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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO

Cultivating the ludic:

“through the air, with the water,
of the earth, in the fire, ether”

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy in

Music

by

Rafael Ramón Liñán Vallecillos
∖

Committee in charge:

Professor Brian Ferneyhough, Chair
Professor John Fonville
Professor Katja Lindenberg
Professor Chandra Mukerji
Professor Jann Pasler

1996

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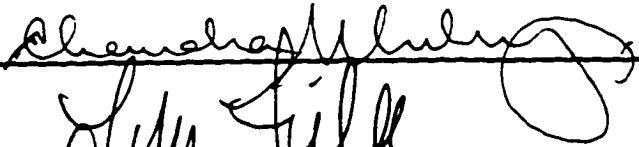
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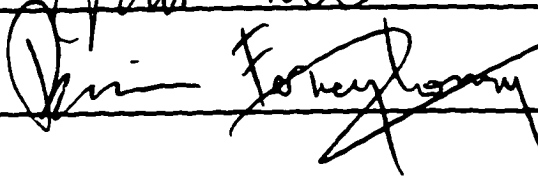
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Chair

University of California, San Diego

1996

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- 1989 - 1993 Teaching Assistant, Departments of Music and
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- 1991 M.A., University of California, San Diego
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- 1993 Father's death
- 1994 Professor at the *Nicolás Salmerón* School of Music of
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- Farmer in Quéntar, Sierra Nevada, Spain
- 1996 Ph.D., University of California, San Diego

PUBLICATIONS

- 1985 *Aproximación a las Formas Musicales*. Lecture series broadcast by the National Radio of Spain (R.N.E.-3). U.N.E.D.
- 1986 *El Monasterio de El Escorial*. Soundtrack, 70 min. U.N.E.D., Spain
- 1986-1989 *Música en la Historia*. Lecture series broadcast by the National Radio of Spain (R.N.E.3). U.N.E.D.
- 1987-1988 *Historia de la Música Española*. Lecture series broadcast by the National Radio of Spain (R.N.E.3). U.N.E.D.
- 1991 *T-eje%MAN-eje* for ensemble and live electronics, music score, 45 pages, *Editorial de Música Española Contemporánea*, Madrid, Spain
- T-eje%MAN-eje* for ensemble and live electronics, compact disc, *Sociedad General de Autores de España*, Madrid, Spain
- Music, morals and engagement*. M.A. Thesis, 122 p. U.C.S.D.
- 1992 *Socio-psychological aspects of reputation*, essay 45 p. Premio Erickson, U.C.S.D. Music Dept.
- 1993 *Darmstadt as a market of reputation*, lecture at C.R.C.A., La Jolla, California
- 1994 *Primavera Ametrallada* for contrabassist and electronics, compact disc, Center for Research in Computing and the Arts, California

SELECTED PERFORMANCES

- 1986 *Pieza para piano*. Premiered by Carlos Galán in Madrid
- 1988 *Dubhe*, sextet. Premiered by the *Grupo Cosmos* in Madrid
- 1989 *T-eje%MAN-eje*, for ensemble. Premiered by the *Grupo Círculo* in Madrid
- 1990 *A Scream 4...* for tape. Played in San Diego (in collaboration with dancer Lorna Dunn), Buenos Aires, Athens, and Madrid
- 1991 *s H e*, for flute and contrabass. Premiered by Nancy and Bertram Turetzky in Mexico City.
- Performance of *Dubhe* by SONOR in San Diego
- 1992 *walk #5.1*, for flute and percussion. Premiered by Jane Rigler and Steven Schick in Darmstadt, Germany.
- Primavera Ametrallada*, for contrabassist and electronics. Premiered by Hannes Giger in San Diego. Performed by Robert Black in Buffalo and Warsaw.
- 1993 *while caressing Chronos' throat...* for two carillon players and two speakers. Premiered by K. Pappas, R. Coulombe, J. Rigler, and R. Liñán in San Diego.
- 1994 *al aire*, collective piece. Performed in Alicante and Madrid, Spain
- 1995 *Elementary interactive pieces*. Collective creations. Performed in Madrid and San Diego.

FIELDS OF STUDY

Major Field: Composition

Studies in Composition.

Brian Ferneyhough, Roger Reynolds, Luis de Pablo and Claudio Prieto

Studies in Musicology.

Jann Pasler

Studies in Improvisation.

George Lewis and John Silber

Studies in Computer Music.

F. Richard Moore and Francisco J. Sánchez

Studies in Guitar.

Francisco J. Torres and Luis Maravillas

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Cultivating the ludic:

“through the air, with the water,
of the earth, in the fire, ether”

by

Rafael Ramón Liñán Vallecillos

Doctor of Philosophy in Music

University of California, San Diego, 1996

Professor Brian Ferneyhough, Chair

In mercantile, bureaucratic societies, music is, above all, a realm of activities having to do with the commerce and rational manipulation of sounds. In addition to restraining the ways in which members of these societies enjoy sound, this conception of music impairs the ways in which people interact among themselves and with their environments.

Inspired by the ways of life of ecological communities such as the Pygmies and the Yanomami as well as by the creations of John

Cage and Pauline Oliveros, I present here my own ways of understanding music, social responsibility, and life. Cultivating a *ludic* attitude towards life and music as well as *playing* are the foundations of my proposal.

