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D.S. Would you say that in composing your pieces you speak in symbols?

A.L. I think the majority of pieces I have done in the past five...in awhile, I would say no, I don't use symbols. I've been concentrating on direct...making of...of a particular, you know, on...exploring...sound and social events, which seems to me don't use symbols or images in between. The environmental pieces are really just...exploring for, you know, certain sound things that I'm, that I want to find out about, and it's almost as if I've cut the art out of it.

D.S. Wouldn't you consider the fact that people assemble for a concert a symbolic act?

A.L. Well, I suppose so but my pieces could be played... the idea for the pieces sometimes doesn't have anything to do with the fact that people assemble for a pro-...you know, for giving a concert. On the other hand, when you have a piece like Vespers or...the one we just did, Quasi-modo, there is simply in the title, in the titles, and in

what the pieces are about, comes along with that, without, without thinking about it very much, comes along in parallel the symbolism that, I mean you can't keep symbolism out if people think about...bats in a certain kind of a way; you can't say: "Well, the piece does employ the... does use principles of...you know...of perceiving echoes which bats do so very well". I can't say: "Well, even though I've used that, I don't, I'm not interested in the symbolism"...because bats and...you know, bats and...you know, underwater...you know...like...dolphins of course have a very great, great range of symbolism. So it's as if I just get that as a side effect but, I'm delighted that it's...there...but I don't compose that.

D.S. If you wouldn't call your pieces symbolic, would you call them significant in the sense of signals? Do you attempt to utilize signals in...

A.L. Yes, sure, I mean...sure, I mean because you're dealing with audio signals and with electronic signals and they go from one person to another and they go through a medium or several mediums...from air to water or from things of that kind so that.... They're not much different from what scientists think of as signals--as a matter of fact, they are what...but what I'm trying to get at is that there shouldn't be any difference between science and art and that even the most ordinary things of everyday,

you know, that you do everyday are really quite extraordinary. So forgetting anything about symbolism but just getting into the everyday stuff is interesting enough.

D.S. Do you feel that the signals involved in the pieces signify your interest in composing the piece? Is there a connection between you as a composer and the content, possible content of the signals involved in the performance? In other words, is there something specific to be signalled? Or is your intent more broad than that?

A.L. Gee...there's something in, well you know, I can't talk for all the...pieces because pieces are different, you know, every piece is...

D.S. Let's say in Vespers.

A.L. ...different, but in Vespers for example, the signals are very specific. They are...generated by a very specific piece of electronic, you know, devices, and there's not much of, I mean, they're very simple, they're just a very...simple-minded kind of signal, they don't change much, I mean you can't change the frequency, you can only change the rate of repetition. But...what it does when it...collides with the environment--the walls for example--changes what it is, so that the content changes because of where you are. So that even though the symbol is specific, it's, it should be...forever changeable, where, de-

pending on where you play the piece.

D.S. In other words, there are significant patterns but you don't compose them.

A.L. I don't...no, I don't compose them. I let the environment do that.

D.S. Do you consider that world of vibrations that the clickers produce, a world temporarily parallel to the life of the audience and the players, or do you intend that it encompass...that it all become one world during the performance?

A.L. Well...

D.S. I mean it relates also to thinking about bats. Do you associate yourself with signal-producing animals during the performance?

A.L. I do, yes, I mean...I just said that I didn't think of symbolism but, that was too simple a thing for me to have said because...just the fact that I did do the piece and just the fact that it is dark, it's in the dark...all the symbolism of that is there, you know, I mean if you put the lights out there's a reason and if there's a reason there's...symbolism comes along with that. And the title of the piece, even though it relates to the family of bats--the Vespertilionidae--it very strongly relates to my ex-

perience as an altarboy...where we used to do vespers services which were...evening services and always had a very particular quality. And, the idea that the...space of the church...the church service--I mean...churches are always...sanctified, you know...whether you believe it or not they're always, there are certain rituals that you do to make a church...sanctified and I suppose every, you think if you take it seriously, every church service does that but the vespers service had a particular quality like that--and when we do the piece...in spaces, in other spaces that are not churches, it still seems to me that the piece has something to do with sort of...exorcising or sanctifying the space, by the way the--you see, the players sort of move in very...although I don't state it, in very...not religious but very...well, I hate to use the word "ritualistic" but I suppose to audiences it appears like that. And, but the reason they do that is so that they can...employ the echoes, you see, to their advantage--but regardless of that, it still is, it's still the symbolism of both the bats and the church...and the communication over space, from space, you know, from one player to another, from a player to the walls and back, all that is still there in the piece. So I suppose it's a very old-fashioned idea, you know, the idea that a...that a particular chord, or a sonority in a classical symphony...the better the piece is, the better the composer is, the more...the more meanings one chord

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or one sonority has in the piece, you know the idea of the chord being...one, functioning one way in one key and functioning another way in another key, and that it's at that point where you don't quite understand what the chord is going to do makes the very interesting points, do you know what I mean?, or when the theme comes back but it's, but the orchestration and the accompaniment and the, I mean, any other parameter might not be the same, that's when things get very, that's when the symbolism is very strong because the one item symbolizes so many different things-- it's very powerful--it's like an image in a poem...that you can take a look at from many, many angles.

D.S. You mentioned that, even though the players are proceeding the way they do in the piece out of practical necessity, mainly not moving too fast to confuse the echoes, but what they do appears ritualistic...

A.L. Right.

D.S. ...and offers many possibilities to the audience-- in what way are you satisfied to allow the audience to make it's own meanings out of what they see and hear?

A.L. Well, I like them to make any kind of meanings that they want, but it's disappointing when they don't understand the simple premise that the piece is built on, that is, that the players...are able, say, to migrate through

a space without visual information but instead audio information. And, if an audience, if a person in the audience doesn't understand that, then that's a big part of the performance that he hasn't understood. And also if he fails to hear the differences in the speed and the timbre and so forth of the echoes that are produced, if he thinks it's just a phase piece, then he's really not understood a large part of it. And I hope that he would understand those large parts that I, that were the reason that I did the piece, and then anything else he puts in is fine, but if he doesn't understand those, then I don't know what to say about what I think of his understanding of the situation is.

D.S. Your Piece For Solo Performer might offer a similar situation--it's a very austere setting, the performer doesn't move,...

A.L. It's amazing how many people didn't know what was going on there, it's just amazing how many people thought it was pre-recorded...waves, brainwaves--I don't know what they thought the putting-on of the electrodes on my scalp was all about, if they thought it was just theatrical or just some kind of a joke. It's funny, odd, people some-, people just...well, it's changing now but, particularly people that are going to write articles about what you do, they so often don't even perceive what you do! You know

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I am sitting in a room, well, there was a critic from the New York Times who was talking about the fact that it was electronic distortion...and the piece says fifteen times, ten or twelve of which are understood, how, what the process is and he just didn't even understand that, I mean, it makes you begin to wonder. The brainwave piece, I... it's not a pleasant piece to do because you have to sit there and you have to have somebody put that electrode stuff on your scalp and then...it's very anxiety-provoking because often the electrodes don't work or the amplifier doesn't function right, and, you only do that in order that the alpha is the real thing in the real time, otherwise, you might as well...people used to say: "Well, why don't you tape record it and process the tapes, and speed them up or speed them down", well, that's the...simpleminded thing to do; but it's funny how many people just think, don't realize that it's...like, a real-time thing.

D.S. Would you consider either doing what you said, using pre-recorded tapes, or not telling how you did produce the effects of I am sitting in a room, that is, saying, not saying how you did it but perhaps saying something else-- would you consider that a compromise with the process? Are what you say and what happens in I am sitting in a room and, are they complementary processes, that you wouldn't want to destroy?

A.L. Well, I didn't tell the audience in the brainwave piece what I was doing. I didn't, I've never written satisfactory program...no-, things to write in the program, but as a subtitle often it would say; "(amplified brainwaves)". In Vespers...the subtitle to the piece is: "(acoustic orientation by means of echolocation)". I am sitting in a room, the only reason I did use that text was because I didn't have a score yet, and I was thinking that that might be a score, I mean I didn't know what I was thinking but the pacing of the text to me was...very, you know, something I thought about, the speed at which I...you know... said it. But, I think the time is gone when we have to be...mys-, secretive or mysterious about what we do because everything should be available to everybody, I mean tools should be available, art should be available. And I don't think it...serves, I mean I don't think we should be secretive anymore and in...Quasimodo--the whale piece--the last time I played it, I didn't tell anybody what it was about and they, well, they didn't know what to think, but at the party afterward, when I would tell people that I was imitating a whale or I was trying to tune into that... well, heartbreaking communication...thing that the whale does, then people were very sympathetic...and why not have people sympathetic?, I mean, I think people come to concerts now and they really want to...understand them.

D.S. But does knowing the inspiration for your piece help them understand, really help them understand? Or do they, it might turn into a programmatic piece.

A.L. Yes, that's possible. But...tala, if you know the tala of a piece, don't you enjoy the performance more?

D.S. I wonder if they're analagous.

A.L. I'm not sure. Well, it's just that...when you... you see, people always want you to explain them technically what you, they always want to...well, they always want it to be technically staggering. I remember when I first was writing instrumental pieces, more conventional, when I was a student, and somebody would say: "Oh, how do you write a score for full orchestra?" Well, you can explain how you do it because many people do it and you're able to learn it...in school, I mean, you can learn it, you know, very easily--the ranges of instruments and the... conventions of traditional scoring. But I often found that people didn't want me to explain it but...wanted to think that it was something beyond them. Now of course I'm being contrary to what I just said about being not secretive, but...people often, when it's concerning the brainwave piece, they always, I get a lot of letters that ask me very technical questions about brainwaves and I don't know anything about it--I wasn't interested in that the least

bit.

D.S. How do you relate to the general concept of illusion and theatricality?

A.L. Well, my first impulse to answer it was that... there's enough illusion and theatricality in things as they are. I remember the Once Group...some of their programs were putting together very simple things, almost, you know, what you might say banal things; but putting them, but choosing to put them together for some particular reason. They use imagery very much, but I mean...using an old Fred Astaire film...doing...simple things like that as if to say: "These things are very, are, we can celebrate these things...and get into them", and by doing it you get enough... you know, it's extraordinary enough. But if I believe that completely then...I wouldn't think that some composers were more interesting than others because some composers present...for instance, Jasper Johns when he paints those flags, the content is, like, very simple, they're American flags, sometimes they're superimposed on each other, but there's still the technique that Jasper Johns has, which is so extraordinary that he does make...and he does...put something between the object and the eye. And it's not terribly much all the time. Or take Marcel...take the,, you know, the found objects of Marcel Duchamp...there was, he used, once, a rack and then he used a...you know, things

of that kind which he didn't change at all but he just called art, but he saw them...like that, as you look at a cloud you can often see a face or the man in the moon, well he...only he did just a teeny bit but he did put something between the rack and the eye. And all he did was to say: "I am an artist and that is art." And that's just one step further than what Jasper Johns does or that's sort of like...what I do; the brainwave piece is just a duplication of an EEG which is done in...you know, institutions all the time, I mean everyday people are having...electroencephalograms. And of course there's symbolism in that because people that do are...are often being tested for...psychological imbalance. Did I ever tell you what...Takehisa...no, no, no...the pianist...Takahashi?...said when he was at a performance of the Music for Solo Performer?, he said, after the performance, he said it was very American--electrocution. So, talking about symbolism, even though it's a very...you see, I didn't, you see, like, scientists would have to say: "Well, gee, we do those things everyday in the lab, and all he's doing is that, I mean, what does that mean?", but they don't perform it, they don't make it public and I don't know what they think they're doing in the lab, and also they didn't, of course they're, I mean, the real thing about the piece is that the brainwaves are in some way audible to the audience, you know, and of course they don't do that, they're not interested

in that.

D.S. Do you have the conscious desire to live your life on several levels--to use all these situations as possibilities for many levels, one of which could be an artistic presentation? In other words, do you have an eye to things around you like that?

A.L. Yes, I think so. I mean...there's hardly anything I...come in contact with that I don't try to think about... how to make it art. Isn't that strange, when I just said that I often cut art out?, but I mean...everything can be art, right?, it depends how you look at it or how you... live, you know, how you live--if you live well...and you perceive things and you act in...good sort of ways...I guess what I'm saying is that you try to use art to put you in a state of Grace. And if you're in a state of... you know, if you're in that state, then you're close to God which means...which is all the art you could...ever dream about, right?

D.S. I'd like to know your attitude, as a composer, to theatre...and theatricality in general.

A.L. Well...in one sense it's all, it's all,...everything is theatrical or...you know...theatrical. Do you know the...

