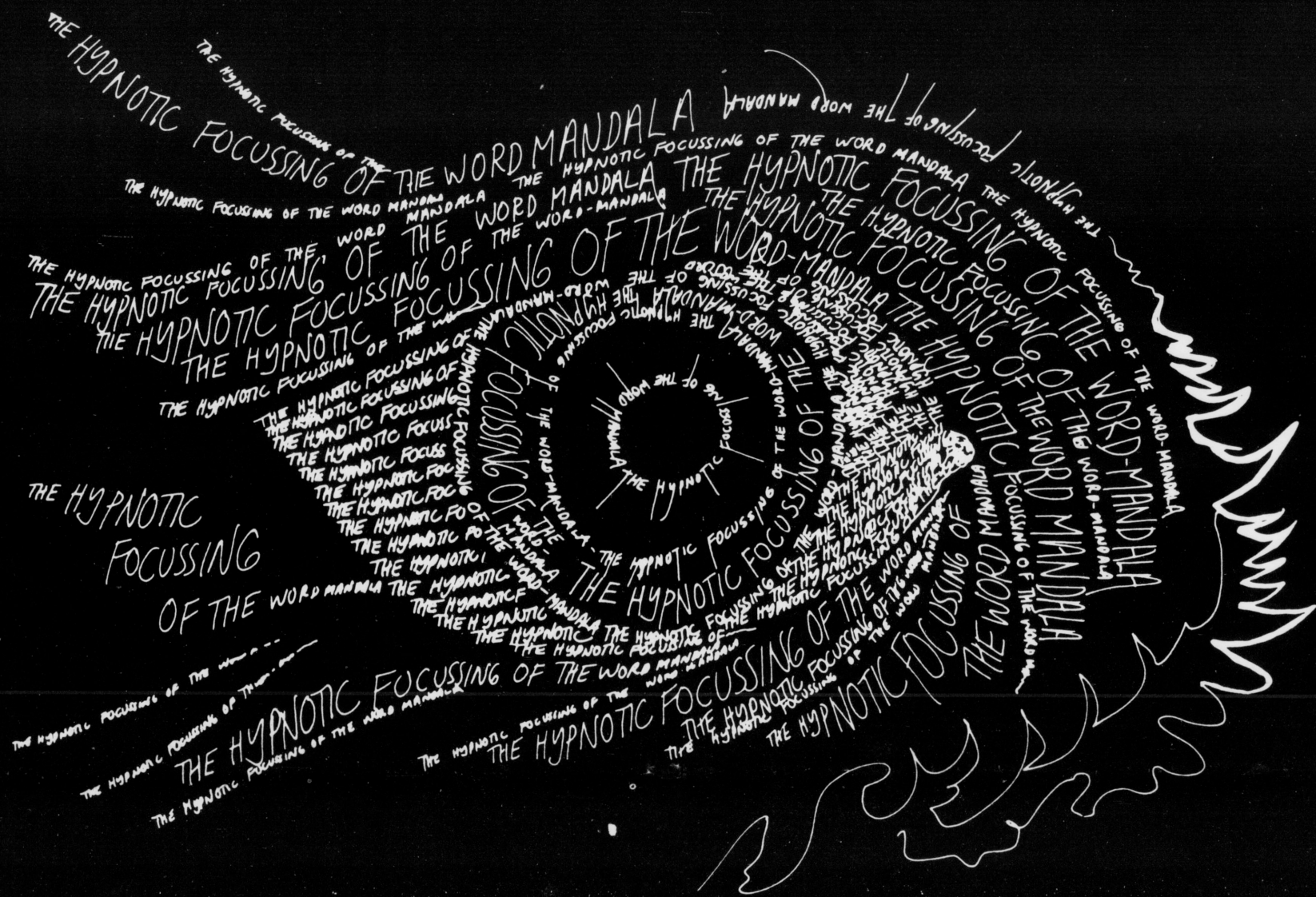


\$2 (\$5 WITH CASSETTE)

MUSICWORKS 25

MUSIC AS TRANSFORMATION

R. MURRAY SCHAFER, DAVID MOTT, AND THE NEW MUSIC CO-OP



The Transformations of Water: Frozen Water

Water never dies. It lives forever reincarnated as rain, as bubbling brooks, as waterfalls and fountains, as swirling rivers and deep sulking rivers. No two raindrops sound alike. Is then the sound of Persian rain the same as that of the Azores? A mountain stream is a chord of several notes strung out stereophonically across the path of the attentive listener. Water never dies and the wise man rejoices in it.

In vast northern areas of the earth water has a special resonance. The sounds of ice and snow form the fundamental of the northern hinterland as surely as the sea is the keynote of maritime life. The sound of snow underfoot at 40 degrees below zero in Manitoba is different from that in barely freezing Toronto. The Eskimos have at least a dozen words to describe the various states of snow, a nuancing which is absent in, say, the Italian language, where experience with this substance is limited. The squeak of cutter-runners over hard packed snow defies description to those who have not experienced it; though in Canada it has been overwhelmed in recent years by the snarl of the snowmobile. Another indescribable experience for the Northerner is the crack of spring ice on the rivers, as memorable a sound as any geography has ever produced. I have frequently tried to get students to invent onomatopoeic words for the various forms of frozen water that form the keynote of their soundscape for upwards of 6-8 months each year. It seems the Canadian language might be enriched in the same way poets enriched the Greek with their insistence on the "much-thundering sea."

— R. Murray Schafer

MUSICWORKS

A sounding of the world from a Canadian perspective.

FALL 1983

30 St. Patrick Street, Toronto, Ontario,
Canada M5T 1V1. (416) 593-7088.

EDITOR: Tina Pearson
ASSISTANT EDITOR: Gordon Monahan
LAYOUT: Bob Wilcox
BUSINESS: Ruthann Pearson
CASSETTE PRODUCTION: John Oswald

THANKS TO: Comus Music Theatre,
Urjo Kareda, CBC Stereo Morning,
Bentley Jarvis, R. Murray Schafer, Vid
Ingelevics, Canadian Music Centre
Centredisques Recordings, Mary Lou
Basaraba, Jerrard Smith.

MUSICWORKS is published quarterly
with the financial support of the Canada
Council for the Arts, the Ontario Arts
Council, paid advertising and
subscriptions.

DISTRIBUTORS: Canadian Periodical
Publishers Association, Toronto.
Diffusion Parallele, Inc. Montreal.

ADVERTISING RATES

FULL PAGE	(15"x10")	\$280.00
HALF PAGE	(7"x10")	140.00
1/4 PAGE	(7"x5")	75.00
1/8 PAGE	(3 1/2"x5")	40.00

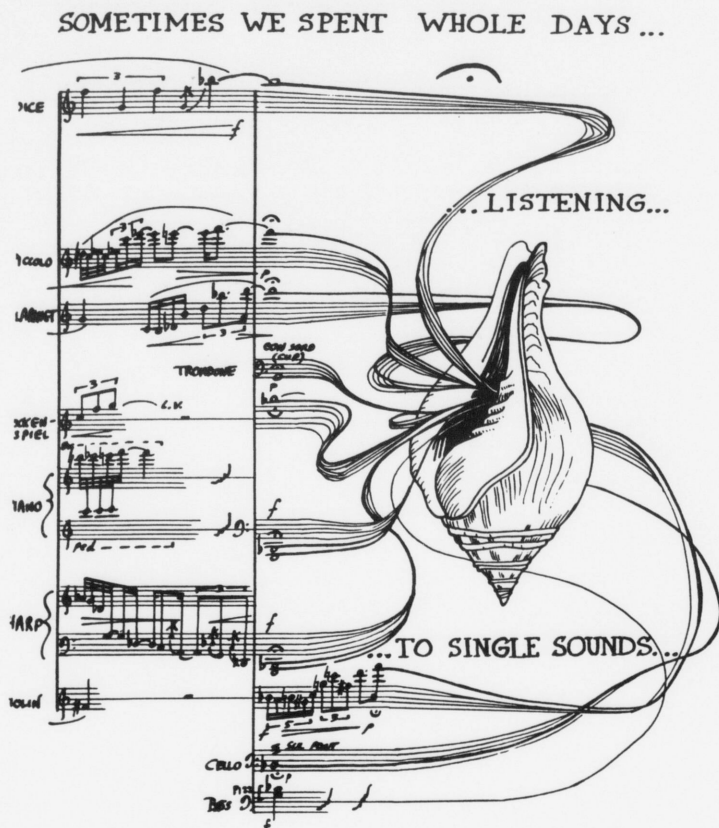
Letters and unsolicited materials for
publication are encouraged. We would
like to hear from you. Please enclose a
S.A.S.E. if you wish your material to be
returned.

PUBLISHER: The Music Gallery
ISSN 0225-686X

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Canadian Association for Electro-
Acoustic Music is now publishing a
Newsletter and they invite submissions
and information from individuals
involved in electro-acoustic music.
Write to CAEM Newsletter, c/o
Canadian Music Centre, 1263 Bay st.
Toronto, Canada M5R 2C1.

Explore radio as art on NEWSOUNDS
GALLERY — Vancouver's art gallery of
the airwaves. You're invited to submit
audio pieces on cassette with a
guarantee that *almost* everything will
be played on the air. Include a S.A.S.E.,
otherwise the tape will become part of
their audio archives. Send to G.X.
Jupitter-Larsen, CFRO, 337 Carrall St.
Vancouver, B.C. V6B 2J4.



MUSICWORKS 25 CASSETTE

The MUSICWORKS 25 cassette includes excerpts from **RA** by R. Murray Schafer; Solo saxophone and ensemble music by David Mott; Breath Guided Music by the New Music Co-operative; and many natural and man-made sounds from the Canadian soundscape: All montaged by John Oswald in an eclectic style.

MUSICWORKS CASSETTES: \$4

MUSICWORKS 23: Music of the Inuit and Other Voices

MUSICWORKS 24: Maritimes and Newfoundland

MUSICWORKS 25: Music as Transformation: R. Murray Schafer, David Mott and the New Music Co-op

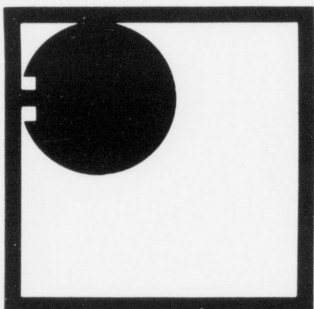
MUSICWORKS CASSETTE/PAPER PACKAGES: \$5

Order from MUSICWORKS, 30 St. Patrick St. Toronto, Ontario M5T 1V1

Coming up in MUSICWORKS 26 and 27: Hildegard Westerkamp's *Power Songs, Colour Perception and Music* by Bruno Deschenes, *The Music of James Tenney*, Drawings by Juan Geuer, Sandor Ajzenstat's *Sound Sculptures*, Mike Zagorski's *Psychoacoustic Research on Vibrato and Tremolo*, and more.

It has been suggested that we devote some space in MUSICWORKS to *Sleep and Dreams*. If you have any material or ideas relating to dream-inspired music, or if you hear sounds or dream of music in your sleep, please let us know about it.

CENTRE FOR THE ARTS
SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY



**Minor degree
CONTEMPORARY
MUSIC
PROGRAM**

**Contemporary Music Composition and
Performance**

Electronic and Computer Music

**Interdisciplinary Collaboration with
Dance, Film, Theatre and Visual Arts**

Well-equipped electronic music facilities including
digital and analog synthesis, live electronic
performance, and tape studios.

Professional musicians regularly perform student
compositions.

For further information on admission, contact:
Student Services
Centre for the Arts
Simon Fraser University
Burnaby, B.C. V5A 1S6
(604) 291-3363

New Music Concerts

Advance tickets at Five Star Tickets
\$9 Adults, \$6 Seniors & Students
For Information call 593-0436

Music in Space-World Premieres

Jarvlepp, Rea, Reich, Werren
Hart House, University of Toronto
Sunday, February 19, 8:00 pm

Ensemble Kaleidocollage perform works
by European composers

Ager, Alsina, Goeyvaerts, Poulard, and Stahmer
Town Hall, St. Lawrence Centre
Saturday, March 24, 8:00 pm

Kagel Program

Boris Carmeli, bass and the Elmer Iseler Singers
Town Hall, St. Lawrence Centre
Monday, April 9, 8:00 pm

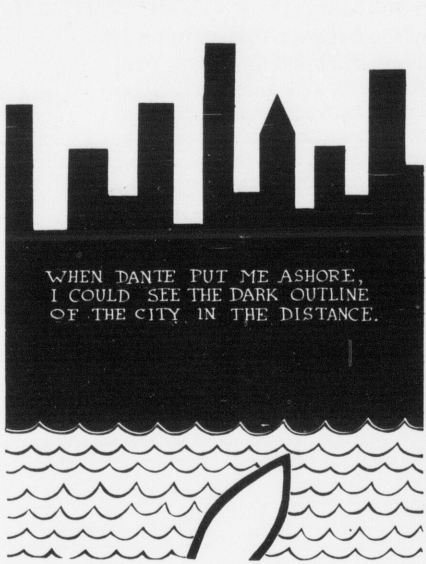
Join us for a special weekend with Mauricio Kagel
Films and Video at the Funnel, 507 King St. East
Friday, April 6 and Saturday, April 7, 8:00 pm
Lecture/Demonstration at the Music Gallery, 30 St. Patrick St.
Sunday, April 8, 4:00 pm

NEW MUSIC

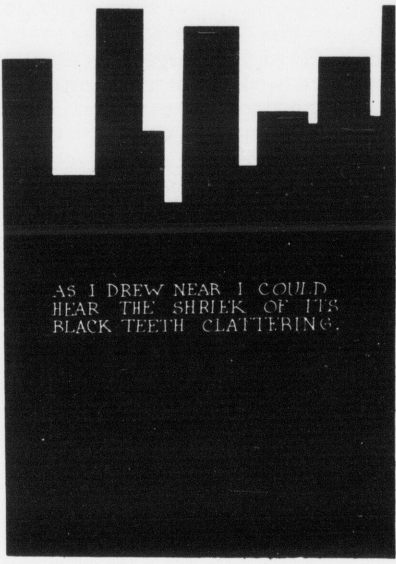
*Books & music
of
R. murray schaffer*

*Write for free brochure to
ARCAEA EDITIONS
Box 1015
Bancroft, Ont., K0L 1C0*

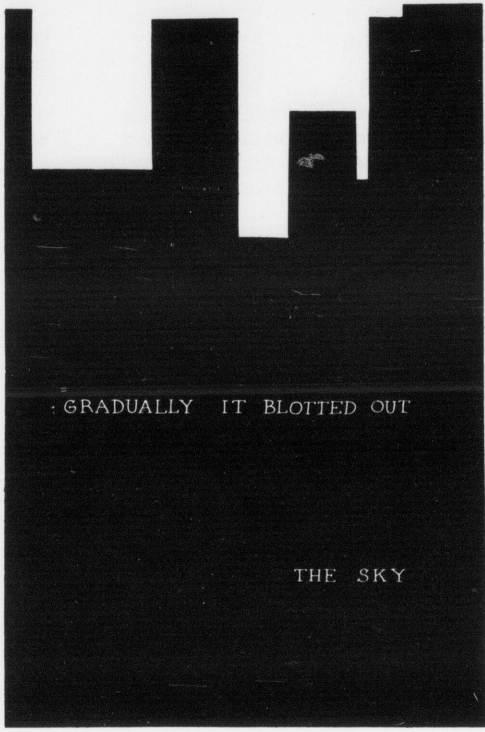
LAST SCENE:



WHEN DANTE PUT ME ASHORE,
I COULD SEE THE DARK OUTLINE
OF THE CITY IN THE DISTANCE.

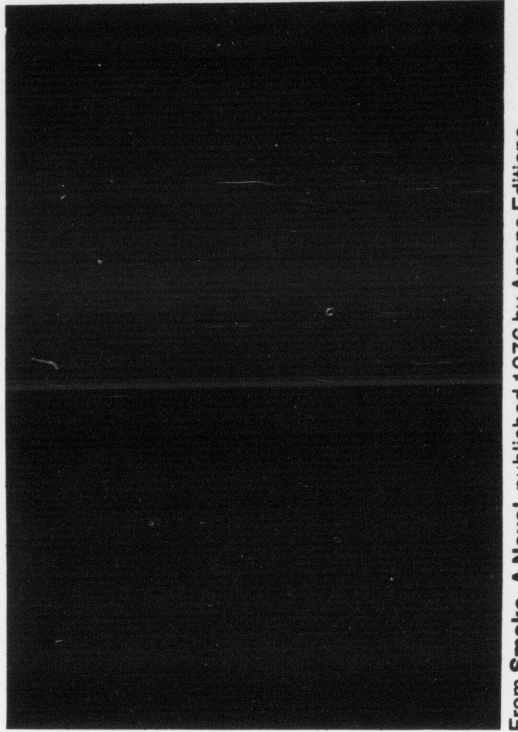


AS I DREW NEAR I COULD
HEAR THE SHRIEK OF ITS
BLACK TEETH CLATTERING.

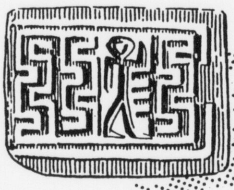


GRADUALLY IT BLOTTED OUT

THE SKY

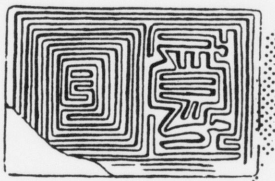


From Smoke, A Novel, published 1976 by Arcana Editions.



BEYOND RA

R.MURRAY SCHAFER IN CONVERSATION



RMS: ... *Smoke* was the name of the first novel. The sound poets seemed to find it interesting, so that sort of encouraged me to write another one, and that was *Dicamus et Labyrinthos*; about labyrinths and languages. It's much less graphic, but it's much more intense, in terms of its discussion of language and the cryptography of language; the hidden elements in any semantic utterance, and the levels of meaning that are buried in it. And particularly since it's supposed to be a kind of a philological document; what happens when you approach a foreign language which nobody knows, say an ancient language which no one any longer speaks, and you try and translate it? Can you really translate it, at all? Or what is it that you are bringing to light: If it isn't a translation, is it fiction? Is it a new, a totally different document? You could say this for even the so-called authentic documents from the period that I'm talking about there.

MW: What is the period?

RMS: Well, it's Crete: 1250 B.C. Homer's about 800 B.C., so you're talking about something like Homer. Well, if you translate Homer today are you really not creating an entirely different kind of text? Because we're not Greeks: Not only do we not speak the language, but the imagery and everything, the 'wine dark sea', is meaningless for us. What does 'wine dark sea' mean? Does it mean that the sea was actually wine dark in those days, in which case those of us who have been to the Aegean can testify that it isn't that colour today, all right; then what? Were the Greeks colour blind? Did they not see the colour properly, or —

MW: Did 'wine dark' mean a completely different thing?

RMS: Or did wine dark mean something different — absolutely. And so, in a sense, that is exactly what I'm playing with in *Dicamus et Labyrinthos*: the labyrinth of language and the fact that you can not resuscitate any kind of a document and assume that you have reproduced it accurately. What you're doing is you're fictionalizing it; you're creating levels of mystery about it and that didn't exist in the original document. Therefore: Highly appropriate that a text should be discovered which allegedly comes from Cretan times and dates from about 1250 B.C. But this is hotly disputed, and the Helladic organizations are in furor over its authenticity. Then along comes somebody who says: I've translated it. Has he translated it in such a way that he's simply allowed to appear there what he wants to appear? You see?

MW: Is it actually an original document that was uncovered?

RMS: No. It's not an original document. The Ectocretan text, I wrote. I wrote it first in English. Then I translated it into Ectocretan. Then I created pictographs, for the Ectocretan language. I cut them, they're wood blocks. I cut them all myself. And then I printed up the tablets. The book is the reverse of that process: The book starts with the tablets and it says, what do they mean, who wrote them, what do they say? I can read it — I'm an expert in Ectocretan. It's not hard, you know. It just takes a bit of practice. It's quite a nice language, actually.

Phonetically, I'm not sure that it really relates very closely to other Greek dialects of the period ... Now somehow there seems to be some Celtic elements in this language:

(reads passage)