This dissertation consists of a set of texts, a video tape, and an audio tape documenting my personal approach to performance, composition and education, presented in the context of my life. The written part includes an introduction to the fundamental aspects of my musical activities as well as memories of the ludic, spontaneous interactions among various people, animals, plants, rocks, air, water, earth, fire, ether and diverse artifacts, in which I have been involved for the last two years. The accompanying recordings include various performances of a set of pieces titled "through the air, with the water, of the earth, in the fire, ether."

I. INTRODUCTION

A. PLAY

Music has traditionally been considered an activity of “players.” In the English language, when people interact and communicate with others through music we say that they *play* music. For me, cultivating a *ludic* attitude towards life and playing are fundamental not only in music, but also in life. Play links music and life, childhood and adulthood, the individual and the community. Ultimately, play can be the nexus conjoining all humans, animals, plants, rocks, the air, the water, the earth, the fire, and ether. Indeed, play manifests the intrinsic relationship between our musical activities and our particular *ways of life*, the relationships between our present and our past, between “I” and “we,” between “we” and “they.”

Being playful and playing are the basic ways in which children interact with the world and learn about themselves, about their brothers, sisters, and friends, about their parents and their environments. Children learn to be both humans and social beings through the games they play. Likewise, humans (and animals alike) learn about time and aging through the various games they play at different ages. Games engage with reality, restructure it, show multiple realities, thus teaching the players new ways of being as well as new ways of interacting socially.

Play is an essentially political activity. When adults and children play together, the ordinary relationships of authority and hierarchy often disappear, and many times are subverted. Likewise, when members of different communities play together they perform an act of mutual understanding, of consensus and of interest in each

other. Their idiosyncratic ways of viewing relationships within their communities are transcended by more comprehensive ones which allow for the interactions to occur. Moreover, when humans and animals play together they create cross-categorical channels for mutual comprehension, communication, and affection.

Play is socially and culturally conditioned, hence it *reflects* the values and beliefs of each community. According to my own observations, if the members of a community interact with one another in formal, hierarchical and competitive ways in their everyday lives, their games will tend to have strict rules, demand different classes of players, and they will involve fighting for one's own place as well as for the victory of one's group over the competitors.

In the conviction that playing also *affects* the ways in which people interact with one another and with their environments, I propose and present, in this text, ways of playing that aim at cultivating a responsible sense of community based upon cooperation, openness, adaptability, tolerance, sharing, and spontaneity, a community not only of humans but also of animals, plants, rocks, and the elements of the environment.

Essentially collective and interactive, the games I instigate are based upon premises and suggestions, not upon rules, and demands. My premises and recipes attempt to be inspirational *metaphors*, relying upon seduction rather than conviction. They aim both at fostering cooperation and at gaining flexibility in the assumption of responsibilities, avoiding competition and the establishment of fixed hierarchies among the players. The games I coordinate are explorations of particular ways of being and being social. Experiencing attentive relaxation and appreciating timelessness and quietness are, for me, important aspects of these games as well.

The games I promote are generally presented in public as “musical works,” because the communities I now belong to and those ones where I got my education, both in Spain and California, are musical communities. Nevertheless, my compositions and my performing activities embrace other arts, such as dance, poetry, theater, story-telling, mime, acrobatics, juggling, etc.

I always try to avoid the term “work” when I refer either to my musical activities or to the fruits of my creative endeavors, because of the pejorative connotations it has in Western cultures due to religious beliefs and socio-economic realities. For instance, I was taught that, Adam and Eve did not have to work in Paradise. They had to work, for the first time, when, as a punishment for their ambition, they were expelled from Paradise. With regards to the general feelings about work, it is clear to me that “work” is rarely associated with pleasure and happiness, even in the playful world of music. Instead of “work,” I use a number of terms denoting the predominance of ludic elements in my music and my life.

Likewise, I try to avoid being considered “the *author* of a work,” because the games I animate are *collective creations*, the fruits of various individuals interacting among themselves in specific contexts and circumstances, always different and new in unexpected ways, even when attempts are made to repeating things.

B. PAY

Although, in our bureaucratic socio-economic system, it would be possible for me to claim these collective creations as *my* intellectual property, and several international laws would protect my right to do so, I am not interested at all in that game. First, because that would be

appropriating something inspired and made by many, as is the case with any creation, thus taking advantage of the generosity of others; and second, because to think that a musical composition is the *property* of an individual sounds insane. Can ideas become private properties, generate royalties, be bought and sold? Can imagination, creativity and sensitivity manifest as material properties? Yes, they can, and, in fact, that is what they are in our society, as I have learned in my past professional life.

The supremacy of economic issues over creative ones in music, of *pay* over *play*, raises important questions of an ethical nature, both as artists and citizens, because music is a public activity with considerable social influence. In my view, musicians enjoy a specially ambiguous status in society, for it seems that we are, at once, models to imitate, as creative, sensitive people, and models not to imitate, as eccentric, nonconformist people. In any case, besides the influence that a musician may have on his/her family, friends, and colleagues, many people (particularly youngsters and teenagers) find their role models in musicians. This fact conveys a special social responsibility.

