at Northwestern University and with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

After the war, Burrell used the G.I. Bill to attend Wayne State University in Detroit. He excelled in his music courses, but was discouraged by the racism of his advisers.

1949: Hired by the Denver Symphony Orchestra.

Played under Pierre Monteux by joining the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra.

1965: Returned to the Denver Symphony Orchestra and met his wife, Melanie, a cellist.

Mentored and taught Tony Knight of the Cleveland Symphony Orchestra, Major Holly and Ray Brown. Other musicians guided by Burrell are jazz pianist George Duke and Burrell's niece, jazz vocalist Diane Reeves.

(view [www.thehistorymakers.com](http://www.thehistorymakers.com) for complete biography)

### **Container Listing**

Box 1	F1	Birth Certificate (copy)	1955
Box 1	F2-F5	Correspondence	1966-1999
Box 1	F6-F7	Newspaper clippings	1971-1983, n.d.
Box 1	F8	Miscellaneous Programs	1964-1986
Box 1	F9	CD gift – George Duke	1993
Box 1	F10	VHS tape – Burrell Trio	n.d.
Box 1	F11-F13	Photographs	1946-1999, n.d.