TABLET ONE

- 1 𐀀𐀁𐀂𐀃𐀄𐀅𐀆𐀇𐀈𐀉𐀊𐀋𐀌𐀍𐀎𐀏𐀐𐀑𐀒𐀓𐀔𐀕𐀖𐀗𐀘𐀙𐀚𐀛𐀜𐀝𐀞𐀟𐀠𐀡𐀢𐀣𐀤𐀥𐀦𐀧𐀨𐀩𐀪𐀫𐀬𐀭𐀮𐀯𐀰𐀱𐀲𐀳𐀴𐀵𐀶𐀷𐀸𐀹𐀺𐀻𐀼𐀽𐀾𐀿𐁀𐁁𐁂𐁃𐁄𐁅𐁆𐁇𐁈𐁉𐁊𐁋𐁌𐁍𐁎𐁏𐁐𐁑𐁒𐁓𐁔𐁕𐁖𐁗𐁘𐁙𐁚𐁛𐁜𐁝𐁞𐁟𐁠𐁡𐁢𐁣𐁤𐁥𐁦𐁧𐁨𐁩𐁪𐁫𐁬𐁭𐁮𐁯𐁰𐁱𐁲𐁳𐁴𐁵𐁶𐁷𐁸𐁹𐁺𐁻𐁼𐁽𐁾𐁿𐂀𐂁𐂂𐂃𐂄𐂅𐂆𐂇𐂈𐂉𐂊𐂋𐂌𐂍𐂎𐂏𐂐𐂑𐂒𐂓𐂔𐂕𐂖𐂗𐂘𐂙𐂚𐂛𐂜𐂝𐂞𐂟𐂠𐂡𐂢𐂣𐂤𐂥𐂦𐂧𐂨𐂩𐂪𐂫𐂬𐂭𐂮𐂯𐂰𐂱𐂲𐂳𐂴𐂵𐂶𐂷𐂸𐂹𐂺𐂻𐂼𐂽𐂾𐂿𐃀𐃁𐃂𐃃𐃄𐃅𐃆𐃇𐃈𐃉𐃊𐃋𐃌𐃍𐃎𐃏𐃐𐃑𐃒𐃓𐃔𐃕𐃖𐃗𐃘𐃙𐃚𐃛𐃜𐃝𐃞𐃟𐃠𐃡𐃢𐃣𐃤𐃥𐃦𐃧𐃨𐃩𐃪𐃫𐃬𐃭𐃮𐃯𐃰𐃱𐃲𐃳𐃴𐃵𐃶𐃷𐃸𐃹𐃺𐃻𐃼𐃽𐃾𐃿𐄀𐄁𐄂𐄃𐄄𐄅𐄆𐄇𐄈𐄉𐄊𐄋𐄌𐄍𐄎𐄏𐄐𐄑𐄒𐄓𐄔𐄕𐄖𐄗𐄘𐄙𐄚𐄛𐄜𐄝𐄞𐄟𐄠𐄡𐄢𐄣𐄤𐄥𐄦𐄧𐄨𐄩𐄪𐄫𐄬𐄭𐄮𐄯𐄰𐄱𐄲𐄳𐄴𐄵𐄶𐄷𐄸𐄹𐄺𐄻𐄼𐄽𐄾𐄿𐅀𐅁𐅂𐅃𐅄𐅅𐅆𐅇𐅈𐅉𐅊𐅋𐅌𐅍𐅎𐅏𐅐𐅑𐅒𐅓𐅔𐅕𐅖𐅗𐅘𐅙𐅚𐅛𐅜𐅝𐅞𐅟𐅠𐅡𐅢𐅣𐅤𐅥𐅦𐅧𐅨𐅩𐅪𐅫𐅬𐅭𐅮𐅯𐅰𐅱𐅲𐅳𐅴𐅵𐅶𐅷𐅸𐅹𐅺𐅻𐅼𐅽𐅾𐅿𐆀𐆁𐆂𐆃𐆄𐆅𐆆𐆇𐆈𐆉𐆊𐆋𐆌𐆍𐆎𐆏𐆐𐆑𐆒𐆓𐆔𐆕𐆖𐆗𐆘𐆙𐆚𐆛𐆜𐆝𐆞𐆟𐆠𐆡𐆢𐆣𐆤𐆥𐆦𐆧𐆨𐆩𐆪𐆫𐆬𐆭𐆮𐆯𐆰𐆱𐆲𐆳𐆴𐆵𐆶𐆷𐆸𐆹𐆺𐆻𐆼𐆽𐆾𐆿𐇀𐇁𐇂𐇃𐇄𐇅𐇆𐇇𐇈𐇉𐇊𐇋𐇌𐇍𐇎𐇏𐇐𐇑𐇒𐇓𐇔𐇕𐇖𐇗𐇘𐇙𐇚𐇛𐇜𐇝𐇞𐇟𐇠𐇡𐇢𐇣𐇤𐇥𐇦𐇧𐇨𐇩𐇪𐇫𐇬𐇭𐇮𐇯𐇰𐇱𐇲𐇳𐇴𐇵𐇶𐇷𐇸𐇹𐇺𐇻𐇼𐇽𐇾𐇿𐈀𐈁𐈂𐈃𐈄𐈅𐈆𐈇𐈈𐈉𐈊𐈋𐈌𐈍𐈎𐈏𐈐𐈑𐈒𐈓𐈔𐈕𐈖𐈗𐈘𐈙𐈚𐈛𐈜𐈝𐈞𐈟𐈠𐈡𐈢𐈣𐈤𐈥𐈦𐈧𐈨𐈩𐈪𐈫𐈬𐈭𐈮𐈯𐈰𐈱𐈲𐈳𐈴𐈵𐈶𐈷𐈸𐈹𐈺𐈻𐈼𐈽𐈾𐈿𐉀𐉁𐉂𐉃𐉄𐉅𐉆𐉇𐉈𐉉𐉊𐉋𐉌𐉍𐉎𐉏𐉐𐉑𐉒𐉓𐉔𐉕𐉖𐉗𐉘𐉙𐉚𐉛𐉜𐉝𐉞𐉟𐉠𐉡𐉢𐉣𐉤𐉥𐉦𐉧𐉨𐉩𐉪𐉫𐉬𐉭𐉮𐉯𐉰𐉱𐉲𐉳𐉴𐉵𐉶𐉷𐉸𐉹𐉺𐉻𐉼𐉽𐉾𐉿𐊀𐊁𐊂𐊃𐊄𐊅𐊆𐊇𐊈𐊉𐊊𐊋𐊌𐊍𐊎𐊏𐊐𐊑𐊒𐊓𐊔𐊕𐊖𐊗𐊘𐊙𐊚𐊛𐊜𐊝𐊞𐊟𐊠𐊡𐊢𐊣𐊤𐊥𐊦𐊧𐊨𐊩𐊪𐊫𐊬𐊭𐊮𐊯𐊰𐊱𐊲𐊳𐊴𐊵𐊶𐊷𐊸𐊹𐊺𐊻𐊼𐊽𐊾𐊿𐋀𐋁𐋂𐋃𐋄𐋅𐋆𐋇𐋈𐋉𐋊𐋋𐋌𐋍𐋎𐋏𐋐𐋑𐋒𐋓𐋔𐋕𐋖𐋗𐋘𐋙𐋚𐋛𐋜𐋝𐋞𐋟𐋠𐋡𐋢𐋣𐋤𐋥𐋦𐋧𐋨𐋩𐋪𐋫𐋬𐋭𐋮𐋯𐋰𐋱𐋲𐋳𐋴𐋵𐋶𐋷𐋸𐋹𐋺𐋻𐋼𐋽𐋾𐋿𐌀𐌁𐌂𐌃𐌄𐌅𐌆𐌇𐌈𐌉𐌊𐌋𐌌𐌍𐌎𐌏𐌐𐌑𐌒𐌓𐌔𐌕𐌖𐌗𐌘𐌙𐌚𐌛𐌜𐌝𐌞𐌟𐌠𐌡𐌢𐌣𐌤𐌥𐌦𐌧𐌨𐌩𐌪𐌫𐌬𐌭𐌮𐌯𐌰𐌱𐌲𐌳𐌴𐌵𐌶𐌷𐌸𐌹𐌺𐌻𐌼𐌽𐌾𐌿𐍀𐍁𐍂𐍃𐍄𐍅𐍆𐍇𐍈𐍉𐍊𐍋𐍌𐍍𐍎𐍏𐍐𐍑𐍒𐍓𐍔𐍕𐍖𐍗𐍘𐍙𐍚𐍛𐍜𐍝𐍞𐍟𐍠𐍡𐍢𐍣𐍤𐍥𐍦𐍧𐍨𐍩𐍪𐍫𐍬𐍭𐍮𐍯𐍰𐍱𐍲𐍳𐍴𐍵𐍶𐍷𐍸𐍹𐍺𐍻𐍼𐍽𐍾𐍿𐎀𐎁𐎂𐎃𐎄𐎅𐎆𐎇𐎈𐎉𐎊𐎋𐎌𐎍𐎎𐎏𐎐𐎑𐎒𐎓𐎔𐎕𐎖𐎗𐎘𐎙𐎚𐎛𐎜𐎝𐎞𐎟𐎠𐎡𐎢𐎣𐎤𐎥𐎦𐎧𐎨𐎩𐎪𐎫𐎬𐎭𐎮𐎯𐎰𐎱𐎲𐎳𐎴𐎵𐎶𐎷𐎸𐎹𐎺𐎻𐎼𐎽𐎾𐎿𐏀𐏁𐏂𐏃𐏄𐏅𐏆𐏇𐏈𐏉𐏊𐏋𐏌𐏍𐏎𐏏𐏐𐏑𐏒𐏓𐏔𐏕𐏖𐏗𐏘𐏙𐏚𐏛𐏜𐏝𐏞𐏟𐏠𐏡𐏢𐏣𐏤𐏥𐏦𐏧𐏨𐏩𐏪𐏫𐏬𐏭𐏮𐏯𐏰𐏱𐏲𐏳𐏴𐏵𐏶𐏷𐏸𐏹𐏺𐏻𐏼𐏽𐏾𐏿𐐀𐐁𐐂𐐃𐐄𐐅𐐆𐐇𐐈𐐉𐐊𐐋𐐌𐐍𐐎𐐏𐐐𐐑𐐒𐐓𐐔𐐕𐐖𐐗𐐘𐐙𐐚𐐛𐐜𐐝𐐞𐐟𐐠𐐡𐐢𐐣𐐤𐐥𐐦𐐧𐐨𐐩𐐪𐐫𐐬𐐭𐐮𐐯𐐰𐐱𐐲𐐳𐐴𐐵𐐶𐐷𐐸𐐹𐐺𐐻𐐼𐐽𐐾𐐿𐑀𐑁𐑂𐑃𐑄𐑅𐑆𐑇𐑈𐑉𐑊𐑋𐑌𐑍𐑎𐑏𐑐𐑑𐑒𐑓𐑔𐑕𐑖𐑗𐑘𐑙𐑚𐑛𐑜𐑝𐑞𐑟𐑠𐑡𐑢𐑣𐑤𐑥𐑦𐑧𐑨𐑩𐑪𐑫𐑬𐑭𐑮𐑯𐑰𐑱𐑲𐑳𐑴𐑵𐑶𐑷𐑸𐑹𐑺𐑻𐑼𐑽𐑾𐑿𐒀𐒁𐒂𐒃𐒄𐒅𐒆𐒇𐒈𐒉𐒊𐒋𐒌𐒍𐒎𐒏𐒐𐒑𐒒𐒓𐒔𐒕𐒖𐒗𐒘𐒙𐒚𐒛𐒜𐒝𐒞𐒟𐒠𐒡𐒢𐒣𐒤𐒥𐒦𐒧𐒨𐒩𐒪𐒫𐒬𐒭𐒮𐒯𐒰𐒱𐒲𐒳𐒴𐒵𐒶𐒷𐒸𐒹𐒺𐒻𐒼𐒽𐒾𐒿𐓀𐓁𐓂𐓃𐓄𐓅𐓆𐓇𐓈𐓉𐓊𐓋𐓌𐓍𐓎𐓏𐓐𐓑𐓒𐓓𐓔𐓕𐓖𐓗𐓘𐓙𐓚𐓛𐓜𐓝𐓞𐓟𐓠𐓡𐓢𐓣𐓤𐓥𐓦𐓧𐓨𐓩𐓪𐓫𐓬𐓭𐓮𐓯𐓰𐓱𐓲𐓳𐓴𐓵𐓶𐓷𐓸𐓹𐓺𐓻𐓼𐓽𐓾𐓿𐔀𐔁𐔂𐔃𐔄𐔅𐔆𐔇𐔈𐔉𐔊𐔋𐔌𐔍𐔎𐔏𐔐𐔑𐔒𐔓𐔔𐔕𐔖𐔗𐔘𐔙𐔚𐔛𐔜𐔝𐔞𐔟𐔠𐔡𐔢𐔣𐔤𐔥𐔦𐔧𐔨𐔩𐔪𐔫𐔬𐔭𐔮𐔯𐔰𐔱𐔲𐔳𐔴𐔵𐔶𐔷𐔸𐔹𐔺𐔻𐔼𐔽𐔾𐔿𐕀𐕁𐕂𐕃𐕄𐕅𐕆𐕇𐕈𐕉𐕊𐕋𐕌𐕍𐕎𐕏𐕐𐕑𐕒𐕓𐕔𐕕𐕖𐕗𐕘𐕙𐕚𐕛𐕜𐕝𐕞𐕟𐕠𐕡𐕢𐕣𐕤𐕥𐕦𐕧𐕨𐕩𐕪𐕫𐕬𐕭𐕮𐕯𐕰𐕱𐕲𐕳𐕴𐕵𐕶𐕷𐕸𐕹𐕺𐕻𐕼𐕽𐕾𐕿𐖀𐖁𐖂𐖃𐖄𐖅𐖆𐖇𐖈𐖉𐖊𐖋𐖌𐖍𐖎𐖏𐖐𐖑𐖒𐖓𐖔𐖕𐖖𐖗𐖘𐖙𐖚𐖛𐖜𐖝𐖞𐖟𐖠𐖡𐖢𐖣𐖤𐖥𐖦𐖧𐖨𐖩𐖪𐖫𐖬𐖭𐖮𐖯𐖰𐖱𐖲𐖳𐖴𐖵𐖶𐖷𐖸𐖹𐖺𐖻𐖼𐖽𐖾𐖿𐗀𐗁𐗂𐗃𐗄𐗅𐗆𐗇𐗈𐗉𐗊𐗋𐗌𐗍𐗎𐗏𐗐𐗑𐗒𐗓𐗔𐗕𐗖𐗗𐗘𐗙𐗚𐗛𐗜𐗝𐗞𐗟𐗠𐗡𐗢𐗣𐗤𐗥𐗦𐗧𐗨𐗩𐗪𐗫𐗬𐗭𐗮𐗯𐗰𐗱𐗲𐗳𐗴𐗵𐗶𐗷𐗸𐗹𐗺𐗻𐗼𐗽𐗾𐗿𐘀𐘁𐘂𐘃𐘄𐘅𐘆𐘇𐘈𐘉𐘊𐘋𐘌𐘍𐘎𐘏𐘐𐘑𐘒𐘓𐘔𐘕𐘖𐘗𐘘𐘙𐘚𐘛𐘜𐘝𐘞𐘟𐘠𐘡𐘢𐘣𐘤𐘥𐘦𐘧𐘨𐘩𐘪𐘫𐘬𐘭𐘮𐘯𐘰𐘱𐘲𐘳𐘴𐘵𐘶𐘷𐘸𐘹𐘺𐘻𐘼𐘽𐘾𐘿𐙀𐙁𐙂𐙃𐙄𐙅𐙆𐙇𐙈𐙉𐙊𐙋𐙌𐙍𐙎𐙏𐙐𐙑𐙒𐙓𐙔𐙕𐙖𐙗𐙘𐙙𐙚𐙛𐙜𐙝𐙞𐙟𐙠𐙡𐙢𐙣𐙤𐙥𐙦𐙧𐙨𐙩𐙪𐙫𐙬𐙭𐙮𐙯𐙰𐙱𐙲𐙳𐙴𐙵𐙶𐙷𐙸𐙹𐙺𐙻𐙼𐙽𐙾𐙿𐚀𐚁𐚂𐚃𐚄𐚅𐚆𐚇𐚈𐚉𐚊𐚋𐚌𐚍𐚎𐚏𐚐𐚑𐚒𐚓𐚔𐚕𐚖𐚗𐚘𐚙𐚚𐚛𐚜𐚝𐚞𐚟𐚠𐚡𐚢𐚣𐚤𐚥𐚦𐚧𐚨𐚩𐚪𐚫𐚬𐚭𐚮𐚯𐚰𐚱𐚲𐚳𐚴𐚵𐚶𐚷𐚸𐚹𐚺𐚻𐚼𐚽𐚾𐚿𐛀𐛁𐛂𐛃𐛄𐛅𐛆𐛇𐛈𐛉𐛊𐛋𐛌𐛍𐛎𐛏𐛐𐛑𐛒𐛓𐛔𐛕𐛖𐛗𐛘𐛙𐛚𐛛𐛜𐛝𐛞𐛟𐛠𐛡𐛢𐛣𐛤𐛥𐛦𐛧𐛨𐛩𐛪𐛫𐛬𐛭𐛮𐛯𐛰𐛱𐛲𐛳𐛴𐛵𐛶𐛷𐛸𐛹𐛺𐛻𐛼𐛽𐛾𐛿𐜀𐜁𐜂𐜃𐜄𐜅𐜆𐜇𐜈𐜉𐜊𐜋𐜌𐜍𐜎𐜏𐜐𐜑𐜒𐜓𐜔𐜕𐜖𐜗𐜘𐜙𐜚𐜛𐜜𐜝𐜞𐜟𐜠𐜡𐜢𐜣𐜤𐜥𐜦𐜧𐜨𐜩𐜪𐜫𐜬𐜭𐜮𐜯𐜰𐜱𐜲𐜳𐜴𐜵𐜶𐜷𐜸𐜹𐜺𐜻𐜼𐜽𐜾𐜿𐝀𐝁𐝂𐝃𐝄𐝅𐝆𐝇𐝈𐝉𐝊𐝋𐝌𐝍𐝎𐝏𐝐𐝑𐝒𐝓𐝔𐝕𐝖𐝗𐝘𐝙𐝚𐝛𐝜𐝝𐝞𐝟𐝠𐝡𐝢𐝣𐝤𐝥𐝦𐝧𐝨𐝩𐝪𐝫𐝬𐝭𐝮𐝯𐝰𐝱𐝲𐝳𐝴𐝵𐝶𐝷𐝸𐝹𐝺𐝻𐝼𐝽𐝾𐝿𐞀𐞁𐞂𐞃𐞄𐞅𐞆𐞇𐞈𐞉𐞊𐞋𐞌𐞍𐞎𐞏𐞐𐞑𐞒𐞓𐞔𐞕𐞖𐞗𐞘𐞙𐞚𐞛𐞜𐞝𐞞𐞟𐞠𐞡𐞢𐞣𐞤𐞥𐞦𐞧𐞨𐞩𐞪𐞫𐞬𐞭𐞮𐞯𐞰𐞱𐞲𐞳𐞴𐞵𐞶𐞷𐞸𐞹𐞺𐞻𐞼𐞽𐞾𐞿𐟀𐟁𐟂𐟃𐟄𐟅𐟆𐟇𐟈𐟉𐟊𐟋𐟌𐟍𐟎𐟏𐟐𐟑𐟒𐟓𐟔𐟕𐟖𐟗𐟘𐟙𐟚𐟛𐟜𐟝𐟞𐟟𐟠𐟡𐟢𐟣𐟤𐟥𐟦𐟧𐟨𐟩𐟪𐟫𐟬𐟭𐟮𐟯𐟰𐟱𐟲𐟳𐟴𐟵𐟶𐟷𐟸𐟹𐟺𐟻𐟼𐟽𐟾𐟿𐠀𐠁𐠂𐠃𐠄𐠅𐠆𐠇𐠈𐠉𐠊𐠋𐠌𐠍𐠎𐠏𐠐𐠑𐠒𐠓𐠔𐠕𐠖𐠗𐠘𐠙𐠚𐠛𐠜𐠝𐠞𐠟𐠠𐠡𐠢𐠣𐠤𐠥𐠦𐠧𐠨𐠩𐠪𐠫𐠬𐠭𐠮𐠯𐠰𐠱𐠲𐠳𐠴𐠵𐠶𐠷𐠸𐠹𐠺𐠻𐠼𐠽𐠾𐠿𐡀𐡁𐡂𐡃𐡄𐡅𐡆𐡇𐡈𐡉𐡊𐡋𐡌𐡍𐡎𐡏𐡐𐡑𐡒𐡓𐡔𐡕𐡖𐡗𐡘𐡙𐡚𐡛𐡜𐡝𐡞𐡟𐡠𐡡𐡢𐡣𐡤𐡥𐡦𐡧𐡨𐡩𐡪𐡫𐡬𐡭𐡮𐡯𐡰𐡱𐡲𐡳𐡴𐡵𐡶𐡷𐡸𐡹𐡺𐡻𐡼𐡽𐡾𐡿𐢀𐢁𐢂𐢃𐢄𐢅𐢆𐢇𐢈𐢉𐢊𐢋𐢌𐢍𐢎𐢏𐢐𐢑𐢒𐢓𐢔𐢕𐢖𐢗𐢘𐢙𐢚𐢛𐢜𐢝𐢞𐢟𐢠𐢡𐢢𐢣𐢤𐢥𐢦𐢧𐢨𐢩𐢪𐢫𐢬𐢭𐢮𐢯𐢰𐢱𐢲𐢳𐢴𐢵𐢶𐢷𐢸𐢹𐢺𐢻𐢼𐢽𐢾𐢿𐣀𐣁𐣂𐣃𐣄𐣅𐣆𐣇𐣈𐣉𐣊𐣋𐣌𐣍𐣎𐣏𐣐𐣑𐣒𐣓𐣔𐣕𐣖𐣗𐣘𐣙𐣚𐣛𐣜𐣝𐣞𐣟𐣠𐣡𐣢𐣣𐣤𐣥𐣦𐣧𐣨𐣩𐣪𐣫𐣬𐣭𐣮𐣯𐣰𐣱𐣲𐣳𐣴𐣵𐣶𐣷𐣸𐣹𐣺𐣻𐣼𐣽𐣾𐣿𐤀𐤁𐤂𐤃𐤄𐤅𐤆𐤇𐤈𐤉𐤊𐤋𐤌𐤍𐤎𐤏𐤐𐤑𐤒𐤓𐤔𐤕𐤖𐤗𐤘𐤙𐤚𐤛𐤜𐤝𐤞𐤟𐤠𐤡𐤢𐤣𐤤𐤥𐤦𐤧𐤨𐤩𐤪𐤫𐤬𐤭𐤮𐤯𐤰𐤱𐤲𐤳𐤴𐤵𐤶𐤷𐤸𐤹𐤺𐤻𐤼𐤽𐤾𐤿𐥀𐥁𐥂𐥃𐥄𐥅𐥆𐥇𐥈𐥉𐥊𐥋𐥌𐥍𐥎𐥏𐥐𐥑𐥒𐥓𐥔𐥕𐥖𐥗𐥘𐥙𐥚𐥛𐥜𐥝𐥞𐥟𐥠𐥡𐥢𐥣𐥤𐥥𐥦𐥧𐥨𐥩𐥪𐥫𐥬𐥭𐥮𐥯𐥰𐥱𐥲𐥳𐥴𐥵𐥶𐥷𐥸𐥹𐥺𐥻𐥼𐥽𐥾𐥿𐦀𐦁𐦂𐦃𐦄𐦅𐦆𐦇𐦈𐦉𐦊𐦋𐦌𐦍𐦎𐦏𐦐𐦑𐦒𐦓𐦔𐦕𐦖𐦗𐦘𐦙𐦚𐦛𐦜𐦝𐦞𐦟𐦠𐦡𐦢𐦣𐦤𐦥𐦦𐦧𐦨𐦩𐦪𐦫𐦬𐦭𐦮𐦯𐦰𐦱𐦲𐦳𐦴𐦵𐦶𐦷𐦸𐦹𐦺𐦻𐦼𐦽𐦾𐦿𐧀𐧁𐧂𐧃𐧄𐧅𐧆𐧇𐧈𐧉𐧊𐧋𐧌𐧍𐧎𐧏𐧐𐧑𐧒𐧓𐧔𐧕𐧖𐧗𐧘𐧙𐧚𐧛𐧜𐧝𐧞𐧟𐧠𐧡𐧢𐧣𐧤𐧥𐧦𐧧𐧨𐧩𐧪𐧫𐧬𐧭𐧮𐧯𐧰𐧱𐧲𐧳𐧴𐧵𐧶𐧷𐧸𐧹𐧺𐧻𐧼𐧽𐧾𐧿𐨀𐨁𐨂𐨃𐨄𐨅𐨆𐨇𐨈𐨉𐨊𐨋𐨌𐨍𐨎𐨏𐨐𐨑𐨒𐨓𐨔𐨕𐨖𐨗𐨘𐨙𐨚𐨛𐨜𐨝𐨞𐨟𐨠𐨡𐨢𐨣𐨤𐨥𐨦𐨧𐨨𐨩𐨪𐨫𐨬𐨭𐨮𐨯𐨰𐨱𐨲𐨳𐨴𐨵𐨶𐨷𐨹𐨺𐨸𐨻𐨼𐨽𐨾𐨿𐩀𐩁𐩂𐩃𐩄𐩅𐩆𐩇𐩈𐩉𐩊𐩋

MW: So you're Daedelus — you created the whole thing.

RMS: Yeah. I created the whole thing. I had it checked by some friends in ancient languages just in order to assure myself that the techniques that I was using of decipherment and so forth were the kinds of techniques that are used; and that the thing wasn't full of any absolutely egregious sort of faults that would be detected by someone. And for the most part they assured me that that was the case. It was a pretty foolproof concoction.

THE DECIPHERMENT

Tablet One

- 1 ARIADNE SLEEPS.
 Oleordi snems
- 2 SHE SLEEPS THE SLEEP OF A CHILD,
 ke snems viθ snem uiθ o ksuanr
- 3 BUT AS SHE SLEEPS SHE DREAMS.
 wuif os ke snems ke rleps
- 4 SHE DREAMS OF A HERO AND A MONSTER AND A FABULOUS ARTIFICER,
 ke rleps viθ o gela odr o pudsfθl odr o θowainuis ulfeθesθl
- 5 SHE DREAMS OF LOVE AND LUST
 ke rleps uiθ nuib odr nuif
- 6 AT KNOSSOS
 of tausds
- 7 ON THE SUNNY SHORES OF CRETE.
 uθ zui suide kals uiθ tlef
- 8 ARIADNE AWAKENS.
 Oleordi ovitids
- 9 AS A WOMAN SHE AWAKENS.
 os o voipod ke ovitids
- 10 LOOK HOW SHE STRETCHES HERSELF TOWARDS THE FUTURE.
 nat gua ke sfifks gqsnθ favolrs zui θaifail
- 11 TODAY SHE WILL BETRAY HER COUNTRY,
 fari ke ven wefli gθl tuidfle
- 12 BETRAY HER MOTHER AND HER FATHER,
 wefli gθl puizθl odr gθl θuzθl
- 13 FOR THESEUS, SON OF AEGEUS,
 θzl feseuis suid uiθ edjeus
- 14 FOR THESEUS WHOM SHE WILL MAKE A HERO.
 θzl feseuis gap ke ven pit o gela

MW: Why did you do it?

RMS: Because I'm fascinated with languages and I'm fascinated with the fictions that are created by languages. I'm fascinated with languages both in terms of their sounds and also in terms of their meanings; what it is really possible to say in language, and what is impossible to say and what is possible to say in one language that cannot be said in another language. I don't know whether you've had the experience, but sometimes if you're learning a foreign language, at first you don't know a single word in it, it's a total mystery. And little by little you start to learn some words. So elements of its surface, and meanings emerge, and then as you get more familiar with it, you can start to make more subtle distinctions. But there's a great excitement in working with a language which is only partly intelligible to you, because you're learning by listening to it all the time; you're learning new things every day. At the same time, you're using language very creatively. As we all know, we use language much more creatively when we only half know the language. That's why foreigners are very interesting people in Canada and Canadians are so dull: they use the language colourfully, and a person who knows it intimately tends to become very unimaginative.