Musicians have a public voice with which we speak *as* public, *about* the public, *to* and *with* the public. Socially aware, sensitive musicians are supposed to create *good* pieces of music, ones that are beneficial for the public or, at least, for some public. But what happens when someone succeeds? Are good pieces of music public or private properties? Should the musician be interested in holding the private ownership of the piece against others or should he/she or the public promote general imitation and copy? Is this what copyright means: the right of society to copy good creations?

Ethical considerations of this kind are my main interest as a musician. For me, they are far more relevant than any others of an

aesthetic nature. My emphasis upon the ethical implications of my musical activities stems from my concern about the fact that, in our society, all the realms of creative activism and personal interactions have become “markets” where profit (material, symbolic or otherwise) is the main issue at stake, and price is more important than value.

In our world, it is more appropriate to speak of cultural *markets* or of the culture *of markets* than of *cultures*, because all established cultural phenomena tend to become merchandise for trade. Cultural artifacts are thus valued according to the profits of either material or symbolic nature they produce.

The need to renew the stock and expand the market results in new items to satisfy artificially created needs. With increasing impunity, “new” artistic proposals are becoming the products of specific marketing operations. Their instigators may create both the need and its solution from scratch, claiming that they found a new response to a social necessity (never felt before), or they may absorb items from exotic sources and then make them fashionable and profitable. In both cases, these cultural goods are publicized and delivered by professional manipulators of the consumers’ minds, and frequently provoke the desired effects.

An example of today’s marketing methods is the effectist utilization of praiseworthy slogans known to touch the hearts of consumers to animate consumption. Thus, the mass of consumers are encouraged to support children and refugees, to save endangered species, etc. The problems are presented in ways that do not address too profoundly (or at all) their deep roots. By keeping people’s attention away from the structural and ideological foundations of the problems, big business is maintained as usual. The real motivation of these marketing campaigns is getting people’s money, in one way or

another, and perpetuating the status quo. Instances of this strategy are easy to find in the musical productions of the stars of the show business. Other instances are provided by those oil corporations, banks, and chemical industries which advertise themselves as “altruistic” and “ecological.”

In the realm of music, the transformation of cultural manifestations into merchandise is especially blatant, and can be easily verified in any music store, through the classifications of their stock: gregorian chant, punk, gospel, rap, contemporary, new age, etc. Even the musics of ecological societies—where music is a part of the culture rather than a commodity or the outcome of an intellectual speculation—have become trendy market items for Western consumers of music. Ethnic musics, deprived of their traditional contexts are now generally perceived and utilized as exotic commodities, rather than as the profound expressions of the ideas and beliefs of various groups of people who enjoy various lifestyles shaped through hundreds of years of coexistence and of interaction with their environments.

On the part of the musicians, at the present time we are trained and expected to be both *professionals* and *specialists* in something (a particular activity, an instrument, a style, a technique, etc.), if we aspire to earn a living out of making music. In my view, when music is the musician’s main source of income—i. e. her/his main means of survival, her/his initially ludic *vocation* becomes, primordially, a means to maintain oneself alive as well as a tool to keep a certain social status. Consequently, it becomes odd and questionable for me to speak of a musician as a music “player” and more appropriate to speak of a music “worker.” This has not always been the case in Western History and, according to French sociologist Jacques Attali, it

is possible to track down the epoch when musicians began to move away from their role as “players.” For Attali, the change from one role to another was associated, in France, with a change from the term *jongleur* (player) to the term *ministrel* (servant).

Another aspect of the life of present day professional musicians is conditioned by our working environments. Nowadays, with growing conspicuousness, all professional musicians have three basic choices to deliver their musical productions: in conventional concerts, with studio recordings, and on television. Most aspire and achieve to master them all. These three vehicles of music sharing rely on specific social contexts with strict demands and long established conventions based upon the hierarchical, classist *modus operandi* of our surrounding bureaucratic socio-economic system which, to a great extent, reduces interpersonal relations to a mere *bureaucratic* connection whose *raison d'être* is the proliferation of marketable objects. Far from being the authentic celebrations of communal affinities, the ritualistic interactions based upon the multiple ordinary relationships in which one is immersed, like musical performances used to be, the newly composed/performed works are thus turned into marketable *objects*, even before they materialize in compact discs, videos, scores, etc. In the market of commercial music this process is obvious: the new record comes out *before* the live performances in public take place. The new release is not any more a record of the musics people are familiar with and like, but a new market item publicized with a series of performances. Live performances thus become a part of the promotional campaign of new records.

Another revealing instance of what the current cultural markets demand of musicians, artists, and professionals of various kinds is exemplified in the comments many young colleagues, friends and

relatives have repeatedly shared with me, regretting that they do not live and/or work in places they really want to, but in those places where they can get acceptable wages and working conditions. Both their lives and their creative activities are thus conditioned by their *professional* possibilities, and both become items traded in specific markets.

Music has become the private property of professional musicians. Educational institutions award the titles of musical nobility and give access to their corresponding territories. Professional musicians register their works as intellectual properties to hold their exclusive ownership worldwide and enjoy the royalties they may generate anywhere in the planet. Professional musicians in conjunction with their associated agents and industries share the profits of their marketing operations, with a goal in mind: to make a living out of it.

