

Saturday morning 10 January 1981
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Greetings--

In between hayfever attacks I managed to answer Jeannie Pool (supposedly to be in L A 17 - 28 Jan. and San Diego 20 - 21), and David J. Gee of Carson City Nevada who wants to know about my non-12 tapes. Clyde Corson is supposed to show up this afternoon for a little while--his bus trips here take about 3 to 4 times the time he spends here. Somehow I get very uncomfortable with that idea. It just doesn't seem to be the way to achieve profitable results. Something like the book I ran across at the Glendale main library--How To Daydream. As if we needed any help.

After what happened to Tom Stone, I can't see Corson getting anyplace with Transcendental Meditation--which has now led him to try studying Sanskrit. This is how he hopes to get back into computer-programming? Now really. I am even more uncomfortable about that: it is too much like some things my mother did 40 years ago, and like my horrible mistake 50 years ago of learning Russian. Excuse: Everybody thought back in 1929 that there would be important world trade with the Soviets. It looked then as though translating and interpreting would be a steady job. I doubt that anybody back then foresaw the importance Spanish has in Southern California today.

Makes me feel so helpless. I can't steer him when I see what is going to happen--he will lose interest and cy. in another six months or so will be chasing some other rainbow. And I can't do a damn thing about it. After all, I am at the bottom of the economic ladder so can't hope to have anything I say, heeded. The General Semantic group which brought us together in 1951 or such a matter, was just another of these promising things which eventually disintegrated. Fortunately many of the good things about general semantics were absorbed by some psychologists and some philosophers.

So all this makes me uneasy about the Educational Politics business. For example: What effect will the Regan administration have on Educational Politics for the next 4 years? He wants to abolish the new Department of Education and he nearly wrecked the California educational system when he was Governor. All of which doesn't make the future of educational affairs look very bright before 1984, when it might improve. Then I have been studying Carrillo's book----

now the Carrillo book or many of the articles in it and its very title are about Educational Politics! It's an amazing coincidence that it should fall into your hands just when you are considering taking up that subject--he goes on for pages about the horrible physics and acoustics professors and the mistaken teaching in the conservatories and music schools. That seems to be the main impetus of his Crusade. And then he says something about his European student days.

It's fortunate that I got to read it now, since I will be cautious and not try to convert any Carrillistas to just intonation nor to non-12 in the sense of 17 19 22 31. I could have wasted a lot of valuable time and effort if I hadn't just now read all about Carrillo's opinionated prejudices which exclude non-multiples of 6. 19 and 22 can be promoted on the basis of selling more guitars, to guitar shops, bypassing the prejudices of those who only know Carrillo's doctrines. The real irony is that Mondo 13 excludes the 13-tone scale. At least it does if this book is the accurate reflection of Carrillo's opinions.

The news stories about educational affairs look as though they are cutting out everything they can, pleading Proposition 13 as alibi for this, so California education does not look like a promising field for music or art in general. The way you got rebuffed about using the CMU computer for non-12 redoubles my caution and wariness. I don't want to see your energy and drive ruined by a losing battle with the educational roadblock-people. It might take decades for any change to be effected in the contemporary atmosphere.

The hope for non-12 then, is in maintaining our already-begun Underground Network and getting people who have not been ruined by the establishment-programming of conventional musical training. Either catch them young, or recruit them from handicrafts, home workshop fans, scientists who get interested in music, mathematicians who become theorists, woodworking craftsmen who get interested in instrument-making, and a dozen other walks of life which lead to music but do so without the conventional piano-lessons route and the crippling of the imagination and shrinking of minds caused by endless finger-exercises and practicing of 120-year-old piano fodder. My moral support has come from painters and sculptors, not music teachers. After half a century of this I ought to know.

Let's get down to actual people! Mercator, of 53-tone fame, was a mapmaker. Helmholtz was the founder of hayfever research since he had it. He was known for physiological optics and other things outside music. Ellis was a phonetician and translator and wrote a three-volume work on Early English Pronunciation--such as the reconstruction of the way Shakespeare's plays were actually spoken. Huygens was the inventor of the ship's chronometer and developed the theory of the pendulum. Sir James Jeans (Science and Music) was a cosmologist and astronomer etc. Fokker got into 31 by way of crystallography (does John Gibbon realize that?).

So practically the entire chronicle of progress in non-12 has been from outside the musical field by people who hadn't been converted into Romantic-Period-Performing-Robots and deprived of their imagination and creativity! If you become an Educational Politician is this going to make it any easier for you to introduce Non-Twelve?

