

Monday 13 January 1966

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Greeting *****

Tiding a spell of S Santa Ana winds. Warm wind that blows from the deserts. Santa Ana is the county seat of Orange County which is about 25 miles south of Los Angeles and then extends southward 30 more miles or so. These desert winds are felt in Los Angeles County also. It will now turn colder and there may be occasional sprinkles later in the week. This happens every now and then.

You were asking about weather and climate. The temperature range in San Diego is one of the shortest in the country--not very cold and not very hot. Los Angeles area gets both colder and hotter as the weather changes, than down here. There is a relatively narrow coastal strip in California where the sea breeze cools and dampens, while the interior can get dusty-dry and extremely hot in the summer. The hottest month in Southern California is September. The smoggiest month is probably August.

Smog is worst around Los Angeles since there are mountains that obstruct air flow out of the Los Angeles Basin, so the gas fumes and ozone and oxides of nitrogen (produced by auto exhaust, industrial plants, and the photochemical reactions of the sunlight upon various things already in the air) accumulate. In the rainy season the rain can wash the smog all away and for a few days it will be clean and clear. San Diego smog can get blown away much easier because there aren't so many obstructions.

Los Angeles County is pretty well filled up now--fewer places to put houses or apartments. The result is that new construction tends to move inland into real desert places which can get terribly hot in the summer. San Diego has lagged behind, and only recently is the city itself all filled up, and now North San Diego County for some 35 or 40 miles is where all the new towns and villages and even industrial parks taking over farms and open country.

The centrifugation and rabid ruthless Developers ripping homes out are everywhere. Glendale was a horrible example that reached its peak just after I moved there some ten years ago. There is almost a continuous city all the way down the coast from north of Los Angeles to San Diego and then into Baja California Mexico for some distance.

I don't know so much about the 400 miles between Los Angeles and San Francisco, having seen only the narrow strips of the highways and train tracks. If Southern California were a country, a nation in its own right, it would rank very high on the list as to wealth and production and agriculture and population-growth. There is great long-term rivalry between San Francisco and Los Angeles, but not quite as much as there used to be. Many times the proposal was brought up to split California into two states--probably just north of Santa Barbara and Bakersfield inland. Southern California growth is now facing a natural limitation of not enough water for more people. Much water has to be brought in. San Diego might be choked in the long run because that problem will be worse down here.

There are some books about cities and regions that you might be able to find at libraries or secondhand bookstores etc.: The Nine Nations of North America is almost a must reading before you travel. America II is a more recent paperback. Three or four others that would be a help in comparing East and West Coast. There is even a book about the centrifugation of San Francisco.

I forget some of the titles and authors, so that will be a problem. There is a book that compares ten Western cities. The Nine Nations would be valuable because it compares the New York area with the Midwest and the South and the West. That is you start with what you know and it is correlated with what you don't know.

Fifty years ago, May 1935, I came to San Francisco with my mother and lived there about two years. I've been back there a few times. So I do know something about the climate and of course renewed interest a year ago when I was up there.

San Francisco is on a rocky peninsula which stands between the sea and the San Francisco Bay. Because of this water on both sides and lots of wind and lots of fog, it is much cooler than the interior or even than Berkeley and Oakland on the East side of the Bay. I.e. San Francisco has a unique climate--airconditioned by Nature is their boast. It has steep hills and narrow streets and the driving situation is terrible--parking is just about impossible. It has good bus service and new subways. A few old streetcar lines were retained.

The views from San Francisco hills are stunning. It has a long history culture wise. Alas! the developers are trying to ruin it and have succeeded in gentrifying just during the last decade. So the parallel with what you just told me about New York is keen and poignant. San Francisco cannot grow since it is surrounded by the ocean and the bay. The result is that half the office and other workers in San Francisco must live across the bay or north of the Golden Gate or down the Peninsula to the South. Commuting becomes a desperate sardine-crunch. I can get the two San Francisco radio stations here at night and hear all the news about traffic jams and accidents etc.