The market of music demands originality—the fuel of the market's engine, but it does so in a peculiar sense: a new composition has to sound somewhat different to others already known, to renew the appearance of the stock, but if it trespasses the aesthetic boundaries of its market or if it questions any of the rules of the business, it will be dismissed. If a new composition is somehow threatening to this system, it may well be attacked by the various agents who depend on and support this business at large, including members of the media and academia.

Due to these facts, it seems that the commercial aspects of today's musical activities are far more important than any others, whether in the realm of ethics or aesthetics. Moreover, the playfulness that has traditionally been associated with music making appears to

be relegated to a secondary plane (if not completely absent) in most professionally produced music.

C. π

In response to the current state of affairs, I propose to bring the collective and the ludic back to music. The terms of my proposal are explained in my accounts of a series of compositions, performances, and educational projects in which I have been involved between January 1994 and December 1995. These *ludic* activities consisted of multiple interactions among people, animals, plants, rocks, air, water, earth, fire, ether and diverse artifacts. My participation in them occurred, mostly, while I was completely awake, but also while dreaming—not always asleep—as well as in various psychosomatic states of uncertain categorization. Sometimes, I assumed a major role in the interactions, while in others, my participation was “merely” as a witness.

My accounts of these interactions are of a creative nature, rather than scientific reports based upon verifiable data. Indeed, my scores are purely subjective descriptions: they display *my* own ways of perceiving both my relationships with my neighbors and among themselves. By *neighbors* I mean all the bodies and elements of the environments where these relationships took place. Whereas some of my neighbors are animate, others are inanimate, while some are real, others are imaginary, and many others resist classification.

Among the numerous interactions in which I have been involved for the last two years, I have selected those ones which reveal fundamental elements and basic aspects of my current life: accounts of daily rituals I perform and imagine, reckonings of special celebrations

in the various communities I consider myself a member of, stories of other members of these communities, descriptions both of my close neighbors and of the various surroundings where I live, explanations of some of the ways in which we interrelate with one another, what, when and how we eat and drink, our games, our beliefs, our encounters in concerts, stories we have invented and situations we dream of, etc. Special emphasis has been placed on the long-established relationships among the members of my local community in Quéntar (Spain) within our environment, thus displaying some characteristics of what I consider our *local* culture.

The majority of the interactions I have been involved in originated as *celebrations* of favorable and stimulating events for me and/or for the communities I feel a member of, such as: an encounter with family or friends, a new harvest of grain or fruit, a wedding, a trip to the coast, mild rain, a sunny morning, a sunset, a full moon night, a solstice, etc. I have also included descriptions and recordings of different performances of this set of pieces presented in concert-like settings both in Spain and California.

My attitude, both during these interactions and at the times of writing their accounts, has been, essentially, a ludic, musical one. When I was a child, music was a form of play. However, due to my intense formal education and subsequent professional activity, music became a way of making a living as well as a tool to maintain a particular social status, something too *serious* to be playful about it. Thanks to the fact that, in recent years, I have been able to recuperate, to a certain extent, my original approach, I am now able to understand and enjoy life and music the way I do.

My ludic attitude—cultivated with special care for the last two years and ingrained in my current daily activities—has expanded my

comprehension of music. Indeed, it has fostered a peculiar sense of perception which induces me to regard as "music" a wide variety of interactions with other animate and inanimate beings as well as with the natural elements which I perform and witness: from caressing, to breathing, to the sounds of gentle rain.

However, in order for me to comprehend any interaction as "music" it needs to trigger a particular kind of disposition which, to date, I am not able to fully control with rational means nor am I interested in doing so. In my personal consideration of what is "music" and what is just "sound" I find a certain parallelism with the generally accepted differences between "listening" and "hearing:" whereas the former is associated with an attentive, perceptive attitude, the latter is related to a merely physical, emotionally impermeable perception. On the other hand, examples of what I do *not* consider music are some activities I hear of daily, such as wars and nuclear tests, despite the "wealth" of both sounds and interactions that they produce.

It is thus that I have come to consider common interactions that occur in my everyday life as "music," understanding this term in a broad sense which comprises other performing arts such as dance, poetry, theater, story-telling, mime, acrobatics, juggling, etc. I have found inspiring and stimulating antecedents of similar attitudes in writings and compositions by John Cage, Pauline Oliveros, Fluxus, Laurie Anderson and the Scratch Orchestra, to cite only a few of the most influential references. Of special relevance have been their descriptions and stories of their own lives, how they interact/ed with their relatives and neighbors (understanding this term in the broad sense explained above) and how they perceive/d those interactions, their explanations of how they achieve/d improvements in their lives,

their speculations on how their achievements could be extrapolated to their neighbors, and any corroborative experience of their speculations.

It is with these antecedents in mind that I present here as “musical performances” descriptions of such fundamental and ordinary activities of mine as breathing, eating, drinking, sleeping, playing, visiting (or being visited by) relatives and friends, picking fruit, stretching, etc., together with activities commonly regarded as “musical,” such as performing in concert. Inasmuch as the whole set of these performances constitute the experiences upon which my investigative labor relies (as a member within the academic community of the University of California at San Diego) I, sometimes, call them “investigations.”