D.S. Shakespeare saying?

A.L. ...the, oh yes, "All the world's a stage," no...I'm thinking more of the...Borges story, about the universal theatre where...I wish I had read it...more...just, just, I mean, I wish I'd read it just a little while ago so...it would be more fresh in my mind, but it's...it's got something to do with if you thought, if when you're doing everyday things, if you thought...all you have to do is to think that they aren't...and you could imagine that you would be...as you do the everyday things, you'd be doing the ultimate...theatrical...you'd be in the ultimate theatrical situation. It's sort of like his story about the re-composing "Don"... you know, "Quixote" where, in a...one...world, or you could imagine living in a world...far away from the one we're in now, and being in the same situation that you would re-write,

word for word, Cervantes' book, you see what I mean? It's like that funny Spanish looking-in-a-mirror or parallelling-- it's like a parallel, it's like being in a parallel...universe. And I forget who said it, whether it was Bob Ashley or John Cage, that all the music tends to theatre anyway.

D.S. Do you consider the visual aspects of your performances, and do visual ideas give you ideas for pieces?

A.L. Yes. We always stage what we do. I mean, when you compare what we do with what the...composers that perhaps you and I don't find so interesting...as ourselves...do, for instance, making pieces on tape only, where you go into the concert hall and you see two speakers and you hear the tapes. Well, that is one theatrical point of view--that's one theatrical aspect...and it's sort of scary and it's sort of...you know, like, the sounds are invisible, and...that has a point, but I...remember finding the early tape compositions rather interesting in that respect because it was, like...where's the music, where's it made? It really was like...it really was sort of like seeing science fiction stories you read that, like...the walls would be, like, you know, television screens. But then you get tired of that because that's just like one theatrical situation. Then the live situation is, like, more interesting because you see...things happening but you're not sure how they're done. I remember my brainwave piece, I was very conscious about staging that...right...and I remember an

early tape piece I did called Elegy for Albert Anastasia, which was...reminiscent of the, you know, the underworld man, who was assassinated. I put the lights out when, that was a tape piece, a pure tape piece, I used to put the lights out... and I remember a good friend of mine...putting me down for that, saying he thought it was a trick--a cheap trick...and I thought so for awhile--but then when you think about it, putting the lights out or putting them dim or doing anything with the environment...is...a form of staging and it's a very simple thing to do...and of course now we put the lights out for certain things...and it doesn't seem, you see, to bother us. When you asked the question about do visual ideas get you started on compositions, right away I thought of imagery, I mean, visual equals imagery. And that one of the differences between, I think, the generations...of Cage and us, I mean, we're sort of the next generation down...we use imagery while Cage is against imagery. And...it's very funny because it really reminds me, seeing we're in a laundromat, one of the big...causes, I don't want to...one of the big causes of the split between Bob Rauschenberg and Cage and the Merce Cunningham group had to do with imagery or not...imagery. And because Bob Rauschenberg was, of course, an artist, he...had to be concerned with visual. And...if...I don't want to get into talk about what abstract expressionism has to do with imagery or what pop art does but...the beautiful images in Bob Rauschenberg's art...are very near...to us, I mean, my

generation. And one of the beautiful things that Bob did, when he was doing decor for the Cunningham group, is, when they were having their split, he did a beautiful design where he strung a line across the audience and hung his and his... dancers...they did...laundry, and they hung laundry up, which was a very beautiful pop art idea, but it was also a very atrocious pun, which, I'm beginning to be very fond of...you know, bad puns since I've been in the Chicago movies and George...you know, George...George is...very interested in puns. The pun of like, the wash, you know...showing your... what is it? Two puns! One is...the dirty laundry, where you show your dirty laundry to the...to everybody, means that you expose yourself...and the other pun is "everything'll come out in...the wash," which is...which was a very beautiful thing for Bob Rauschenberg to do because, of course, in the long run, there's really no split. I mean, there's an aesthetic split, but...Cage and Merce and Bob and, you know, they're both, they're all wonderful artists and...he was pointing up that that was just a...provincial argument and it really, in the long run, doesn't really matter.

D.S. You mentioned the fact that tape and electronics work invisible and you started to say something about a parallel or a complementary world.

A.L. Right.

D.S. Do you ever consider what, do you have images, visual images of the sort of world that would provide electronic effects?

A.L. Well...

D.S. Do you consider that when you use electronics?

A.L. Yes! Well, I think of...I think of, although I don't understand it too...profoundly, but I think of the lengths of the...frequency, I mean...you know, when you think of the spectrum, the audio spectrum and the infrared spectrum and the light spectrum and so forth, I'm always thinking of the size of the particular...lengths of the particular, you know, whatever the energies are. And it's almost as if...well, I have no scientific ideas about them except I'm thinking... you know, when you think of everything vibrating and then when you think of amplifying, you're...you go deep into that... idea and you start...dreaming about...seeing objects, seeing all the particles of objects...vibrating and of, like...jumping into them, you know, like...getting into those environments, that would be like the corner of, like, a particular desk-- jumping into the corner of the desk and being in a very complex, fast...saturated environment, the molecules are really bouncing around and where you could amplify the teeniest signals.

D.S. Of course, amplification changes the scale so that those once invisible vibrations are made manifest.

A.L. Right. But I can't imagine another world except if it's futuristic, you know. But...

D.S. I'd like to jump back to talking about Cunningham's group. Rauschenberg's dirty laundry was a set.

A.L. Right.

D.S. It was something that they built for a performance...

A.L. Decor, yes.

D.S. ...decor. Do you consider the time and the place of a performance to be important to imagery, that is, do you try to take advantage of the particular place that a performance is given in?

A.L. Well, we always...the Once Group particularly and other groups that have grown up since then like...the group in Connecticut...you know...

D.S. Pulsa.

A.L. ...Pulsa which deals with environments and...changes, I mean, goes to a place. They went to a school which wasn't very liberal in its co-educational, you know, in the living arrangements, and they connected in audio terms and in video terms the boys' dorm to the...other girls' dorm, which was a very symbolic...thing, you know, like, if they couldn't get connected physically, they could get connected electronically.

And I've asked them to come here and my idea was that, was that either we connected the Afro-American...place, which is out of bounds...to...us...I think, I'm not sure, perhaps it isn't but we think it is, and the white...for instance, connecting the black dorm to the white dorm. Or connecting the University to the downtown, you know, the town and the gown thing...like, a storefront downtown. So that the... people like the Once Group, the Living Theatre...the Sonic Arts Group...would have thought that way but now, I think, I'm more interested in...sanctify---I know that's very... that's...that's a...very sanctimonious thing for me to say but...I remember we had an experience in Geneva, in 1969, when the vibes for a particular concert were very, very bad. We gave a concert and the vibes--we could tell the minute we walked into the hall--the...electronics weren't up to standard, the people who were in charge of the concert weren't, you know, co-operating. And we backed off in the performances, but I felt badly about that...because I feel that even though the vibes are bad and the place is bad...it's our...it's, we should, I mean...if we do anything in the world, our...what we should do is to try to make places like that good instead of going away. I mean, try to make the concert as beautiful as you possibly can. So now it interests me to go anywhere. And...if, not try to exploit the space necessarily, but to really, to make the space really...go good--go, in a nice, particular way. Do you know what I mean?

D.S. When you talk about the space, are you including the people? The vibrations are from the people by way of the space?

A.L. Yes. Including the people is hard, it's very hard because...

D.S. Do you try to touch the people, or are you talking ritualistically about changing the space?

A.L. Well, I was talking about the space, but now when you mention the people, obviously, I mean...you try to touch the people and it's very hard sometime because...depending on the space that they're in and I really mean that in a... profound kind of a way. If you go into the Boston Symphony... building, you have a whole set...well, you have a whole set of conventions...that you sense in that buiding. Even if you didn't realize that it was the Boston Symphony Hall...I think you would...this sounds...queer, but I think you would feel... the...presence...of all the music that had been there, and all the conductors and all the...elegance and the...you know, the conventions--I mean, I really believe it...I think that the spiritual...energy stays in there. I think it gets...--stuck in there! And it can't be aired out.

D.S. Do you have the same feeling about meeting-places and have you ever thought of you concerts as meetings where you, the people in the group, meet the people in the audience?

A.L. I...didn't think of it in those words, but...

D.S. That's the way I've thought of Sonic Arts Union concerts, the best ones.

A.L. Yes...I'm still...I'm very interested in what we do because it's beginning to go out of--, not go out of style, but it still is strange as it ever...I mean, we never got... popular. I just sent a letter to a university recommending tenure and promotion...for a friend of mine who's a very young composer who came along like...a long time after us and now... composers of that age go...right away into...respectable jobs, academic jobs. They've, we've helped...make those things available. Of course, John Cage did the first of the whole thing...I mean, he made it available for us to work, and we made it available for these other younger composers...to work and...the Sonic Arts Union is in the middle of all that and we've never got...popular--how we get another concertis... beyond me...I don't understand why...we continue...I mean, why people keep asking us to perform.

D.S. Maybe you're useful and you don't know it.

A.L. Well, we might be like...Genet. We might be...martyrs. Each of us, you know, in Genet books where...he thinks he's... they think, you know...Sartre wrote...Genet was really, in reality, a saint because in his...because he focuses...all the evil on himself so that other people can...focus their own

evil on him and thereby become...sanctified. Perhaps our... perhaps our programs are so bizarre that...people can sort of, people feel good about, that little bizarreness that they have in them...it takes, you know, I mean, it alleviates that...for them. That's a funny idea.

D.S. If I could change the subject, I'd also like to ask about your relation to hard information, the sort of thing that comes in technical books. Will...

A.L. Well, I find it hard to understand technical books. I always have. I, certain...in, when I was young, I just never...connected with physics or subjects like that; but I...think I have the knack of...getting general ideas, you know, if I don't understand specific--and also, I can get more information from somebody, for instance, asking somebody. If I...stumble in a book, I always rather ask somebody who really knows and in...conversation, I seem to get the information slightly better.

D.S. But I know you're fascinated by rather esoteric books.

A.L. Oh, like what?

D.S. Like alchemy.

A.L. Oh, alchemy! Oh, well I can understand that!

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D.S. That's certainly a technical subject.

A.L. Oh, I thought you meant...com-, you know, science.

D.S. Well, that too.

A.L. I think I can...what I don't understand about the alchemy...doesn't really...I don't, doesn't concern me because...I get...a fair amount of it. The images, I understand the images, I mean, It goes back to my childhood, you know, I was, I mean, all the...imagery that I...being an altar boy, right?, I mean, the imagery of...the colors, of the change in the seasons of the church...the, you know, the incense and the candles, the parts of the...church service that are so...striking. You never...you keep those things always and...I don't have any problem with alchemy when they say three...you know, three goes to...three is unstable, goes to number four. I mean, I can understand that.

D.S. Do you think it's important that artists--well, I know you'd answer yes; but--do you think it's more important today that artists and scientists and authors and whatever establish communications?

A.L. Yes. I think it's more, I think it's more...important than that--I think...that the boundaries have to break down and that...there, we shouldn't--I mean, we shouldn't

distinguish who's an artist and who's a scientist. I mean, I know that's sort of a strange thing to say but...for instance, I as an artist, I mean, I'm really interested in...you know, technical things. And...we're doing a piece, my wife and I, are doing a TV piece for station KQUED where we're going to use a--police...information-collecting devices... we're going to have to learn about infrared...you know, pictures...doing, you know...and...I mean...if...if you're talking about, if I'm dreaming about composing a piece of art that will communicate with a non-human...you know... another being, a non-human being, like a dolphin...I mean, I'm really serious about that. And if I'm serious about that, that's no...that's not far away from the kind of work that the man who's trying to teach speech or understand dolphin speech, I mean, I'm just doing it with other means but...I...in that sense I don't consider, I mean, I'm...in between being an artist and being a scientist. I mean, you see how important it is not to think in those ways?

D.S. What form...do you think speech is the most effective form of communication that could be established?

It was once thought that music, in the medieval university, was the common language. It was the language, that was most eloquent.

A.L. Well, that's...difficult. I would...think so off-

hand. I would way that sound, you know...

D.S. you talk about communicating with a dolphin, are you talking about strictly verbal communication?