MW: There's less of a search.

RMS: Yeah there's less of a search. You think you know the *mot juste* for everything — *Le mot juste*, Flaubert said; always searching for the exact word. You think you know the exact way of expressing everything and because you're not looking anymore then you tend to be satisfied with something that's banal. Whereas if you have to look and find something that's slightly off key, or off colour, it's much more exciting.

... NO PROBLEM I CANNOT SOLVE, HAVING PUT MY MIND TO IT.

But there was a problem and it remains. The limitation of the humanly possible, that is Daedalus. In the language he chose to encipher the script into the word for labyrinth comes out strangely as "noweLED" (knowledge!). That is the problem: that the best rational skills we possess should conspire to produce camouflage and jargon, hiding truth in the bewildering heresies we call art & science. That is the labyrinth: the lie of art.

MW: I was intrigued by **Dicamus et Labyrinthos** because the idea of a labyrinth, and having to go in somewhere to find something, seemed applicable to what you were doing in **RA**.

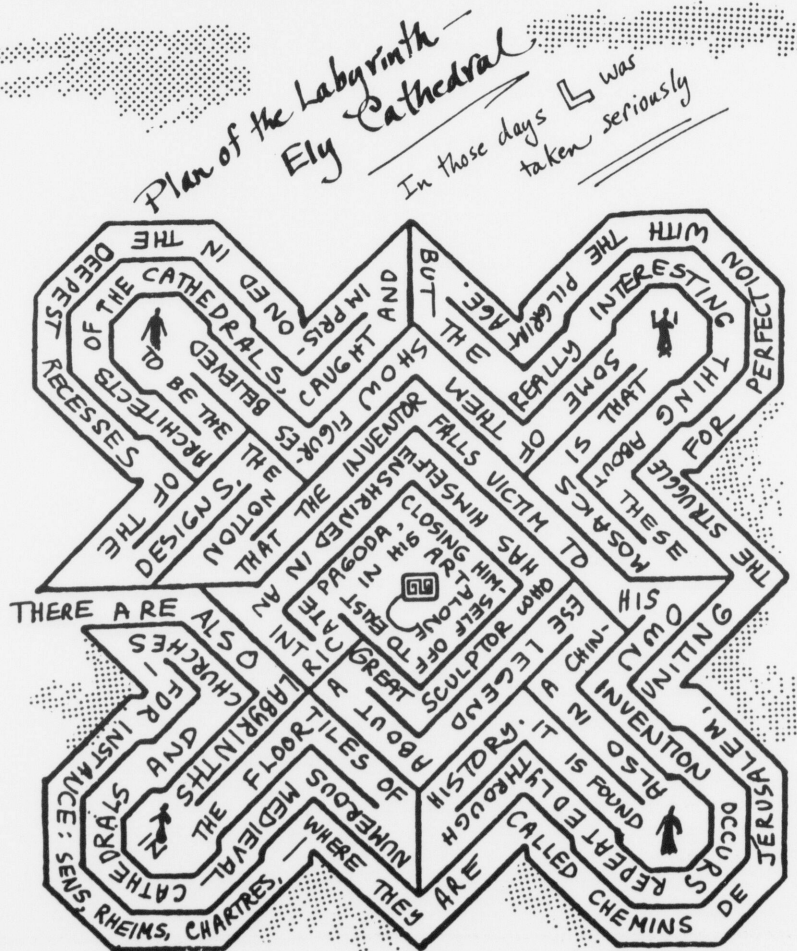
RMS: Yeah. Well in *Dicamus et Labyrinthos* I'm dealing with a language labyrinth, which takes the form of a story about a real labyrinth. So you have the real labyrinth story, the Cretan labyrinth story, treated linguistically as if language itself were a labyrinth: The whole work is in an untranslated or undeciphered language, therefore it's only through cryptography that we can begin to penetrate this labyrinth, and find out what this text is really about. The text turns out to be **about** the labyrinth.

MW: That's the enigma. In **RA** too, you seem to be trying to find a stronger consciousness, or awareness of things, and how you're doing that is you're creating more mystery and more complexity. The levels of complexity in **RA** are astounding; when you consider that the idea is really to find clarity, or the source of the experience.

RAMS: Yes. It's true. There's certainly a relationship between that work and **RA** in as much as **RA** has to a large extent to do with the Egyptian labyrinth. You know there were two labyrinths in the ancient world, and one was the Cretan labyrinth with the story of Theseus and Ariadne and the Minotaur associated with it and I've written that piece about it and I've also written several pieces about Ariadne and Theseus, which eventually are going to form **Patria 4** which will be about Theseus and Ariadne and the Minotaur in the labyrinth. But. There is an Egyptian labyrinth too. It was a different kind of labyrinth. Many Greek travellers discussed it as a kind of mansion of the dead, a kind of a temple complex, which was so complex that there were supposed to be ten thousand rooms in it. And in each room there was a statue or a mummy or something or other, and the priests used to go down there and go through incredible sorts of ceremonies all night in order to make sure that the world would continue to function. This is what we assume took place in the Egyptian labyrinth, although the Greek visitors were talking about it at a very late state of decay and the ceremonies were in decline. What we do know is that we have certain texts on the walls of the pyramids and some of the palaces which give us a sort of story, and the story has dramatic elements which might have at one time been ritualized, been actually acted out as dramas. And that's where I picked up, really, the substance of the story for **RA**. It comes from a fairly well known text which describes what happens to Ra when he descends into the Netherworld at night. How does he get from the Western sky when he sets, or dies, to the Eastern sky the next morning when he rises or is born again. In a sense it's a cosmological enigma if you think about it. We have a way of answering that today. Well the Egyptians had a way of answering that too, and their answer was that Ra dies, goes into the underworld, spends all night travelling from West to East, and through the intervention of Osiris [*the personification of the King in death: Guarantor of triumph over death to all devotees who identify with him*] is allowed to be reborn and rises up the next morning as the sun. But. Since the Pharaoh is also Ra it's the Pharaoh who dies and is reborn. And since, in later Egyptian history **anybody** is also a Pharaoh, it is the **individual** who dies, and goes through the night and is reborn. And so there's a relationship between that and the idea of any kind of a mystery ceremony in which **you** are reborn. You go through some kind of a purification ritual, or some kind of a confessional ritual, or a cathartic sort of experience, in which at the end of it you rise up as a new human being with something behind you which has changed your life.

MW: What is the nature of this particular transformation? Aside from becoming a new person, why would you want to go through it?

RMS: I think you know when you want to do it. Certain times in your life you may feel that you have to completely renew yourself. Some people may never feel it consciously, but I think most people do, very often when they start to approach middle age. It's the age of all the saints, it's the age when Buddha and Christ and Mohammed and everybody started really sensing their mission in life. So some people, I think, at certain times in their lives feel that they should go through some kind of an experience which gives them a new perspective on living. And that presumably is the power that those mystery religions once had. People would go through various kinds of ceremonies which would introduce them to a new perspective on life. In the case of **RA**, I think there is a different perspective from the one that most people might have been thinking about before they attended it. That is that the sun shows us that there is a continuity of all living things, but also a continuity of all dying things. And that life and death are related. Not as polar opposites that always remain in opposition to one another, but as things which rotate, and **together** form the complete experience. A Christian notion for instance is that life is something that we should hold on to at all costs, because some day we're going to die. And unless we live the right way, when we die, that's going to be the end of us. But not so in the Egyptian religion. The Egyptian religion is a thing in which you are constantly dying: The moment after midnight, the sunrise begins, and the moment after midday, midnight begins. So each day is moving toward something else. You are dying, you are being reborn. You are dying and being reborn. As all things in nature are, and as the sun demonstrates: The Sun himself is reborn every day. He rises up to his zenith, and then he declines, and he dies. He disappears. That's what they really believed and therefore, you see, if you have a philosophy of life that's like that, that's a very different kind of philosophy from this fatalistic idea that everything is absolutely fixed in one position and it remains there; that there is such a thing as absolute good or absolute evil. There isn't! The Egyptian philosophy was much closer to Oriental philosophy with the notion of the yin and yang — an **exchange** of things which together make the total experience.



So to the extent that I was playing with philosophy in **RA**, I was trying to develop that notion which is implicit in the material and present to people a perspective in which everything dies, and everything is reborn, including you. And you can be reborn every day, if you have that kind of perspective: You can die, and you can be reborn. There's a marvellous phrase by Rumi (Jalal uddin Rumi, 1207-73) you know, the Persian Sufi who says, "die before you die". In other words, leave off this thing, you know, kill this thing in you, now, and you have a chance to be reborn. But if you just go on persisting, you know, flogging this one idea until you die, you're a lost human being.



RA

Anubis, in **RA**. Played by Jan Filips. Photo courtesy Comus Music Theatre.

In May 1983, at the Ontario Science Centre in Toronto, Comus Music Theatre and a cast of 33 singers, dancers, actors and instrumentalists presented R. Murray Schafer's dusk-to-dawn music-theatre work, **RA**.

Most simply, **RA** is the story of the Egyptian sun god, particularly during the hours between sunset and sunrise. The myth tells how Ra (or Re) passes the night, travelling from west to east through the netherworld, a dangerous time for him filled with encounters with his vilest enemies. In one way, the myth is symbolic of how the dying sun can rise up newborn the next morning in the opposite sky.

RA is what might be called a hierophony, a religious drama. Much of the text has been retained in Pharaonic Egyptian, the language of the gods. But it is interpreted as the drama proceeds by a high priest or Hierophant, together with his assistants (here called Hierodules) and in explaining they embellish the myth, adding details suitable to a contemporary audience.

The audience is limited to 75 — necessary because of the location changes throughout the work, and fitting because this corresponds to the 75 magic names of Ra, one of which each individual carries throughout the night as a seal of divine protection.

The audience members are really more like initiates being conducted through a mystery ritual. During the early part of the work they indulge in numerous preparation exercises designed to assist them when they eventually descend into the netherworld. They learn breathing exercises; they learn to distinguish the gods by their appearance as well as the sounds and perfumes associated with them; they learn to chant in ancient Egyptian; and at the conclusion of these preparations they are clothed like the priests themselves. The Hierodules then accompany them to the netherworld where Anubis will guide them, showing them the manner in which Ra's miraculous rebirth is carried out. There are many spectacles in the netherworld, but the work is experiential in other senses than the visual, with particular emphasis on the senses which function best in darkness: touch, hearing and smell.

— (from the program notes by R. Murray Schafer)

NANCY HALPERN

So those were some of the themes in **RA**. And of course, as you said, the thing is both arcane and very simple. We're moving toward the light, we're always moving towards the light: Through the night we know the dawn is coming, we know that light is coming, and with that light, knowledge is coming. And enlightenment is coming. And at the same time we're surrounded by gods who are speaking a foreign language and we're never told what it means. Although what they're saying in fact is perfectly a *propos*, if you could understand it. But I don't think it matters. I don't think it matters any more than someone listening to Wagner, you know, can get a general sort of whiff of what it's all about and get great sort of **physical pleasure** from listening to that language and listening to that music. It's perhaps better that you don't know everything that's being said.

MW: I think that worked well in **RA** for the audience: being very intimidated by the mystery of it, not knowing what really was going on and what was expected of us in terms of the ritual. We were completely displaced from knowing what behaviour patterns we could fall into. So we were forced to call upon other resources in other levels of our being. We really had to **search**, you know, in order to get through it all.

RMS: The only thing that I wanted to have more of was more isolated experiences, where, for instance, you were told to proceed down, say, a long corridor, a very dark corridor, alone, not knowing what would be at the end of it. But it just wasn't possible, given the spaces that we had to use and the fact that the cast, and the crew were absolutely strapped to the limit.

*One of the main problems that we had in the production of **RA** was using the Science Centre, which was so obviously a Science Centre that much of our efforts and a great deal of our time was taken up in trying to disguise the Science Centre suitably: we were always trying to disguise some spaceman or something, you know. But it's very strange that a work like that took place in the Science Centre, too. I had a meeting with Tuzo Wilson, the director of the Science Centre, early on, when we wanted to use the Science Centre, but before we had permission to do so, and he said, What is this about? And I told him, and he said, That has nothing to do with Science! And I said, Well, in those days, Dr. Wilson, Science and the Arts and Magic and Astronomy and everything, they were all related. And he said, Young man, it's thinking like that that kept Science back 3,000 years!*

MW: There was a sense of isolation during the section when we were collectively blind-folded then taken on a walk. I did feel that I was alone, and so I had much more freedom to play; to know what I was sensing and feeling, to see if I was scared and to test the next step on my own. That was probably one of the most enjoyable phases of the whole event.

RMS: I agree. I would make several changes to do it again. Small changes.

MW: I was going through some of your writings on the soundscape and on education where you talk about the evidence that we have lost touch with the natural vibrations of the world, or lost our relationship with them, and that you are concerned with re-establishing that awareness; by listening for them; listening for small details, listening for big expanses of things. **RA** seemed to be a way of going toward that total sensing; of tricking people in some way into learning to sense within a particular natural timespan. In **Princess of the Stars** the audience got up at 4:30 in the morning to go out to a lake and experience the whole magnitude of dawn, with the mist coming off the water and so on. And in the same way in **RA**, we were perceiving the actual timespan of dusk to dawn while we were given indications through music and dance and drama as to what was going on through it, rather than being given a piece that just presented those indications in compressed time. Going through those 12 hours at night with all the different sensual experiences you presented and having things pointed out that aren't usually paid attention to; these aspects of **RA** in themselves naturally altered our awareness and encouraged a different kind of perspective. Also the care and confidence with which the cast led us through these experiences was very inspiring. In view of these stated concerns of yours, though, I was wondering why you relied on traditional dramatic elements and the theme of an ancient myth to realize the event artistically.

RMS: Well there's quite a history of sensory awareness works of art — I'm going back to the sixties when it was really fairly fashionable to be teaching that kind of thing at places like Esalen in the United States and even at Simon Fraser (University in B.C.). When I first went there, I taught a lot of sensory awareness courses — not only to do with sound, but a lot of them to do with textures, sensing textures. I used to send students out to embrace trees and do things

THROUGHOUT EDITING UNITS 1 & 2 SINGERS, WIDELY SEPARATED ON ROOFTOPS, TOWERS & TERRACES, WILL CHANT TOWARDS THE WESTERN SKY, ARMS UPLIFTED. THE CHANTING IS IMPROVISED FOLLOWING THE MELODIC SHAPE GIVEN ON PAGES 6 & 7. THE REFRAIN PRECEDES EACH VERSE & IS MORE ELABORATE IN EXECUTION. THE VERSES ARE DIVIDED AMONG THE SINGERS, EACH TAKING A FEW AND REPEATING THEM ON THE VERSE RECITATION NOTES GIVEN. OCCASIONALLY A FEW OTHER NOTES MIGHT BE INCORPORATED AS EMBELLISHMENTS OR FOR ADDITIONAL EMPHASIS. THE CHANTING SHOULD BE VERY TENSE, LIKE AN ECSTATIC FUNERAL PANEGYRIC THAT IS CONSTANTLY ON THE THRESHOLD OF TEARS. MALE VOICES PREDOMINATE AT FIRST, ALTERNATING & OVERLAPPING; FEMALE VOICES GRADUALLY JOIN IN AS THE INITIATES APPROACH THE TERRACE OF EDITING UNIT 2.

IT MAY BE DESIRABLE TO PRE-RECORD SOME OF THE VOICES TO GIVE ADDITIONAL STRENGTH AND SPATIAL DEPTH TO THE SINGING. BUT THE TEXTURE SHOULD NEVER BE TOO DENSE. THE EFFECT SHOULD BE AS IF THE ENTIRE WORLD IS MOURNING THE PASSING OF THE SUN-GOD.

REFRAIN:

hākū nāk Rī'a k̄ā sāhmē
Hail to thee, O Re, exalted power

TIME: 7:00-7:30 PM PLACE: ZONE 1 (WALKWAY)

THE SUN IS SETTING. FROM THE ROOFTOPS AND TOWERS & TERRACES MOURNERS (PREDOMINANTLY MALE) MAINTAIN AN INTENSE, EMOTIONAL CHANTING, ALTERNATING & FREQUENTLY OVERLAPPING. THEY FACE THE WEST, THEIR ARMS RAISED IN ADORATION TOWARDS THE SETTING SUN.



like that, you know. Or I'd say, the substance of this course is going to be one square meter of ground. Every student was to choose one square meter of ground and study it for four months. That's it. They'd say, what am I supposed to do? You study it and you write your reports on it and you write your essays on it or your poems or your music or whatever you do; but it's got to be restricted to that piece of ground, and there it is right out there in the field, so go out and get acquainted with it. There was a lot of that kind of stuff going on then. The criticism that a lot of people have made of any attempt to turn that into a work of art is that it tends to be meandering. And unless you can connect it somehow, with a philosophical theme, that it's difficult, for a lot of people at least, just to understand why are we doing this? Now, that's not true of all people. I wouldn't have that difficulty in sensing at all. And they want nothing but a theme, and they want to sit in a *fauteuil* and just sort of have the magic pictures pop up in front of them.

MW: So in a way, you **were** tricking those people who need some sort of sense of drama into experiencing these other things.

RMS: Oh yeah. Sure. Very intentionally. And a lot of them resented it too. Particularly the critics, who had not the slightest idea of why there were doing these things: Why am I being asked to sniff this, this **bowl**, you know, of **perfume**? Or, why am I being asked to listen to that sound, or why is someone feeling up my legs in the dark? You embrace them, you give them a hug, and they pull back — they stand back and look at you, or put up their hand to resist you. Because you don't embrace the critic — I mean, how can he write down the experience in his little book, if he's hugging? But I think that that's one of the things that made **RA** unlike any other sort of sensory awareness kind of experience that I've ever participated in, or ever run. And also made it very much unlike any other lengthy theatre piece, of which there's a fair abundance now. Bob Wilson has done twelve and twenty-four hour pieces and things like that, but all of those, as far as I can tell, are simply for people who are imprisoned in a theatre and sit in theatre seats and something happens up there on the stage in slow motion and you tolerate it as long as you can, but with **RA** we were not only playing with the metabolism change over a long period of time but also providing sensory stimuli at intervals, so that in a sense, we try and calculate what the boredom and arousal curve might be; when do we need to stand up and get some fresh air, after all this heavy incense and so forth? When do we need to eat? When do we want to lie down, you know, things like that. And so they all become parts of the work of art, or an **attempt** is made to deal with that.

MW: How did you determine those things?

RMS: By doing several all-night walk throughs. When I had the first rough sketch, we did an all night walk through, in real time, in which we read the texts in the locations that we were proposing to use, and sat around and discussed how we might realize that, and then, I went to work on the text again, and got a little bit of music done, so the next time we did an all night walk through we had a couple of musicians there to improvise some sounds and fill in the kinds of things that were going to happen in this place and we had a couple of actors there, who read the lines so we

were just reading them out of the book ourselves, and we got some feeling for the shape of the thing. That's how.

MW: So you did it very organically — you didn't map out metabolism charts or anything.

RMS: No it was done very organically. We went through this a couple of times, and then in the morning we sat down and we said, what worked for you and what didn't work for you, and when did you get sleepy and when... you know? And taking all those things into consideration, I won't say that I ended up trying to do a piece that was simply going to make it **easy** for people — very often it made it much more difficult. For instance, at five o'clock in the morning when you're rising up out of the Netherworld, there's a **long** debate we had: Should we have the escalators working for people all the way up? And I absolutely insisted, No. They will **walk** up. And they said, what about old people? They're going to have heart attacks and so forth. In fact, there were a couple of participants, who suffered quite a bit as a result of that experience. But I just felt that that's the way it has to be, you know. It's not all easy. Some of it had to be hard. And if you have a terrible headache as you go into the Great Hall, ... Good. I mean, let's listen to music with a headache for once, you know.

MW: That was **very** difficult, having to sit and listen to music at that point.

RMS: I know. Oh I know it was difficult. I think that was the magnificent thing about it. It was so difficult that as I was standing behind, you know, I saw people all sitting on these little cushions and kind of falling over, and...

MW: People were snoring. I was trying to keep my attention there the whole time, but I couldn't. Afterward I realized that that difficulty was good, in a way, because it kept the dream-like quality there — my awareness would fade out and when it would come back in I'd be still hearing something I had heard five minutes ago when it went out but now hearing something new at the same time. That was very nice.

RMS: That's it. Listening to music like that was totally unlike any other listening experience in a concert or in a theatre piece, where we're always expected to sort of be relatively wide awake, and give it our full attention. I like that idea. It's kind of a peripheral sensing, if you want, as distinct from concentrated sensing.

MW: It can enter in on a lot of different levels that way, and it becomes a richer experience, I think.

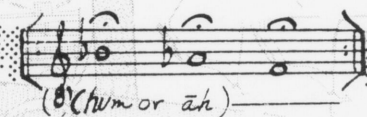
RMS: Yeah, I think so. There's a lot of music in the world in which it's quite obvious that peripheral listening is something very important. I'm told, for instance, in East Indian music that you don't listen to the melodies, you listen to the drones: You hear the melodies and the ornamentation peripherally, while you concentrate on the drone.

MW: You get more of a sense of the relationship that way.

RMS: Yeah. Sure. Sure. And, you know, our listening,

our art experiences, are always so high profile, are so intense. We're supposed to be with it every instant. It's highly focused, you know, it's **always** in perspective. And this was playing with that whole idea of perspective: If you're absolutely wiped out, and you're sitting there at what could be the 3rd act of Aida or something, can you take it in? No. People are falling off right and left, and I thought it was marvellous! And I **knew** that somehow something of the odour of this experience would still linger on, when they woke up: After they'd gone home and had their sleep and they woke up, something would still be there.

MW: There was. I had a cotton sweatshirt on, and it had soaked up all the incense smoke, so I didn't wash it for two weeks because I enjoyed smelling it, and the memories that that would evoke. I kept remembering how careful the cast was with the audience; dabbing water on the cheeks, gently aligning the head, patting the legs while we were lying down; and the



RMS: There were 2 or 3 nights where at various times, the initiates would suddenly and spontaneously start to sing that. That was beautiful. I loved that.

MW: I remember that as we were going up the escalator steps at the end, we were humming it softly. It was a very nice gift that we were given — being told that we could sing that whenever we wanted to, or when we felt afraid or confused. The parts that I had difficulty with were the more theatrical/dramatic scenes; the big snake attacks **RA**; it was very spectacular and my attention was certainly different, which was not necessarily unwelcome, but I found myself unable to **believe** in what was happening on a certain level...

RMS: I know what you mean. I think the showcasing of some things, like the showcasing of music where you have 'a scene', which can be an operatic scene, is perhaps not so effective, or a dance which is obviously 'a dance', you know; now we will watch 'a dance'.

MW: No, it wasn't that, because some of those scenes seemed to work well in terms of the whole, where we stopped and were just sitting and taking them in. What I meant was the flow of attention in real experiences as opposed to dramatically contrived ones. There seemed to be two different emotional attitudes or postures presented — one was a serene kind of strength and balance that was projected by the members of the cast, and that came across as a real experience for them. Another real experience was, again, the intimidation of the audience. For example, I was made to think, because of the written material given to us before the show, that I was going to have to get up in front of all these people and remember the Egyptian names, and sing all the chants, and do the dances and I didn't want to have to do that, so that was great for awhile, because I was genuinely afraid. I wasn't afraid of being devoured by some devil or monster, but I was afraid of my own role in the situation. After I lost that fear the scenes where people

REFRAIN

Hăk nu năk Rīc a

VARIANTS

Kă Săh m^e

VERSE RECITATION NOTES

were supposedly attacking us, where it was dangerous to go through this passage, and the Hierodules were saying, Quick, quick! You have to get out, it's dangerous here! ... Well, I didn't believe that, **they** didn't believe that; nobody believed it. So after going through the sensual experiences and the genuinely fearful ones, those parts didn't quite ring true for me. They were like going to a drama, except that you were actually walking through a staged scene. You weren't actually going through the experience. On the other hand, the more sensual/perception parts were actually **real** experiences. We were going through that experience, they were helping us through that experience and they actually felt strong, they felt open and centred: You could believe them and you could believe you in those situations.