To sum up, the terms “interactions,” “performances,” “investigations,” and occasional combinations of two or more of them are in this text, for the most part, refer to analogous activities. At times, a further differentiation is introduced with the terms “rituals,” “games,” and “concerts” and with occasional combinations of these three with any of the general terms. Similarly, the terms which refer to their transcriptions in any form—written, audio-taped, or video-taped—such as “descriptions,” “scores,” “texts,” “recordings,” and “accounts,” as well as occasional combinations of two or more of them are, generally, analogous too. Nevertheless, in each case I have chosen one term or the other, or a certain combination of terms, with consideration of their different evocative qualities and nuances, within the specific context in which they appear.

Some interactions were planned in conjunction with other people, animals, plants and rocks to be presented in more or less conventional concerts. Other interactions consist of activities I execute

regularly—every day, every week, every month, seasonally, etc.—which, primarily, involve collective rituals celebrating certain events: dawn, full moon, rain, Spring, etc. Some interactions happened unexpectedly, yet they were both executed and notated with the essentially ludic, musical attitude that animates this text. In order to emphasize the concert-like, the ritualistic, or the ludic aspects of the performances, I have grouped them according to a classification into three categories: “concerts,” “rituals,” and “games.”

Some other activities I have been involved in for the last two years were not presented in the specific context of the “elementary pieces” but have a direct connection with them. Descriptions of some of them appear in the fourth chapter, titled “Related events,” and consist of a piece titled *while caressing Chronos’ throat* composed in La Jolla right before the first “elementary piece,” and two series of concerts: one, called *Musicoloquios*, carried out during the process of writing my dissertation and aimed at creating a space for multi-ethnic interactions in Madrid (Spain), and a second one, of pedagogical nature, projected for the imminent future. Since education has been the principal field where I have presented my personal contributions to the various communities I belong to, for the last fifteen years, this latter project is of the utmost importance for me, revealing my main concerns.

All the activities described in these pages have been possible thanks to the generous cooperation of my family, friends and neighbors, to the privileged elements I am surrounded by, and thanks to the conditions in which I currently live. In addition, I owe much to the open, playful, congenial and positive attitude towards people, life, and music I learned from the writings of the well-known artists cited above—Cage, Oliveros, Anderson et al. Both the “known” and the

“unknown” individuals showed me, in their own ways, the *music of life*. This music constitutes the audible waveband of the relations, vibrations and signs I associate with certain ways of life, which acknowledge the imaginative and ludic aspects of ordinary activities and interactions.

These ways of life are enjoyed by people all over the world who enjoy a highly developed sense of community and who live, primordially, from what they grow in their land and, occasionally, from what they trade. They continue millenary traditions of communality and attachment to the earth based upon two fundamental premises: the need to have a profound knowledge of and a lively contact with one’s own ancestry and neighbors, and the need to have a profound knowledge of and a lively contact with one’s own environment. Indeed, the keepers of this tradition generally live in close interaction with their own family and neighbors, with the air, the water, the earth, the fire, and the ether, interactions upon which their own survival and well-being depend.

The lives of those communities of this kind that exist around the world whom I admire the most are marked by a friendly, collaborative and solidary attitude both among themselves and with their neighbors. Likewise, they have the deepest respect for their environment, which they commonly regard as “divine” and “sacred.”

I came into direct contact with one of these ways of life in October 1994, when I moved to Quéntar, a small village of about 1,000 inhabitants located in the mountains of Sierra Nevada, in Southern Spain. Quéntar is my father’s hometown, and the place where the majority of my father’s family live. I live with Jane, Gusiluz, several families of lizards, mice, ants, spiders and flies, and with half a dozen plants, in the house that my father was building before he suffered a

fatal brain stroke in March 1993. It is a quiet, modest country house, two miles away from Quéntar, raised in the land he inherited from his father, which overlooks the fertile valley of the “Aguas Blancas” (“White Waters”) river. Located on the Eastern slope of a rather steep mountain, it is surrounded by almond trees, olive trees, fig trees, rosemary, thyme, and various kinds of rocks and conglomerates with capricious shapes and colors.

The ways of life of the people of this valley are somewhat akin to the ways of life of other peoples living in small rural communities all over the world. These peoples continue, in their own ways, ancestral traditions, most of which are rapidly changing—sometimes disappearing—under the pressure of industrial progress and civilization.

Despite my frequent visits to my relatives in Quéntar, until very recently, I was unaware of the excellence of their way of life. Fully immersed in city life, enjoying one of the common middle-class European lifestyles *produced* by the industrial revolution and some correlated habits, educated in the basic ideologies associated with rationalism and industrial progress, and a collaborator with the consumer society, I shared with other urban, career-oriented people a tendency to regard these rural, ecological ways of life, and the attitudes towards life related to them, as “primitive,” “inferior,” and “undesirable,” compared to the enormous professional possibilities and the large amount of commodities I had living in Madrid, capital of a developed Western European country. However, since 1991, a growing interest in “primitive” ways of life aroused in me, an interest that, as I have recently found, is shared by other Westerners, including urbanites of various kinds, intellectuals and artists.