A.L. No, no, no--I'm not talking about verbal communication at all. I'm talking about sound communication. I'm saying, you see, because he's expert at it, better than... we are. You know, like, his audio information is equal to our visual--the amount of bits of information, generally speaking, that you receive, right? And his sending apparatus is...you know...stereo. And...apparently, he can-- maybe we talked about this before--but he can communicate with another dolphin and tell...apparently tell the other dolphin very sophisticated things by recreating the environmental situation, you see?, in sound. And that suffices... you see. Now, I would like to make a piece for...the... instead of...pushing the dolphin around and telling him.... You see, what, I think that the...blacks have done us a great service...in talking about...how everybody is so egocentric about their own selves. I mean...the French and the Germans think that...in, pertaining to art, they're superior to us, so you have this whole Boulez-Stockhausen... thing. It's so odious...in America, right? Then...you find out that the...now I think that...well, you know... the Whites think that their culture is better than the Blacks or the Arabs or the orientals, right? And we're

finding out that that's obviously not...true. The terms are different only. Now, I think the same thing is happening with human beings' relationship to animals. We think we're...superior to animals. Well, perhaps we are in...a lot of ways, but in a lot of ways, animals are superior to us. I mean, like, a dolphin has better sound sending and receiving apparatus than we do. So, what I would like...you know, what I'm dreaming of is that we have a world where, like, every being...everything...that's either alive, or that even isn't alive...is equal and that you don't...break a stone...only if there's a need, if there's a symbiotic rela-...you know what I mean? And... to say that the dolphin should learn English speech is pretentious...you know, and I'd like to make a piece that's very complex...sonically, that might use...you know...computer technology, that could describe in the dolphin's terms, what we are like. I mean, the dolphin's eyes are not so good so he really can't perceive much because he's under-, he's in another system. I mean, he can't see... an airplane. He can't see...you if you're twenty feet away out of the water. But if we made a piece that would describe those things, then I think we would be doing a... service.

D.S. You mean a different field of vibrations, that is the light...

A.L. Right.

D.S. ...field isn't...

A.L. Right.

D.S. ...good, so you...

A.L. And you know, the dolphin could tell us a lot about the ocean. I mean, if we want to mine in the ocean, if, you know, we're spoiling the ocean, I mean, we're sending... the mercury...it's funny, because alchemy's got...the mercury is a fundamental...and sulphur too...is fundamental to alchemy and that's just what we're pouring into the ocean, right? But I mean, if we could...the...he could...aid us in, like, telling us how to employ the ocean, in a good way, without spoiling it.

D.S. We also pour enzymes from our washing machines.

A.L. Yes.

Interview Nine
~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~

D.S. What do you think of the terms "amateur" and "professional" as applied to music?

A.L. First of all, the distinction...is obsolete and shouldn't exist...because a professional musician is one who...makes a living, makes his livelihood playing...and economically, and it also implies that he makes a big commitment...to it, you know what I mean, it's, it's in terms of commitment, and you decide to be a musician and that's what you do. An amateur...of course the professional musician should be an amateur in that he loves what he's doing; but I think often the professionals, since they're stuck in, often...in...unpleasant social situations, sort of, sort of lose their amateur standing... do you know what I mean?

D.S. Yes.

A.L. And...if the social situation in the world changes-- when technology can do the work for us--then everyone can be an artist or be a musician, and it will be like planting a garden or like...you know. There'll be no idea about being a musician for economic, for any reason about economics.

D.S. Do you think the role of the music teacher is, relates to those categories as you define them, or do you think it's somewhere in the middle inasmuch as he has a rather unusual function--he doesn't just play music professionally but he's paid to teach music which is rather a confusion since he, so he comes in contact with amateur musicians.

A.L. It could be that the teacher--the professional teacher--is obsolete, I mean, the idea of it is obsolete and that the only reason we have them is because they teach arts that are...well, I hate to use the word "obsolete" but arts that are traditional, I mean, if you want to learn to play the piano you pretty nearly have to have somebody to teach you. But I can't...teach, really, what I do, I mean, I almost can't teach it...in those ways, I mean, you know, I can't...lay down rules or...I haven't found a way or a style. I just...I just provide tools and...and atmosphere; and in electronics, young people know more electronics than I do, generally speaking, and they can start, I mean, they can start to make tape pieces or electronic pieces or free pieces instantly, and, so that it's...I have no, I mean, I don't consider that I teach in the way that a pianist would, a piano, piano teacher would.

D.S. Have you had any indications that students no longer learn in the way, in the way that they used to?

A.L. Well, they probably learn the way they always did, I mean...when I used to go to music school I learned much more out of class than I did in, in class. I remember I learned a great deal about wind-playing...embouchure, fingering, things of that kind, because I used to hang around with the wind-players in school and they were always talking about playing...and every night we'd go to a place and drink beer and they'd talk about intonation, phrasing; and I certainly didn't learn that in school, I learned it from musicians. Of course, you know, I mean, I suppose you are right, I mean, I suppose there is a case for saying that they don't learn in the way that... I mean, I've been told that children don't learn how to read or how to write in the ways that we did.

D.S. Do you think conversation as opposed to textbooks is a more effective way of learning?

A.L. It's hard to say. Frederic Rzewski and I had thousands of conversations when we lived in Italy together, and we learned a lot because we talked, or, for instance, the Sonic Arts...Group, there's no, we have no more enjoyment in anything than to sit around and talk...and

I've learned a tremendous amount of information from just doing that. But I think there's some information that...that you can't, I think there's some information that you've got to be able to freeze...visually, and that, for instance, a book in computer programming... I don't see how I can learn that having conversations with a programmer. I think you have to have the visible page...

D.S. For concentrated study.

A.L. Yes, for, so that you can manipulate what's on the page; it's hard to do it in real time, if you know what I mean.

D.S. There's also a problem of the person you're talking with is giving you wrong information.

A.L. Of course a book can give you wrong information too.

D.S. That's true...in fact, the form of information that comes through conversation is often experiential in that it's filtered through the person's experiences with it.

A.L. Also there's other information than what the words say. It's another matter. I don't understand people who

don't like to sit around and talk, I've never understood why somebody gets the idea to get up and go somewhere else. I know that when the Sonic Arts people--you know, when we talk--certain people just get very bored, I mean, they can't see why people would want to sit and just sort of go from one subject to another, or tell a joke, there's always...and drink, you know, there, some people are very uptight about that, and feel that they're wasting their time. I can't understand that.

D.S. Well, perhaps you'd have to be outside the group to understand it.

A.L. Well...I don't think it's, I don't it's that kind of a thing, I mean, even if...it's not a group but just going to somebody's house, some people just don't enjoy sitting around talking. They'd rather read...for example.

D.S. You mentioned once before that you get many of your ideas for pieces in conversation with other people. How do you think your professional life would have changed if you were...the only people you came in contact with were students and other teachers...in other words, if you were cut off from your performing, professional life?

A.L. Well, you know, there's long periods of time between when the Sonic Arts Group meets and when it doesn't

meet. There are long empty periods.

D.S. But you do have correspondance.

A.L. Yes, we have, and phone calls and sometimes I find I just like to call somebody with nothing particular to say but it's just the connection, and...well...you can learn a lot from talking to any people, I mean, you can learn something from anybody.

D.S. Do you ever find yourself in situations where you don't want to talk to people?

A.L. Yes, when I'm tired, sometimes when you're very tired or...but that's very few and, very seldom do I feel like that, if I'm very tired or if I'm doing something... urgent, if I have something really important to do--a project--or if I'm composing, you know, or...or if it's a person I don't really connect with very well. I remember when I was a student, I remember it was often val-, it still is, it's often valuable to learn something from a bad piece. From a bad piece you really learn a lot because the bad parts of it are really exposed, whereas with a beautiful piece, sometimes it's very hard to find why the piece is that, is the way it is...because it's... it's mysterious.

D.S. That's probably because in a good piece all the parts work together.

A.L. Right, and...right, and it's hard to tell really, the...the mys-, I remember Morty Feldman telling us how, you know, he was very friendly with the, with the American, with the New York school of artists, you know, during the fifties...and he remembered, he told us about a time when, I think it was...Franz, either de Kooning or Franz Kline--one of those boys--going to museums with them and talking about paintings, you know, in the traditional, famous paintings with them, and he said that, that--we were talking about academic musicians at the time and how, for instance, certain composers, like, explain everything, or even before they compose a piece it's all explained for them, you know, the rows, the serialism, the controls, and how banal an idea it is to think that way, because why a piece is beautiful or wonderful is because there's a mysterious quality that you don't understand and I'm not being sentimental about it, it's, you know, it's true and that Feldman was saying that, like, a great painter would be looking at a Rembrandt...sketch, for instance, and talk about it, you know, but finally, usually coming to the concl-, finally having to say: "Jesus Christ, how does he do it?", you know, how did he do it?, you know

and...that's sort of close to the romantic vision that a lot of people have about artists--the mystery and so forth--but I think it's true, I mean, why shouldn't we have a romantic vision about art, right?...because that mysterious quality gets you really into the supernatural, I mean, it's where the supernatural is, I mean, it's where art is.

D.S. Do you think it's possible to learn that?

A.L. Not directly. You can be brought to it.

D.S. How?

A.L. Well...you have to have some inputs, you know, I mean, if you didn't n-, if you didn't ever hear a piece of music, you certainly wouldn't, I don't see how you'd be able to...I'm being very extreme, you see. I think you, I think it's accidents, I think strokes of accidents to be with certain people at certain times that say things, or that show wonderment at certain things which gives you...the...carte bl-, gives you the privilege of feeling that way...I mean, if you put down...chamber music, if you had a child and you continually put chamber music down and said how bad it was, chances are he would probably grow up to feel that way; if you have another attitude, chances are he would feel the other way.

D.S. You mentioned accidents, do you think there's a future in eliminating accidents in music? Or is that a realistic way to look at computer music?

A.L. Well, there'll always be accidents because remember we talked about imperfect, imperfect devices, and so long as there are imperfect devices and as long as there's, you have a mismatch between you and the device, some accident is going to happen because...

D.S. At the interface.

A.L. Yes, because...because you don't fully comprehend everyone and it doesn't comprehend you either and there'll always be some mistake in how you...how you operate, and that's where art is also, right?

D.S. Do you feel there's a fundamental difference between...well, for example, an artist and his intelligence and a computer? Do you think that there's necessarily a mismatch between those two systems?

A.L. I don't know.

D.S. Or is the artist the person who does have an...

A.L. There has to be a mismatch of some kind because computers are designed by a chronological, chronologically

changing and variable group of people, and if you don't, and therefore, if you consider that there's a mismatch from one person to another, then there has to be a mismatch between you, the operator of the computer, and the computer which is the...child of that group...of people. Are you asking do computers and artists think alike?

D.S. I wasn't asking that so much as if they could work in harmony, not just--a harmony that would eliminate any...

A.L. Accidents?

D.S. ...accidents.

A.L. Well, but in traditional harmony--if I can use the word, I mean, directly--the most, one of the, I mean, the most...charming things are when you have, like, accented passing notes, or dissonances, which are like accidents, you know, the word "accidental".

D.S. Of course, but those are accidents according to the system but there are very seldom accidents according to the composer.

A.L. But they're not accidents when they first occur-- I mean they are accidents when they first occur, probably...because you have to resolve them; if you didn't feel

that you had to resolve a d-, when you get to the point where you feel that you don't have to resolve a dissonance, it's not an accident anymore, it's part of the system, but when it first occurs, it's a surprise and you have to pass, you have to pass on to the other consonance.

D.S. Yes, but of course that assumes--might happen in improvisational music but as long as--in graphic notation, you're still working behind the times, like there has to be a system with which, you're still, you can still change any note after you've written it, and it's not an accident in the sense that the composer knows that it's there--he does know that it's there.

A.L. Right.

D.S. That's interesting now because you're not operating, you don't choose to operate in an improvisational manner, but you are operating in a manner without a well-defined system. Consequently, your accidents are hard to tell sometimes from your purposes.

A.L. Right.

D.S. I know you find that situation attractive.

A.L. Right.

D.S. So do I.

A.L. Right.

D.S. Inasmuch as computer composers and serial composers choose to operate with a very rigorous and well-defined system and you have chosen to operate with almost no system except that of your own devising--well, actually that isn't quite true since you use nature's systems often, which are given--do you feel you're working in the same field?