RMS: Yeah, I know what you mean. I know what you mean. How do you think you could get them to work? Or would you abandon them?

MW: I don't know. That's why I was asking you about why you felt it necessary to determine the event, or the aspects of the event by an ancient myth treated as a dramatic story line.

RMS: See, I wanted those other things to bring a certain level of awe to it. You know? Like, you round the corner, and *there is RA. And there is the King*, or whatever. And something's happening, and gee, have a look at it. What I ideally would have liked is that none of those scenes would have been things that you would be permitted to really stay with entirely. You would pass **through** them. You would see something and then you would be taken on. And this idea of sort of Quick! Get out of here! was partly, I suppose, an attempt to keep you from kind of fastening on to them.

MW: So the idea is to get intrigued by it but then get pulled away before you can figure it out. And to get a sense of going through something that wasn't necessarily happening for your benefit.

RMS: No. Not happening for your benefit. Happening in spite of you. And you were there only by permission of Anubis [*guardian of the dead*] who will protect you and make sure that you have free passage through this. But you can't linger and watch it. Because what is happening down there in the Netherworld among the gods is really beyond your comprehension and beyond your ability to affect in any way. And they're not interested in you either. None of those scenes were ever played for your benefit.

MW: Even though you could extract some of those scenes from the whole work, put them on a stage, and they'd work quite well. But in this situation the performers weren't performing to us at all. They didn't expect applause, and not once did we ever even consider applauding, or acknowledging them in any way.

RMS: In fact, most of the time they never even looked at you. They paid no attention to you. Unlike anything on the stage, when they're always looking at you and always paying attention to you: They're projecting to **you**, and they know that you're there, and they expect something back from you; applause at the appropriate moment, and therefore they **oggle** at you all the way through. That's all traditional theatre. There

was none of that at all in **RA**. No conductor, nobody sort of in the centre, who was obviously directing any of these celebrations that were taking place in the underworld, enigmatic some of them, but no attempt was made, really to explain many of them. People said of some scenes, What is it? What's it supposed to be? I said, what difference does it make? Who are you to presume that you should know what the gods are about?

One of the ideas was to take anyone who was troublesome and have a kind of bouncer. We were finding, we had to drop him, but we did have a former Argonaut football tackle who was going to be in the production. He had enormous **paws** on him, you know, huge great sort of black hands. One of his assignments was going to be whenever a Hierodule was being given trouble by someone, he would appear, and he would simply **pull them off into the darkness** and shackle them to the wall for either the remainder of the night or for a good period of time.

MW: Why did you drop him?

RMS: Well he sort of opted out. Perhaps he was used to getting more money, or at least some money, I don't know. We were very dependent on a lot of volunteer help for **RA**, and we got it. I never saw a group of both cast and crew that worked so hard on something that was terribly tiring and terribly demanding. When you get into rehearsals and you're working 12 hours a night rehearsing and then performing, you're not doing anything else; you're just living that work: You don't have time to go out and buy a pair of shoes or a toothbrush or anything. And you just go home and you sleep and you get up and have dinner and then you get back out to the Science Centre and start in on the next shift. And so it takes an enormous amount of devotion.

MW: I talked to a few of the dancers about it, and from their point of view, going through that whole change of time schedule, the whole process of making the piece and then doing the actual performance was a very positive transformation experience. They felt that they went through something very significant, both together as a group and individually, because of the level of attention and the kind of attention that they needed for what they were trying to project. I can see that it would be felt strongly because they're dancers and so of course they're dealing more directly with physiological transformations in that situation. For the musicians, and for the crew, though, where does that kind of transformation come in?

RMS: They were all being asked to do things that normally they wouldn't do. For instance, dancers, like opera singers and actors, are used to playing on a stage, in front of an audience for fairly short bursts. They're not used to being asked to do other things, like, now, you, opera singer, or dancer, or actor, you're going to massage people. It's dark down here. Therefore, you're not putting on a spectacle. Forget spectacle. You will be sometimes seen. You will be sometimes heard. But when it's dark the experience is primarily tactile. And you're going to create a tactile environment. Things like that, you see, are just beyond their whole training. Their expectations are different and the fact that they went along with it I think is really to their credit. And also to the credit of Tom Sokoloski

(director), Sally Lyons (choreographer) and me, too, I guess, for trying to get them to understand the nature of the work and the scale of the experiment and that we absolutely needed their 100% devotion to this thing, even if they were asked to do things that seemed to them to be very strange.

MW: So on some level, aside from the sheer length of it, it was transformative for them in the way that they had to deal with totally unexpected tasks.

RMS: Yeah. Exactly. And I think they'll say that too in the same way that the dancers probably have told you that it was a very broadening experience for them, personally, to be involved in it.

You mentioned the **Princess of the Stars**: Both **RA** and the **Princess of the Stars** and some of the other things that I'm interested in, are, I think, posing questions. They may not be answering all the questions **effectively**, but at least they pose certain questions. For instance, why is it that we always think that a work of art should exist in a constant temperature of seventy degrees? Why do we insist that it should be indoors rather than outdoors, where you might get rained on, or there might be some other kind of natural factors which affect your appreciation in some way? Why do we insist that we sit and watch, instead of standing to watch, or lying down to listen? And of course one of the reasons that we do these other things in a very conventional way is simply because it's more convenient for the great organizers, including the unions, to cope with business in those terms. And so you have all kinds of regulations set up; that it must be sixty-eight degrees or a musician is not allowed to blow his clarinet; there must be so much candle power, otherwise he's not allowed to play either.

MW: Well those are certain rituals that we've set up ...

RMS: They're rituals, yeah.

MW: ... in that they have their little rules and implications in the same way that the Egyptian rituals and ceremonies had theirs. What you're saying is that you don't accept these particular rituals.

RMS: No; I think they're worn out, and when things are worn out they have to be changed.

MW: They're worn out ... do you mean in the same way that you were talking about language — that if you know a language too well, there's less of a search involved?

RMS: Yeah. Um hum. We know them too well. We feel too comfortable with them, and as a result they've become moribund; they've become ossified, they've become dead, shrunken imaginatively. And so it's necessary to find new ways in which we can really sense and experience things in a pristine way again. And that search goes on all the time: It isn't just something that happens in any one period in history. It does tend to happen when a civilization senses somehow from the inside that it's deteriorating; then there's a demand for transformations. And after all, the Egyptian society, which was incredibly static for thousands of years, was not mobile: It wasn't a society



The initiates, **RA**. Photo courtesy Comus Music Theatre.

which was attempting to transform itself in any way — yet it still fell victim to that, ultimately. And, it fell apart.

MW: So why use Egyptian stories to help create a new relationship with the senses?

RMS: To answer that, I have to say that **RA** will eventually be incorporated into this very large work called **Patria**. Now the prologue to **Patria** is **Princess of the Stars**. This is the very beginning of it. From the prologue we jump right into **Patria 1**, which is sort of a fairly contemporary work in which a displaced person finds himself in an unknown country and suffers in a fairly undignified way. Now **Patria 2**, which is in contemporary society, introduces us to a character called Ariadne, who is in an unspecified environment which is probably an insane asylum. **Patria 3**, which I'm just working on now, brings back the heros from **Patria 1** and **Patria 2**, but in a fragmentary way because **Patria 3** takes place in a kind of a small town carnival or a small town fair, in which there are a hundred acts and shows going on simultaneously. And you have to sort of lace them together and figure out what the whole thing is about; there are these definite themes that run through it. **Patria 4**, which is about half done, takes us right back to Cretan society and is the story of the Cretan labyrinth, as I told you; Theseus and Ariadne and the Minotaur in the labyrinth. Then there's a **Patria 5**, and then somewhere around **Patria 6**, we actually find ourselves in Egypt, and we go through **RA**. And the whole **Patria** cycle, as it sits in my head at the moment, somehow eventually closes again where it

began — in the forest, in a Canadian forest. So, since **Patria** means homeland, or native country, you know, it starts in Canada and it makes this huge sort of sweep around the world, and then comes back to Canada in the end. So I'm sort of hopeful that when it's all in place, the question you ask, why Egypt? will answer itself.

MW: Well the answer that I made for myself, in light of your dissatisfaction with the rituals we have now, and your attempts at getting back in touch with these things that we have lost our relationship with, was that you see some clues and some hints that we can get from the way a static society like the Egyptian one related, or, from what you can see of how the Egyptians related, to natural phenomena.

RMS: That's right.

MW: Possibly what you're assuming is that there are things that we know, but not on a conscious level, that they knew that were transmitted in the symbols and rituals they made, and that we might be able to get in touch with the knowledge again through looking at the symbols, and re-enacting some of the rituals.

RMS: Yeah, that's it. I think that's it. The symbols of any society are it's attempt to define itself as clearly as it possibly can for itself, to bring up out of the unconscious certain things which they managed to give conscious definition to, and the Egyptians tried to give conscious definition to certain things, just as any other society did, and by looking and experiencing what they offered is not necessarily a bad thing, you know, for us to do. None of these things are eternal. And in a sense I guess that's what my whole **Patria** cycle attempts to show. The themes may be fairly constant; the search for meaning in life, the search for enlightenment, the search for rebirth; and different societies have different ways of trying to realize them. And by re-experiencing them we gain some insight, I suppose. That's all. So we go around the world looking. But we come back to Canada in the end. You know in **Princess of the Stars** there's a real sort of relationship I suppose with Indian mythologies; not that it's an Indian work, really, but the setting suggests something like that.

MW: The setting?

RMS: Um hmm. Well, the outdoor setting, the fact

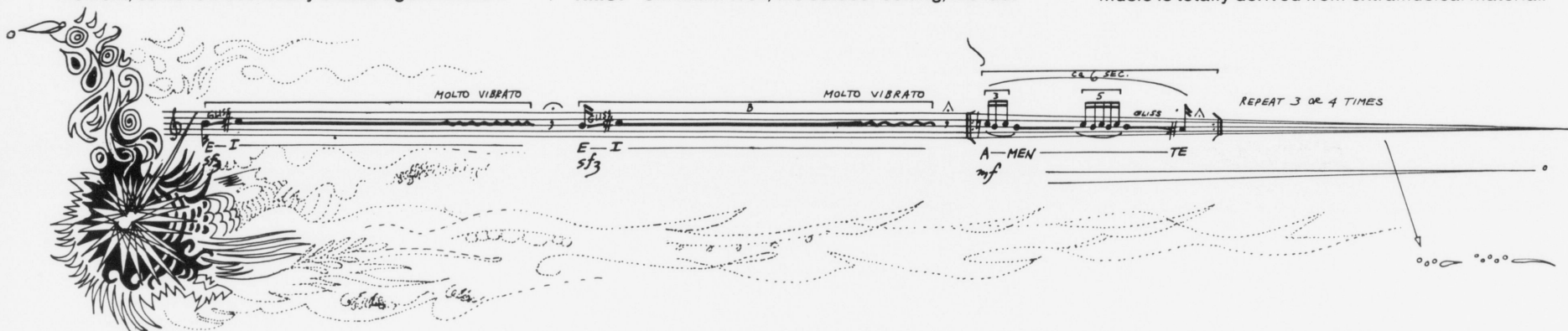
that it's outdoors. It's around a lake and there are certain things in the text that relate the action of the work to the environmental happenings around you. In other words, the dawn birds appear when the dawn birds appear in the morning at 6 o'clock. When they come out, we come out in our costumes and we imitate the dawn birds. And the moment the sun rises, the sun appears as a character. And the reason that there's dew on the ground in the morning is because the Princess ran through the forest bleeding, and the reason there's mist on the water is because the Princess is being held captive at the bottom of the lake, and the mist is her attempt to sort of struggle and get free, or at least it's a sign of commotion under the water. In that sense it's very Indian, because the Indians would explain the environment by creating a myth that would tie environmental change to some kind of human quest. So in the end, as I say, I want to try to ultimately bring it back to Canada and bring it back to the Canadian forest again. After we've gone everywhere for our search, then we come back to something which is quintessentially our own experience. And maybe that's what we do in our lives, too, you know. There are the years of wanderlust in which you go out and you explore the world and then there are the years when you contract back into the inner abundance of what was there that you didn't notice in the first place. So does that answer your question?

MW: It explains why, even though you've spent a lot of time exploring the world of sound, how it's made, what makes it — I'm thinking of **Tuning of the World** and your teachings — your musical works are never simply about sound and resonance: There is prominence of story or myth, an idea that the music is underlining, or some symbolism from someplace else that is the focus rather than the experience and inner workings of actual sound and resonance.

RMS: Well I have been accused of being a composer who can't write a straight piece of music, you know; always takes inspiration from some nonmusical force.

MW: But it seems that you're not as much a composer of music as you are a maker of events.

RMS: But sometimes you are perceived that way. I just got a very nasty review from an English magazine which said precisely that: Here is a composer whose music is totally derived from extramusical material.



The Acoustic Community

Community can be defined in many ways: as a political, geographical, religious or social entity. But I am about to propose that the ideal community may be defined advantageously along acoustic lines.

The house is an acoustic phenomenon, designed for the first community, the family. Within it they may produce private sounds of no interest outside its walls. The idea of a parish is also acoustic and it is defined by the range of the church bells. When you can no longer hear the church bells you have left the parish. Cockneydom is still defined as that area in East London within earshot of Bow Bells. This definition of community also applies to the Orient. In the Middle East it is the area over which the muezzin's voice can be heard as he announces the call to prayer from the minaret. Aristototele somewhere gives 5,000 as the size of the ideal community and cites as evidence the fact that one man can address that number of people with his naked voice — but not more.

In Goethe's day the city-state of Weimar had a population of about 6,000. Its six or seven hundred houses were for the most part still within the city wall; but it was the half-blind watchman, whose voice could be heard everywhere throughout the town as he called out the hours of the night, that expressed best the sense of human scale which Goethe and his colleagues found so attractive in Weimar.

Had we recognized these things we could have predicted that the Church would have declined when the sound of the police siren (102 decibels) surpassed that of the church bell (83 decibels), just as the downfall of Islam was signalled when the first loud-speaker was attached to a minaret, or that Goethe's humanism would have passed when the watchman's voice no longer reached all the inhabitants of Weimar. (A further sign of the muzzling of Weimar humanism was a nineteenth-century bylaw forbidding the making of music unless conducted behind closed windows.)

In the lo-fi soundscape of the contemporary megalopolis, acoustic definitions are no longer possible. There is cross-talk on all the channels; there is also anomie and social disintegration. (Or are we to assume the increasing prominence of the siren heralds the coming of The New Order?)

Acoustic Design 1: Analysis

The most important revolution in aesthetic education in the twentieth century was that accomplished by the *Bauhaus*, that celebrated German school of the twenties.

Many famous painters taught at the *Bauhaus*, but the students did not become famous painters. The purpose was different. By bringing together the fine arts and the industrial crafts, Gropius, Klee, Moholy-Nagy and the others *invented* the whole new subject of industrial design.

It devolves on us now to invent a subject which we might call acoustic design, an interdisciplinary in which musicians, acousticians, psychologists, sociologists and others would study the world soundscape together in order to make intelligent recommendations for its improvement. This study would consist of documenting important features, of noting differences, parallels and trends, of collecting sounds threatened with extinction, of studying new sounds before they are released into the environment, of studying the rich symbolism sounds have for man, and of studying human behaviour patterns in different sonic environments, in order to use these insights in planning future environments for man.

Many of the sounds of our contemporary environment are accidental. How many of them are desired or necessary? The efficacy of many of those which are intentional has never been questioned. Take, for instance, the telephone bell. Who invented it? Certainly not a musician! Perhaps it is just a bad pun on the name of its inventor? It may be that a device which permits anyone to jump onto your desk unannounced *should* have an obnoxious sound, but the matter probably merits more careful consideration. Why could not everyone choose his own telephone signal? In a day when cassettes and tape loops are cheap to manufacture this is entirely feasible.

Car horns are another example of a sonic "absolute" bequeathed anonymously to the world by an inventor who never took music lessons. In North American cars the interval of the two horns is set at a major or minor third. In Turkish cars they are pitched at the interval of a major or minor second. While in some cultures this is considered an exceedingly dissonant diad, there are examples of the Balkans, for instance from certain regions of Western Bulgaria, of folk singing in which two voices sing together in major or minor sec-

But I don't see myself as a composer either.

MW: No. But you use musical composition in the making of your events. **Princess of the Stars** was an event that focused on the experience of dawn but used a musical performance context to get people there. I was wondering what the relationship was between the sonic elements of the piece and the outdoor environment — I remember having difficulty hearing some of the music...

RMS: Certainly when you go into an outdoor environment you discover that a lot of the techniques and so on that we have been using in music in our indoor concerts are inappropriate. One of the things that worked most effectively there, I discovered, was the log drumming. Some of the others things that probably didn't work nearly as well were the use of more traditional instruments in more traditional ways. Or singing in more traditional ways.

MW: What is the interface between the musical or sonic materials and that particular environment, and the dawn?

RMS: Well there isn't very much. The **Princess of the Stars** is actually almost completely a 12-tone piece of music. In fact, it's the same tone row that's used in **Patria 1** and **Patria 2**.

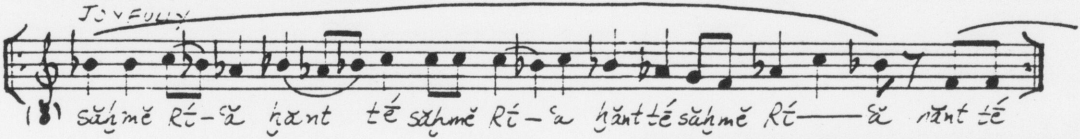
MW: What are the characteristics of the row?

RMS: Well it's one of those all-interval rows, that starts on a note and then just moves out semitone, tone, minor third, major third, fourth, augmented fourth, fifth, et cetera. I wanted to use the same tone row for the **Princess of the Stars**, and I did, for the most of it. In **RA**, there's only one aria, the one that I wrote for Maureen Forrester that uses that row.

MW: In **RA** was there a lot of Egyptian-based composing from you?

RMS: Um hmm. Well we don't know that much about ancient Egyptian music, but we know quite a bit about Coptic music. And all the chants were based on Coptic chants. And the Copts traced themselves back to the original Egyptians. You know the Copts are non-semitic people — they're Hemitic people, like the ancient Egyptians. And their language is non-Arabic

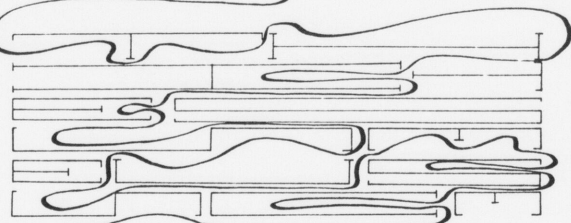
language, which has some very clear cognates with ancient Egyptian. So it's reasonable to assume that the music too, which is quite obviously not Arabic, is as close as we can get to what ancient Egyptian music might have been like. So remember



Well that's a Coptic chant, which I put those Egyptian words to. So, yeah, I did all that stuff, and then George Sawa (Egyptian music consultant for **RA**), of course, added some other things which were much more Arab-inspired. So you had a kind of mix; a bit of Arab music and some ancient Coptic...

MW: The duet, for example...

RMS: The duet is nothing. That's just pure me. Pure me.



ARIADNE IS THE EYE GUIDING THESEUS!
BUT THE EYE IS WEeping. ARIADNE WEeps
AT THE VERY MOMENT HER LOVER TRIUMPHS.
WHY?

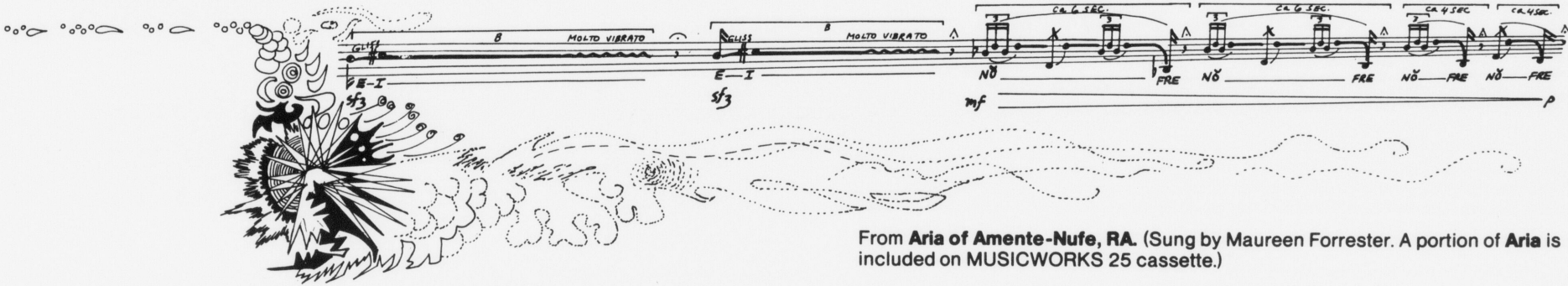
RMS: I think in retrospect perhaps a mistake was made in trying to publicize **RA** as a very exclusive event.

MW: But you're making, like you said, a more complex structure, a structure that needs a lot of support, a lot of money, a lot of people...

RMS: **RA** is a big work, and therefore in today's terms it's an expensive work. But I keep emphasizing that it's an expensive work only for you and me, you

know, as composers. It is not an expensive work in terms of the kinds of works that are presented every week in Toronto. Why should we not create from time to time a complex and, if necessary, expensive work, and be able to have that funded? I think we have more

right to it than the Toronto International Festival, which will be bringing the Met, and spending 8 to 12 million dollars on entirely foreign entertainment, which anyone could get in New York or Berlin. Some people think differently, obviously, but I certainly think that we should have a right to that. But there are other things of mine which are much less expensive; for instance, **Patria 3**, which, as I said, is a work that takes place inside a kind of village fair. I don't know whether this would work out or not, but I thought that one way of doing it to cut costs might be to have no admission charge at all and to have all the performers go through their various acts and hold their hats out. And what you make, that's what you get paid. So, if you're not making so much, you improve your act. You know. But do you see what I mean? There's an expectation on the part of performers, too, that they're going to get paid no matter what, and unions and producers have built that expectation into them. I think there's no reason that they should expect to have those guarantees any more than a university professor deserves tenure, which he doesn't. We're all constantly being adjudicated and we're being either paid or going penniless according to how well we're doing that particular job. So what's wrong with that? I think that if one were to do, say, **Patria 3** that way, that one might find there are a lot of performers, not necessarily the big name performers, but an awful lot of performers that would be interested in that kind of experiment, just to see what would happen. And maybe they're the right kind of performers for a work like that. So, I'm hopeful that maybe we can do it that way, and then what have you got? Your only cost is renting a bunch of tents. And throwing them up, putting some lighting out there and then just go. Bang! That's an open-ended work, by the way, in which I've created many of the pieces, but there's a whole category of pieces which anyone else can plug into. And I hope that people will. I hope that anybody who's got an act, provided it relates in some loose way to the



From **Aria of Amente-Nufe, RA**. (Sung by Maureen Forrester. A portion of **Aria** is included on MUSICWORKS 25 cassette.)

onds, the singers considering this is a consonant interval. In the interest of preserving idiosyncracies in the world soundscape some thought should be given to using the characteristic intervals and motives of local musical cultures in tuning environmental signals of all kinds. In Java, for instance, it might be the unique "shortened" fifth that could serve for the car horn, for this interval is, I understand, found in no other culture, though it is basic to the tuning of gamelan orchestras and is said to derive from the characteristic call of an island bird.

It would also be useful to have complete information on how horns are used and abused in different communities. We have determined that an average of 70 car horns are blown per hour at the downtown intersection of Georgia and Granville in Vancouver. In Moscow they are less frequent; in a one-hour count on Gorki Street 17 were heard. In Teheran or New York, on the other hand, the numbers would be exceedingly high. (Parenthetically, I might mention one memorable drive from Pergamum to Aescelapion, a distance of seven kilometres, during which my chauffeur blew his horn 289 times at nothing in particular.) Vancouver has a monstrous horn mounted on top of one of its highest buildings, which signals twelve o'clock by playing the opening phrase of the Canadian national anthem. One block away this sound is 96 dBA-100dBC. This hectoring attempt at the patriotic unification of the community (and which came into existence without the citizenry being consulted) is one of the most salient sounds of the contemporary Vancouver soundscape.