As a result of my interest in the ways of life of the Sierra Nevada communities, I now combine, like some of my neighbors, agricultural activities with other kind of endeavors, in my case of artistic nature. Whereas the former are activities of seasonal nature and require a settled kind of life, the latter ones lead me to live a sort of nomadic existence at particular times of the year. At the present time, being involved in a "modulation" between two different ways of life, I find it necessary to combine both realms of activity. Nevertheless, I believe this to be a transitional period, leading to a deeper, more stable engagement with my local community in Quéntar.

With the limited perspective of a newcomer to this community, I find my current life more fulfilling and inspiring than the one I enjoyed in past years, living in comparatively good apartment buildings in Madrid (and for four years in La Jolla), and working with fixed schedules as an employee of various educational institutions. However, in my present situation I often have to face arduous problems of both ethical and practical nature. Indeed, I am frequently confronted with numerous challenges raised by the fact that the basic demands of the current markets of musical production and trade (in which I have been so far making a living) are, in general, very difficult (if not impossible) to satisfy by musicians of a remote, rural community like mine. For instance, if I wished to keep a stable position in any one of these markets, I will probably have to establish a basic infrastructure (a telephone, regular and electronic mail, a computer, a bank account, a playback system of cassettes and compact discs, etc.) and keep it updated, which is much more time consuming, costly and difficult in an isolated place than in a city. In some cases, the demands of the cultural markets are just incompatible with my ethical principles. For example, I may be, eventually, pressed to

assume certain attitudes and perform various acts commonly required in these markets which conflict with my morals, such as: to compete in contests, to present a candidacy for a prize or an institutional position, to judge or select other peers in competition, to establish more or less temporary alliances with some people against others (which, sometimes may be based more on circumstantial interest than on essential affinity), to develop a minimum of marketing skills, to fake affection or interest for personal gain, to join a guild of professional specialists, to claim the money produced by author's rights, to spend time attending events of dubious interest, to accept nominations, awards or gifts from institutions or corporations I dislike, etc...

In order to fulfill my deeply felt desire to share my ideas and abilities with other people outside my local community, it is necessary for me to find appropriate connections and suitable milieus *within* the current socio-cultural system, although they will likely exist only in peripheral locations. These comments attempt to provide the reader with different elements to speculate about the viability of some of my ideas and proposals, if the hegemonic concept of "artist" within post-industrial societies remains basically unaltered.

II. THE BASES OF THE ELEMENTARY INTERACTIVE PIECES: "THROUGH THE AIR, WITH THE WATER, OF THE EARTH, IN THE FIRE, ETHER"

The core of this dissertation comprises a variety of performances of what I occasionally refer to as "the elementary interactive pieces." These pieces originated from my interest in addressing, in a playful, thorough manner both my own relations and those of the communities I consider myself with the air, the water, the earth, the fire, and the ether, these being the natural elements upon which our lives depend. These relations occur in countless, interdependent and everchanging ways to be surveyed prior to each performance and played with while it lasts, according to each context and to the circumstances. Albeit titles are not always used for the performances, occasionally, these pieces are identified, in public presentations, as: *through the air, with the water, of the earth, in the fire, and ether.*

One of the main premises of these pieces is that anyone can actively participate in them without any type of rehearsal. Indeed, from the very beginning, I wanted to encourage every attendant to each event to get actively involved in the performance, in a coordinated way, with the hope that most (if not all) performers will be able to adopt a playful, spontaneous attitude and observe two basic principles: to be as respectful, sensitive, and responsive as possible and to rely on common sense according to each context and circumstances. One of my goals is to foster collective interaction so that everyone who wants to share questions, sounds, thoughts, movements, gestures, etc. has a chance to do so, much like the kind of interaction I have enjoyed in some intimate wedding parties in California and during the traditional celebrations of festivities such as

La Cruz de Mayo in Granada, Spain. Thus, I think of my settings as a mixture of ritual and game.

A. <<REW

The indeterminate, ambiguous nature of my compositional premises together with my purpose of creating a relationship with the performer(s) (and among us/themselves) based upon suggestion rather than demand, upon seduction rather than conviction, rendered unsatisfactory my initial attempts to establish a vaguely fixed referential framework in the form of a more or less conventional score.

Indeed, the early scores I wrote were based on expressions of the kind “it is recommended to use this” or “it is recommended to do that,” which despite my efforts to present them as proposals ended up sounding more like commands (if one’s performance was to be related to my score at all). The following is an example of one of my attempts to notate my compositional ideas:

Participants:

any number of individuals who have agreed in advance to participate and are familiar with the score (coordinators); and any number of individuals who may not have agreed in advance to participate but who are willing to do it, according to two basic principles: to be as respectful, sensitive, and responsive as possible and to rely on common sense according to each context and circumstances.

Environment:

the performance space should be healthy and inspiring;

a modest supply of sound food and drinks is recommended.

Recommended participants:

any number of sound equipment coordinators;
any number of light equipment coordinators; and
the presence of a wide variety of life forms.

Optional equipment:

one or two microphones plus the necessary amplification
equipment
(with additional sound processing equipment if desired), and
a lighting system able to span most (if not all) of the performing
space.