A.L. Yes, because...they're going to have to start to work the way I do...if they want to get anywhere, right? I mean, this psych-, this fellow who wants to buy the PDP 12, and he's a psych-, he's in the psychology department and I'm in the music department and he's doing... I don't know exactly what he's doing but it sounds as if he's doing quite, he's doing things similar to what I am...and my way of going about things, I would think is very valuable for him to find out about. He'd probably scoff, you know, I mean, scientists scoff at the way artists are, want to use tools because they think it's not serious. It's like scoffing at the alch-, it's like the modern science is scoffing at al-, at the alchemists; but you can see how wonderful and how important the work

of the alchemists was, if to no one else at least to themselves, I mean, they're sort of mag-, stri-, trying to get at supernatural, trying to get to God; and artists do that too, you see; and I think scientists do too when they try to measure...they try to measure, you know like, ima-, I mean, imagine an astronomer, I mean, he, his impulse to be an astronomer has to be that he wants to find Almighty God, right?, in some way, right?, and when you try to measure the distance between a star and another star, it's not really any difference than...tuning a fifth or, I mean, you know, the music of the spheres, that ancient idea is still an important...idea--except we're--at least I am--going at these things in a different way, I mean, I feel very strongly about how I feel in imagery and symbols, which are just as valid a way to use these tools as what the scientists are...I mean actually, in a lot of cases, it's more so because, some scientists are employing the tools to manufacture bombs... which isn't a very good way to use tools.

D.S. War has always been a very efficient system, you have to be efficient to win a war...and that's what's produced efficient mass production in this country.

A.L. Also many great surgical steps forward came about during the war when you had to operate fast.

D.S. Perhaps scientists feel the way they do about artists' use of tools because it seems their purposes are considered impractical from the beginning.

A.L. But that's absurd, you know, because understanding art is understanding...the world and...

D.S. But it's not understanding it according to the way things seem at the time. An artist is always trying to locate a new way of looking at the world.

A.L. Did you read about what, at M.I.T., what they found out? They took photographs of very, very small things--minute, I mean, un-, invisible to the eye...and they took photographs of those and blew them up in black and white. And they put beside them abstract paintings... certain kind of abstract paintings, and many people couldn't tell what the photographs, what, which was art and which was reality, and the interesting thing about it is that the artists' paintings, for the most part, were created before the pictures; so that, you see, the artist, doing an abstract painting, dis-, knew, deep within himself, what these things were going to look like, you see what I mean? Now, how did they find out?, they were unable to see them. The force that was operating is the force that operates in art and that's why it's a strong

force.

D.S. Well, in the case of the microscope, it was the common force of investigation. A scientist fragments things to investigate them, a chemist takes things apart, and I know an electron microscope, you have to photograph dead things...

A.L. Why?

D.S. For some reason, I don't know.

A.L. Photograph dead things?

D.S. Well, you have to...I know viruses have to be coated with something to...

A.L. Oh?

D.S. ...at any rate, the Western scientific method has to take things apart. A scientist, he did it magically-- I mean, a composer has done it, a painter has done it magically, has taken things apart without actually doing it...

A.L. Right.

D.S. ...and yet he had the knowledge.

A.L. Like we scoff at ac-, at the Chinese acupuncture.

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I don't think anybody in the West believes in that...
but it's probably very effective.

Interview Ten
~~INTERVIEW TEN~~

D.S. Are you familiar, off-hand, with Cage's distinction between indeterminacy and chance? What I wanted to ask you about relates to proportion and that in turn relates to his comments upon the difference between those two. He thinks of chance as a situation in which your elements are fairly well established and what you don't know is how you're going to put them together or in what way they're going to come together; but, indeterminacy is a situation in which the final elements are left undetermined, so that leads to pieces like Variations II where the performance is indeterminate of the score. Now what that leaves for Cage to do is to determine the possibilities of certain proportions, since when you throw the celluloid sheets that's what you get and you make your measurements, you drop your perpendiculars, you get certain parameters. So, I was going to ask what, if you've given any thought to the role of proportion or the... slack that ideas about proportion takes up when you don't have everything decided beforehand.

A.L. Yes. Well...I guess I'd have to say that I'm of the...generation that didn't have to take either chance or indeterminacy seriously. I mean, Cage did because

he...did it. And the European composers, for instance... who realized they couldn't avoid coming to terms with it, had to use it in a very European way as a method, a, as another technique, just as they used twelve-tone technique, right?; but being an American and being at home with it, you know, at home with Cage's pieces, I don't... I never thought of my works as either chance music or indeterminate--just as when...you know, I mean...just as when you are...when, if you're in a position to be very conversant with atonal music for instance, you wouldn't say to somebody: "I just made an atonal piece"...people who speak to me and say: "I just did a chance piece", I know right away that...they didn't, or they did but it's very self-conscious and it's...a taken idea. So I really don't know how to answer the question...

D.S. Well, you're concerned with maintaining proportions. Sometimes, I know, you use proportions that are given in the sense that they're natural proportions--they're found...

A.L. Right.

D.S. ...in nature, in an environment.

A.L. Right...like in the echolocation piece, the measurement of time is a very physical one...it's really...if by

proportion you're referring to space and time, when you send a pulse out and it hits an object and bounces back, there's a very direct, simple physical relationship--how far it goes...means, makes...how long it takes for the sound to go out and come back tells you how far away it's gone...right? So, I got at the proportional thing by a nat-, by the...natural...doing of the piece. I am sitting in a room--the proportions, the length...of the... well, there are two things going there: one is the length of the text that I...used, depended on how long it took me to explain what I was doing, but also I paced it as a musician would...would. I mean, I chose a certain pacing of the speech, which is very important to me, it's very personal to me...it's not the way I usually talk but it's sort of like the way I'm talking now. And also...so that those two things: one, the pacing and the other, how long I thought the paragraph should be to explain it--then, the length of the whole piece or the am-, the number of repetitions depended on the physical qualities of the room, until I felt that the resonant frequencies had been...gotten at. Now, in another room it would happen much faster. So, the proportions in that piece are more complex than you would think. They depend on speech, on the explanation of it and on the physical qualities of the room...and of course on the charac-

teristics of the electronic equipment.

D.S. There's two...I was thinking in Vespers, there's a proportion maintained between the amount of signals you send into the space and the type of space it is, and the number of people who are also sending signals...so that you can't exceed a certain practical proportion of signal to area or you can't perform the piece.

A.L. Right...if you do exceed that, then people are not playing the piece right because they can't hear their own echoes. I was fully aware that...that control was built in, that I didn't have to decide on...density... and proportion in that way but that the space would do the deciding for me.

D.S. In I am sitting in a room, you've also maintained a proportion because it's a modular performance, it's built up from a certain...duration of the original text which is repeated as many times as necessary...

A.L. Right.

D.S. ...so that you maintain a sense of proportion.

A.L. Right, right.

D.S. Like building blocks.

A.L. You know, when you think of alternatives, when you think about like, for instance, turning back...we were driving today and we couldn't...we...the bridge was closed, right?, to cross the river...well, the decision to turn back...we didn't turn back and I'm glad we didn't... but, if we had turned back, for some other reason, or even if we decided to turn back, then that...I would have accepted that as a proportional...quality...I would have said: "Well, the mileage could have been...one way, you know, one way, across the river and then return, that's beautiful"; but also an obstacle...makes you turn back, and while that's not what I would have thought of doing, it's to me it's just as beautiful a proportional... thing, do you know what I mean?...I mean, you find that your decisions can be overridden...by any other situation. It's like, for instance if somebody...comes into a performance and disturbs it, well, you could think of it as not being a disturbance but as a changing of the sound situation...and that's all right too...it's just an unexpected proportional change.

D.S. Have you noticed that when you're retracing your steps, often your subjective sense of duration is altered so that it seems as if it doesn't take as long?

A.L. Yes, I think they have explanations for that, you

know, psychologists. Maybe you've been over the terrain... once, maybe that's...you know?; or maybe the expectation, the difference in expectation--it's like...the recapitulation in a sonata...I don't, you know...it's been so long since I've really taken a sonata seriously, but... I don't think you hear the recapitulation in the same way that you do the exposition.

D.S. It's a throwaway.

A.L. Well, it's going home, you know. It is going home. And...in a real classical, like, if you have a model, a schoolbook sort of a model of a sonata, the only difference is that the second theme is in the same key... which really establishes home because you...you don't want to go away again, you know, you start at home... like you're back, you're first theme is in the original key and you don't want the second theme to go away... you make sure it's home, then you can go to another key and, like, say the coda or in a...in a section...like that, but...

D.S. You know, if we had turned back and retraced our steps, you would have had two sensations to deal with: the sensation of, the durational sensation that we had originally going from point A to the place where we would

have decided whether to turn back or not...

A.L. Right.

D.S. ...and then the sensation from point B back to point A. Somehow you would have had to deal with those two sensations. I think they would have been different durationally.

A.L. Well, but you know what we did?, do you know what we did?, we...we did what improvising does, we...hit a wrong...tone, a wrong...you see, but instead of acknowledging it as an error, right?, we went on with it and we...manip-, we forced it to be part of the piece. Like if we'd gone back and said: "Well, we made a wrong turn", right?, if we'd gone back and got on the right road to go to Hanover, that would have...we would have acknowledged a mistake...instead, we took the mistake and said: "Well, this might bring us to someplace else". I remember driving David Tudor from Stony Point to New York, and I was supposed to drive him to a bus station on, near the George Washington bridge, and I made a wrong turn and we got up near the...you know that art museum up there, the...

D.S. Cloisters.

A.L. ...yes, the Cloisters, and he said: "Oh, I'll get out here," he said, "because it's been years since I've been to the Cloisters and thank you very much, Alvin"... so in other words, he made...a mistake into a virtue. And that's what we did, right?, in other words, we made a...we made a piece, you know, we were like sitting at the...keyboard, now...you know what I mean?

D.S. I was thinking it also has to do with...not thinking of time as something that you fill up with useful activity, because if he had thought of things that way, if he had considered getting home as his goal, then his time at the Cloisters would have been an annoying delay...

A.L. Right.

D.S. ...but if you don't think of time as from here to some distant time and filling it up...

A.L. Right.

D.S. ...then time creates its own subjective flow...

A.L. Right. Well, he's...wise, you know...he's wise.

D.S. ...which has to do with our going to a different place. I think it also has to do with how an audience can remain interested in a performance of music with which

they're not familiar...because if an audience thinks of a concert as a two-hour commitment during which time they hope to get two hours worth of material, you know...

A.L. Right.

D.S. ...that they like, then they're up the river without a paddle, sometimes. What do you think about duration of concerts, duration of pieces?

A.L. Well...

D.S. Do you think there should be some proportion maintained between audiences' interest and the length of pieces?...or should a composer worry about that sort of thing?

A.L. I don't know what to say...I would have...if you'd asked me that...sometime ago I would have said...the composer shouldn't have to worry about the audience... on the other hand, now I'm not against...pleasing an audience...I think the time is over that we should irritate people because...because people, I think the...secrecy of what we do should be abandoned...I think people should know what we do...there's not, I don't see any reason--I remember the old...programs we used to do and we used to get into very self-contained, isolated situa-

tions where we'd be doing some very bizarre thing, and the audience would be, like, very, up-, irritated because they would be out of it...they would be like...sort of... watching a very...closed kind of closed-circuit ritual, which nowadays I think is a very unnecessary situation because now everyone should have access to all the tools, right?...and I just don't find that interesting anymore. However, sometimes when I'm performing...well, there are very definite reasons why you should end a piece. I think you can end a piece if the players are not playing it right, if it's being sabotaged, I don't see any reason to continue. You can end a piece if somebody is getting injured. If, for instance, we had experiences on the last European trip where I had players in the audience, particularly the girls, and it was almost to a state where...certain guys in the audience were sort of, almost...physically manhandling the girls...in that case you should stop the piece. Fatigue...is another thing, but...what I, often a wonderful thing happens: just at the point where you...think you should stop the piece because the audience is getting bored or you're getting bored, often that's just the point where the piece takes off. It's like, Pauline and I were talking about the alchemical process, how...you can repeat the same process over and over again and...you're, what you, you see, the

difference between modern science and alchemy is that science today, you don't repeat the same thing...when you repeat it you change something, and then you find out if it works you, the change tells you...you know, what's happened...but in alchemy, by repeating the same thing, you hope that either by the working on the material, you'll make the transformation, or you'll do it and it will synchronize with a certain time--a certain point in time--when other events in the universe are correct for that, the transformation. And I've often had that--you've probably have too--had that experience in a performance where nothing is happening, right?, and then all of a sudden...from...from the...dull stuff something very beautiful occurs...and...I think we're in that state very often.

D.S. You mentioned secrecy, I remember reading, I think it was Herbert Eimert's or Stockhausen's description of the early days in Cologne where they, when each composer would put together his own timbres from addition of sine waves, and after he had this collection of sounds he'd make his piece and then--I couldn't believe this--after it was all over, he'd destroy all the source material so that no one else would have access to it...

A.L. Oh.

D.S. ...and then the next person would have to start all over again.

A.L. Well, that's a stupid idea, right?

D.S. It doesn't seem very...

A.L. I mean that's...