You can compare it with commuters from White Plains or New Jersey or Long Island or Brooklyn into Manhattan--not all that different really.

The San Francisco area has kind of a temperature floor--it cannot go down to freezing, but it will go down to 40° and have lots of damp chill wind and so people in San Francisco must have steam heat or some kind of heat year round. Block after block of monotonous gray apartments and hotels and buildings--very little trees and grass on that peninsula. Lots of trees and grass across the bay or down south of San Francisco some distance.

Oakland and Berkeley on East Bay are very rundown. South of San Francisco first is San Mateo County with little towns grown together into one mass, and a little farther south is Stanford University and Palo Alto, then on to San Jose which was a sleepy farming town when I was a young squirt--now a big city with its own dreadful smog and lots of pollution from factories there. Silicon valley because all the labs and places where transistors and ICs are made--now turning into a less-prosperous research and development center--tightly crowded and new semiconductor factories springing up all over the country a few moved down here and more moved into the Portland Oregon area where I was born and raised to age 13.

Many went to Texas and farther East.

All the length of California (Oregon for that matter) are mountains. These is usually quite \$\$\$ inland and so mountain climate can be found both North and South by a reasonably short driving time. Say four hours. Northern California has some real rivers, but those of Southern California are a kind of joke. The Los Angeles River is a sort of creek. They drink it all up at the source, with aqueducts and wells tapping that source in the hills. While San Francisco is a compact city, Los Angeles is urban sprawl. There is no real center. The cultural activities in Los Angeles County are very very far from one another. Cultural deserts in between--boring monotonous expanses of disorganized small towns and

terribly rundown neighborhoods alternating with elegant suburbs and wealthy enclaves and some lively cultural neighborhoods and some temples of greed such as banks and new office buildings and condos.

A crazy quilt for over 450 square miles. It takes a long time to get to and from the Los Angeles important places. The transportation problems in Los Angeles and Orange Counties are just horrible. Public transportation is very very poor. Many really important places are not served at all. Some neighborhoods are dangerous. Muggings etc. Street gangs are very bad in some places. All the way from San Francisco to San Diego.

I hope you can get a list of places to stay out of. One of my older friends was extremely worried just over a year ago when it was possible that I might move to San Francisco or near nearby. He had left Los Angeles 15 years ago when driven out of his southwest L.A. home by street gangs and riots, but he said it was out of the frying pan into the fire. One only has to go say ten blocks from the dangerous neighborhoods into a rather safe place, however. I am told that the Southeast part of San Diego is dangerous. This neighborhood is fairly central and is called North Park and seems normal. Average.

The coastal scenery between Los Angeles and San Diego is excellent.

I hope this will be some help.

Gary Harrison was here on Saturday the 11th from Austin Texas. He had spent a few days around San Jose where the computer and semiconductor places of Silicon Valley are. Evidently when he tried to go to San Francisco to see the 1/1 studio on a terribly sleazy alley in downtown San Francisco (I was there a year ago October) they snubbed him and wouldn't let him come, claiming the instruments and things were all dismantled at this time. So I am not the only target of Doty's nasties.

14 years later since that visit to 1/1, I feel that I was "had". That is to say, Jonathan took me to an evening at the "Other Music" Studio and Doty was not running the place; it was after all the Rosenthals' home/apartment/offices, and we went through our respective demos and nothing seems to be amiss. Only months later when I was back in Glendale and read the first issue of 1/1 did I get the full denunciatory blast claiming that my Moods of the Systems were worthless, I was guilty of Fallacy, and nothing but Just Intonation was ever to be used and I was disloyal to Just Intonation because I practiced 1/ 19 22 31 34 etc. The hard facts are that I learned about Just Intonation almost sixty years ago, long long before Doty was born. I was introduced to the Helmholtz/Ellis Book back at age eleven, 1928-29, and studied it at ages 14-17 a hell of a long time ago. I took up the cello at age 14, 1931, so I could play just major and minor thirds. So there! In 1962-63, I met Ervin Wilson and John Chalmers and had already met Tillman Schafer then of San Diego in 1946. I even met Peter Yates and Harry Partch. The network of xenharmonists is thus at least 23 years old and well-established and documented. I stand stand on what I have DONE. Not plans for a future when I may not live long enough to reach it.