When the soundscape is as dynamic as it is today new sounds are constantly appearing and others are disappearing. Those which are disappearing should be collected. We are currently building an archive of all the disappearing sounds from the British Columbia soundscape. Our list is very extensive but a few examples will suffice for illustration.

- The ringing of old cash registers;
- Clothes being washed on a washboard;
- Butter being churned;
- Razor being stropped;
- Kerosene lamp;
- The squeak of leather saddle bags;
- Hand coffee grinders;
- Rattling milk cans on horse-drawn vehicles;
- Heavy doors being clanked shut and bolted;
- School hand bells
- Wooden rocking chairs on wooden floors;
- The quiet explosion of old cameras;
- Hand operated water pumps.

It is only by exercising considerable imagination that the soundscapes of past societies can be reconstructed. Novels, works of art, anthropological studies, and other documents must be studied in detail for clues; but we are finding it is indeed possible to develop plausible tone-pictures of lost societies by the careful examination of documents as diverse as Thomas Hardy's West Country novels, the paintings of Breughel, Fenimore Cooper's Leather-Stocking Tales or the tales of The Thousand and One Nights. A geographical comparison of contemporary soundscapes is easier; all it requires is good ears and travel money.

This gathering of cross cultural information is most desirable if we are to plan future acoustic environments imaginatively and judiciously. If we do not do this, as I have been trying to point out in this essay, we run the risk of sinking into an environmental sound sewer which is characterized exclusively by its amplitude and brutality. Illustration four, which is based on some of our early tabulations from the type of documents mentioned above, shows how the hard-edged sounds of modern technology are now musing out the voices of their human inventors.

	Natural Sounds	Human Sounds	The Sounds of Tools and Technology
Primitive Cultures	69 %	26 %	5 %
Medieval, Renaissance and Pre-Industrial Cultures	34 %	52 %	14 %
Post-industrial Cultures	9 %	25 %	66 %
Today	6 %	26 %	68 %

4. The table shows the increase in technological sounds and the decrease in natural sounds throughout human history. It is based on the study of many accounts in art, literature and anthropology of the kinds of sounds heard during different historical periods.

general themes of **Patria 3**, will come along and say, gimme a corner, I want to do something. Okay. Yeah, come. Put out your hat, like everybody else. And that's the way you build that work up, I think. So it's exactly the opposite of a highly exclusive and expensive sort of undertaking.

MW: Why do you think it was a mistake to present **RA** as an exclusive event?

RMS: Well, it is exclusive, but when we tend to think of something being exclusive, we tend to think that it means expensive. That is to say, the tickets are very expensive. We have that kind of syndrome — it's the opening of Thompson Hall, or something or other, therefore the tickets are going to be **very** expensive in order to get the first chance to parade on the stone coloured carpets, you know. I think the mistake was made simply in making tickets so expensive [\$150 general admission] that people like you, or anybody else who is the appropriate kind of audience, feels, Oh I can't afford it, so they stay away. Well then who does but the tickets? Then you're dependent on the people who might have gone to the Canadian Opera Company gala performance or something to buy your tickets. They're not the right kind of people to be going to **RA**. We got some of them, and they were rather disenchanting, quite obviously; it's just not their kind of show. You see I wanted to run a lottery and sell lottery tickets for 2 dollars. And if you could sell 10 to 20 thousand lottery tickets that's how you would make your money. And then you'd draw out 750 lucky winners. But I was not the producer, and I didn't make the final decisions on how the thing was to be publicized. But you see, you could also knock out the publicity budget. We tend to think, in terms of publicity, that you have to take an ad in the Globe and Mail, it costs you hundreds of dollars, maybe thousands if you wanted anyone to see it. But if you sold 20 thousand lottery tickets, 20 thousand people would know about the event and you haven't spent a cent. And they're talking about it. And they're saying, Gee, when's the draw? Maybe I'll win. I think it's a viable way to find a new audience. You see I really believe in new audiences too. **Princess of the Stars**, for instance, of the audience that came to that there were a lot of people whom you might have found at a New Music Concert.* But there were an awful lot of people that you would not have found at a New Music Concert.

MW: There were people from the community around the lake?

RMS: There were some people from around the lake, there were canoeists, and those kinds of outdoors people; fishermen who happen to get up at five o'clock in the morning, and were told on those particular mornings they wouldn't be able to fish in the lake because there was going to be a production, so some of them came and watched instead. And you get really interesting and genuine responses from those people. By the way, they're not, by any means, hostile. We said **Princess of the Stars** is a 12 tone piece of music: They listened to that. No one ever said, Gee, I don't like the music. They just listened to it, they thought it was fun, they took it for what it was, knowing nothing about it; it was absolutely an original experience for them. So, in our New Music Concerts and our new music undertakings, I really think that the audience is out there — it's just that the audience is not the audience that we've been trying to make an appeal to for a very long period of time. It's not the audience that's going to come down here to St. Patrick Street, (The Music Gallery) or it's not the audience that's going to go to the Edward Johnson Theatre. It's not the audience that's going to turn on and listen to Stereo Morning. It's a different group of people. They don't know anything about new music. Fine, I say. Perfect people.

MW: Well there is a tendency to keep cycling through the same audiences, I think, and it becomes a very static ingrown situation.

RMS: Yeah. And you keep thinking that somehow the audience is eventually going to materialize. But it isn't going to materialize. I've been around long enough to know that it isn't. It isn't getting any larger, and in many places it's getting smaller. But it's getting smaller not because of a refusal on the part of the public to listen to this execrable music, but rather that the music is being presented in such a way and in such locations that they just don't feel very comfortable with it and therefore they don't go out of their way to find out about it. The same experience is being found I think by the sound poets, bp nicholl and Steve McAffery and those people, who are now reciting in pubs and things like that, and find that there's an entirely different audience out there who knows nothing about what they've done, but will sit and listen, quite attentively. I think we can do that in music too. For **Patria 3** we obviously need thousands; I mean if you're going to do a fair, it's a fair. You've got to have a thousand people a night at least.

MW: Is that how you conceive of it — that you're making a fair?

RMS: Oh it's definitely a fair. It's nothing but. It has all kinds of booths and kiosks and tents and mini-stages and hawkers out in front that are trying to lure you in to see this act and that, and lots of freak shows, lots of deceptions, lots of tricks, magicians, in addition to some things that are fairly sophisticated pieces of

music. **Beauty and the Beast** goes into **Patria 3**; a very tame, nice little sort of piece of music, but fairly sophisticated.

MW: This all takes place in the country?

RMS: Well I could consider doing it closer to the city, or even in the city, as far as that goes, but the model, really, that I had in mind was the country fair; any small town that has a fairgrounds and has a fair at the end of the summer or the beginning of autumn would be the kind of thing that it's attempting to sort of imitate, but — it's imitating it in a slightly ironical way, because it isn't just that; it's something much more than that: It is a work of art.

MW: So you're creating another labyrinth?

RMS: It's a different kind of labyrinth. It's a labyrinth in which the people move freely, selecting whatever they want to see, or hear, or eat,

MW: Or win,

RMS: Or win, but at the same time, unknown to them, certain things are happening. For instance; supposing you're playing a game, and you happen to win, as a result of throwing your coin over these pop bottles, a particular prize, and the prize happens to be a blue baloon. As you walk around with a blue balloon for the rest of the night, you in a sense become an actor without realizing it: Maybe the blue balloon is a signal to something else to happen that you will be directing in a certain way, or you will be dealt with in a certain way, or you will join up with certain other people. There's a lot of that kind of manipulation.

MW: You mentioned that you wanted to invite people to participate in **Patria 3** as long as they kept to the themes.

RMS: There are several sort of themes that it deals with. It's hard to explain them without getting too complicated, but basically one of the themes is the fragmentation of experience. Because this consists of a hundred or so pieces, fragments, vignettes, little cameos, the suggestion is that the whole of contemporary life is being chopped up into little pieces. And so one of the themes is the breaking up of everything into fragments and pieces. And of course, its opposite: How do you put the pieces together into a coherent picture again? So anything dealing with fragmentation, and coagulation is appropriate. These are the sort of themes that run through it. And some of the acts make reference to them and so what I'm saying is that I would welcome other musical performances, dramatic performances, dance, mime, anything, which deals with those two themes, or with counterplots. I think it's a nice idea. I'm kind of excited about it, you know, because it's creative, and it can always be in a state of flux.

MW: And it will always be a fun thing for people to come to, for people to participate in.

RMS: Yes. And I don't even think that necessarily **every** act and every detail in it has to relate to any other detail.

MW: So **Princess of the Stars** is the opening to the **Patria** series.

RMS: Yeah **Princess of the Stars** is the prologue to the whole thing.

MW: The whole six . . .

RMS: The whole six or seven or eight or I don't know how many there are.

MW: Until you find the Minotaur.

RMS: Yeah, right. And then we zoom back, right back to classical times in **Patria 4**, to treat a classical subject which leads up to the whole story of Theseus and Ariadne and Pasiphae, the wife of the King having the affair with bull, which leads to the birth of the Minotaur and then Theseus going into the labyrinth and confronting the Minotaur. And who or what is the Minotaur? And what is the nature of the confrontation? It deals with that.

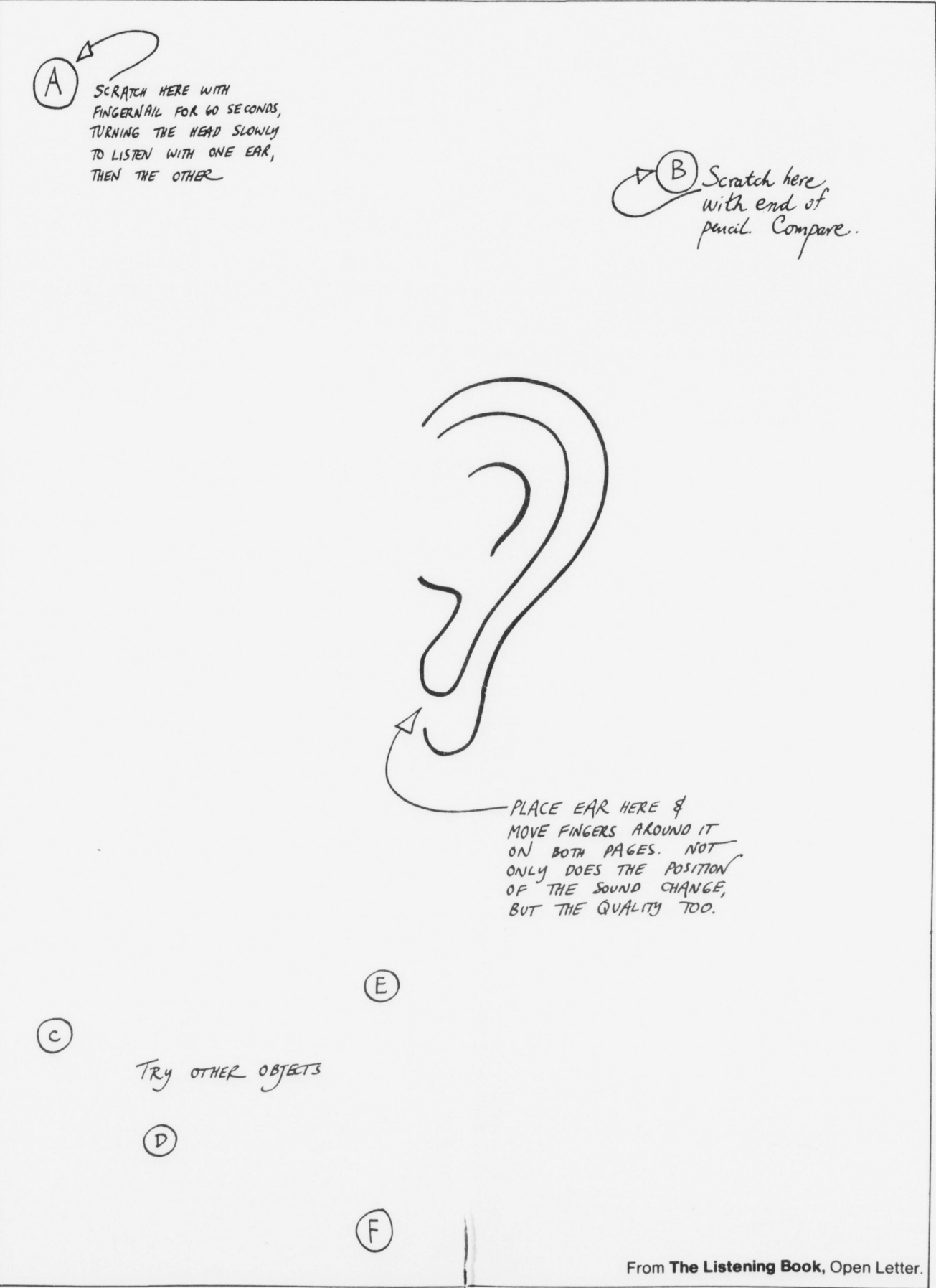
MW: You're not going to tell us what happens.

RMS: No. I think that what I have in mind needs to be kept secret for the moment. But at the same time . . . remember at the end of **Princess of the Stars**, the 2 principle characters there: The Princess who falls out of heaven and is being kept prisoner now at the bottom of the lake, and Wolf, who comes to look for her, and can't find her. And at the end of the **Princess of the Stars** he's told to search for her, far and wide, you know, search in the four directions of the Earth, and meanwhile the Sun tells us that the Princess will be sealed in the lake until she's found and delivered. She'll be sealed under ice and snow. So we go into a kind of winter period. Well, Wolf keeps reappearing. Wolf, who is the animal of the wolf, is the same character who comes back in **Patria 1**, transformed as the hero. In fact in **Patria 1** they call him Beast. Or sometimes they call him D.P. They have all these perjoratives for him, you know; the Animal, the Outsider, the one who's egregious, outside the flock, or the one who's not like us. And he's searching.



Wolf, from **Princess of the Stars**. Design by Jerrard Smith.

BRUCE GREEN



From **The Listening Book**, Open Letter.

MW: So the whole **Patria** series is Wolf searching.

RMS: In all his transformations, whether he is called Wolf, or whether he is a displaced person, or whether he is Theseus, or whoever he is, he is searching for his Ariadne, all through the whole thing. And in the end, presumably you know there's some kind of consolidation of that whole search, and a deliverance. But, as I say I'm not quite sure exactly how that's going to take place. Except that I imagine that the whole thing returns to Canada again, after he's searched all over the world for his salvation.

MW: When did it all start, the **Patria** series?

RMS: Oh, well I wrote **Patria 2** about 1970, I guess. **Patria 1** I wrote next, about 1975. And then **Patria 4**, **Patria 3** I have been working on whenever time permitted. And, of course **RA** came up, and I decided, in some way I'm going to incorporate **RA** into the whole thing. Because **RA** deals with the labyrinth too. And the labyrinth is very much a part of the whole thing.

MW: It's very clear. In **RA**, opening of the door down in the Netherworld, sounds like Thunder and I remembered reading about the sound of the Egyptian court doors opening; all of those labyrinth images are very clear. So the sound then, the music, is really simply a function of these ideas; the searches, really, that are manifested in drama.

RMS: Oh, yeah. And the music's the thing in a sense that holds it all together. Rather than the story line. In various other sorts of trilogies, or tetologies, you have a kind of continuous story that holds it together. Story is not so clearly defined.

MW: It keeps disappearing and reappearing.

RMS: Yeah, it keeps coming back. There are all kinds of cross references, but there isn't actually a continuous story that you could say, it starts here and it goes from A to B to C to D to E. So music is kind of the thread, Ariadne's thread, if you want, that leads us through the whole experience. I sort of dealt with that a bit in an early essay that's in a collection called **Theatre of Confluence**. Well, **Theatre of Confluence**, to me, was a theatre where there was a confluence of the various art forms contributing. But, for me at least, music would be the thing that holds them all together, because, although I'm not exclusively a musician, I'm more a musician than I am a novelist, or a poet, or a theatre person.

MW: It's a different approach than composers who deal with just sound, exploring the structure of sound and making pieces that are stretching our ears to hear more the natural order of sound. I was surprised that you don't make your sound structures in accordance with ideas of Music of the Spheres or ideas of perfect vibrations that you've expressed in some of your writings.

RMS: Yeah, that's probably true. And I think also the forms that the pieces are written in, and the instrumentation of them, is fairly traditional. And the music itself is fairly traditional. That is to say, it's like other things that have happened in the 20th Century — it's not something that is going outside of music and dealing with pure vibrations or making new musical instruments — it's written for known musical instruments for the most part, although there are some soundscape things that were done that are probably closer to that sort of sound art form, you know. I'm thinking of works like **Okeanos**, an hour and a half piece based on the sounds of the sea, recorded on the sea shore and with some electronic sounds that simulate them.

MW: **Minewanka** effectively imitated the sounds of water also. And the wind going through the trees — the voices sounded exactly like that.

RMS: Yes. I think there are some pieces like that. And then there are some of the things that we did in the Soundscapes of Canada series, which actually a group of us put together, Barry Truax and Bruce Davis and Peter Huse and Howard Broomfield and myself. Each person made a very strong contribution to that series of 10 one-hour radio programs, that were based on aspects of the acoustic environment. And some of the nicest things were simply selected acoustic environments which we recorded, including a 24-hour recording that we made in British Columbia outside of Vancouver at summer solstice in the countryside. Those things have been played as pieces. So to some extent, I could say that there is a certain strain in my music in which the natural sounds of the found environment make their presence felt. But basically, the music which probably satisfies me the most personally is music that is composed for skilled classical performers playing in a fairly traditional way.

MW: Do you know why that is?

RMS: I think it's because, although I identify at the beginning of the **Tuning of the World** the two kinds of music. One which is a sort of an Apollonian idea. I suppose, is that you draw music with restraint from the sounds of the universe, which were given to us, and it's characterized in the myth of the origin of music

which says that when you find a turtle and you start tapping on the back of the turtle shell you discover that you can drum on it: That is how music originated. The other more Dionysian idea of music is the idea of a Greek myth: When Medussa was killed, her daughters started wailing and created the dithyramb; so that idea of music, which is more traditional in Western culture, says that music comes from the heart, comes from inside, it's quiet, it's happiness, it's something that you push out, you know. And probably of the two notions, that one is still closer to me in my own work, although I recognize the importance of the other. And the Soundscape work really is totally devoted to the other, to the sounding universe: We are eavesdroppers, and we can listen to it and we can manipulate it in various ways, we can discover things about how sounds behave and we can use them creatively in our own work. This would involve things like composing in the time span, say, of the way bird choruses function, or the interplay between frogs and birds through a diurnal cycle or listening to the sound of waves, composing according to the ebb and flow of oceans and things of that sort.

MW: You do that too, in a way, not exactly with the musical composition, but certainly in **RA** and **Princess of the Stars** you're using a natural timespan for the overall structure. There was also an earlier piece called **Sun** where there was a concern with this sort of natural motion.

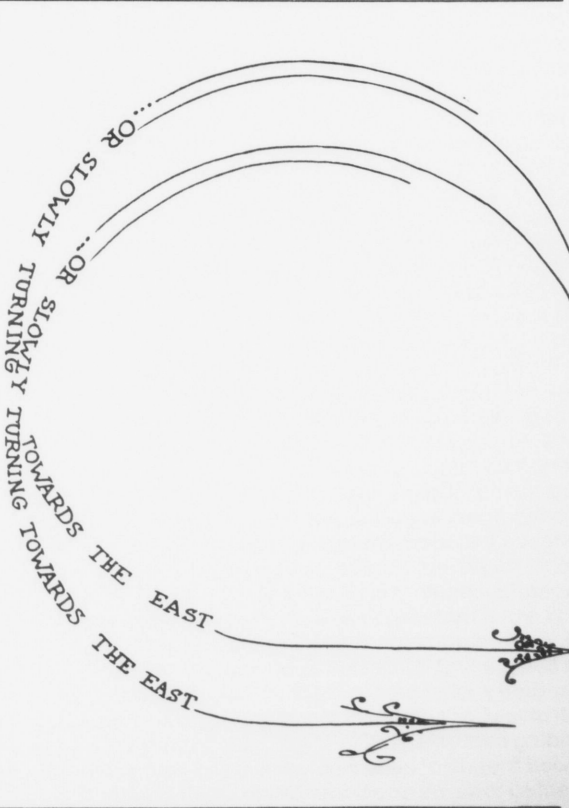
RMS: Yes. Definitely. I've learned a lot, you see, from having listened to the sounds of the environment intensely. I do it in my 2nd string quartet too. One of the things that we discovered about ocean waves was that 90% of the time, they crested between 6 and 11 seconds. That's to say, only 10% of the time were there crests of shorter intervals or longer intervals of time than that. So there's a kind of periodicity there. So, taking that as a sort of a model, 2nd quartet uses the idea of cresting, every 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 or 11 seconds, then the sort of allowing the music to ebb or go into a sort of a rough and crest and . . . so there's a kind of a motion there that is not dissimilar to the motion on both the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, as we measured it. So those things come out, but they come out in a very distilled way, I think, in most of my work. I think probably that's partly because I'm very much aware that if you're creating a work which is going to be presented in an alternative environment, if you're taking something, a listening experience from one environment and moving it into another environment, you may have to deal with it in a slightly more sophisticated or fairly arbitrary manner. I'm not sure whether that sounds as clear as it —

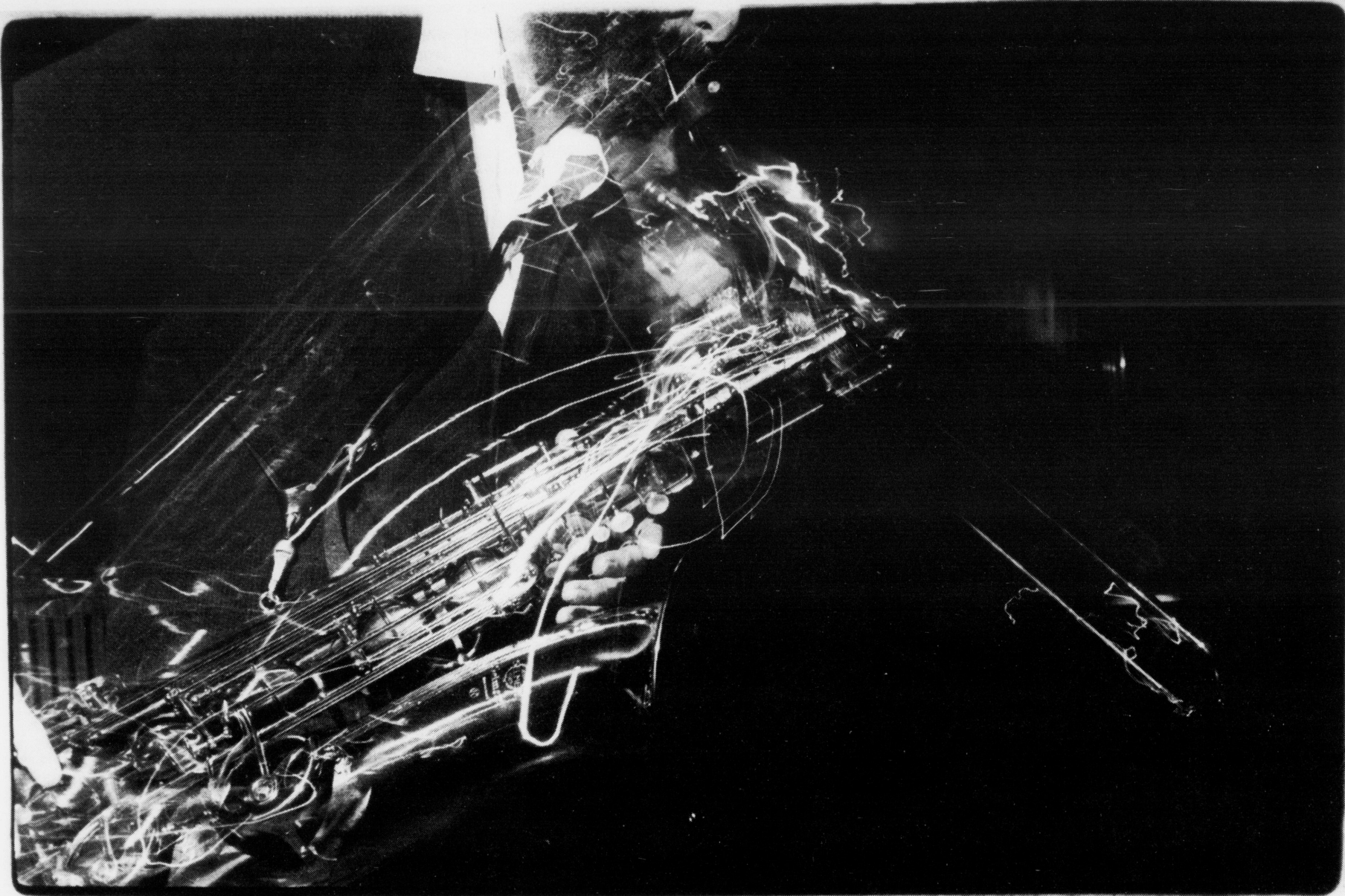
MW: Well, you have to change the context in which you're acting.