D.S. ...smart somehow.

A.L. ...that's not an efficient way of doing things, I mean...

D.S. It's not friendly either.

A.L. No, it's not friendly, it's...egotistical.

D.S. Of course, there might have been a reason for it if then...if things had been easy, then people wouldn't have had the urge to try to find new things because they were really on a, doing...they didn't know what they'd find then, at that point.

A.L. You know, there might be a point to that because... one of the things we all have against synthesizers is that when new people...go to synthesizers...they just accept the conventions of the synthesizer and after all the synthesizer is just a low common denominator of what the

whole electronic milieu is like...and...somehow it's too easy, you know, you have a sequencer and some oscillators and some things and it's sort of mass...it's sort of...not interesting, if you know what I mean. Whereas if you told...if you, if to make...if to find sounds you have to go physically out after them, you might have a more...friendly--no, no, no, not friendly--you might have a more...respectful attitude toward sounds, because you really get to the qualities of sounds. If you have six oscillators staring you in the face, all you have to do is turn them on; then there's no...you know...I... I don't know because I suppose communication...ease of communication, is what we want, isn't it?

D.S. Neutrality of tools is also important.

A.L. Yes, because when you think, if you go to a synthesizer, it's very easy to communicate with the synthesizer.

D.S. Yes, but it's not a neutral tool because most synthesizers are set up and most people are conditioned by the fact of using a synthesizer--there's enough been done on synthesizers now that people look for the same timbres. Like, they want to use that sound from Switched-on Bach, they want to look for it and find it in the syn-

thesizer, and they're upset if they can't find it.

A.L. Well, it's all a question of id-...of brain, right?, it's a question of id-, getting, having an idea...because I've never used a synthesizer, but now I have an idea for a piece...and my idea wants to have three or four of the component--no, my idea needs three or four components--processing components...and you can find these components in one cabinet which is a s-, which is part of a synthesizer...therefore, I want a synthesizer...but I don't want it for the reasons that other people want it, I want it because there are convenient packaging of those components...but you see, all you need is an idea. Now...I can imagine someone having an idea for a...more conventional...use of the synthesizer, and I wouldn't be against that but I think it's...I like interesting ideas, you know...because if it's a question of information, you don't want to receive the same information all the time...so you want someone...who has an idea, the information of which, is the kind that you've...that's going to surprise you--something that you haven't heard... and maybe, by bouncing off a synthesizer which...everything about it is made to give you the same information, maybe you in turn can't bounce off that device and make new information for somebody else, I don't know.

D.S. You know, your receiving system is built up of-- it's not an unchanging piece of equipment--it's built up of what you've already experienced as well; so that even though you keep sending the same information, it's not received the same way because your receiving system changes with the fact that--if you get so familiar with something that's happened so many times, all of a sudden, from that familiarity, something else emerges from nowhere.

A.L. Familiarity breeds contempt. You probably, that's, no, that, you know like when we...did LaMonte's Young piece years ago--the piece where you hold a fifth, you know, B and F sharp, for a long time--well, I asked the people afterward how they felt, and at first they are interested and they're concerned with the task of producing the sounds, making the intonation right; then at a certain point they get very angry at it--that's like contempt, right?, they're so familiar with that fifth that they get very contemptuous; but then, once they decide to keep at it, then their contempt changes to a... to some form of ecstasy. Of course, you start hearing the overtones in that piece and...

D.S. As soon as you give up the practical ends which can happen in a lot of ways--you can give up your own comfort, or you can give up your time--then you're open

to new possibilities.

A.L. You have to, yes...

D.S. You have to lose control somewhere.

A.L. Yes, you have to decide you're not going anywhere and that your time is not really worth...you know, you don't need to...the...antithesis of thinking of a product...you know?...I mean, it's real process kind of thinking. If you think of a product and you think of a perfect fifth, well...that's not terribly much of a product...

D.S. That's right.

A.L. ...to spend an hour at, but it's you, if you think of it as a...as a world to be in, you know, to bounce around that interval and experience the difference tones and the harmonics and the timbre and the spaces, then you have no...point of complaint.

D.S. Yes, the fifth is like the grossest kind of average of what actually happens in that time...you get it and you lose it and you keep going back to it and...

A.L. Sure.

D.S. ...everyone has to make their own adjustments to

maintain that.

A.L. Of course, a fifth doesn't stay the same either... it's, the f-, the idea of a fifth is just a symbol... you say a fifth but there really isn't such a thing, I mean, depending on the attack, the onset time, the envelope...I mean, there's a world in that, you know, we learn that from Feldman--there's a world in a Feldman attack or should I say a Feldman...non-attack.

D.S. Do you think people should, by and large, be left to their own...left on their own when they make decisions about how they're going to spend their time?...I mean as that relates, possibly relates to questions of durations in performance?

A.L. Well, you could say that that...that's an impossibility...because how alone can you be?, you know, when you make a decision, why you make the decision has to depend on some input that you had...even in the past; so that if you're in a performance--even of free music, very free--your decisions are all controlled and...by your whole past and your whole...everyone else's past, as it emerges in the symbols that the players...employ. I mean, if you put two sounds, you know, together, there's a whole...almost infinite set of...reasons why those two

no-, two sounds are together in that particular way... and then if you're in a performance and you perceive those...given to you by another player...you're going to transform them and use those as a basis for decisions of your own...and if you don't perceive them, there's a reason that you didn't perceive them...and those are limitations...of space, or that the sounds have been covered up by other sounds, or that your ears weren't adequate to receive them or something like that; so no matter what situation you're in, you're in an inter-reacting one.

D.S. Even if the composer seeks to establish certain proportions of his own choosing, other natural proportions will maintain themselves whether or not he plans on it.

A.L. Yes, I think that a, almost, that the older composers made decisions as to proportion which related to other music that they had...you know, I mean...you would have had to study other music and you, you start believing in the proportions that the older composers made. But I think now...I know that I'm...trying to find secrets of proportion in like, that slate wall there, for example-- it's been cut through to make a highway...that slate has been pressed, you know, by a very serious...order of a geological...geological events that took maybe a great

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deal of time...a span of time that I, I cannot comprehend, you know, or that I can comprehend but I can't experience--but I could take the result of that which is the pressing together of that slate wall and I can regard that as a collapsed...time event, right?, and I can say to myself: "Well, I, I take that seriously", and I could use that as some signal to me about what I could do, how I could act in a certain...way; so that I don't have to depend on other music...I can, I can find things in...the world, the natural world.

Extended Finals Hours

UCSD University Libraries

Monday, March 12 - Sunday, March 25, 1984

Central University Library

Mon-Fri (3/12-16)	8 am - 11 pm
Sat (3/17)	9 am - 11 pm
Sun (3/18)	10 am - 11 pm
Mon-Fri (3/19-23)	8 am - 11 pm
Sat (3/24)	9 am - 5 pm
Sun (3/25)	Closed

Biomedical Library

Mon-Fri (3/12-16)	8 am - 12 Mdnt
Sat (3/17)	9 am - 5 pm
Sun (3/18)	1 pm - 12 Mdnt
Mon-Thurs (3/19-22)	8 am - 12 Mdnt
Fri (3/23)	8 am - 9 pm
Sat (3/24)	9 am - 5 pm
Sun (3/25)	Closed

Cluster Undergraduate Library and Playback Center

Mon-Thurs (3/12-15)	8 am - 12 Mdnt
Fri (3/16)	8 am - 10 pm
Sat (3/17)	9 am - 10 pm
Sun (3/18)	11 am - 12 Mdnt
Mon-Thurs (3/19-22)	8 am - 12 Mdnt
Fri (3/23)	8 am - 10 pm
Sat (3/24)	9 am - 7 pm
Sun (3/25)	Closed

Medical Center Library

Mon-Fri (3/12-16)	8 am - 12 Mdnt
Sat (3/17)	9 am - 5 pm
Sun (3/18)	1 pm - 8 pm
Mon-Fri (3/19-23)	8 am - 12 Mdnt
Sat (3/24)	9 am - 5 pm
Sun (3/25)	1 pm - 8 pm

Science & Engineering Library

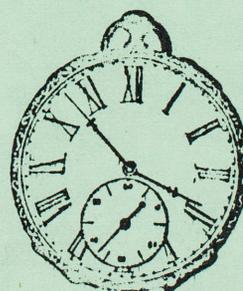
Mon-Thurs (3/12-15)	8 am - 10 pm
Fri (3/16)	8 am - 6 pm
Sat (3/17)	9 am - 6 pm
Sun (3/18)	1 pm - 10 pm
Mon-Thurs (3/19-22)	8 am - 10 pm
Fri (3/23)	9 am - 6 pm
Sat (3/24)	1 pm - 10 pm
Sun (3/25)	Closed

Scripps Institution of Oceanography

Mon-Thurs (3/12-15)	8 am - 11 pm
Fri (3/16)	8 am - 6 pm
Sat (3/17)	9 am - 5 pm
Sun (3/18)	1 pm - 9 pm
Mon-Thurs (3/19-22)	8 am - 11 pm
Fri (3/23)	8 am - 6 pm
Sat (3/24)	9 am - 5 pm
Sun (3/25)	Closed

Slide & Photograph Collection

Mon-Fri (3/12-16)	8 am - 12:30 pm 1:30 pm - 4:30 pm
Sat-Sun (3/17-18)	Closed
Mon-Fri (3/19-23)	8 am - 12:30 pm 1:30 pm - 4:30 pm
Sat & Sun (3/24-25)	Closed



Call 452-3837 for up-to-date hours.

Departmental hours may vary within a Library.

Spring Break Hours

UCSD University Libraries

Monday, March 26 - Sunday, April 1, 1984

Central University Library

Mon (3/26) Closed
Tues-Fri (3/27-30) 8 am - 6 pm
Sat-Sun (3/31-4/1) Closed

Biomedical Library

Mon (3/26) 9 am - 5 pm
Tues-Thurs (3/27-29) 8 am - 12 Mdnt
Fri (3/30) 8 am - 6 pm
Sat (3/31) 9 am - 5 pm
Sun (4/1) 1 pm - 12 Mdnt

Cluster Undergraduate Library and Playback Center

Mon (3/26) Closed
Tues-Fri (3/27-30) 8 am - 5 pm
Sat-Sun (3/31-4/1) Closed

Medical Center Library

Mon (3/26) 9 am - 5 pm
Tues-Fri (3/27-30) 8 am - 12 Mdnt
Sat (3/31) 9 am - 5 pm
Sun (4/1) 1 pm - 8 pm

Science & Engineering Library

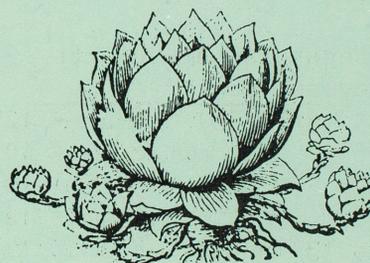
Mon-Thurs (3/26-29) 8 am - 6 pm
Fri (3/30) 8 am - 5 pm
Sat (3/31) Closed
Sun (4/1) 1 pm - 6 pm

Scripps Institution of Oceanography

Mon (3/26) Closed
Tues-Fri (3/27-30) 8 am - 6 pm
Sat (3/31) 9 am - 5 pm
Sun (4/1) Closed

Slide & Photograph Collection

Mon (3/26) Closed
Tues-Fri (3/27-30) 8 am - 12:30 pm
1:30 pm - 4:30 pm
Sat-Sun (3/31-4/1) Closed



Call 452-3837 for up-to-date hours.

Departmental hours may vary within a Library.

Interview #11

D.S. I wanted to ask you--seeing as how you're a person who's spent a lot of his professional time considering the way things are--that is, the way nature operates and the way nature is--what your attitude is, and remains, and continues to be toward the artist's activity of creating new things, that aren't of nature but are of his own creation...in other words, how you view your own creation in relation to what nature's created.

A.L. It's the same thing. It's like...I forget who said it but...maybe Harold, maybe it was Harold Rosenberg who said that...there wasn't an artist--I mean, you know, an important artist--who's alive now who thought he was imitating something else, but the idea is that an artist now thinks he's...building something or cre-, I'm trying to avoid the word, you know, "create", but maybe "to make" is what I mean...you think that you're building something that will stand alongside something that is, already exists in the world and, even if you don't think of it as art you're doing the same thing when you build anything; I mean, haven't we talked about the idea that any technological invention is simply an extension of the apparatus that humans beings have, I mean, they're like fingernails right?, I mean, any technological device is like hair, right?, it comes out of you to do a specific thing, right?...so that the dis-, you don't have to make any distinctions anymore, so that if you make a piece of music that has certain sound qualities, it's...you're like a bird.

