

Munday 21 Sept 81

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Greetings--

Procrastination again---they arrived at 7:30 instead of 5:00 and so didn't stay too long, and with five people in this room it is quite crowded--ironical affair which went in my favor--the other people asked most of the questions and put forth most of the ideas so she never really got around to discussing her film at all. Other than "what made this swishing, sizzling sound on that tape?" and "That might work for the film" but the other people were more interested in the Newel Post.

So in effect I was saved from here pushiness by the other people doing most of the talking. Maybe they were from the film audience at that showing of short films in Venice a fortnight ago.

When somebody asked me how much it cost to make the Newel Post, I said "a carload of time and a ton of patience!".

That is, with non-musicians so and people not in manufacturing it is very hard to understand value-added. That means--a redwood beam comes from a fencepost and the endpieces off an old kitchen door and a bunch of nails etc. and how does it end up the equal of 4 steel guitars and does it or does it not command the same price as a pedal steel after it is working? I should have thought of one of my father's favorite quotations: "I wonder what the vintners buy, half so precious as the stuff they sell." But on the other hand I haven't heard or read or thought of that line for 40 years!

Could you discuss this with your friends? What is a fair price for a Megalyra? We better get that settled now, because the question gets more urgent a every week. I am so afraid to quote any figures, after those Gipsies as asked me questions for half an hour in a running steady stream with no time for me to answer if I had wanted to! But if I don't have some flash-answer referring to amounts, I will be taken as a mere amateur or faker.

I tried to evade by saying (this is surely appropriate in the case of the Newel Post) that the custom shops would quote (this person who asked) on a copy of this instruments--that is, just stick the instrument in front of them and tell them "How much to make me one like it?" and they should be able to figure their time and materials etc. But three of the five people didn't seem to understand the idea of Building To Order From a Prototype. And of course at the evening hour of 8 or so it was already dark--this is Fall now--and I was not going to drag the incomplete Newel Posts out of the garage. I was tired and annoyed by this six-month-long procrastination and all the cancelled appointments that have cost me so many lonely hours here at home, and so did not want to keep them here all night--they left about a quarter after 9. Or maybe a little earlier.

In a way this was a Rehearsal for the Demonstrations and Attempts to get Business Partners and clients for consulting and getting some rock group or whatever to rent a Megalyra and publicize it once or twice.



It's not all that different from the questions real agents or promoters or managers or people running a custom shop would ask me. It's not all that different from what would happen when a group of business people might come here or have me to their place and try to iron out an agreement. Or what would happen if some kind of group or organization decided to do something about the instruments or putting on a concert or whatever. Or if somebody suddenly finds me a sponsor.

What if those people had all been drinking? What would I have done all alone with no moral support to call on? (I suspect that one or two of them had been.) What if there had been a real high-pressure salesman or business sharpie among them? (No, I don't think there was, but how there could have been!)

The reason I suspect drinking habits is the lack of sense of purpose in those people--I still haven't the foggiest idea of what the film is about, if there is a film at all. The other people didn't even use the word film and one of them merely said he had some friends in a couple of TV programs and would tell them about the instruments. And that's not avant-garde film or -- it's odd that that many people from Venice didn't mention Beyond Baroque.

I think this place and the things here and the small house and yard were so different from what Abbie Breit imagined six months ago after reading CMNI that she simply didn't know what to say or what to do and it torpedoed any half-backed ideas she may have had about it, and then the dozens of procrastinations and not keeping appointments at the last minute killed off any plans or memories, so the other people simply took over and I know less about what she had in mind or ever had had in mind than when she called last March! I was extremely careful not to ask anybody to do anything nor promise anything. I didn't have to refuse to give away music because nobody asked for a free soundtrack.

Of course something like that could happen later, but when we have an affair run by a professional procrastinator and people who are not all aiming for a purpose and a goal, I can fairly well depend on this thing fading away harmlessly.

Contrast this with the degree of momentum and sense of purpose that you have there in San Diego and the advantage you have of a nucleus group going in the same direction now that the Interval magazine and studio has lasted this long.

Earlier Sunday I found out why the people in Hollywood had not come after the check as usual--she is ill and almost lost her voice. So if she doesn't recover, I will be in a bind by middle of October. I have no connections whatsoever in Glendale. I simply had no intention of remaining here 5 years and 2 months and through I would have been back into Los Angeles long long ago. And the people of Glendale won't come here or help me or make any business deals so how could I make any connections? Look at it from Glendale's point of view--I was imposed upon this city and they didn't want anybody like me and so refuse to do anything. If I am ostracized and ignored long enough, so they thought, I would go away. Well sure I would have if there had been any place to go.

I tried to keep the Physics & Music book review short enough to learn from it. I tried to keep it short enough to get it into making instruments. I tried to hold onto the book till you see it here. Yours,