RMS: You have to change the context. I know when we did **Okeanos*** and I proposed to the CBC that I'd like to do this piece based on the sounds of the waves, they said, Well how long do you want? And without thinking, I said 24 hours. They said, Well you can't have it, and I said, Well how much can I have? And they said, Well how 'bout an hour and a half? And so you're in a position where, what can you say? I'll take it!

* An annual series of contemporary music concerts held in Toronto.

* **Okeanos** (1971) was composed in collaboration with Bruce Davis and Brian Fawcett.





Vid Ingelevics

TOWARD A NEW MIND/BODY MUSIC 4

DAVID MOTT IN CONVERSATION

David Mott has been writing a series of short articles in MUSICWORKS that deal with body meditation practices and music. Beginning in MUSICWORKS 19 and continuing in numbers 20 and 21, the series discusses guidelines for developing mind/body music, and includes breathing exercises and body meditations.

Presented here are excerpts of a two-part interview that MUSICWORKS had with David in November and December 1983.

DM: What is the state of consciousness that you reach when you're listening to a piece of music that moves you? What does that state of consciousness point to in our own beings, and how does it help you, or does it change your life in some significant way?

I can count on a number of pieces that I have heard at various points in my life as being transformational: I hear the music and all of a sudden I'm no longer the same person. All of a sudden I'm aware of something entirely different in my life — a whole mode of consciousness, a whole mode of experience. So therefore I really see music in it's most powerful way as being transformational.

I think that what I was getting at in the first article (Toward a New Mind/Body Music, MUSICWORKS 19) and which I find so very difficult to say is that if you're after that transformational aspect of music, then you find that music is much more of a wholistic experience than just the first two levels of listening: The emotional level — isn't that a lovely piece — or the cerebral level — isn't that fascinating what happened with that musical information, that material and how it's used by the composer. Now the more spiritual level transcends the first two levels and goes to a deeper place of consciousness while the first two are still present. If we get down to that third level, we start to realize that we have to do even more with ourselves than just practice our instruments or just compose. It may be that there are a few very gifted individuals for whom music is their entire vehicle. But I think that for most of us, it's fruitful to find something much more wholistic: Approaching music throughout your entire life, through working on your body, working on your spiritual self, shall we say; in a sense, making everything music, or making everything artful so music is no longer a separate category, it's totally tied in to the direct experience of everything than you do.

Maybe this is an attempt on my part to rectify what people might see as attention on some rather disparate elements in my own particular life. But I don't see it that way. I used to when I first started doing all different kinds of things; being interested in the body, being interested in the martial arts, or spending a lot of time in meditation, or practicing an instrument, or composing, or learning how to cook, or building cabinets. And in a way I guess I always sort of envied friends of mine who were really very powerfully directed towards one thing: Being a composer. Or, being a cabinet maker. Whatever it was.

MW: You didn't feel focused in that way?

DM: I couldn't do it. Lord knows I wanted to.

MW: You wanted to be a composer?

DM: Yeah. Or be a cabinet-maker. Or, then I'd say, Boy, the martial arts are really great. So then I'd want to be a martial artist. This great smorgasbord of life is just so far out, you know, I couldn't deal in exclusivities. I couldn't say, Well I'm just a musician, let somebody else build cabinets, let somebody else sweat in a martial arts environment. I couldn't do that. So then I had to say, Well, what is it that led me to all these things? What do these things have in common?

MW: You were putting more or less equal attention, or the same kind of attention to all of these activities?

DM: Right — well I can't say that that's totally true; I'm not a meticulous cabinet-maker. I haven't studied it. So cabinet-making, I can say, well maybe that is really a hobby. Except that there is something beautiful about working with wood. And there's something that transmits itself, I mean this sounds maybe hokey, but the woodness transmits itself into my body; my body needs that element, my body needs to feel the wood, needs to shape the wood, needs to see what's in the wood. I'm not a great cabinet-maker.

MW: It's more the play with it that's important.

DM: It's the play. The Taoists say that there are all of these elements in the body, and wood is an element. I need contact with stone, wood and water. I really do. Fire — not so much, metal not so much. Those are probably already in my character to a fairly high degree. But I need those other things: I need to go out

into the woods. The woods in a way combines all of those things, because I'm surrounded by wood. I feel the rock underneath my feet, or I lay on a rock. I climb the rock. The water — I need to get my feet wet, I need to take photographs of the water, I need to listen to the water, you know.

MW: So rather than finding yourself trying to be a composer, you were trying to balance —

DM: It wasn't complete enough for me. You see the other thing about it is that composing is really nothing different than designing and building a cabinet. The experience of composing, of really tapping into the deeper part of your self, into the intuition, into levels of consciousness where the creative impulse flows, is no different than some of the things that I experience as a martial artist. Performing as a saxophonist is really no different than the martial arts, you know. Cooking is no different than working with wood. So in talking about the complete experience of music, the thing that I discovered is that all of these things bring something to bear in music too. My experience of working with wood, or making a Szechuan recipe, making one up, all help music. They bring something to bear in the music. I remember I had a really good composition teacher in New York, I don't remember what his name is now, but apparently he was a student of Bartok's. And he was a particularly good composition teacher. The first thing that he would ask a prospective composition student, is, What interests do you have outside of music? If you had no interests outside of music, he wouldn't take you. Because his feeling was, What do you have to express in your music? There's nothing. It's empty. Music, for him, and I think for me, but not necessarily for everybody else, but for us, is something that's not an ingrained circular path, in which music causes more music causes more music. It's like some kind of a positive black hole. It just pulls all of this other stuff into it and then it feeds it out. At the same time I guess I'm being misleading by saying that, in away, it looks like everything's going to music. And maybe it's not — maybe it's flowing the other way. Maybe music is going out to everything else at the same time. So my original concern with these articles (Toward a New Mind/Body Music) is that I do see a lot of musicians that maybe are extremely gifted musicians but there are a lot of other holes and gaps ... and I would like to say anomalies in their lives that don't seem to be put together to make them a complete person. I've been offended by musicians who were great musicians but were absolute turkeys as human beings. But in a way that speaks to the power of music that somehow these musicians are gifted in one sense, that they can transcend themselves, completely, and let themselves be a vehicle for whatever this beautiful music is. So that attests to the power of the music itself.

MW: I would like to ask you about the musics that have given you very strong transformational experiences — music that suddenly opened up another state of consciousness for you: What was that music, and can you describe what the experience was — on what levels you felt it entering your being, the images you had, did you feel something physically?

DM: That's a very good question. I'll do my best with that. My first father teaches voice at a University, so I grew up listening to and being in operas. The curious thing is that outside of a few selected Puccini I never got it from opera. The first music that really did it for me was Spike Jones. This is as a very young kid. Spike Jones is the epitomy of . . . well, listening to it now with much more sophisticated ears, there isn't a whole lot going on there. But as a kid, the incredible flux and change of musical timbre and of humour and of timing and of pacing was absolutely startling to me. And I loved it. It was exciting. There were the most unexpected shifts. Spike Jones always leads you down this rosy path of expectations, and then really literally in the most funny way possible, pulls the rug from underneath you, so you don't know what end is up. You don't know where you are, you land with a thud, and you laugh.

MW: So there was a childhood thrill in listening to it.

DM: Yeah. But also these crazy sounds that he came up with. Sound somehow became magical. Like a magician. A magician has a hat, you look into it, there's nothing there, he reaches in pulls out a rabbit, and you say, well how the heck did he do that? And you know this hat now contains rabbits, but it looked like an ordinary top hat. So you have this popular song of the 40's. And it's kind of schmaltzy, you know, it's sort of lilting along, and all of a sudden something happens which is utterly chaos. It's anarchy. And because it's anarchy you start paying attention to everything. Even the schmaltzy aspects you can't take for granted any more, because you know something is going to happen, but you don't know what. But that was the first real thrill that I ever experienced. And it was transformation. It really made me listen to music.

After that it was Dixieland Jazz. And I think the thing that knocked me out about Dixieland Jazz was creativity. I never thought about music as being creative until someone said, Hey, you know, those people are improvising — they're making that up. There were actually a number of things about Dixieland Jazz that really were incredible. First of all that it was improvised, and then I began to see something very deep about the expressiveness of blues.

MW: What do you mean by deep?

DM: Well, sorrowful. I don't want to make this sound like a caricature in an archetypal sense, because when we think about blues, we think blacks — the difficulty of being black and living in this culture, coming from slavery, which I don't think white people can have a complete empathy for because we haven't experienced that. But, nevertheless there was something very powerful and very moving in that early black music, that Dixieland that I heard. I made me feel big. You asked me to describe my physical reactions: I can't even connect the Spike Jones that way, except maybe kinetically — it made me feel like a clown. I felt a tremendous amount of kinetic energy from Spike Jones.

MW: What do you mean by big?

DM: Big without dimension. As though inside of us there's a capacity that's almost endless for dealing with things like sorrow. If I had to describe it, if I had a mental picture . . . I have the feeling that somewhere there's a place that's like this huge big dark blue blackish balloon that we're inside of. For a moment. And it's limitless. It's huge. I don't know where it is, but it's there. And somehow blues and the feeling of blues brought me to this place. It's an earthiness. It's almost like the blues tapped into something very fundamental, like rock and earth and soil; a place in which sorrow can be healed: Inside the Earth, or inside this rock, it just absorbs it like a sponge. But I don't get the feeling of matter in this, I get the feeling of expansiveness, of immense dimension. And I felt it in my body. And I felt the rhythm in my body. Right in my belly, but I feel my belly is too small — it's my belly inside of the Earth. And I think that's where blues comes from.

MW: It's a retreat, in a way.

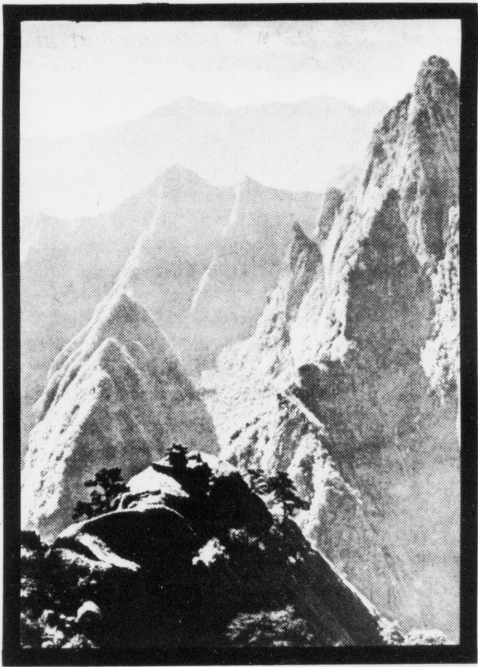
DM: It's a retreat but it's also a passageway. The music acts as a passageway. It's like this huge funnel or tunnel that pulls you down into this place. It's a very powerful place, it's a very soothing place, and I feel it in my belly.

Then I have to go to Schoenberg. When I was in high school I went to a summer camp at the University of Illinois and they had this fellow there named Don Siderly who was at that time sort of post-beatnik/pre-hippie — we're talking about middle to late Fifties. We used to improvise in the Jazz tradition together and one day he said, You've got to come and listen to this. So he dragged me into a little practice room, sat down at a little piano, and played Schoenberg Opus 11, the **Drei Klavierstucke**. And those pieces connected to some sort of an upper level. In some traditions they talk about the body and various layers

of the body as the physical body, the earth body, and then they talk about the astral body or the soul body — there are a lot of different terms in different traditions for this. Schoenberg was tapping into something in terms of a higher level, for me personally, of experience. Not higher meaning that my jazz experience was lower — that's a poor choice of words. One is very physical and one is very ethereal. Blues is very much pulse oriented: Your heart. Whereas Schoenberg is much more nervous system music. So all of a sudden I was tapped into my nervous system; I discovered my nervous system through Schoenberg, in a way, and listening to these major and minor thirds in combinations with one another. It was truly an ethereal experience and I just sort of floated out.

Then we go from Schoenberg to non Western musics.

When I was 16 or 17 or 18 I had a dream, which today is still as vivid as it was then, that I was with 2 musician friends of mine, and we were playing in what at that time — and this is very interesting symbolically — was the highest building in Chicago, the Prudential Building. We were on one of the top floors standing in the hallway playing. My 2 friends were playing their normal instruments: bass and drums. I was playing, on the other hand, an instrument that was this silver globe, a bright, round silver globe. And on top of it were these iridescent blue keys. The music that was coming out of it was not jazz. It wasn't even anything that vaguely represents itself aurally in terms of Western music. It was much more closely oriented to things that I've heard and now know in Asian music. The instrument was like a combination of the Sheng, which is a Chinese-organ like instrument, and the Sona, which is like a short double reed instrument. And yet it had a stringy-ness to it too, and I felt gongs and all kinds of things that I hadn't experienced before. So when I first heard Tibetan music and when I heard Chinese music and Korean music and Japanese music, with each of these that I heard I was just completely destroyed in terms of any conceptions or preconceptions that I had about music. And I think those musics put it all together. Spike Jones now merged with Schoenberg which merged with blues which merged with John Coltrane which merged with Charlie Parker or Ornette Coleman. The whole thing made a totality. And the music was for the most part not entertaining but music that had a deep expressiveness that was purposely used for the heightening of consciousness, was purposely used for transformational ends: there it was! It was always there and it was just waiting for me in my life to find it. So thank goodness for Odeon and Nonesuch and so on.



DM: The Chinese have an ideal person that superficially sounds like the Renaissance man, my understanding of the Renaissance man being a person who was learned in certain kinds of social graces in an almost Confucian manner; he could maybe play the clavichord, virginal, whatever — a well-rounded individual. He had an education, he was physically active . . . But my problem with the Renaissance man is that there seems to be a kind of superficiality about that kind of a person. I feel equally the same about the Confucian ideal, to some extent — that it was really involved with social graces and these kinds of things. But there was another kind of Chinese ideal, which I think is much more akin to what we would know as the person who was an actively practicing Taoist — who was a scholar, or learned, who was a poet, a painter, a musician, a martial artist, a healer, a priest, a judge; all of these things. It was really the embodiment of integration of many many different things in a way that they all came out of some central place, or they all fed into some central place. And it's been something that lately I've been rediscovering. It seems that, again, we're not talking about music, but it's like the Chinese musical experience for me — you put all of these things together. Not only the Chinese, but the Tibetan, the Korean and the Japanese as well. And I see that in Asia, there is this kind of model of a person who develops all different aspects of his or her personality. I guess it's probably *his* because as we know about

Asian society, women are really for the most part pushed into the background. But there is this concept nevertheless of completeness that really fascinates me. It's not for the purposes of social graces, or not to be a charming conversationalist or a witty person: Somehow it's as though all of the positive things about humanity can be found or can be represented within a certain person. And we all need this. You see this coming back more and more today. Ken Cohen*, with a man named Rolling Thunder who's a great medicine man in the Native American tradition, talks about the return of the spiritual warrior. In many ways it embodies this kind of ideal. A spiritual warrior is a person who is a warrior not in the sense that they're involved in taking life or hurting people, but they're involved with the hunting of positive energies, in a way. The spiritual warrior gives life, whereas the warrior takes life. It's an interesting concept. It's in a way a very non-Western concept although I think that this is happening now in the West, in Canada and in the United States because we have the opportunity now to do these things. If we talked about this in a Western way we would talk about the new movement towards the development of full human potential and they're looking at the same things from a different stand-point. It just turns out that in my own case I have much more of an affinity for Asian things. There seems to be a lot to learn about the histories of Asian cultures and a lot to learn about their modes of acting that I think are very very useful. I think it's significant that so much of the best of Asian culture is now appearing very strongly on this continent, and in Europe to some extent. The thing that's interesting too, is that a lot of these things were on the verge of extinction — Taoism as a practice has been dangerously close to extinction. But now, all of the people that are really worth studying with, that I'm aware of, seem to all be in either North America or in Europe. They've all left. Of course they can explain this all very normally and naturally as part of the pattern of things.

MW: How do they see it as part of a pattern?

DM: Taoists are interested, as you know, in intrinsic energy, which they call *Chi*. Every human being has *Chi*, or intrinsic energy. Each thing, actually, this tape recorder, this table, everything, has *Chi*. The '*Chi*' manifests itself in different ways — it has different strengths and different weaknesses. But the Earth certainly has *Chi*. They deal with the whole science of *Feng Shui* which literally translates as, I think, Wind, Water and maybe Earth, but it's the Chinese science of Geomancy, which is the study of the formations of earth to understand the power in the Earth and where the power is and how the energy moves through the Earth. See, the Taoists don't deal with exclusivities. Mammals and reptiles and fowl and all of the creatures that we know of don't have any monopoly on energy and the way energy works. The Earth certainly has its own energy. One of their great fears, of course, is that the Earth is slowly being killed. It's a very very serious concern, and it's a concern that all the environmentalists have.

MW: So in terms of migration, then, the Taoists are moving to places . . .

DM: . . . that have the *Chi*. They feel where the power is moving, so they go with the power. When it leaves, that part becomes dead. I am the most amateur of amateurs in talking about this at this point, but you can see how different cities get energy, and they're on the move. Toronto is really on the move: For the first time in how many years, we have winning sports teams.† Now that may seem trivial, but if you look at the great cities of North America, you can see how there's a flux, for example, in all different aspects. Sports even. Cities, when they're great, and when there's a lot of energy in those cities, they all have great sports teams. It's curious. And this may seem crazy and bizarre and nuts, because what we're talking about is sports, but you see other things happening in cities; you see a tremendous amount of interest in the arts, you see things happening in what we could classify as spiritual, or New Age activities. So the Taoists study that, and they're very attuned to it. It's not like plotting an astrological chart: They just know it. They know it by feeling. Once you get aware of the feeling of energy in your body, you can start then to feel the energy of other things. So it's a natural process, it's not anything deliberate. Or deliberating. They go. It's time to go. We of course deal with that in the realm of the intuition. But intuition, I think, oftentimes to a certain extent, is just knowledge that's not complete. It's all there, but it's subliminal, it's buried.

MW: It's more accidental.

DM: It's a lot more accidental. And part of the training that I'm interested in, and this gets back to that article, is making it less and less accidental. In a way it's like anything that's developmental. It's just that we don't usually think about it being possible to develop the intuition. We certainly know it's possible

*Ken Cohen is a Taoist priest who teaches the Taoist way (martial arts, healing, meditation) in Boulder, Colorado. He has written numerous articles for *EastWest Journal* and *Inside Kung-Fu*. He has also done extensive work with North American Shamen in comparing the North American Native way with the Taoist way.

† This interview took place when the Toronto Argonauts had just won the Grey Cup for the first time in over thirty years.

to develop cognition — that's what we do in school most of the time: Facts, facts, categories, concepts, modes of thinking. That's all feeding the cognitive — it's helping the cognitive grow. But somehow, we never stop to think that the intuition, number one, is important — some of us do obviously, but most people don't — number two, that the intuition can indeed be nurtured and can grow, and number three, that it becomes part of the natural way of being. And that's pretty far out. You know, as a culture, as a society, we're very calculating. We've learned that; that's what this society has taught us. What's it going to get me if I do this? And then we think about that a lot. As opposed to just trusting, and just being big enough that we can just move in and have no ulterior motive. If you want to do something, and you've already decided how it's going to work and what you're going to do and everything else, that action is already dead. There's nothing sensitive; it's not feeling, it's not alive, it's not able to move. In the martial arts if you have only one way of responding to another person then there's really no interaction and you're hard, you're brittle, you're static. You can't move, you can't accord with that other person. You're not alive any longer. In the martial arts the goal is to make your entire body alive in such a way that you don't have to think about it. You don't have to make conscious effort — it's just alive, it responds naturally. But that's one of the hardest things for us to learn. We come into this life and we learn to set ourselves apart from everything. And when you set yourself apart from everything, you create a gap, a distance, you create a rigidity that ultimately you have to break down. One of the things that's always fascinated me about the martial arts is you have to work with a partner. That's very important. Touching. Feeling that person's energy. Feeling that person's intention, and responding to it.

MW: Once you started working with touch did your music change?

DM: Yes. Greatly, greatly. It unblocked a lot of stuff for me.

MW: In what way?

DM: First of all, the sense of "I", of me, David Mott at the best moments, at the most important moments, disappeared entirely. Just as in touch, there are not two people touching one another — there's just touch. There are two energies coming together which make a complete circuit of energy. So the pieces that I compose, which I really feel I can hardly take the credit for — my name is on them for convenience's sake — I don't know where those pieces come from. They didn't come from me. And I started to unlock that possibility. The times when my performing was good, I wasn't performing. I don't know who was performing. It's not a feeling of being possessed — it's not a crazy notion that I gave myself up to some other being or some other thing. It's not that at all. It's much more like a circuit, it's like this *Chi* which flows through the Earth, which flows through my body, which flows through your body, which flows through the tape recorder, this table ... All of a sudden it's just flowing.

Part of that I should also say was not just due to the martial arts: I have spent and do spend a lot of time sitting on a cushion doing Zen meditation. Part of that of course is having to come into contact with seeing the thoughts in my mind going over and over again in very habitual ways, in very predictable ways. First of all, it's startling to realize how much energy and how much time we spend with this *ya ta da ta da ta da*. [David's phonetic description of discursive thought.] Secondly, it's almost discouraging to realize the patterns of that *ya ta da ta da ta da*. It doesn't matter what feeds into it, this *ya ta da* tends to want to deal with it the same way. It's very practical. But it's also very habitual. And when you start to see it you start to let go of that to some extent, the best you can.

I think the really great Zen masters, Taoists, it doesn't matter what they are, what tradition — Christians, whoever — the really great people, what we consider to be spiritual people are really people who've let go of the *ya ta da ta da ta da* to such an extent that things happen. Things happen through them, so we call them saints. Or we call them geniuses. Now there's a lot to that. But what really knocks me out is that when you start to cut through all those layers of, well, useful stuff at times, but mostly crap, that you start to see that there's really no bottom; there aren't any limits. And therefore there are really no limits to what you can do. It's just a matter of preparing yourself. And that's where the whole aspect of discipline, which I touched upon in those articles, really comes into play. I think most of us need discipline. Because without the discipline to do this, not just to do it now and then when we feel like it, but to do it day after day after day after day, whether we want to or not, that we start to cut through all of this crap. That's the only way. It's very difficult. But once you do that and you get involved with that you see that then there are no limits. And I think that's what I'm after in my articles: Helping a group of collective friends, which we call musicians — because we all understand something very deep about music or we wouldn't be musicians — to realize that, number one, there is more to music than making a living of it, or manipulating it for our own ends and secondly, the most rewarding stuff is giving up those kinds of limitations that we place upon music. Maybe I'm making another limitation — I don't mean to be. I'm making a limitation on music that it's unlimited. And so therefore really what I'm talking about is music as a

metaphor for life, or as a part of life. And if you feed all of this very positive stuff, the discipline, the cutting through the crap, the surge, the exploration, giving up of personal gain, of self, of conniving, then there's really marvellous stuff. And that's when you enter the realm, and not even self-consciously, the realm of genius, of sainthood. There's no end to it.