D.S. Well, does that answer imply that the relative hardness-- the non-human aspect of nature--is comparable to what an artist does even though he's a member of a society? In other words, I know that there's a tradition of creating objects and icons that stand on their own merits, but how do you correlate that attitude with the fact that you live in a society and there are conventions of language and communication?

A.L. Well, you've got to use what you have...you know, I mean, I can only answer very practically, you know, like when sometimes when I'm thinking about a piece, one of my biggest problems is finding...the way to do it, you know, for instance underwater sound-producing objects right?, so you finally, you know, you think that they've...that they've...you think that there ought to be underwater oscillators, that the government must have had a need for them, you know, like, hand-held devices or something like that, but then you find out that there aren't and you just redesign your ideas and just take whatever there is, I mean, you know, adapt whatever...I'm not answering it, am I?, I mean, I'm not answering your question exactly...but I don't know how to.

D.S. Well, do you think any production from a human being can exist alongside nature or with nature without any problems... or, are some artistic productions better able to fit into a natural situation?

A.L. Well, I don't know, it's getting scary because...I was

talking to Stan Vanderbeek a couple of months ago about my idea for an underwater program right?, and the first thing he said to me was: "You should dye the water", you should pour in, like, day-glo type orange or bright blue dye, right?...then I was talking to a fellow in England a couple of weeks ago who was with a group of artists who did an outdoor event and a guy actually did that, he dyed a stream, like, a natural stream, he, like, poured dye in it. Then this group of... you know, people in Connecticut here...you know, Pulsa, they, like, put big speakers outdoors, they live in a farm-type environment and one of the things they do is to go outdoors, you know, beautiful outdoors and put big, huge loudspeakers there and play sounds into the environment. I remember up in Vermont, in the Burdock Festival that we had, we did that and there was a cow...and the cow was getting very distraught because we were pumping sounds into his field that, from his point of view, didn't belong there and we were, like, upsetting his, you know...his thing, his...the way he lives and...it's the same as pollution, you know, it's the same as air...you know, it's a form of...air pollution, do you know what I mean?

D.S. Yes.

A.L. I remember my father telling me when he first became a lawyer, when airplanes--you know, he was very interested in aviation in, you know, a long time ago--and he was telling me that when airplanes first started, one of the main...problems

that people thought of was that: how are the, how are...cows, you know, these stories when, if, if your farm is near the airport, your cows are going to stop giving...see, milk, and, in fact, you know, the sound of airplanes did intrude on that.

Well I...I think this kind of outdoor electronic performance is sort of...it reminds me of the same, it sort of reminds me of that, you know, it's like the early days of aviation...that we're, like, really...we have to decide whether...you know, we have to decide whether to accept pollution and to live with, I mean, I can imagine living with pollution, right?

D.S. The question is whether or not it's pollution. Perhaps those artistic efforts don't fit into an environment that isn't prepared for them.

A.L. Yes, well, it, but of course the cow can't, is in no position to prepare his environment.

D.S. No, but I'm suggesting that perhaps they only make sense in a more traditional artistic environment.

A.L. Yes. It's like, remember we were talking about violence and how you could possibly define it as any communication, right?, we were saying that...you know, you can injure somebody and that's violence or you can insult somebody, or you can do violence to somebody psychologically or socially, you know, like we've done for centuries to blacks or to women, right? But even when you talk to somebody, and your idea goes into

somebody's head...you must be rearranging some, something in their head, I mean, like, on what particular levels I don't know, but it must be arranging...you know...changing something in that person, I mean really physically, I don't mean just, you know: you're changing something physically, you must tear something. You know when you...you must be tearing something in the other person's fabric, so that just giving a person an idea is doing him, in a sense, a form of violence. It's like when Bob, Bob and I have been, well we've all been talking a lot about going from one place to another or taking your particular music to somebody else or just, going to see somebody else right?, going to somebody's house, you're, you're, like, going into that person's...privacy, right?, but you...on the one hand you are, on the other hand you can't consider anything that anyone has as being his privacy, otherwise there'd be no communication at all. You know how annoyed people are when the phone rings and you're not in the mood to answer it, but you can't not have a telephone. You can but...you're not being, you're not being a good citizen...do you know what I mean?

D.S. Do you think it's more insidious for a person to make adjustments before you say something to someone such as people often do with, a man will do with a woman, like he'll rearrange what he was really going to say to suit what he thinks the receptivity will be in the case of his partner...do you think that's more insidious than just treating everyone as able to take care of themselves when you make communication?

A.L. Yes, I think it's insidious, but it's because the man thinks he has to do that and the movements that are happening now, the, you know, the great social changes are really...they're really very relieving...you know, they're very relieving, for instance, it's relieving to meet black people who you don't have to, who you don't...it's a relief to meet black people now who you don't have to...play games with, right?, I mean, maybe you play games but they're, like, another kind of game, you know, they're not the condescending, paternalistic game, I mean, he won't allow it--the black guy won't allow it anymore and it's a relief, because that kind of communication always took so much energy, right?--you had to start playing, and you were afraid to hurt his feelings and you're afraid to use such a word or this word or that word, and it's beauti-, it's going to happen with women too and it's a relief, because when women play their, you know, their old games, you know, that feminine game, it put the man in a...stupid situation and I'm, it's about time that these things are...going to change, right?

D.S. So, a healthy situation or a situation of maximum health would be, I suppose, where people don't make those adjustments for each other but people can--perhaps people can view each other's artistic products in the same way that they view nature since nature never did make adjustments for human consumption.

A.L. Right. I guess you'd say, have to say so. Maybe there's some kind of a pure...visionary situation that we're going to

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be in. I mean, maybe instead of making adjustments in communicating we can just work very hard at really deeply communicating, going to deeper and deeper planes. I've been reading Timothy Leary's book about how he believes that psychedelic drugs can get you to the cellular plane, you know, physi-, I mean, your, from the smallest, farthest-out parts of your...who you are, right?, I mean, you can really get into the cells and get the wisdom of the cells which he says have taken a couple of billion...have taken such a tremendously long time to get to where we are now, and that you can really go deeply into all that and also what is really, really very inspiring about his ideas is the idea of going back into the reincar-, your previous reincarnations which, which I think has a lot to do with art, since...when you experience...a piece that has, like, wondrous connections...it's almost as if you're...connecting...it's almost as if you're connecting...not, well, both ways, one, horizontally, or like, synchronistically--in time--you know, at one instance, but that you might also...go back to connections that you might have not been able to make, in...some other lines. You know, we were talking about studying the musics of other cultures and what a wonderful idea it is, you know...and on my trip that I just took...Bob, Bob was saying--I was telling Bob, about, you know, these, about how wonderful it is to study musics from other cultures--and he experienced hearing on that, you know, eight channels of sound, of stereo sound on an airplane, on a Boeing 747, he tuned into Boulez conducting a Debussy piece...conducting

the New York Philharmonic and it dawned on him, on Bob, that it was the same kind of buying that America's always done, you, like, buy the music from other cultures and bring it, like in the Nineteenth, like the conservatories were always, like, Nineteenth Century music, German and French, right? When I went to school it was, like, you start studying Paul Hindemith and then Stravinsky and then Sch-, I mean it's always...now what we seem to be doing now is we, instead of going back to the Baroque era or studying the Renaissance or studying French or German music, we're going to Bali, right?, and we bring the music here and...it, I've been struggling with that idea. On the one hand, I find it very fascinating and interesting to experience the musics, these musics from other...these other cultures. On the other hand, I just can't understand people, I mean Americans or Englishmen, who can study, for instance, music of India in such depth that they change their whole religious and spiritual life. But instead of putting that down, I'm coming to the conclusion that these people are fulfilling an incarnation and that this whole study...the whole study of the past that we've been doing in America so...for such a long time, like in the universities, for instance where you would study the music of Bach, you know, is the kind of a reincarnation period where a young baseball player from, like, Boston--you know, a young American kid--will go to Germany on a Fulbright and come back and be a Baroque sch-...you know, study the Baroque for example, is because he has unfinished business

over there, right?

D.S. So in a way it's as if the old idea of a person discovering the language of his ancestors and becoming a musician, suddenly the whole thing popped into a geographical metaphor.

A.L. Yes.

D.S. Instead of having to go back in your own past you can explore somebody else's present.

A.L. Right, and I, there's a friend of mine who wants to go study the mus-, these other musics and someone asked him: "Well, where are you going?" He said: "Well, either Ghana or Bali or Kor-", I mean, he had, like, four very different places to go. Now that is scholastically, that's an insupportable...scholarly thing to do, right?, because, like, you don't just jump into these other cultures, but from his point of view, I think he has no alternative but to think that way because I think he's finding out which one it is he's supposed to be in, I mean, do you know what I mean?

D.S. Of course he could be in all of them.

A.L. Yes, right, so instead of...instead of thinking...I've been really struggling with this and whether it's a good idea to make these other musics so easily accessible to so, so many people or whether we should not import them but teach them somehow so that if a person is really, feels strongly, then

he has to make a real physical effort to go there and to go to the countries of origin. I don't, it's a real problem. In Stockholm, I'm very fond of Skåne aquavit which is a very strong alcohol and when I, we were in Stockholm the last...you know, the last couple of weeks, we would go out and eat, you know, and like, drink this stuff and have a wonderful time, we'd all get drunk, you know, and have the right food and so forth. Well, I bought a couple of bottles of Skåne to bring home and the other night to the refrigerator and I took the bottle out and I had a drink and it's not the same--it's just not the same on seven, on my, in my house, seven Miles Avenue--as it is in Stockholm and I don't think it's just psychological, I think it's a real physical fact that...you just can't import things and have them be the same, and I think for somebody to really decide to study the music of, say, of, like, another culture like India or Java, I think it's a real serious thing and I think people have to think about it or else I think a lot of harm can be done.

D.S. To whom?

A.L. Them. Well...them--both the person that goes into the culture and the particular culture itself, I mean...

D.S. You mean from a conservative standpoint of trying to maintain the culture the way it was?

A.L. Well...I guess I think that way, I mean, for some reason,

for some reason, I wasn't ever afraid of hurting what I thought was the particular culture I was in, for example...changing people's minds about what kind of...what kind of art they should be doing, for instance, I always had a fight--I fought for many years at Brandeis against, you know, conservative, conservatory-type thinking where you'd have a university orchestra where the students would play Bach and Beeth-, you know, composers like that--I was very eager to change that because I felt that that really didn't belong to us and that it was just a...an affect-, it was an affect-, it was...people being effected--affected. I just didn't think that that kind of music really belonged to us and that we were at a point where we could dispense with it...right? I mean, the immigration laws, I mean, you know, immigration had changed, we were all third generation Americans, our thing was something else; but when I think about a group of American students going to Bali, I just...don't know what that's going to do to Bali and if we say: "Well, it's going to do them good", then that's almost the same as the Viet-, our Vietnam idea that we have to go and save Vietnam from a social order that we don't agree with...I mean, if Vietnam wants a certain social order, they ought to have it and if the music--for instance, weren't you, you told me that you felt that our idea of the music of, like, Bali is that it's not really sufficient, we have to take it here and do something, we have to operate on it; whereas it really functions the way it is, I mean, it functions from a very communal village social thing, the

environment which is indispensable to the way the music came about and we take it over here and put it in a building and we take it out of it's environment and it's really not the same.

D.S. Of course artists do that, like Duchamp did that. He found things and brought them into an artistic environment and said that that's art.

A.L. Yes, but if people...

D.S. Do you think the difference is people, you can do it with objects and not with people?

A.L. Well but, you see, the music of...we're talking now about the music of a particular country--it's art anyway, I mean, it starts as art. Duchamp was just trying to show you what else he thought art was. I suppose when I really think honestly... Bob and I were having an argument about cigarette smoking and how that when you're on an airplane and you sit beside someone and he lights up a cigarette, then he's doing it for his own pleasure but he's also describing his space in a certain way, and if the smoke goes into someone else's space, he is in a way doing--he's, like, imposing on you, right?, I mean, he's intruding an idea he has about cigarette smoke which might be an idea that you don't have, and I was saying to Bob that that was a way, that was an agg-, that was a very agg-, you know, a very...that was a way to attack people in a mild way. But when

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you start thinking in that way then anything you do is also,
I mean if...you're interviewing me and I'm talking and my sound
waves are going out beyond me and the minute there's ou-, the
minute you think of outside you're thinking of communication
and you're thinking of violence...in a way.

Interview #12

D.S. I know you've spent some time just recently preparing a score of Quasimodo and I wanted to ask what sort of relationship those two activities, namely composing music and preparing scores, enjoy in your professional activity.