I can see that maybe you have to leave the musical field or the Musical Underground in order to make money. But it has taken me two weeks to reason this out--to realize what would happen--that you have a finite amount of time and energy and something will have to give. If you are forced by compelling necessity of circumstances to make this choice, you will never get back to computer music in non-12. I will understand, but by the same token this means I have to keep on seeking new people until I find someone who will collaborate and help finish what I have merely started--refretted guitars and Megalynai and Newel Potts and successors to the amplifying clavichord and keyboard oboe (i.e. my active participation in the future development of synthesizers at this turning-point in their history) and people to take over what I can't possibly continue to do--I can't hope to finish any more instruments because I cannot get to buy materials because I have no transportation and no place to put the supplies even if they were brought here.

Note how Gary Morrison has just been eaten alive by IBM into the Space Program Engineering, so we end up with his mother doing all the instrument-building and exploration of new scales! If that doesn't ring any alarm-bells, I don't know what will. Again it makes me feel so helpless. I saw what was going to happen and had no way to prevent it.

I am also sorry, that if you eventually decide to get into non-12 computer music, you can't do it at CME. Obviously you would have to fight the so-called avant-garde 12-tone-serialist indoctrination of these people--that is why they'd turned you down. It would be a continual uphill fight draining your energy. You would have to do it through some other computer center in your area, and very probably there are such places. Very good thing you told me immediately as you did, so I didn't make any tactless faux-pas remarks to those fellows in the Computer Cubicle. I will keep silent and then will not lose them. They will just have to find out the Hard Way. I could have gotten you into a peck of trouble if you had not told me and I tried to crusade for non-12.

The alternative would be for you to find some computer buff who would be willing to program his equipment for 19 or 22 or whatever and produce a battery of tapes with new tunes and chords. If you simply don't have the time and energy this would be the way to go. Delegate it to somebody else.

I know better than to try to convert any music teachers to non-12 because their minds are frozen stiff. I see now with great sadness that had I corresponded with Carrillo 40 years ago or 30 years ago--I almost got the introduction--I would have been steered away from 13 14 15 17 19 22 31 and would have been locked into 24.

It's interesting to note that Joseph Schillinger who was a radical in so many ways--in favor of Theremin's inventions and certain specialties in mathematics applied to the arts--was very much against the revival of the harpsichord and declared dogmatically that the present-day listener would never tolerate it. Of course today's harpsichords and guitars refute him to pieces.

I felt so bad in past years that I failed to meet certain people--now I see it would have been a terrible mistake. The Guitar Player article would never have happened. I would be stuck in a rut.

Since nearly all non-12 progress has come from people who did NOT go through channels, BECAUSE they did not go through channels, BECAUSE they didn't get talked out of it by the Establishment, it should be obvious that the PROMOTION of non-12 from here onward has to be OUTSIDE conventional channels. Otherwise it will be an exercise in futility.

- The kind of futility I am talking about is shown vividly by Carrillo's piece which I heard over KPFX where the 96-tone one-octave piano plays against an orchestra in tired old twelve. 96-tones which theoretically is 84 New Sounds, but restricted to only one octave while emasculated versions of Carrillo's ideas run through the conventional orchestra but comprise six octaves. His alibi is that otherwise it could not get performed in public, and recorded. That may have been true then, but now? with computers? and synthesizers?

Which of course will be denied by the devotees, since The Great Master Has Spoken and that is Final. This is the kind of humiliating compromises that I would have had to make, if I had gotten some of my compositions performed by Unterberg's group. That is to say, I am forced to take his continual procrastination as his subconscious way to avoid the consequences of accepting my non-twelve compositions and performances. By putting it off till after my death he can evade the confrontation. It's very sad again, and makes me so lonely here. But it's better for me to face the fact and not try to drive him into an impossible unpleasant corner. I simply have to write him off as I must forget about Jon Lackey. The temptation to call up Lackey is very great because of my solitude here and the lack of company in Glendale, but I must resist it, lest I feel all the more depressed after he tries to make me give up everything I stand for.

When Macauley was here the last two times, he kept wincing and squirming every single time he heard certain of the 19- and 22-tone intervals. I asked about it because it was so obvious--I was really croggling him. He alibied on the grounds that his training at Cal Arts Music Dept. was rigidly 12 and his ability to appreciate what they hated had been removed or almost removed from him--they had, if I may so paraphrase his words, reprogrammed him so that any non-12 intervals would evoke acute distress. So that explains to a slight degree, his continual procrastination. This, then, is diseducation, installation of fear and dread and anxiety. At least he did realize he had been so programmed--it was not his own inborn prejudice but a superimposed prejudice.

This ought to be a clue for us. The programming against non-12 has caused the failure of the Experimental Music Centers that you told me about. They run into a blind alley because the Escape Route we are using has been denied to them. Without knowing quite why, they run dry and the business folds and I dies.

If we don't watch out, the narrow minded religious people which includes the Hindus, will do this terrible thing to Scott Makeig. Maybe just maybe we can stop it. Somebody or -bodies want him to fail, and then have to go back humbly to 12. Do you get the idea? Probably he can be saved.

I have no energy to spare to promote Numaudo and it will die with me. Unless I meet a special kind of promoter. This means two