I also think that that's the stuff that's really worth your life. It's positive, it's useful, it's no longer functioning at the level of personal gain. So it's contributing. That's what I think Ken Cohen is calling a spiritual warrior. Even a spiritual musician, or a spiritual warrior musician, or whatever you choose to call it. It doesn't matter.

MW: I want to ask you about the idea of ceremony and how you are approaching that in your music. But I thought that talking about your personal experience with sax playing might be a good way of leading into that. First of all, where the intent of the music-making is transformation and you're working on your solo saxophone playing, what is it that you do: What's your attention state, what are the characteristics of it? And secondly, what then does the music become, what are the qualities of the music because of that state?

DM: I should probably give you some background information about my saxophone playing. I've enjoyed playing saxophone for a long time, obviously, but for years I resisted playing my own music.

MW: What music were you playing?

DM: Improvised music; notated music; the whole spectrum, but it just wasn't mine. As a composer, with very clear ideas about what I would like to see happen, I would stay away from doing my own stuff. I had a lot of experience improvising both in jazz and in free music groups, but in terms of playing conceptual pieces or pieces that I had established for myself and knew the basic direction things were going to take, I didn't do any of that. Nor did I compose music that was fully notated for myself to play. I didn't do either of those things. The kinds of performances that I do now are compositions in the sense that there is a concept behind them with a very general idea along the lines which I will proceed as a performer. But I don't write them out, really, except for very sketchy notes to myself, because I want to do it differently each time within the limitations of the parameters or guidelines of what I've established to do.

So in terms of solo playing, I discovered two things: First of all, that where I'm functioning in the role of a composer, that almost 99% of the time I compose for specific people. I guess that's partly because I conceive of music as almost a one-shot experience. Or two-shot or three-shot but not mass produced, or not for, and this sounds elitist and I don't mean it to be — I mean it in a totally different way — not for general consumption. In other words, the music demands a certain kind of commitment and specialness, and it's hard for me to conceive of X saxophonist of X person, it doesn't matter what the instrument, out there being able to somehow tune into it and to do it correctly. And if it isn't done correctly I don't know what the audience is going to get from it. So I realized that I was always

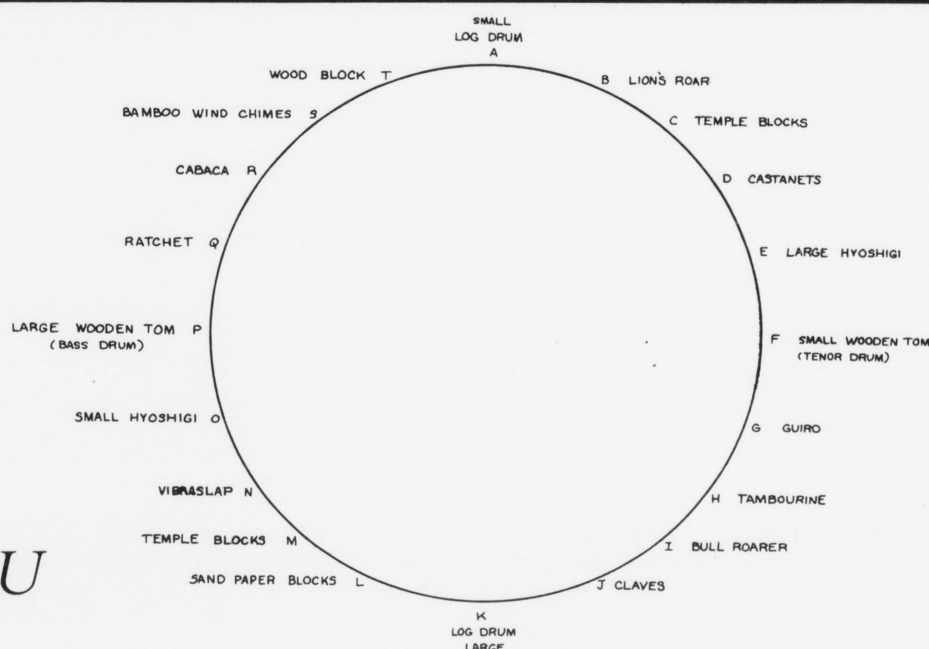
PLATEAU

(excerpts from program notes).

The flute part should be played on a transverse but non-mechanical flute. The pitch level of the flute is optional but the pentatonic scale formula of whole step, minor third, whole step, whole step, is essential. Since the pitch level might vary from flute to flute, the pitches are not written using a clef but rather each line of the staff corresponds to one of the pitches of the pentatonic scale beginning with the lowest line and pitch to the highest line and pitch of the scale.

There are 13 Plateaus. The conductor and the flutist determine the exact structure and events for Plateau for each performance by ordering the Plateaus and by determining the role of the percussion. There are eight notated arrows in each of the Plateaus and eight percussion 'states' (TIME, SAVE, CLOSE, CARRY, FILL, MOVE, SPARE and TOUCH). the conductor has to initiate at least three percussion events in each Plateau, beginning at one of the arrows (cued beginning place) in the flute part. This may be done spontaneously in performance by the conductor announcing (outloud) the state to be used well in advance of its cued beginning, to prepare the percussionists (so that they can quickly scan the event(s) of the state). Therefore, not only using all eight cues in a Plateau would be difficult, using all eight states would be equally so. The choice of state(s) to be used is entirely a free choice for the conductor. I suggest that all of the states for each of the Plateaus be carefully rehearsed apart from interacting with the flute part so that each of the percussionists is familiar with the musical and physical tasks called for by each of the states. The conductor should stand in the centre of the circle with the flute soloist and should develop necessary hand and arm signals to be seen by all in the circle for such things as a pulse for rhythmic attacks, dynamics, and stopping and starting procedures. The vocal commands should be limited to announcing the states only. It is important that the concept of a ceremony be maintained in the performance and so every performance move, while spontaneous, should be completed carefully and with an air of seriousness.

Whenever possible, the audience should sit inside the circle. The circle should be no larger than circa 40 feet in diameter and no smaller than 25 feet in diameter.



Plateau was envisioned being performed on a butte in Montana. Lacking the possibility for this, however, please keep the spirit of that space alive by performing it outdoors in a spacious place. Architectural buttes will substitute well. When performing indoors, avoid static concert halls whenever possible and avoid chairs or any seating so that the audience must seat itself on the floor (musicians should always perform while standing).

NOTATIONAL GLOSSARY AND EXPLANATION FOR THE PERCUSSION STATES

- TIME**
repeat a single short roll or attack on conductor's cue.
- SAVE**
hold roll (or continuous reactivation of instrument) until conductor's cutoff.
- FILL**
repeat a freely improvised irregular rhythm until cutoff.
- CLOSE**
one at a time in the direction of the arrow, add single cued (in pulse) cumulative attacks until completed.
- CARRY**
numbers indicate the order of events and the broken lines with arrows indicate events to follow immediately. (When numbers are not connected with such lines and arrows, a slight pause in the order may occur.)
- MOVE**
the percussionists at either end of connecting line with arrows synchronize their attacks independent of others.
- SPARE**
a repeated single event on instrument.
- TOUCH**
short musical events take place under the touch state, and often they are in unison.

composing for specific people. And then I realized that in terms of things that I was demanding from performers that probably the most logical thing would be for me to demand that from myself, which is maybe something that I didn't want to face all along. But then it hit me: I had to do something about it. That I believe deeply in the music, that I wanted to obviously have lots of performances. So I felt that I had to take responsibility for it. Not only that; a number of friends that I had were doing interesting music too and I wanted to take responsibility for their music to a certain extent, and I had them write me pieces. That's where the record, for example, **From Distant Places**, comes from. And then in performing for people all by myself, I found that really fascinating, because there's nothing to rely upon. You just gotta do it. And it meant that you really — I say you — I had to really dig into my gut or whatever it was, and pull out something, and really had to feel that I could do that consistently, no matter what happened, no matter what the circumstances were.

MW: How did that affect the outcome of the music?

DM: Well let me see if I can put this in some sort of reasonable fashion. I have to acknowledge a lot of influences: Robert Dick and David Moss, Jane Ira Bloome, Jerry Hemingway, Malcolm Goldstein — tons of people, but Robert Dick and David Moss, Jane Ira Bloome, Jerry Hemingway, Malcolm Goldstein — there's a whole ton of people out there, who are doing

similar things, I think. And I also have to acknowledge a tremendous indebtedness to Pauline Oliveros and the kind of work that she's been doing with meditative music, or music that involves meditation in some fashion or comes from meditation. But I feel, like they do, I think, that there's some sort of shamanistic, if I can call it shamanistic... again, we're talking about transformation, of transforming an instrument, making it something you never thought it could possible ever be, like a saxophone: You say, Wow: Those sounds are coming from a saxophone? Or Robert Dick, Those sounds are coming from a flute? Or Jerry Hemingway, Those sounds are coming from a drum? Or David Moss, Those sounds are coming from an odd assortment of percussion instruments? Or Malcolm Goldstein, Those sounds are coming from a violin? And all of the people who are doing really fascinating things along those lines. It's remarkable. That's shamanistic to being with — the fact that you're taking an instrument and you're creating magical sounds, sounds that we had no idea even existed before. And probably some people say, Yuch! That doesn't belong on that instrument. And that's the way some people like their reality — nice and neat and tidy. And very predictable: My reality is getting up in the morning eating breakfast going to do whatever it is I do, having lunch coming home turning on the television having a beer and going to bed. That's nice and neat and tidy. But if you examine any one of those moments: Getting up in the morning: That's pretty amazing. (For some people more than others.) But what is it? You wake up, your eyes open, your body suddenly comes back into a different state of consciousness than it's been in for

the last 6 to 8 hours or maybe 14 hours depending on the individual — every one of these things is a miracle. And what shamanism is doing is taking what might seem to be very ordinary things and all of a sudden making them magical and miraculous. Shamanism traditionally does that for purposes of healing, and I can't say that I'm quite to the point where I could say that what I do is healing, although I hope it is in some subliminal way. There are people who are working with that very consciously. But okay, you take an instrument, you spend a lot of time with it, you say, Look at what it can do. And that leads to... Oh. Well it can also do this. And so your vision with the instrument is continuously extending. Your consciousness while you're extending your instrument has to be extremely open. It can't be closed at all, because then you eliminate possibilities. So then you say — How can I do this? How can I find more things? And sometimes you don't even try for months and you're walking down the street and something occurs to you: I wonder if I can do this? You rush home, you wet a reed, you get the instrument out and you start struggling with it. Robert Dick, for example, says that some of the things that he's working on will take him ten years really before he can honestly do them in a performance situation. And I certainly feel that way too. It's like there's a cycle of renewal and it just keeps recycling, which seems to be the theme of our little talk here. So that's the first state: Of saying look what's there: Magic; Shamanism; How can I transform this: And then in turn; How am I transformed by this? It's so tightly interwoven, like mind/body relationships, that it's very difficult for me to separate whether the sound came first or the consciousness came first. So then when you're

DM: **Plateau** was a piece commissioned by Keith Brian and the Yale Band. What I wanted to do was to write a piece for the Yale Band that would take place in five different acoustical environments with processions to each one of those places. And **Plateau** was part of that. Now of course this was more far fetched than was possible to realize: what I really wanted to do was I wanted to have this take place in five different parts of the country — not Yale campus — although I was able to explore this idea in a mini kind of way around the Yale campus. The whole series was called **Earthbound/Skywide** and **Plateau** was the second of the pieces. One piece took place in this enormous stairwell, which is the most beautifully resonant acoustic environment, and the band was split up into five different levels and they would play into the stairwell. The audience was standing at various levels of the stairwell at the entrance to it so they could hear the sounds going up and down past them. And then we had a procession, and the musicians had to change what they did depending on whether they were in an open

space or a confined space, a narrow space, a long space, a wide space — all of that — so there was this ribbon of sound that would change as the musicians would go into different acoustic environments. **Plateau** was in a courtyard of one of the colleges there. It's a piece for non-Western flute, or bamboo flute, and it was played by Keith Brian, because he's a very good flutist. In this case he played a beautiful open-holed ceramic flute. And there are twenty percussionists playing very simple percussion instruments like wood blocks, ratchets, all kinds of things, in this huge circle around him, and then there's a dancer who dances inside the circle and ideally the audience should sit inside the circle.

You'll notice that I used a variety of different states for the percussionists which are determined by a conductor. Each of these states basically relates to time and space, and therefore the physical body: **TOUCH**, **CARRY**, **MOVE** — those three in particular. And then things dealing with time: **FILL** time itself, **SAVE**, **CLOSE**. Now **SPARE** is an odd one — it's sort of a combination of the physical and time and space.

When I think of **SPARE**, I think of setting something aside, sparing something, making it special. So there's a good deal of touch or commitment to it but there's also a kind of reserve state about it all at the same time. **CARRY** is just movement of stuff — the same material passes around the circle from place to place. **TOUCH**: everybody makes a simultaneous touch and commitment, and it varies from section to section. **CLOSE** is this feeling of expansion and contraction — as you close the door, the space is all of a sudden confined or opened. **MOVE**: something goes back and forth, or across. **FILL**: we have space and time, let's put something in it, so something occurs. **SAVE**: let's make it re-occur — let's save this. The only way we can make a musical sound be saved is to do it again. Let's keep using it. and **TIME**: let's expand our awareness of what's happening. So those are the various states, and it's probably my first ritual ceremony piece, although I dealt with issues like this in much more confined or reserved ways before. I hope it is done on a butte somewhere, because then it would really happen.

PLATEAU 2

The musical score for **PLATEAU 2** consists of five staves. The first staff begins with a tempo marking of 0.2 and a dynamic of *f*. The second staff has a dynamic of *mf*. The third staff has a dynamic of *mp* and a crescendo marking. The fourth staff has a dynamic of *f*. The fifth staff has a dynamic of *f* and a **SEGUE** marking. Below the score are seven circular diagrams, each representing a state: **TIME**, **SAVE**, **CLOSE**, **CARRY**, **FILL**, **MOVE**, and **TOUCH**. Each diagram has letters around its perimeter and internal markings representing the state.

performing, what you want to do is you want to share this. It's not Let me show you where it's at, it's, Look at this. And then, when you take the attitude of sharing, you disappear. Because there's only the sharing. There's not me saying, Hey, look what I got to give to you. It's, This is bigger than I am, this is bigger than all of us — we can all tap into this, and here it is. So I think that's it in a nutshell. Or a worldshell.

MW: This also relates, then, to your use of ritual and ceremony in the compositions you make for groups of musicians to play. How do you adapt the idea of transformation to these different performing situations?

DM: First of all, being a jazz musician — I worked my way through school partly by playing as a jazz musician in very smokey nightclubs where very few

people were listening, often times 5-6 nights a week so I know what the experience of clubs is, very intimately, and I decided that that wasn't for me, it wasn't my lifestyle. Along with that came the feeling that, although I had fantastic experiences as a listener in jazz nightclubs, where there were great musicians playing and who seemed somehow able to transcend the environment of heavy duty cigarette smoke, or maybe they were part of that environment of people drinking themselves into oblivion, of people really just taking a date there and not really being very concerned about what was going on but sort of trying to by osmosis soak up some of the vitality of that atmosphere, I began to realize that what I was looking for in lifestyle seemed to indicate that a different kind of experience, of performing and listening and musical experience, was necessary for me. It began to occur to me that — let me interrupt myself again and give credit to a teacher that I had that I resisted and I fought for years in my mind and I thought was just full of crap. His name was William Klenz. I took this course with him that seemed vaguely and intuitively interesting to me: Rituals, Traditions, maybe Styles or something like that, in Music. He started out by talking about the importance of ritual in church music and how there really is no such thing as absolute music or music that is purely cerebral, except maybe in a very few circumstances. And I fought tooth and nail. I thought, This guy is full of horseshit. But he completely won me over. He completely convinced me. And he's right! Although, I was so stupid. Again this is part of the dishonesty that I felt, or the embarrassment about not wanting to confront certain things within myself, Music is great, as long as I think about it in an intellectual, cerebral kind of fashion. Although my experiences, my deep experiences weren't that at all. But in terms of my participation as a musician, as a composer even, Let's see how I can manipulate this material. Or as a player, Well let me deal with the technical aspects of it, but not the expressive. So there was this dichotomy, there was an eternal battle, or a deep ambivalence going on about these things. And William Klenz convinced me. So then I went whole hog. And I started to get really involved in musics that were sonically interesting to me. Like Tibetan music, lots of Asian musics. But now, I was willing to confront that they had a deeper purpose than just being sonically interesting: That they were speaking to various parts of our being, and that was a purpose, that was an intention. And I started to think more and more about what the experience in music is and started to see very clearly what the limitations of a concert hall are, and really began having trouble. I still do write concert music, and I go to concerts, and I enjoy that and when it's great it transcends the concert hall, it transcends everything. But a lot of the time you're battling that as a listener, the performers are battling that, everybody is battling that. And some of the best, most vital experiences I had were on a one to one basis — somebody coming and playing, two people making music in the living room ... and that's a kind of a ritual, too. So I started to deal with rituals that are expansive rituals and the intimacy of rituals, the intimacy in terms of how it takes away any individualistic feeling, which is very powerful, maybe dangerous even how you just give up yourself: You say, Take me, music, let me go, wherever it is that I can go in terms of consciousness, in terms of physical experience, everything. We have a certain amount of that in the dance hall, discotheques, where the music is just so powerful, it's loud, it's throbbing — you just start dancing. Hopefully, if you're a good dancer, you give up worrying about yourself. It's just dance, you're just dancing, there's just the rhythm. And I think that's fantastic, and I think that's the power of that music. But there are other kinds of powerful experiences that can happen in music, too, in terms of consciousness; I think also in terms of healing. There are experiences involved with ritual, involved with ceremony involved with making the concert experience much more vital.

MW: When you write a piece of music for a concert hall, what is it that you are trying to do — are you trying to reach people on certain levels? You were saying that Tibetan music, for example, is doing something to the consciousness with a specific intent. Are you trying to do that as well?

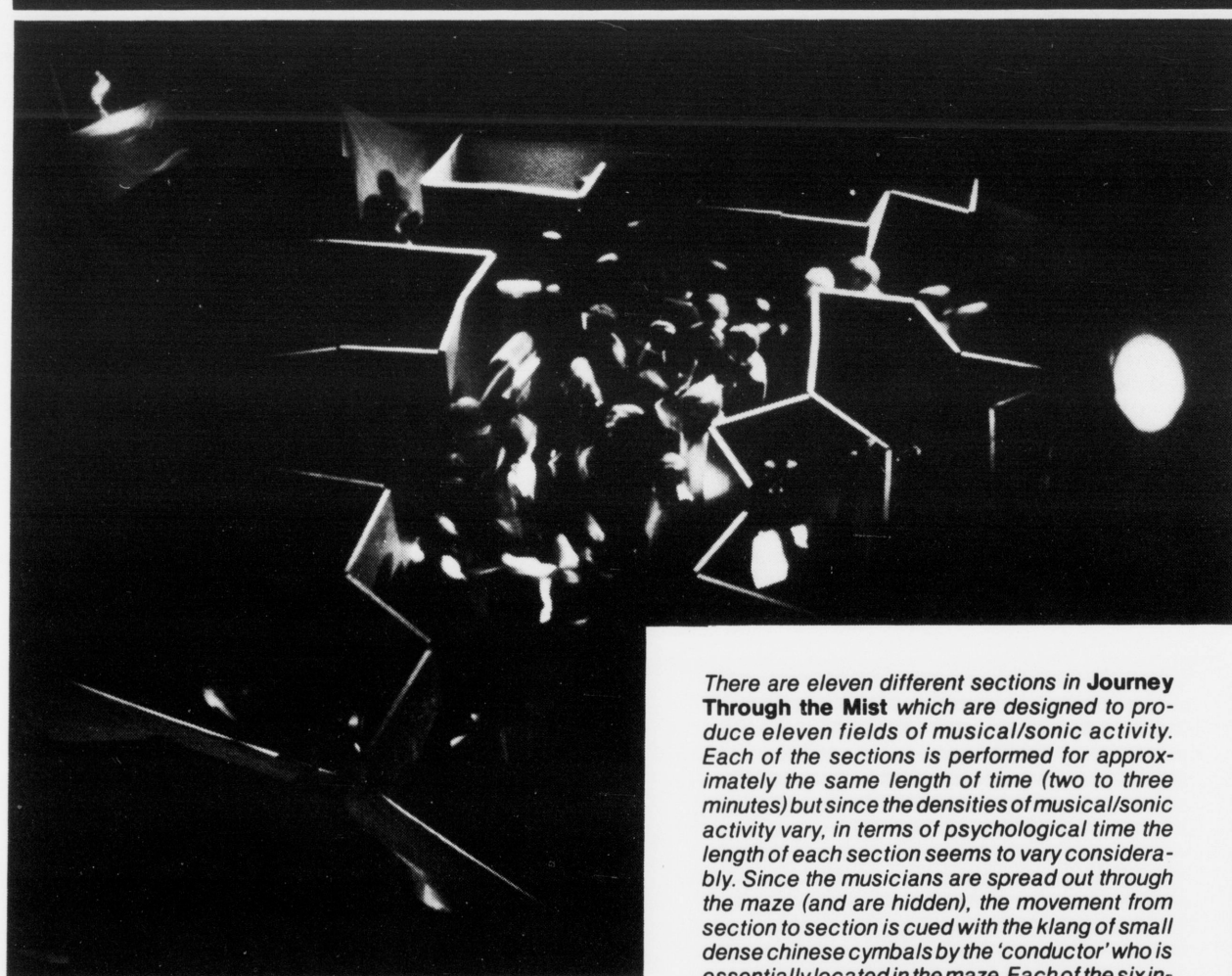
DM: I don't have enough knowledge yet. I'm just a baby. It may take me a number of lifetimes to get this together. But I'm working on it.

MW: That music is centuries old ...

DM: Yeah, it's centuries old. They know very clearly what it's going to do, how it works.

MW: It seems that some of it has become unconscious.

DM: Sure. Some of it is unconscious. But when it comes down to doing something musically, people are able to transcend themselves and something flows through them. On the other hand, from the wholistic standpoint, I think that it's good if you can make it all one thing. So intuitively, we can go to these very very deep places and even transcend a whole lot of crap that we've built up in ourselves. And around ourselves and about ourselves. But it's really fascinating when this thing can become you more and more and more so that the crap starts to also disappear. And that's when it's truly transformational. And I think that the role of ritual and ceremony is to try to make this possible for people who aren't necessarily doing it — they're not necessarily musicians. And that's all my intention is.



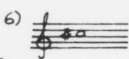
There are eleven different sections in *Journey Through the Mist* which are designed to produce eleven fields of musical/sonic activity. Each of the sections is performed for approximately the same length of time (two to three minutes) but since the densities of musical/sonic activity vary, in terms of psychological time the length of each section seems to vary considerably. Since the musicians are spread out through the maze (and are hidden), the movement from section to section is cued with the klang of small dense chinese cymbals by the 'conductor' who is essentially located in the maze. Each of the six instrumental parts has a title which may be viewed as a poetic image designed to stimulate the performers imagination and mood. The instructions for each section determine: the dynamic range; the amount of vibrato; the nature of rhythm or placement of musical events in time; the density of musical events; pitch information; and finally, timbral and/or pitch deviations. In addition, there is a graphic score for each of the sections to visually corroborate the written instructions. *Journey Through the Mist* demands considerable aural sensitivity and interaction from the performers who are physically isolated in the maze, nevertheless need to communicate carefully like small animals in the forest at night. Section 10 even contains a listening pitch game which has become a composition in its own right which I call *Souvenir from the Journey Through the Mist*.

