

Sunday 9 May 1993

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Bright glare all around here which I suppose will continue. This time I am using some paper that Brink brought me quite a while ago --he was going to have a computer set-up and thought he had a big bargain, but then found out a that this paper had the red-ink imprint on every sheet so he wouldn't be able to mail it out to strangers.

It makes good carbon copies so has been handy for that purpose around here.

Much later I got a big bargain on carbon paper, and so can use it instead of the outrageously expensive ribbons for this machine. I think the trouble is that a coiled-up carbon ribbon cannot be forced into the tiny space available inside the ribbon cartridges.

As you know I finished the X Btn #12 and then sent out a good many to my own list and then for the last dozen was able to use Wendy Carlos' mast-head. I sent a copy to Larry Hanson of Sherman Oaks--he was promoting 53 back at the time--late 1970's---when George Secor et al. were trying to get someplace with the Motorola Scalatron.

Larry Hanson took me up to his place in the hills at that time so I recorded a couple of reels in several systems mostly 19, and he didn't like the assertive sound of 17 when I used that.

However: My Study in Fifths works in 17.

Now--in one obscure place on p. 4 of X B 12 and in the side-bar on p. 27, the last page with the 53 table, I got the Messrs. Mercator mixed up. I got them mixed up in that I stated that Gerhard Mercator of map fame was the 53-man, and I always had thought so because Sir James Jeans in SCIENCE AND MUSIC so stated in his book and I never read anything to the contrary, and the famous Helmholtz book does not give a first name for Mercator whom it mentioned a number of times, and that was 62 years ago when I first read the book as a boy and in all that dreadfully long time nobody ever contradicted it, so how was I to know?

I have been to the downtown Library twice since Hanson enlightened me. Now I discover that there were THREE Mercators: Gerhard (Map), Nicolaus (53), and Michael (Harpsichords).

I started, just for kicks, to look in phone books to see if I could find any survivors of the Clans, named Mercator. So far, two people in California named Mercatoris. But I haven't seen the New York or Chicago phone books yet--there might be a Mercator in those?

However, Kremer was the original name of the map-man and Kaufman of the 53-man, and Krämer that of the Harpsichord-fellow, so THOSE NAMES are extremely well represented in all the phone books! We can well assume that merchants seeking social climbing, translated their names into Latin to be Mercator and maybe the families didn't?

The Spanish form MERCADO is extremely abundant here in Southern California.

Why bother? Just to show why I could be under a false impression for 62 years, and it isn't my fault.

If Prof. Jeans could be mistaken, then many other musicologists and so on must also be mistaken, so we have to set them right later on. Too many errors of that kind in musical matters get copied from book to book, especially the silly nonsense about Bach inventing the twelfth-root-of-two temperament.

Larry Hanson sent me a copy he made from a dictionary of scientific biography, concerning our 53-man, Nicolaus. It arrived yesterday afternoon, too late for me to write and mail anything about it to anyone yesterday.

Hanson claims that it took lots of trouble to find it. So I can xerox that for you in a day or two and by Snail Transport it will eventually reach you.

I bet it would annoy Chalmers if I started calling the 53 scale the Kaufman System (Nicolaus's original surname had only one N at the end even though the standard German spelling today is Kaufmann with two.)

This is because Schleswig-Holstein is on the DenmarkGermany boundary and has been both at various times. The Britannica Encyclopaedia has Nicolaus Mercator in it but no reference to the 53 scale at all.

I suppose one or another of the 20 people to whom I sent copies of X Btn.12 HAVING the sidebar in error, will now write back and scold me. What I did was to run off 4 copies of the p. 27 with the sidebar deleted and the p.4 item that said "geographer" whited-out, so that the last 4 copies I have now sent will not contain the misinformation.

Tempest in a teapot anyhow, but that Ezra Sims if he ever gets any of my stuff will raise hell. Back in 1975 or so he demanded that I call scales like 5 7 10 "microtonal" even though they have to be macrotonal.

So I never wrote back to Boston or wherever he is. And I will not.

*** While we are about it! The nowadays Prof. Daniel J. Wolf was visiting relatives in San Diego several years ago, swo brought some friend of his over with him to see me, and this was soon after I moved into this house and I did not have all those keyboards. He scolded and scolded me over some mere trifles and wanted me to feel very humiliated about everything. So I have carefully refrained from any correspondence. I'll let others take the chances of being argued at. The affairs were such tiny trifles--no excuse for his getting angry about them.