A.L. Well, I'm in the middle of the score now, I mean I'm... or I could say I've just begun. It's the biggest problem I have, I think, because...since a piece like that is...is sort of composed in a place...in spaces, you know, in big spaces and it, your...one of your concerns is, like, setting up the right configuration of electronic equipment...and you're not complete in your mind about what, what actually you want, or what actually can or cannot serve the purposes for the piece; so you do the piece several times, you know, in different sp-, places like we did here and we did up in upstate...in the, you know, the concert...we did. Then, you start making a, then...I always want to--this sounds, like a very old-fashioned idea but--I always want to let those things gel because if you try to finalize them...too soon, then you're going to...you aren't going to take into account other things that you might, that might enter into your experiences after that. And, earlier in the game, I would have not want to finalize things, but now I do because you want to, because I...you want to get certain pieces out of you and off you, even though they're sort, they aren't ever done and also you can build into the final score, all the

conditions in which the piece doesn't have to be final, do you know what I mean?, like you can write into the score those situations that you could continue experimenting...with--but you, but I don't feel like I want to leave it contin-, open in every area, only some areas because if I left it open in every area, then it wouldn't be the piece that it is. It would be one, you know, your life would be one...every piece you did would just be part...of the whole thing.

D.S. I noticed you said, you used the word "compose" as opposed to what one would expect--"realization". Did you really consider the piece in a process of composition in those different performances?

A.J. I do, no I do...now, I mean; I think you asked the question, something about what relationship did the, you know, the performing of the piece and the making of it have to do with the process I'm in now of composing the score. They're rather different in many ways because I'm now adding things in the score that I didn't think of, you know, when I made, when I, first, when we first did the piece it was just a physical, very physical idea and the possibilities that came up were dependent on the physical actualities of, you know, the performance that we did, I mean, when we were doing it, how much equipment we had available and what I...you know, there were only certain possibilities open to me. Now when I try to write out a prose score, I don't just want to make a description of

what I did because it would be too confined, it would be confined to the...corridors of the building that we were in, in a way, do you know what I mean?; whereas I always dreamed of doing it in steel or in rock or in earth or in...under the water...and I, of course, haven't had time to do all, try those all out but I can imagine and make a, sort of a more...score--scorey-type score, if you know what I mean, and it's funny because, you know, scores are scores, you know, they're like old-, not old-fashioned ideas, but they're a more traditional idea, the idea that you write down what you want so that somebody else is able to do it, I mean, that's a, you know what I mean?, that's a, an idea that...

D.S. That's before the fact.

A.L. ...before the fact and...but I'm composing this, like, aft-, it's very strange because I'm composing it after the fact of those two performances that we did but before the fact of many of the other versions I want to do; but I find that I have to be good at those traditional prose techniques that you find anybody who's able to write good at, and I find that very hard because words don't come easy to me on the page and I find myself thinking about all the technical...little points of technique that you learn when you're in school, when you study a writer, for instance, and, you know, you learn all these things. I find that I almost have to call on all of those.

D.S. Do you think that there's any emotional difference for you between the performances after the score as opposed to the performances before the score?

A.L. You mean if I did the piece now again?

D.S. Yes.

A.L. Oh, there'd be a lot of difference, I don't know...did you say "emotional"?

D.S. Yes.

A.L. Well, I don't know about that but there'd be a lot of difference because now I'm trying to...you see, when I first did it, the repertoire of vocal sounds--well, they weren't really vocal sounds altogether, I used a lot of whistling sounds--and since we only had a finite time and I was worried about, you know, the building and where we were and, you know, I was taking the time of a lot of people so I didn't have an infinite amount of time to work and I experimented with making...with thinking...well first of all, I chose the whistling sounds... I was influenced by the...the recordings of the whales, right?, I mean, that's where the origin of the piece came from but since the whale makes his sounds in another medium, right?, than air, it wouldn't necessarily follow that you'd want to make the same kind of sounds to articulate the space...but he does--he or she--does make the sounds...with air, right? It's

not in air but it's with air or...well, they're not positive but...it sounds like it, I mean, you know, the...it sounds like it...to me, I mean, they breathe air, and they have some kind of a muscle that produces those sounds--but anyway, my first choice, when I got before the microphone at that first stage, what, I decided that vocal sounds would be a little awkward or a little grotesque but I'm, I don't know why I would be against making grotesque sounds. I didn't want to make sounds that would be like German exp-...well, I'm getting into problems here, but sounds that you, that for instance...composers make when they make vocal pieces, when they want to be...drama-... oh, I can't think of words, I can't think of the words to explain what I mean but...to me it would sound too psychological, do you know what I mean?, it's like screaming, I would have to scream, I would have to moan, I mean if I made an upward sweep and it came out...

D.S. You wanted to avoid human expression.

A.L. Yes, of that kind, yes, yes. So, the...and then all, somehow my ear, you know, I mean, you're a musician, you choose sounds, you just choose them, sometimes you don't know why, but my ear told me to use whistling sounds and I think some of it had to do with the fact that I'd be able to whistle...with high frequencies plus the fact that I think that whistles are simpler wave forms than vocal sounds, right?, and somehow I felt that simple wave forms should be the ones that...that fly through

the spaces. I felt that the space that we were going to try to traverse, right?, we had how many feet?, probably sixteen hundred feet, I mean, we were going to get a second or more delay and it seemed to me that I would have to use something simple and uncomplicated at the beginning to go through the several configurations of microphone-loudspeaker system and through all those alleyways and, you know, down the stairwells and finally, I thought that if I started with complex sounds what you'd have at the end would be sort of indistinguishable...I thought there would be a lot of noise, now I don't, I have no scientific evidence to prove that; it just seemed to me that those whistling sounds were...appropriate to go through the spaces and take the acoustical qualities of the environments.

D.S. When you were composing the score, were you attempting to compose in the words of the score by a process parallel to the composition of the piece? In other words, was there a conscious attempt to produce a parallel structure between the important aspects of the piece and the way that the score was...

A.L. You mean am I trying to make the score in the same way, in the same way that I'm trying to make the piece, at the beginning?

D.S. Either that or when the score was finished would you hope that reading the score would be parallel or analogous or something like that to experiencing the piece? In other words,

is there an attempt to help the performer with the score in the way that a traditional score does?

A.L. Yes, oh sure, but I'm trying to make the score a greatly expanded version of the piece that I did, I mean, after all we've only, I've only done that piece three times and that's hardly, you know, enough times to really to test my ideas but I'm trying to make the score, I'm trying now to predict, I'm to now to override--not override--but to go beyond my three experiences and from them get general principles so that what I'm trying to do now is to make a greatly more generalized score. It was like when, the first...like the first piece...the piece that started us on this book, right?...

D.S. Chambers.

A.L. Chambers was first a piece playing...shells, and then when I saw the possibilities in that, then, of course, I got the idea to use any resonant environment, so the idea that, you see, the first idea was, I was on a ferryboat in...going from Belgium to...Amsterdam, you know, we were going to Amsterdam, and I had a cassette tape machine and I was bored and I walked through the rooms of the ferryboat, you know, they, like, the salon and then there's a dining--so forth, so forth, and I just held the microphone and I went from one room to another and it was amazing when I played it back, the difference in the room tones, just, it was like filtering, it was like every

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room had, like, huge filters in it; and then I thought of the huge municipal buildings--I went to Boston once and looked in the J.F.K. Federal Building--and I thought terrific amount of action goes on here from, like, the office hours every day but what about Saturdays and Sundays?...and how those big buildings are empty, you know, and then I got the image of, like, the ocean, you know, like, they're like empty spaces like ocean... oceans. And then when I found out that the particular whales that are on the, see, the record that I bought, have the power and the technical ability to send their sounds over complete oceans, it dawned on me that these buildings should be use, I mean, could be used for performances, right?; but that's just the beginning of the idea, the i-, then the idea is that you could think of any large s-, place--see I have to change the word from space to place--which could be, like, a mountain, a big ice floe, a, like, a lake, the steel structure of a building, all those are, like, large...places where, in, through which you could send sounds and the sounds could, as they travel through, pick up the sound qualities of those particular places. Then you can general-, go from that idea to the idea that if you have a lot of small spaces, or small places, you can use the amplification systems to connect those so that they don't become separate spaces but they can, you can tie a lot of them together to become one big space; so, you see, the idea starts from a very specific, physical idea but then changes to become a more general kind of an idea. So the score sort of goes beyond

the, goes beyond what I ever did in the performances.

D.S. Were you improvising when you were whistling?

A.L. Yes, but I...not...no--well, I said yes and now I say no. I made up the s-, you know, I had an idea of what kind of sounds I ought to use and then I tried to in, sort of, real-time, get a process started that--so that I wouldn't have to think about it anymore...and get a process started that, if I could follow it point-blank, you know, cold-bloodedly, then I wouldn't have to think about my next sound--you know, I mean, I wouldn't have to invent them all the time because I, it's the old problem that we've spoke about so much: if you start improvising then it's your past that you're thinking about and your personal preferences and your ideas about what sounds should or can be. I like to pose myself the problem of deciding about the sounds on the basis of the physical task that they have to do and in this case, it was making sounds that would travel through a, an environment and test that environment, right?, so any idea I had about personal, you know, like, up and down or fast and slow is stu-, I mean, it would be stupid of me to impose that because that personal idea doesn't have anything to do with the environment. So, what I tried to do is to make up a process of, a sort of a simple-minded process where...well, it's just dawning on me now when I'm trying to write the score, what I in fact was trying to do then, see, I'm finding out what I was trying to do and I'm perfecting it:...to make, to decide on an appro-

priate process where by repetition and change you can make little changes in whatever sound you start off with, right?, for example, if you have a sound of, if you have a very short sound...if you start making that sound and then you lengthen it, I mean, like, almost imperceptably, then as you're doing that you don't have to think, I mean, you just have that one little thing to think about, the rest of your...brain or whatever, can go towards hearing the changes that...that that change is going to make in the articulation of the environment, I mean, if you just made that sound once, once, and then went on to another sound, you couldn't be sure that that sound...was the or-, you couldn't be sure what effect that sound was going to have on the environment. It's like, didn't we talk about repetition as amplifying, right?, but with a little change every time so that as you, so that it gives you time to hear it, for instance, if you use notes of short duration, they're good for hearing the delay time, hearing how far away you are from the last stage and if you do it only once, you only get one little answer back, but if you do it often and lengthen every note, then when the overlaps start then you can really experience the whole delay thing, right?, how far away and then how soon the overlappings start and then when it gets completely overlapped, you know, you have another situation. Then I tried to make upward and downward sweeps...in a lot of ways and, I thought of them as discrete...well, continuous sounds but composed of discrete...frequencies that had var-, that had different sized

wavelengths from the low to as you go up, you'd go from longer wavelengths to shorter wavelengths, each wavelength of which is valuable, you see, to test an environment, right?, but when you put it in a, one upward sweep, when you put all those wavelengths in one upward sweep, you're doing all those little tests at the same time...and I was thinking, well, you could start very low and go just up a little bit, and then take that whole spectrum up, go up and up and up and up, or you could start with a sweep that only spanned a minor third. I, you know, when I was doing it, I thought of an atrocious pun, but I don't think I'll reveal the pun because it's in the, it's got to do with the...it's got to do with intervals!...it's got to do with old-fashioned intervals, it's got to do with the title, but it's such an emb-, it's so emb-...it's such an em-, it's like the...it's like such an atrocious pun that I, it makes me... it makes me...upset to think about it.

D.S. Well, let me ask a different question. You've made it clear that you didn't...that if you were improvisation it certainly wasn't with the aim of expressing your own musical...

A.L. Right.

D.S. ...or you weren't engaged in a process of self-expression...

A.L. Right.

D.S. ...but do you think in a more abstract way that the process

of working out the problem that you'd set for yourself, the musical problem of the piece--tying spaces together--all those problems--do you think that that process can aid you in certain processes of thought? I know one specific example is that when you composed the piece, working through those performances, that was the process that enabled you to write the score...

A.L. Right.

D.S. ...and gave you all these other ideas...

A.L. Right.

D.S. ...of course the score is a bigger idea...

A.L. Right.

D.S. ...but in a more general way, do you think that engaging yourself and trying to solve these problems--problems such as Quasimodo poses--can aid you, can clarify other possibly unrelated problems? In other words, can there be a therapeutic effect to working out these hard problems in the environment?

A.L. Therapeutic effect...

D.S. In the sense of personal--solving personal problems.

