

Thursday 1 July 1993
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Greetings from Down south -----*

I am getting busier. New people coming into new music and other activities.

Are they for real? I have to wait a little while to be sure. But it is so utterly different from Wilbur George and Rob Bell. Energetic enthusiastic people instead of skeptical wet-blankets. and spoilsports. Opposite attitude toward the same instruments!

Then Larry Hanson who had been away from it for a number of years, coming up with the urge to try 34-tone and then getting other people's suggestions and he got a 34-tone guitar fixed up and Stephen Taylor is trying it out and called me.

Got your latest yesterday: I have been "on the other side of the fence/coin/ledger" quite a number of times in the last forty years or so: i.e. people have had me revise MSS. and evaluate technical papers and answer questions about publishing their stuff and there was a time some forty years ago when I mimeographed other people's commercial announcements, newsletters, lists, and poetry. Even a used-car-salesman's price list. And announcements someone sent out in German.

Three years ago I got stuck with somebody up in a crummy part of L.A. County trying to get a book published and other things sold and trying to get a literary agent and all that sort of thing and losing money and sleep and everything in the process. I couldn't get out of the situation and it was distressing to see somebody so desperate and conscientious but continuing to lose.

No, this is not my problem but I had to watch it happen to someone who did not deserve such an unkind fate, and on top of that, other people were criticizing him unmercifully.

Other people in similar circumstances have had similar problems and I have heard from them in time past or have read about it or have been told about their experiences.

I have been writing various things for nearly sixty years. Seventy years ago my father ran a weekly newspaper in Portland and I was frequently taken to his office and to the printing-places where the newspaper was printed and other places where his friends and colleagues were in business. Yes, it started when I was six.

Forty years ago, if I had been healthy which I wasn't, and if I had access to sponsors and was earning enough money, which was not the case, a Book such as you mentioned would have been the way to go. But not today! Conditions have changed radically. We can't afford to do anything so expensive as you estimated. We can do some Trial Balloons, of course, and can issue single articles or pamphlets on a small scale and if one of them succeeds, then get more copies. Recently, for instance, I got a few of backissue bulletins and sold them. One or two at a time, not any foolhardy run of a hundred!

Much more interest in early bulletins now than when they were first issued. I have no space to store more copies--so I only reprint them. It can't be here since there is NOWHERE TO

I have several big boxes of mimeographed papers that were run to too many copies. No, they were not failures, but should have been five of this and ten of that, rather than a hundred or 150 of each. A lot of deadwood was thrown in the rubbish in Glendale and Silverlake and USC neighborhood and Santa Monica and other places I formerly lived because of overestimating.

You will have master-sheets and computer-disks which will not take up too much space and if a demand exists in 1998 or 2003, you can then run off enough copies.

Soon this piecemeal desktop publishing method will become easier and cheaper and much more acceptable than it is today.

My long experience in distributing writings should count for something. I would never have reached 76 if I were not cautious. I have had too many opportunities to see what happened to other people who did too much too soon and ended up with useless overstocks of this or that.

Mentioning what happened to INTERVAL MAGAZINE should be reason enough for my skepticism and extreme caution. This is a mild case by the way, since those remaining magazines are now being sold and traded now that their time is slowly coming. There aren't too many leftovers now.

Yes--I know--Chalmers nags me about publishing this or that on a large scale--but it won't work, while a small slow scale will succeed. We are still in a Recession and economic mess and MUST observe constant CAUTION. No, not STOP but SLOW, TAKE CARE, WATCH FOR BUMPS AND BOULDERS!

In fifty long agonizing years of moving and being sold-out-from-under by ruthless nasty mean real-estate-ers, I have lost many things. In the present context, the Amplifying Clavichord and the way it was destroyed and all the abuse I had to take from 1940 to 1980 because of it, and what happened to my elastic tuning organ when it was moved INTO Glendale and could not be moved OUT OF Glendale and the abuse I had to take on account of it, well it's just too much. I will not gamble now. I have succeeded in getting people to buy certain writings of mine in affordable bits and pieces. The people who need to read certain things now would not want a book. Chalmers is arguing from the standpoint of a heavily-degree'd graduate and holder of position and formal academic standing. This does not describe me. I am not a Yuppie like him living in splendid insulation from the Madding Crowd.

I can't time-travel with you; I can't prove to you how horrible 1928 and 1939 and 1943 and 1951 and 1956 and 1966 were. Maybe I can't convince you now. But at least I have now done what I could.

My enemies would have every right to scold me if I let you gamble by making too many copies of something. We need promoters and agents and sponsors, before doing too much.

Very recently I met some possible persons who may expand our network. So I went downtown four times and ran off a few copies of certain things and SENT them OUT. Latest was two copies of the suite IN LIMBO which is for plays or films or video or certain events, and Kneifel had me compose it back in 1963 and did nothing to help me with it since, although he used it for six weeks of June-July 1963. There are new possibilities now, but I do not over-copy. I can go back for me more if current attempts succeed.

I have to concentrated on more extraverted activities--being heard, seeing real live people directly, not through a book.