It just is NOT the way to build and to run a Network!

He had an excuse, which was that he was several months in San Diego and could not find anybody to play ensemble music with, and hated the whole town in consequence--but why pick on me? when I had the very same problem even worse than he had. 61 years of playing the cello and unable to ever get an accompanist to perform the pieces I learned 59 or 58 years ago!

My first...
LEXIS NEXIS LEXIS NEXIS

* * * and after Jonathan did the mandatory performance on the button-board of the front door of the building we climbed stairs to the offices of CIRCUS EARTH, and were shown around, and Bill Wesley had a chance to try a Yamaha something-or-other synthesizer and we admired all the computers and phone accessories in the rather small offices of the suite and the wide view of the desert east of the hill from the picture window at the end of the corridor--that was the Conference Table where they hold their Planning Meetings, just like Interval did--and instead of the oldfashioned blackboards there were white glossy boards to write with erasable color markers.

---each office in the suite was small, crammed with things, and from their windows this expansive view, and the fact that the building was FAR FROM other buildings of any kind--nowhere to go to in an emergency and probably security guards would hound you if you tried--so Claustrophobia AND Agoraphobia SIMULTANEOUSLY! I never knew that anybody could feel both emotions at the very same time. But later after we had left, Jonathan said that some other people he had taken there, felt that way also! I wasn't a Minority of One after all.

It's so much better in this neighborhood. Nothing like that. Probably the matter with the Hilltop Place was other tenants of the building with their paranoia and previous tenants of that suite who might have been any kind military zealots or hostile secretive hategroups.

I sure hope Jonathan gets out of that place for good and I do mean good.

Sure glad I have absolutely nothing to do with the place.

If the same persons were in another office building in a different part of San Diego, there would not be this distressing psychic atmosphere. So I am inclined to believe it's not their personal fault, except for moving into that building.

It was exactly a week ago from the time I am typing this, therefore late on Sunday, so none of the Circus Earth Staff were there. This is entirely a feeling about the location, the distance from other buildings, and the building itself.

Arthur Frick's place and the new Hollywood Bowl Museum in sharp contrast were pleasant places to be in where I instantly felt welcome. What a difference!

It certainly gives me more understanding of the Koresh and Postoffice things that just happened.

Certain locations are accursed; others are successful.

How about this new Electromagnetic Field Scare? Could there be a physical explanation for the above? Ultramodern small office building. Suppose it was infested with special electronic apparatus for security? Sensors that set off detectors or alarms or send over phone lines when human beings approach?

Also, was it a mere coincidence that my skin cancers on my forehead in 1980 or so, flared up because the cottage in Glendale was directly under the main high-voltage transmission line from the Glendale Powerhouse to the Central Business district of Glendale? (I am raising this question only because of the lawsuits going on now in San Diego by people here living in similar locations under high-voltage lines.)

It could all be baloney, but nevertheless however. . .

I did a conventional twelve-tone tape last night on the Mirage and the Roland. Then this can be duplicated. I still have that awful feeling--anything I now compose in conventional orthodox Twelve is absolutely guaranteed to contain measures and passages which somebody else composed better 100 or 150 or 170 years ago.

Wounded Pride again, as I told some of the other instrument-builders at the garden luncheon in Hollywood.

+ ++ ++ The new Boulanger computer music tape will be No. 425 in the archives. I am still seeking to get some duplicates placed in different cities or locations far from Earthquakeville and Smog Center, so that at least some of my archives will survive. I have been doing a little of this for the past ten years.

Maybe it would do some good for me to write certain persons on the new Label-List that you just sent me, on this subject.

Since you are now in Oregon, you will be faced with a) Mosquitoes b) flies c) hayfever sneezing d) leaky roofs. This reminds me of something that happened in Portland a long time ago when I was a teenager. Or maybe pre-teen: Certain people had tubs and barrels etc. out in their back yards near the back fence. These would breed mosquitoes that would bite their neighbors. Better lay in a supply of citronella and other repellents that may be more potent to keep off mosquito bites than they were back then.

Yours,