Proposals:

Prior to the performance, it is recommended that the coordinators
thoroughly survey and reflect upon some or all of the following:
the traditions, habits, beliefs, attitudes, concerns, physical
features, behavioral patterns, gestures, rituals, laws, songs,
words, sayings, artifacts, signs, etc. related to the air, the water,
the earth, and the fire that exist in the community or
communities of those who are more likely to participate in the
performance;
how their ways of life depend upon, relate to, and affect the
characteristics of their environment(s);
the context and circumstances of the performance;
the attitudes and actions related to the air, the water, the earth,
and the fire of those who work with you in the preparation of the

performance, plus the ways in which decisions are taken and roles assigned; and

the connections between the above mentioned factors and the characteristics of the performing space and its environment.

Your collaboration, to your fullest capabilities, both in the publicizing of the event and in the setting up of equipment, furniture, etc. is highly recommended.

During the performance, it is recommended:

to use both your own background and your knowledge of the host community

or communities to play with, comment upon, parody, etc. the relations with the air, the water, the earth, the fire, and the ether, and among the members themselves both in your community (or communities) and in the host one(s);

to allow plenty of time for the other participants to interact with your actions, emphasizing the collective nature of the event;

to minimize, erase, or subvert any unidirectional hierarchical relationship that, in any dimension, might be expected or established among the participants, giving priority to the contributions of those who are less likely to be given a chance to make public their ideas; and

to be responsive to any reaction of the participants of the performance or to actions originated in the surroundings.

After the performance, it is recommended:

to allow plenty of time for other participants to dialogue and/or interact with you and among themselves;

to collaborate, to your fullest capabilities, in the picking up of equipment, furniture, trash, etc.;

to reflect upon the effect of the performance on the host community/ies, on its/their environment/s, and on yourself; and
to re-evaluate, at the light of this experience, your way of life, your attitudes towards others, your relations with your environment(s), and your habits.

After long consideration, I chose to elaborate a collection of descriptions both of my ideas and of actual realizations of them, instead of designing a *pre-established* code of actions aiming at its possible execution by *others*, like conventional scores do. Therefore, my scores are, primarily, *memories* of my own past experiences, but not *indications* for others to perform any actions, although they may be taken by myself and by others as *orientations* for future experiences.

In these interactive pieces, both the elements used and the actions performed depend upon the expected players, the particular context of each presentation and the circumstances of each player at every moment. I encourage each player to be as respectful, sensitive and responsive to the other players and to the environment as possible, in whatever ways one wants to be. In my experience so far, the more interaction among the participants before, during, and after the game the better.

The whole cycle, as we have played it to date, is based upon five sets of actions, concepts and materials ascribed to the five elements in a more or less arbitrary fashion. These five sets are called "Personal Performing Premises" (P.P.P.). Each set suggests to me a realm of attitudes, actions, and/or materials that can be adopted, undertaken, and/or used at any time either alone or, more frequently, in combination with other attitudes, actions, and/or materials from other

sets. For example, "air" is identified by "speech" and "earth" by "drones," so, whenever I sing a drone using a text I am being "earth" and "air" at the same time. Moreover, if the text revolves around the sea, for instance, I would be "water" as well. If I were to play percussions on my body while speaking and dancing around the game I would be "water," "air," and "fire" at the same time. These pieces can be presented in different combinations: as single pieces, in pairs, trios, quartets or quintet. Personally, I like to perform various pieces together, showing various interactions with one another, rather than just one in (theoretical) isolation from the rest. When two or more are performed together, I prefer to juxtapose and/or superimpose sections of all of them rather than playing one after another.

In past presentations I have considered the staging (particularly the place and position of the people who come to the event as "audience"), the lighting, clothing and food as fundamentals aspects of each performance. My goal is to foster a sense of community and ritual, to be inspiring in order to stimulate creative participation. Those aspects were determined, case by case, depending upon the participants involved, the location, the time, the season, etc. In my experience, these pieces have been most rewarding when played by individuals (humans, animals, plants, rocks, and artifacts) well acquainted with one another, in the countryside, in quiet places with clean water, pure air, soft soil, beginning right before dawn, before dusk or with full moon, and with a comfortable temperature.

When playback equipment has been available, my own versions of *through the air* and *with the water* have usually included two sets of recorded materials: for *through the air* I utilize the spontaneous opinions of my son, my mother, my father's mother, one of my father's sisters, Jane's mother, and the mother of Jane's father; for *with the water*

I sometimes use recordings of either my own compositions (soundtracks, concert music, songs, etc.) and interpretations of Spanish folk songs by Jane and I. For *in the fire*, I sometimes use a set of colored ribbons representing flames.

I began the composition of *through the air* with the assumption that air is “something shared” by people of all imaginable categories as well as with (and among) animals, plants, machines, rocks, etc. In addition, I thought of “air” as an “object” managed by various institutions for whom it can (and has to) be defined, analyzed, regulated by laws, delimited in international conventions, etc. The same could be said of the other elements. However, in past presentations, neither my concerns nor my opinions are actually voiced, but rather those of my family, the technicians and other members of the supporting team of each concert, and the audience. Nevertheless, hearing over and over the opinions of my grandmother, my mother and my son gave me important clues about my education and personality to the extent that I feel like it is *me* who speaks. In fact, I consider the tape with their voices as an exploration on my own identity. It was also a great pleasure to play with their voices on this piece—initially commissioned “for tape alone”—which was realized in a dark, noisy, and artificially ventilated computer laboratory.