Why didn't Doty argue with me on the spot? If he claimed I had no right to use temperaments and that I was against just intonation when I have been the best or at least the most indefatigable promoter of just intonation and user of it for decades, why didn't he have it out with me then and there? He had every chance. To keep quiet and then denounce my whole network of people in the maiden issue of 1/1 amounted to treachery. He was baiting me--he wanted a quarrel IN PRINT with no sounds of any music--just numbers and metaphorical words on paper. Silent. No mental auditory images in any reader's mind, so it would have gone against me. I refused to write anything in 1/1 since I would have been in a triple-bind. I could not defend myself by citing moods of temperaments in the Just Intonation Journal. See the point? He didn't name me, so I would have been the Paranoid seeing Enemies on all fronts. Happily, you and Glen and some others defended me.

There has been too much writing about and too little hearing of non-12.

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I gave you and about ten other people this example: You have heard my Purple Bedroom Blues. In the 19-tone system. If it were played in just intonation, which which could be done on computers or even on a string quartet for that matter, it would have the wrong mood. It would become the White Lace Curtain Blues and lose all its zerk and not attract any attention.

Indeed, played in 31 it has no impact, no spirit.

I think Doty was on a Power Trip and wanted to control a corner of the musical world and crowd me out. So that gave me the right to pull senicrity--aren't 55 years long enough? Ten issues of Xenharmonic Bulletin? More than 50 years of tuning just intonation on various things from time to time?

If I seem to be digressing from Gary Morrison, remember that he defended me also. Glen got slapped down something terrible by a nasty diatribe of Doty's.

John Chalmers can't understand why I don't submit articles to 1/1 or why I didn't try to get on their tape. I think my best policy is to ignore them hard in order that there will be no public debate between me and him. So he can't have the satisfaction of winning a paper-and-ink argument on some old sophistical point. I could have argued like this: Reasonably small integer ratios existed on the Hammond Gearwheel Organ, to wit: 84:89 and 185:196 which are extremely close to the twelfth root of two. Do them on your calculator if you have a costs routine. But those numbers are small enough to meet his test of whether an interval is just. You can't have irrational fractional numbers of teeth on a gear. Therefore the infamous Hammond Imitation Organ of 1928 was just intonation! Compare the above numbers with 531441:524288 (pythagorean comma). Or 32805:32768 (skhisma).

Gary Morrison played my refretted guitars and tried out the Hagalyra (8-foot) and two Turkish 12-string banjo without frets and showed me his interchangeable fingerboard guitar, and his synthesizer plans. He stayed overnight with Jonathan (4 miles west of here) and tried out the instruments there and conferred with him about the new Ariga computer. He is confident and had his affairs well under control and his plans work. Very good to be around someone that successful.

Doug Keislar was down here from Stanford and visited Jonathan and saw some of my things here and spent some time at HUSD which is in La Jolla, 14 miles north at the Experimental Music Center there. You need his Stanford Connection (Electronic Music Studio etc.) so I hope you meet him.

John Chalmers spent a week in the San Diego area and wants to move here in May or such a matter. Tired of Houston climate and the boom there has busted. But also! he is still in paper-and-ink theory. Doesn't use soldering iron and electric drill and electronic parts and violins and pianos and organs and old or new instruments. At his age it may be too late to get him down to business.

I just did 4-track overdubs of my Oriental Serenade, Prelude in F# Major, Serenade in D minor, and other things. All these 40 years old or so. Never heard properly before. Oriental Serenade now that it has been realized in 12, I can go on to it in 19 22 and 31 if I ever have the chance while still alive.

Try this on your instruments: Re-orient the Song of India. Play it in 31. That's the best mood for it. Put in some fifth-tones. Try it in 19 Iso. The part that can now go: D D-flat C-sharp C C-flat B etc.

Yours