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3/7/93

Ivor;

Greetings from Oregon. The day after my arrival, 8 inches of snow fell.

This, as it turned out, was unusual. More: unheard-of. No one in Oregon's ever seen that much snow. Fortunately, weather's back to normal. No snow, no rain. Just a light drizzle. Temperature: 60 F. That's more like it, says I.

Still no phone. US West demands bizarre amounts of identification. "I'm not able to confirm your identity," reported the cyborg on the other end of the line while Yaws Twuwy fed quarters into the pay phone. Open the pod bay doors, Hal.

Soon they'll want retinal scans, blood sera and forearm bar code tattoos, no doubt.

Thus the missive.

Corvallis is a *severely* cool place. Totally quiet. Classic small town--yet with 24-hour supermarket, a computer store, 24-hour copy shop, and of course a university.

New house is almost *eerily* quiet. Utterly ideal. A shocking change from California, where the roar of traffic, the screams of police sirens, and the crackle of automatic weapons fire blended with the yells of *cholos* vrooming down the boulevard in their chopped-and-channeled chevies, and the howls of black folks, chicanos, liberals and poor people being beaten senseless by *der polizei*.

Exaggeration?

Mayhap. Clean air, absolute quiet and uncrowded streets filled with friendly drivers have a way of...doing that. Particularly when one thinks back on the Whacko State.

In any case, the move's a success. Every day spent here makes it harder and harder to imagine returning to the Land of Freeway Shootings, where the *cholos* and *pachucos* roam...where seldom is heard a non-F-word, and the smog is dark brown all day.

But I digress.

The economy continues to execute a drunkard's walk between recession & recovery. My prediction last year was that the economy would peak briefly after Clinton's election, then tumble back into a recession. So far it's peaked... We'll see about the other part of the prognostication.

Accounting trivia:

Turns out that the 1991 GDP figures are distorted by a \$40 billion payment by Japan, et al., for Desert Storm. Sans that cash infusion, our economy did pretty badly. About 1.5% growth for the year. The 1992 figures are similarly distorted by a \$25 billion infusion caused by Hurricane Andrew. Rebuilding, &c. Sans *that* infusion, 1992 also clocked in at about 1.5% growth per annum.

These are *medieval* growth figures. By the rule of 72, it would take about FIFTY YEARS for the standard of living to double.

That, plus the prevailing gross innumeracy of the media, has hoodwinked the population at large about the actual state of the economy.

(My favorite recent example of innumeracy: a Wall Street Journal article decrying Clinton's claim that middle class folks now work harder to earn less. "Not true!" thundered the Journal. "The middle class makes 7% more than it did ten years ago, adjusted for inflation!"

C'mon, guys. The cost of the big-ticket goodies--houses, cars, or rent--has gone up FAR more than 7% in the last 10 years. Let's get real. If your pay doubles, but the cost of what you buy *quadruples*, you are in fact earning *less*. Classic case of innumeracy. And typical. So much of this idiocy goes on, one despairs for the average newspaper reader or TV news watcher.)

To make a long story short, expect everyone to be appalled by the "low" growth figures for 1st quarter '93. Of course these are just the *same* growth figures the economy's exhibited since 1990--but the "experts" will be *shocked*, nonetheless. They'll all be *astounded*. They'll all be *amazed*.

Yawn.

At least Robert Reich's in the Clinton administration. He and Lester Thurow are the two smartest, most insightful, and most adept economic thinkers in the U.S. Not that this is saying much, alas. Still, the folks waiting for Germany to lower its interest rates ("Waiting for Godot, Part II") should listen to these guys and get clueful.

As for xenharmonics, hooray! Calloo, callay, O frabjous day! Got a *severely* cool DAT tape from Richard Boulanger. Features an *excellent* Mathews radio drum piece in the Pierce-Bohlen scale, also a bunch of neat csound pieces. Will send you a tape soon.

Also copied Kraig Grady's DAT of just goodies. Will have to ask him for permission to make you a copy--he enjoined me not to make dupes. Go figure. Some neat stuff. Very Moroccan sounding, very LACE-like. That's Los Angeles Contemporary Experimental theater, if you're not in the know. A center for the performance arts often featuring beyond-the-fringe music.

Stephen James Taylor was kind enough to send a cassette tape of his cues for "The Giving." Will dupe it on the sly--but don't tell anyone. Technically, Taylor's contract prohibits his making copies, but it's unlikely anyone will really care, since "The Giving" did not knock 'em dead at the box office.

Received a virulent letter from Ezra Sims. "Is there nothing but intellectual curiosity driving you?" That sort of thing. Sent him a very funny missive thanking him for his unkind words. Since he hates the music of Harry Partch, Julian Carrillo, Easley Blackwood, and other fine composers, I figured it was a real honor to be similarly disliked. He'll probably get an infarction when he reads it.

Incidentally, there's a microtonal symposium in Salzburg this year in May. Pity. Too little time, too much money. At least they'll publish the proceedings in a *Mikrotoene* volume. Xeroxed Volumes 1 and 2, but don't have the rest. Paul Rapoport presumably has the rest--he received one while I visited him.

& Boulanger definitely wants to include my csound piece in his CD-ROM anthology. Sent him the .orc and .sco source codes on both Mac & PC disks--he said it was his favorite piece on my tapes. High praise, coming from the csound guru himself.

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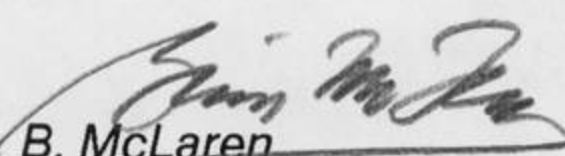
Ivor;

Thanks for "Twilight In the Chapel." Had a few hours to spare, so I took the liberty of entering it into the score program and spitting out a spiffy version. You'll have to ink in the title, of course, along with the 8va bassa and performance directions--but all told, this should save you some paper. It's now 2 pages instead of 3.

Enclosed find also some more DARREG address labels.

As you know Chalmers is back in Richo Super Few taking care of financial stuff. Re-worked the start of the first movement of my 15-tone piano concerto. Completely different; a much stronger piece. Will send a tape next time.

No time now--will write in a couple of days.



B. McLaren

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