

Toooldi 23 ~~00000000~~ j June 1981
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Greetings from Forest Lawn Centre----

Alas! the new issues of OMNI (no letters about the March article so far as I was able to see, but I will check it again to be sure) and LIFE--no music article as far as I can tell--probably the Royal Wedding storey killed it. They appeared in one of the bookstores yesterday so Buzz Kimball took me over to find out.

Then we headed for a music store I had seen from the bus but which was not a general store after all--just pianos so we didn't go it in--two disappointments in one hour!

He is presumably on his way to Connecticut this morning. The heat wave and his timidity about things made y him reluctant to try to meet people or even to scare up some publicity for Don Schertz, and it was only after three days of my constant nagging that he made an appointment with Ervin and went over to his place which was a mere mile or less from where he was staying in Eagle Rock.

He blamed it on his unsatisfactory attempts to make some kind of deal with Schertz in Monterey the five or so days he spent there. Why, he didn't even go to the Griffith Park Observatory or the Laserium or the beach cities or Hollywood or even up to #7 Tujunga Hill or the Scenic Drive around Pasadena.

Bad enough overcoming my own tired feeling from the heat wave without trying to energize somebody else less than half my age.

He tinkered with the 19-tone electric guitar and filed down the frets some more on and clamped the neck and straightened it somewhat after using an Allen Wrench to tighten the reinforcement rod. He went over to a medium size music store near the Brand Library (no, he didn't go there) and got me an adjustable bridge for it.

The Larson music store had extremely expensive things--guitar strings for \$9 a set; a cello for \$1190; other things to match. But much more cordial people than the Charles Music store where I had that horrible experience with the cello bow.

Now if cellos are now worth that much I am a millionaire or something.

Chris Banta called me yesterday and had more info about resonators. Something about the damping or resistance effect of small holes in them--which leads me to believe that f-holes would cause more air-friction than round holes of the very same area. Co there. So there might be some reason for f-holes after all and for C-holes in the old viols which also have more friction surface for the same total area. Resistance flattens response--lessens resonance peaks. Would a cello with a big round hole like a guitar have a more ferocious wolf?

That's the kind of questions he was raising.

Overslept whic morning and so didn't get the fans started early enough. So tired last night I didn't let them run late.

Another letter from my niece--she has not heard from the young man since he left in that huff. Or at least not for a month. So she has to pick up the pieces and start all over from scratch. She said a young guitarist had borrowed and later returned my tape and was quite interested.

Jon Lackey wants to come here later this week and watch me wind pickup coils. Apparently the acoustic-only purism is yielding very slowly to the facts of the Real World and its background Noises.

Two smashed avocados yesterday--so this is the tail end of the crop. A couple of tiny buds showing that the next crop is beginning--new leaves in bright green.

Very little hayfever symptoms just now despite the smog. But Buzz Kimball seemed to have slight allergy troubles. Or maybe w he was smoking too much. I frankly don't know whether this will result in something worthwhile a year or two from now or not--he may settle down or something. The family is leaving Connecticut for New Hampshire at Xmas time or such a matter--state taxes are lower in NH and some other things will be better.

So he didn't make it to San Diego--just too "down" from the heat and ffrom failing to make any conclusions with Schertz and Pratt. Maybe the over-idealizing of anticipated things as I discussed with you before--also I think Schertz greatly overestimates the possibilities of doing honkytonk pop music standards vintage 1900-1915 in just intonation and getting public enthusiasm for such.

My own experience with the MOODS of the Systems would indicate that these honkytonk piano pieces (you have the record and the tapes so you know exactly what I am writing about) and the pop ditties that were flourishing some time before I was born, would do better in such systems as 17 19 and maybe with certain kinds of bendings from 12 as the old-time jazz people did, for impact, than with calm serene just, or with 31-tone which would remove all their zonk.

I copied off some tapes for him (wonderful not to have to go through the agony of mailing them).

That was sure a cliffhanger about the airline controllers.

Meanwhile the bus system here threatens a stiff fare increase very soon--a few days--caught only part of it on the radio--even senior citizens will have to pay 40¢ before paying for a transfer. So that maroons me in Glendale, with the risk of another bus strike which might happen in August.

Risk also of a Postal Strike. They were talking about it from the postal Union Office in Washington or somewhere last night. This horrid character with a heavy heavy incredible Brooklyn accent. Sounded like a very crude stage comedian.

Buzz Kimball didn't have any particular thoughts about the Computer Music Journal articles even though he brought me that Volume 4 #4 issue that you had let me see when I was in San Diego--Schertz had given him the magazine and evidently it was over his head or something--well the Group Theory thing of Bolzano is very heavy math and I can see how it would look formidable when I can't make much of it either and must call on Brian Hartzler, Clyde Corson, and anybody else in the math field I can get, for help. I have only the vaguest idea of Theory of Groups and could not hope to get very far in it even if I wanted to.

But now I have the magazine and can doubtless get one or another mathematician to help me --Corson promises to come here and read it. Hartzler may be a little longer getting here and it is so sad that I can't get anybody to take me to his place.

I played the soundsheet record when he was here--we both agreed that it was rather trite synthesizer fodder and not all that new or different compared with what is on ordinary synthesizer records. Maybe the methods by which the compositions were put together are novel and different but the results are nearly so-so.

I am afraid it's the old hoary tiresome question of the means and the End. All these articles in journals like Perspectives of New (?) Music treading the beaten worn-down path of 12-tone serialism, and grinding out gobbledygook about symmetrical 12-tone patterns. The same old worn out sounds with different analyses on paper which look and read differently but refer to something everyone had heard far too much of.

We see a New Orthodoxy just as bad if not worse than the old 19th-Century one. More closed ultranarrow minds.

To follow the Computer Music Journal Articles' recommendations will cost so damn much and require such expensive facilities and expensive people who claim to be impossibly busy and have NO time for us and so nothing will ever ever happen. We shortcircuit the whole deal and therefore will be miles ahead of them because they don't really want to progress beyond Schonberg's Ghost. Since going over this stuff and discussing it with other people I have become more and more nasty-critical about it.

When Pierce so could accidentally produce 19-tone sounds and the people at IRCAM in Paris who produced the tape for him and did the computer programming etc. for realizing it, not one of them was even slightly aware of creating a 19-tone array of sounds! Incredible but true. And I wasn't aware of it for two entire days after I heard it!

This means that I am already AHEAD of them right NOW. That the only problem is PROVING what I already did. Smuggling non-12 into various places before I am denounced and thrown out and called stupid or ignorant or disruptive or undesirable or persona non grata. Some of my things are ELEVEN YEARS OLD already that prove I am ahead of them.

Since LIVEDid that come out in July with the article, I must get publicity. Any ideas what I can do this month?