Journey Through the Mist

SECTION 5

FLUTE HIDDEN VOICES

1. $p \leftrightarrow mf$
2. AD LIB
3. AD LIB
4. REG \leftrightarrow IRREG.
5. INTERMITTENT



7) TALK INTO FLUTE - ALLOW NOTE TO SPEAK. IMPROVISE TEXT ON THE DIFFICULTIES OF THE MAZE

CLAR. HIDDEN VOICES

1. $p \leftrightarrow mf$
2. AD LIB
3. AD LIB
4. REG \leftrightarrow IRREG.
5. INTERMITTENT



7) TALK AND PLAY AT SAMETIME ALLOW VOICE TO SOUND SOLO IN HORN OCCASSIONALLY SEE FLUTE FOR TEXT.

A.SAX HIDDEN VOICES

1. $p \leftrightarrow mf$
2. AD LIB
3. AD LIB
4. REG \leftrightarrow IRREG.
5. INTERMITTENT



7) TALK AND PLAY AT SAME TIME. ALLOW VOICE TO SOUND SOLO IN HORN OCCASSIONALLY. SEE FLUTE FOR TEXT.

TRP. HIDDEN VOICES

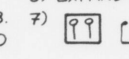
1. $p \leftrightarrow mf$
2. AD LIB
3. AD LIB
4. REG \leftrightarrow IRREG.
5. INTERMITTENT



7) TALK AND PLAY AT SAME TIME. ALLOW VOICE TO SOUND SOLO IN HORN OCCASSIONALLY SEE FLUTE FOR TEXT.

PIANO BURSTS FROM THE NIGHT SKY

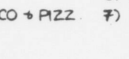
1. $f \leftrightarrow p$
2. SUS. PED. AD LIB.
3. FAST \leftrightarrow SPACED
4. IRREGULAR
5. NEAR CONTINUOUS



6) EXPAND INTO HIGH REG.

D. BASS VOICE OF THE WOOD

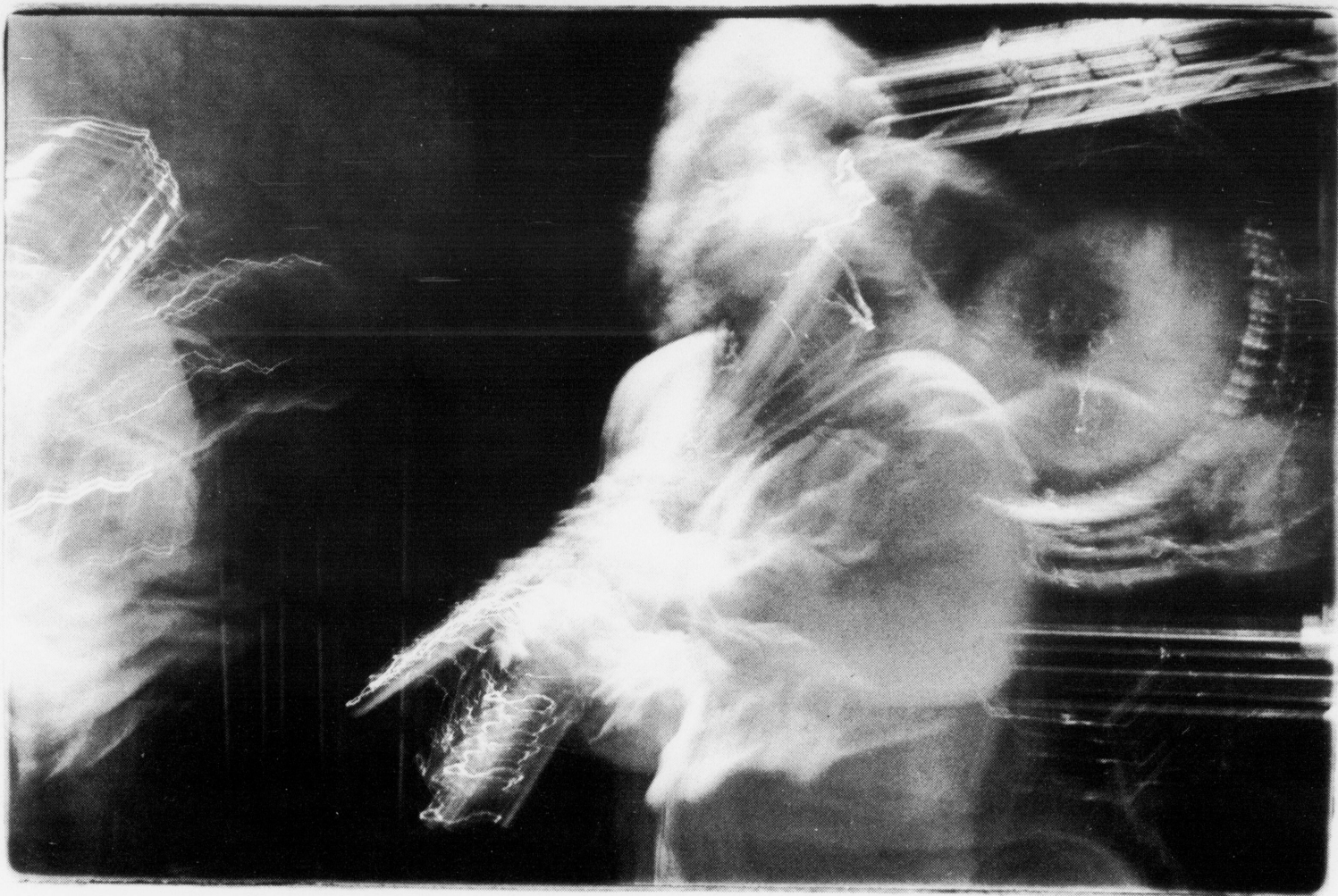
1. $mf \leftrightarrow p$
2. VIB. AD LIB. ARCO \leftrightarrow PIZZ.
3. AD LIB
4. REG \leftrightarrow IRREG.
5. INTERMITTENT



6) UPPER REG. 7) PLAY IN A MANNER TO PRODUCE VOCAL LIKE SOUNDS

DM: *Journey Through the Mist* is an extension of *Plateau*, in a way. Since you can't get everyone to the butte, you bring the butte here. So what I attempted to do there was to create an environment which people could discover. They could hear things coming. And after a while of course, after you know the maze you know where everything is. We transformed the lighting also. So different people would be attracted to different parts of the maze because of whether it was opened or confined, because of the nature of the sounds that were emanating from that part of the maze, because they might find themselves drawn to a yellow light or held by a blue light, or whatever. One of the things, though, that I didn't think about, was noticed by a good friend of mine, Robert Morris. He came two nights and

stood on the balcony to watch it one night and saw that people's movements were entirely determined by the context of the music. When the music was loud and boisterous and aggressive, people would move around very quickly, flit from place to place, stride around. And when it was quiet and delicate they'd tiptoe, stand still, and barely move. And of course in all of the subtle variations of that would determine what people did. Of course some people didn't want to deal with it at all, and as quickly as they could, made their way through the maze and sat down in the audience out there somewhere. What we should have done is we should have had the maze in a room where there was no escape, but that's terribly manipulative. I may be very human when I suggest these things.



BREATH GUIDED MUSIC

THE NEW MUSIC CO-OPERATIVE

Our intention in Breath Guided Music was to find a way to embody and resonate the intrinsic energy that is sound.

Breath Guided Music was a six month project in which an eight-member group investigated the relationship between breath and music. Printed here is a fragmentary representation of our work, which we consider to be a small beginning in the development of a music that consciously explores the interaction between breath and sound. *

Breath Guided Music by Anne Bourne (cello), Chris Devonshire (gongs and electronics), Steve Donald (trombone), Vid Ingelevics (photography), Gordon Monahan (piano), David Mott (baritone saxophone), Tina Pearson (flute), and Kim Ratcliffe (electric guitar).

We would hold group sessions two or three times a week. Each session would usually begin with a preparatory breathing, sensation and/or movement exercise. We were developing a state of awareness that would allow us to let go of our habitual mental, physical and emotional patterns, thus revealing the musical possibilities inherent in consciously sensing the integration of our inner and outer environment, linked by the breath.

Breathing sustains life; and through cycles, vibrations and resonances, is an inherent activity in all things.

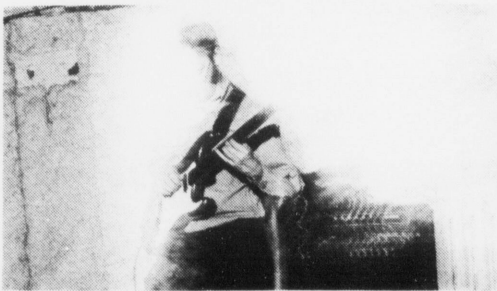
The traditional length of a musical phrase in many cultures is governed by the length of a breath.

Breath is a sign of life; breath is a source of life; and breath is a source of sound. In getting to the source of life, we hoped to be getting to the source of sound.

The breathing exercises often involved chanting, where we concentrated on the physical sensation of sustained vocal resonance and breathing. If one practices chanting on a regular basis, the personal sensation and control of body resonance becomes more acute, as you learn to feel the concentration of sound vibrations at various points along your spine, in your head, abdomen, and along your limbs, depending on what pitch and vowel you're using. Also, listening to the subtle variations in the upper harmonics of the sound you're producing is a natural area to concentrate on. The practice of chanting in a group, close together and touching, is a source of great energy which charges your body, concentrates your mental energy, and stimulates a further release of open vibration.

The ease with which we integrated music-making with breathing exercises varied in each session and to prolong the effect of the sensation exercises and to carry through these states of acute sensing into the music-making sessions, we began to use suggestive imagery to concentrate on while allowing fundamental sound energy to flow from our instruments and merge in the space.

Each meditation and exercise evoked specific responses in all of us; each meditation had a sound-identity. For instance, in one image meditation, we imagined that we were clouds of sound that would flow, change, disperse, accumulate, merge and separate: As clouds are moved by air currents, we were moved by sound currents. When we played Clouds effectively, we would create dense sound masses that would grow and subside as though we were a large being that took three to five minutes to breath in and breath out. The sound mass would gradually build like a huge ocean wave that seemed to carry us away: Some kind of energy-being; a powerful breath-sound that would sweep us up, then gently let us down as it moved through its cycle of grow and subside, expand and contract. — Gordon Monahan



BREATH GUIDED PHOTOGRAPHY

As a photographer of dance and music events, I have become fascinated with two aspects of these activities — process and performance. More simply, I found the appeal of dance and music to be in their real-time nature as opposed to the viewing of photographs, usually enjoyed long after they are taken.

In working with the New Music Co-operative on Breath Guided Music, I began to concentrate on the context and the act of taking photographs. This was made possible through the purposeful heightening of our sensitivities to the group dynamic; the result of various exercises and meditations undertaken together.

Importance was transferred from the need to produce a product (the photograph) to being as aware as possible of my place within the web of energy (the process).

In order to maintain my awareness during the musical improvisations, I found that a photographic technique evolved which didn't at all rely on the view finder.

The camera hung from my neck precisely at the level of my solar plexus and, through combining a hand-held flash with long exposure time, I was able to connect to, and record, the influence of the breathing cycle. This method of photographing allowed me to explore the use of my non-visual senses as cues to locating the 'right' photographic moment.

The quality of attention came to be important, whether or not I actually took photographs. This is what seemed to me to be the underlying motive of our work together.

— Vid Ingelevics

* Breath Guided Music was directly and indirectly inspired by the Sonic Meditations of Pauline Oliveros, and the work of many other musicians who have been active in rediscovering this musical sensibility for many years.



Simple Breath Meditation

Lie on the ground.

...

Notice the state that your body and your mind are in.

...

Relax any tension you feel in your body.

...

Sense the room or space you are in, and visualize the patterns of air circulating through it.

...

Visualize the patterns of air your own breathing is making.

...

Follow the air into your body, step by step along the path it takes. Notice any sensation, pressure or movement along the way, in your muscles, organs and bones, as you inhale and exhale:

(the skin outside your nose
your nasal passages
your sinuses
throat
chest
ribs, expanding and contracting
backs of ribs, pressing against floor and releasing
stomach
intestines
lungs
lower organs
pelvic basin, widening as the lungs expand down
tailbone, stimulate and pushed down and out against the ground...)

...

Notice the expansion of your entire torso as you inhale, fullness. Notice the relaxation of your entire torso as you exhale, emptiness.

...

Gradually introduce a slight tension on the exhale, keeping the expansion of the inhale.

As you exhale, let the expansiveness change to hollowness, as the air is released and its container keeps its expanded shape.

...

Direct the expansiveness outward from the torso through the body:

Let it move through the shoulder, hip and neck joints, through the arms, legs and head, through the hands, feet and face, through the fingers, toes, opening the eyes.

Energizing and sensitizing the whole body, and all its parts.

...

Breathe naturally.

This meditation is simply a guideline for those who may not be familiar with meditations and/or body practices. It can be done with the eyes closed, perhaps having someone familiar with the exercise calmly verbalizing the instructions, leaving plenty of space between images and adding any appropriate hints or images. It is important to keep the attention active and focused on the breathing, not to let it drift into semi-consciousness or sleep. This meditation can also be done standing (with minor adjustments) if you want to proceed directly to making sounds. (Formed from work done with Denise Fujiwara and Anne Skinner.)

— Tina Pearson

"I really like the idea that I became more aware of my body — especially through the breathing exercises. It was the first performing situation where I didn't feel nervous because I knew how to relax. I knew what it meant when my mother always used to say 'take a deep breath before you play'. I finally discovered that.

And I really liked the feeling that you had a direct way of expressing the very things that are really inside without having to process it through language or musical this-or-that. Not having to think about it but just letting it come out the way it is. Just letting the sounds play themselves."

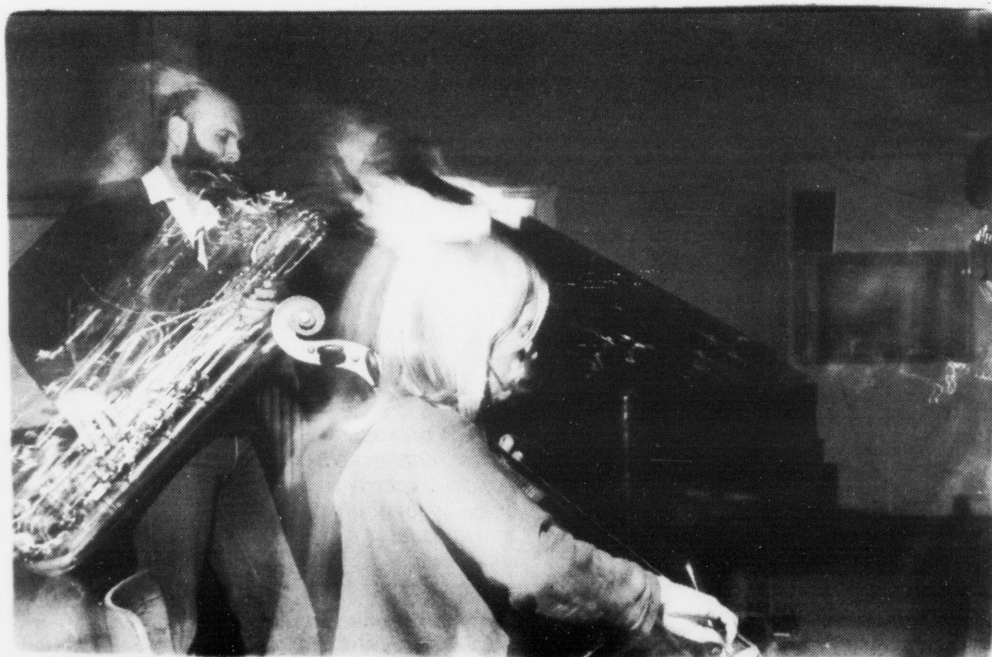
— Anne Bourne



"Along with other members of the Co-op, I believe that what I have learned in this project has been valuable in everyday life — not only in music but in all sorts of other activities. I've never got this much out of music before; I've never been into it as deeply as I was into it here. Putting so much in but also getting so much out was something that I really liked. I felt really good at the time we were doing this, not only when we were playing but also the

next day walking down the street thinking about it — what we did and the different techniques we'd learned, and realizing that those techniques can be used in doing anything, really. It's the idea that breathing can be so important. It's something you do so unconsciously but if you really focus on it, then so many things can happen and so much can come out of it."

— Chris Devonshire

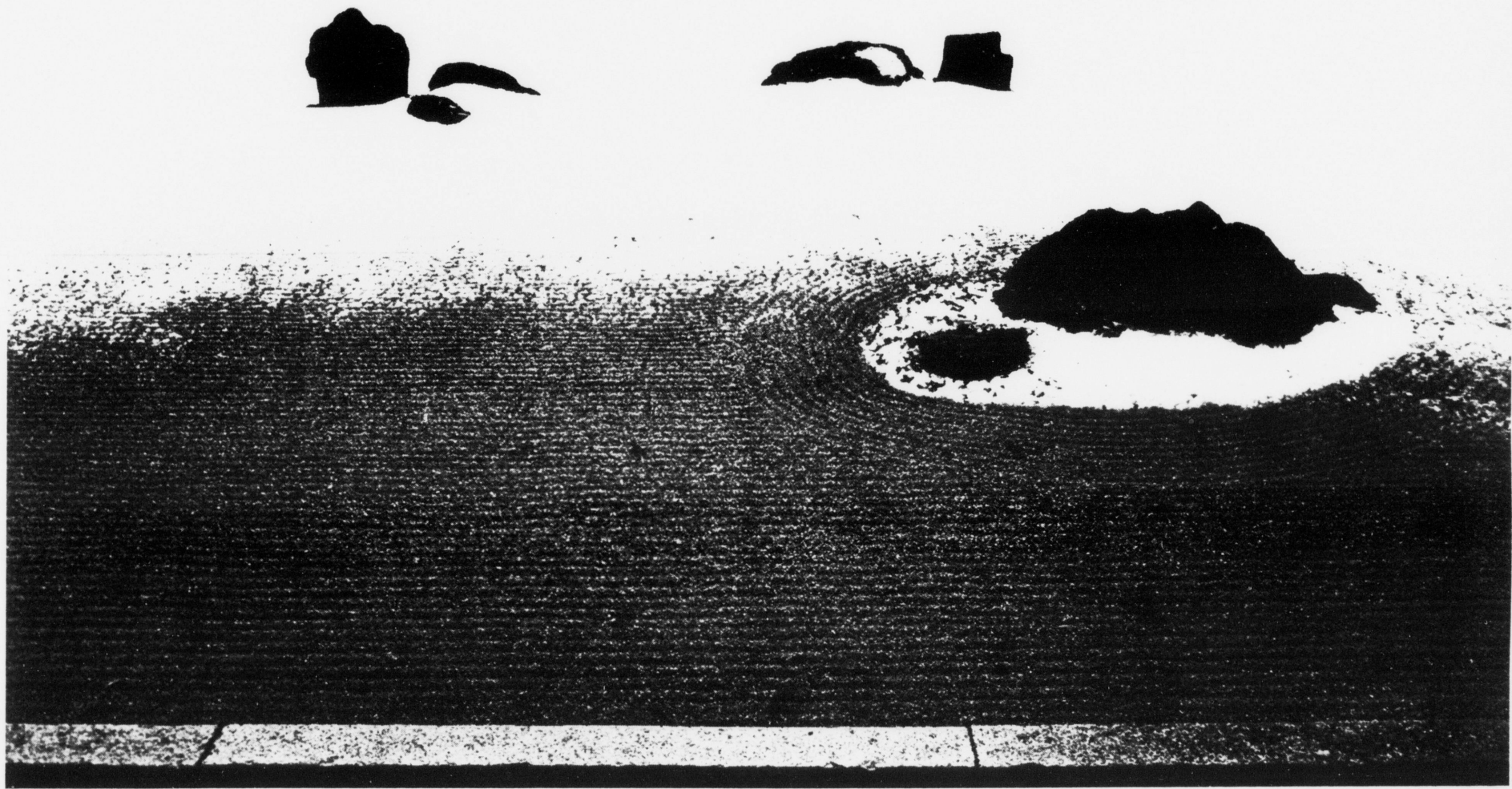


1. Start with the simple breath visualization as outlined in MUSICWORKS 20. (Or; stand comfortably, eyes closed; concentrate on your breath travelling down to your lower abdomen; Breathe deeply, slowly and silently so that the breathing almost disappears.)
2. At the completion of the simple breath visualization stand with feet slightly apart, with eyes closed, completely relaxed, maintaining an upright posture. (Feel as if your body is completely suspended, hanging downward from a point on the top of your head.) circa 3-5' (min.)
3. Begin to imagine roots or tenacles extending out the bottoms of both feet. Imagine that they slowly extend deeply into the ground, moving towards the centre of the earth. circa 2'
4. Very slowly begin to allow your body to sway (feet stay firmly rooted in place) in counter clockwise circles. Start with barely any movement as if the wind is gently blowing your body or as if it moves from the very slow, deep and fine breathing that you are doing. Gradually allow the movement to expand until the body is swaying in fairly large circles. (Use comfortable limits for the circles.) circa 3-5'
5. Continue the swaying circles and slowly raise both arms parallel to each other until they are straight out in front of the body at shoulder height. The arms remain nearly motionless while the body continues the circle swaying. circa 1'
6. Hold this state for circa 3-4'
7. Slowly move the arms until they are straight out to the sides (still at shoulder height). circa 1'
8. Hold this state for circa 3-4'

9. Slowly move the arms back to the front position in front of the body (shoulder height). circa 1'
10. Imagine a deep electric blue colour entering the body at the finger tips, gradually filling the entire body. You may feel sensations of heaviness and heat. circa 3'
11. Slowly move the arms to the side positions (as in 7). (Hold the blue light image.) circa 2'
12. Slowly raise your arms directly overheard. After your fingertips are pointing straight up, imagine a cloud of pure white light coming down towards you from far overhead. It descends slowly towards your fingertips and as it touches them the white cloud becomes a donut shape and very slowly moves down your body cooling, replacing the electric blue colour with a white mist, slowly surrounding your body completely as it floats down to the ground and eventually passes out of sight below your feet. As the white cloud passes around and down your body make sure that you visualize the white mist filling your body from the fingertips, gently pushing the blue light out through the bottoms of your feet as it is displaced by the white mist. You may feel a lightening sensation in the body as this happens. Take as long as is necessary to visualize this step.
13. Slowly lower your arms down to your sides. circa 1'
14. Begin to slow the swaying circles very gradually until there is no movement in your body. circa 2'
15. Stand relaxed and when ready, open eyes.

Please note that the timings are merely a guide for the length of each step. You may find that after doing this several times, it feels quite natural to let each step assume its own length. At no time should you becoming overly concerned with the timings.

— David Mott



GATE INTO THE ROCK GARDEN OF SUNYATA

Gate into the Rock Garden of Sunyata is music that follows the cycle of breath. Two gongs (one higher pitched than the other) cue the cycle of inhalation/exhalation for both the musicians and the cycle. At first, there is only the sound of the gongs being struck and decaying into silence as the musicians (and the audience) attune their breathing cycle to the gongs. Gradually each of the musicians enters, playing a single sustained sound on the exhalation part of the cycle and stopping the sound on the next inhalation. The sounds, at first timbrally pure, become more and more complex in nature and begin to last longer and longer, overlapping into new cycles. Each sound begins only on the exhalation. Finally the music subsides into more and more space between the cycle. An important visual aspect of **Gate** is the asymmetrical arrangement of the musicians (which may number from 5 to 9) as they are separated in the performance space (standing and seated) in the manner of the placement of stones in a Japanese rock garden.

* **The View From Cold Mountain**, Poems of Han-shan and Shih-te, translated by Arthur Tobias, James Sanford and J. P. Seaton White Pine Press.

In **Gate** I wish to:

lead both musicians and audiences into perceiving the peacefulness of following the breath

have the breath give rise to sound

have that sound carry each person into perceiving what the Heart Sutra says, "Form is emptiness, emptiness is form".

or in this case that sound is silence, silence is sound.

to create an environment of musical sound that finds its analogue in the beautiful rock gardens of Japan, such as Ryoan-ji Garden in Kyoto.

to make music that gives rise to experiencing what is described by the Chinese Zen/Taoist poet of old, Shih-te, *

not going, not coming
rooted, deep and still
not reaching out, not reaching in
just resting, at the centre
a single jewel, the flawless crystal drop
in the blaze of its brilliance
the way beyond

— David Mott