A.L. Yes, well...did we or did we not talk about it once before that any work you do, I mean, any good work you do is therapeutic?, I mean, it's good for the mind. I have the funniest

contrary talks with Frederic Rzewski. He was walking out of my house once--I might have told this story before but I don't think it got...on tape--he was making a slightly derogatory remark about somebody whose pieces he thought were therapy and he was walking out of my doorway with a...with a Boulez piano sonata, and I made a, sort of a, I like to...I like to take a little...a little bit...I like to go at him a little bit because of his piano playing, you know, I said: "Well, why are you doing, why are you playing this?", he said: "It's good for the mind."... it's good for the mind, well now, if it's good for the mind, it's good therapy, right? The only, one thing I'm a little bit afraid of is that I'm solving, not in the perform-, not in the, like, original thinking about these pieces, you know, the, when we...the way we went about it was a rather nice experimental, physical thing, but the composing of the scores I'm, I just hope that I'm not involved in too much traditional thinking, right?--I mean, I'm trying to write clear prose, linear, clear linear prose that would, you know, describe a complete situation, would make it complete, would be, you know, balance, have all those things and one thing should lead to the next and the punctuation should be right. I enjoy doing that very much, it's very hard, maybe I enjoy it because it's hard for me, you know, it's like trying to...you know, do a sport. The other thing is I've been getting into trying to give a very clear and simple...description of processes of making the sounds, that are, that have an integrity of their own, like, I'm thinking about

sets, I'm thinking about the whole performance, this is from the players point of view, what sounds he, the form of the sounds, right?...to avoid that personal choice which, you know, might... I'm thinking of providing him a way to design the continuity in terms of sets of successions of events, right?, each set of successions would be, would involve itself with one simple sound and the changing of one parameter of that; for instance, you'd choose a simple sound, a sound that has a simple wave form, the variation in that set of successions would be to complicate the wave form, little by little, until it reaches an extreme of complexity which you can go no further, I mean, which physically you couldn't make it any more complex, right?; or you could go the other way on the spectrum, you could start with a very complex wave form and move to a simpler one. When you get to an extreme point, you could keep that and then make another set of successions where you would change another parameter such as pitch, then you would go to work on that, you know, you'd operate in that particular way. Then when you went to an extreme of the pitch, well, you'd be stuck, wouldn't you, I mean, that would mean either going below audibility or out of audibility, right?; but say you stopped it before you reached an extreme, then you could work on another parameter like changing the duration or...you know.... And I'm getting so that I'm trying to make it very clear and very simple and very...pristine, right?, but I'm afraid, I hope I just don't make it too...too...tradi-...too, you know...too much like somebody else, like...

I hope that that part of it doesn't get to be too good...too good, do you know what I mean?, because then it will be, then I'll be getting into, like, formal, you know, operation on...

D.S. Are you concerned about making what is essentially a general concern, in the large process, are you concerned about transforming that into a personal statement or a personal...

A.L. Well, it's not that I'm worried about making it into a personal statement, it's just that I don't want the formal... design to be so perfect or, you know, perfect, I don't...

D.S. Closed, do you mean?

A.L. So closed or so...well...per-, so...beautiful that it becomes more...it would lead people to think that that was more important than the, than the sound, than having the sounds travel through an environ-, see, I was thinking, on that ferry-boat ride, my idea was that it would, it'd be wonderful if you had a, if you'd be able to fly or if you could take your ears and fly through spaces, right?...fly through spaces and pick up, you know, it's a vision I have of, like...we were talking about geography and about the...what a...the implications of having a music, having a world situation, right?, and going to India or going to Java or trying to mix a lot of musics together, I mean, everyone's thinking about that, right?, and I described to you that piece where you put instruments of different origin into a filter and they could each change the har-

monic structure, did we speak about that?...

D.S. I think so.

A.L. ...where you would put in, you know, in, the rebab, right?, and then...which has, which is a cult-, the sound of which is a very strong potent symbol of a particular...you know, where it, the ori-, where it's from and where it is now, you know, it came from Islam and then went to Java and now that's a whole, tremendous, powerful image and a symbol...and then if you put another instrument from another geographical place in another input, its , for instance, amplitude could, like, change the harmonic structure, you know, and therefore change the sound; then you're thinking then I thought, well, the only reason that you have differences...like that, is because of geography, you know, I mean, for instance, if you're born on one side of the mountain where the sun shines in a certain way, you develop different, you develop different ways--now, what's going to happen when we all go into each other's side of the mountain, right?, by air?, by air: a vision I have is that all those cultural differences, I mean, it seems inevitable that they're going to break down, it'll take a long time but...we were over at Prawoto's house the other night and they were playing a kind of a...dance kind of music that's coming out of Indonesia called...well, I can't pronounce it right, "krontjong" or something like that and it's...it's what they sing, it, you know, like a girl sings the music and there's a violin and a 'cello

and a...drums and...and it's, like, they're sort of developing an international...environmental pop style and it's the same kind of music you hear in a hotel in Stock-, in Sweden. It's, like, you jump on an airplane and you fly to Bali and you get off and...the music, it's like, there's sort of like a pop international style which is very, it's all alike. Well, if that's going to happen, you know--I hate to see it, because you like to know the differences of other musics, you like to know that the Indians are playing a certain kind of music--but if that does, if that is going to happen, then we're have to going to go inward instead of, you know what I mean?, we're going to have to go deep inward in some way, I mean, into, like, the cellular plane or the...I don't know, into a biological situation or an astronomical situation--but my idea was, to get back to the flying thing, was if you could, in a visionary way, describe what it would be like to perceive...ultrasonic frequencies in, that, oh gosh!, that would...see, if you...if you had...if you were able to take a mike, or a set of ears and fly through any environment and pick up the sounds that are... the sounds that could occur in those environments, like if you send a sound out through...you would have, you could do that for the rest of...I mean, it would be interesting enough to do and do and do, right?; but if you got into spaces that were so small, then, of course, the sounds that were in there would be higher than the audible frequency, right?--but I can still, I can still imagine getting in a situation where you could perceive

those, either by psychedelic drugs or by intense religious, you know, thinking...and that this piece was sort of a first step in that, you know, like, sending the sounds through, letting them...collect...any...any quality, any spatial or spiritual... aspects of the environments through which they have...you know, have...to move, and the idea was to, that was the essential idea and I wouldn't want that to get confused with any idea about form, the form in which the ideas...I mean, per-, in a perfect situation, the player would choose the sounds according to the environment, I mean, he would know intuitively what sounds he had to use...you know, I have some idea that if you, if you're environment was...long spaces that had complex architectural structures in them, like, if the walls went in and out, you know, I mean, if there were complicated...ins and, you know, things on the wall, then there's a perfect sound, there's a perfect sound that should art-, that ought to, that ought to be able to go through and describe that. Now, right at the present time that's beyond us, right?, to know, but I somehow think that artists, you know, like, great performers would be able to choose the right sounds to test that specific environment. Am I making any sense at all?

D.S. Sure.

A.L. So I just want to describe a way...I guess what I'm saying is that, well, you could do it two ways, I suppose, you could say there's a perfect performer--you were saying the other

day about how David did Variations II and how beautiful the sounds are, well, that's him, you know, I mean, he did it and that's him doing those, he makes, I mean, he's like a perfect performer--there's two ways you could think of it: one is that the perfect performer would be so in tune with his environment, that he would know exactly what sounds to make so that at the output stage you'd get all the variations in the environment, all the qualities of the walls, the materials used in the walls, the height, the length, the breadth; the other thing you could do--and I guess now that I think about it, that's what I'm trying to do--the other thing you could do is to make a situation that would incl-, that would force you to do almost everything...like choose a simple sound, then subject it to every durational...every durational change, then, given that, subject it to every timbral change--you know, I mean, choose a simple set of things that would span a tremendous amount of... controlled, you know, things. That's sort of a simple-minded way of doing it, but, probably if a performer went through that a lot...that's like school, right?, that's like going to school. Or that's like...Bob Ashley and I were talking about being, going and being a-, about certain jobs that a man...can, you see, I was a little bit resentful that an M.D. makes such a tremendous amount of money in the United States, I mean, you become a doctor, you make money and I worked in a medical school once and it was astounding how hard those interns worked, I mean, they worked every hour of the day, day after day without a day

off. There was kind of a cult of which guy could do the most and I was saying how I thought that was, like, a strange thing and Bob said: "Yes, but there are people who want to work, you know". You know the idea of the, in the ancient world, the man who's got the clear visage, you know, clear visage was always-- the great king had the clear visage. It's like, in Stockholm the young fellows who set up our electronic equipment, this young fellow has a company---he's only twenty-three, twenty-four--- he runs, he's got a sound company. He doesn't care about art or he doesn't care about composing, he just has this one, clear idea of making perfect technical situations so that we come into Stockholm and he and his gang set up, like, perfect electronics, right?, and it struck us that he, that's all he wants to do and he works at it, like, eighteen hours a day, and instead of that being a bad thing, you see, over-working, I mean, we tend to think...Bob and I talked about it, we, it was Bob's idea that that gives a man who, like, really wants to work at one thing, and become excellent at it, because you go to a doctor, a good doctor, and he knows, I mean, he knows so much because he's taken a look, say you have appendicitis, chances are that guy has taken a look at thousands of...instances of appendicitis, he knows, that's all. He can take a look at, do a, you know what I mean?...and...well...all the people like that that I've ever met, do everything else in that same obsessive kind of a way. If you find a man who, like, does his job, that one thing, like, all the time, you'll find that whatever else he

does, he does with that same cold, obsessive kind of thing. Now, I, well I guess what I'm trying to do with this formal thing is to make it so...so, I want to provide so many operations in it that you, if you did it, you would have to learn a lot, I mean, you'd learn, I mean, if you followed those processes, you would exhaust the possibilities and by doing so you would be going to school, you'd really learn, in a beautiful, all-encompassing kind of a way, what, what it is about sounds and how you have to make them to do that job!...do you know what I mean?

D.S. How about the people that are listening to the piece?

A.L. Well, they should get the sense that something important is going on, that something orderly and exploratory is going on. It's my, I think my opinion is if they felt it was improvisation--and this is another possibility--if they felt that the performer was improvising, then...then I would say that that should open the system up and let people walk through the system, I mean, to me it would be like...an invitation for people to walk through the system and to make sounds anywhere along it, which to me isn't as beautiful an, that's a different idea, then that becomes a delay idea, becomes a tape-delay or it becomes a...delay, you know, idea which is not the idea of the...piece.

D.S. Somewhere in these interviews you mentioned that people

had a...many people found that they enjoyed the piece afterwards when you told them what inspired it.

A.L. Yes, they get sympathetic.

D.S. Is this score for the benefit of the audience at all or is it--who's the score written for?

A.L. The score is written...the score is written. It's in a funny r-...I think the score is in a funny region. I remember when I first heard the tape of the...you know, the humpback... you know, the humpbacks, I was in Santa Barbara and Doctor Payne, the man who did the great research on the, on this, was there, and I was in Santa Barbara at the, with the young composer Danny Lentz, and we were...I was going to the talk and we met the doublebass instructor and he was very interested and Danny got the insight that of course he was because he plays a big instrument, right, I mean, he plays one of the largest instruments and you've got a whale which is, like, the largest, you know, thing that's alive on earth, right?; so the two things went, you know, together, so my, one of my ideas was to make the piece for big instruments, make the piece for large instruments because the muscle that the whale...employs to make the sounds is a large instrument, but then, my experience doing the piece, I found that...high whistling sounds were very good, then I thought, well, I still should write it for large instruments in the, large instruments would have to play high, play high

sounds, but then I thought, well, but supposing you play a wind, I mean, supposing the, say, the flute or something, you should be able to do this, you know, then the piece, that's an instance of the specific idea getting unspecific, so that what I'm trying to get at is that it's not just a score for the performers...or since it's a score for any kind of a performer, right?, since, instead of being a score for, like, doublebass players, since it's, like, a score for, like, anybody then it's a score for anybody who wants to, you see, to read it, because anybody becomes the audience, you know. I had, I went, I changed, I had a change of...change of plan, from going, I, from going from a specific, professional musician type, you know, because I was thinking of Ben, Bert Turetzky, you know, the virtuoso and I thought, gee, he'd, like, really play it because he could do, like, high, and high notes and whistling sounds and harmonics, but then...it's, then to me it's, it's such a...that's just the input, that's just the input, you know, that's just the input stage and that what I'm really interested in is the, what happens from the input stage to the output, you know, that large...space that the sound has to go through, so therefore, I don't have any reason to limit it to any type of instrument and then when you open it up to any sound-producing ideas, then it's everybody, you see?