The “water” piece has usually been performed in conjunction with the “fire” piece as a mixture of dancing, playing, clapping, and tapping two kinds of musics: works of mine (pre-recorded or live) and/or improvisations. This piece gives the participants a chance to share with the rest any danceable music of any kind they may have composed. The basic metaphor of this piece is to consider our bodies like masses of water which interact with others as well as with the surroundings in multiple ways.

In my early performances with children from Madrid, three groups of interchangeable performers were established: controllers of the music, water performers, and fire performers. Prior to the performance, each participant chose both a group and, for water and fire performers, a state within the group. The water performers danced and played in one spot according to three basic states: vapor (vaporous dance, vocal sounds), water (fluid activity, tapping on one's own body and/or on somebody else's, including animals, plants and other animated beings), and ice (statue-like appearance, percussions on the walls, floors, rocks and other inanimate beings). Fire performers carried 1 to 2 meter long ribbons in three basic tonalities blue, yellow, and red, corresponding to three basic states of low, medium and high temperatures that correspond to the degree of mobility around the performing space. At any time, a fire performer could throw the ribbon away and become a water performer. It could also become an air, an ether, or an earth performer. A water performer in a vapor state could grab a ribbon left by a fire performer and become a fire performer. Depending upon one's own reaction to either the music (or its absence) and the surroundings (i.e. the states of one's neighbors) a performer could change state.

Once the performers had chosen an initial group and state, one of the musical sources available was played (live or playback) and both the water and the fire performers began dancing to it quietly. After a while, the music faded out and the water dancers began reproducing the music just heard, performing a certain amount of sounds corresponding to each one's state: iced performers played occasional sounds, liquefied performers played about half of the sounds, and vaped performers played as many as possible. The fire dancers moved around always in silence. After a while, a different

music faded in cueing the water performers to fade out their sound making and to adapt their dancing to the new musical features, and so on and so forth.

These performances with children fostered a plurality of apparently chaotic rhythms, movements, and tones (not unlike the sound of rain or a water current), yet each participant was asked to have a clear sense of his/her/its own actions as well as an awareness of the actions of his/her/its neighbors.

The first public presentation of *of the earth* took place alone, without any other piece of the cycle, and consisted basically of singing and/or playing very slowly (usually 8 to 32 times slower) any song, preferably so-called children's songs, keeping the proportions among the notes as accurate as possible. Children's songs are preferred for their effectiveness in bringing back memories and triggering affections. Besides, they are usually anonymous creations, rather the works of individual authors. If text was to be delivered, both phonemes and transitions between phonemes were to be performed very slowly, including consonants if possible. As I expected, this performance resulted in a polytonal, polyrhythmic, polyglot sort of motet which brought relaxation and playfulness to many members of the audience of a panel called "Paths for the Year 2000" on the future of "serious music," including some eminent academic Spanish composers such as Cristóbal Halffter and Tomás Marco. This performance is described in chapter III.

Initially, the "fire" piece was inspired by personal speculations upon such concepts as life, death, change, and revolution. Its origin is also somewhat related to both the sun and the inner flame each living being is supposed to have. Presented alone, I usually perform it as a frantic, silent dance aiming at trance and exhaustion. I rehearse it

slowly, since it requires a special training of the muscles, of breathing and a very good sense of balance. I have frequently experienced how painful it can be to dance frantically for a certain time, as I can hardly walk or move for four days after an intense rehearsal.

Inspired in ancient beliefs about outer space and related to my ideas about the imaginary, the piece called *ether* is about silence, meditation, listening and not-thinking.

To date, the three public performances of this whole cycle, including the five elements, have all taken place in La Jolla, with the collaboration of friends from the University of California at San Diego, and are documented in the enclosed video tape. They ended when the last participant performing an action related to it stopped considering himself/herself/itself a participant in that particular presentation. By then, other participants involved in the beginning of the performance had ended minutes earlier. For future performances I foresee the possibility of some performers ending hours or even years later than others. The duration of these pieces is not pre-established in any way, although in some cases it may be to the advantage of the performers to establish a temporal framework for a particular presentation. Each player decides when to stop considering himself/herself/itself a player of a particular presentation. Indeed, fully involved in the creation/playing of this cycle as I am, I frequently feel a non-stop player since January 1994. Nevertheless, there have been effective indications of endings for the conventional public presentations held to date. These endings were consensuated by a majority of the participants (including the audience) who disrupted a long silence with loud, uncoordinated handclapping: the conventional sign of the end of a performance.

Playing these pieces has been very rewarding to me when there were deep-rooted affinities (or, at least, a high compatibility) among the players and/or when the attendants to a game dealt with their (not always optimistic) surprise and curiosity with a ludic, flexible attitude. Playing with seriously rigid players—as has been the case with some prominent members of the academic musical community of Spain—has also been rewarding for me, but apparently not so much for most academic musicians I have tried to play with, who, apparently, were unable to adopt a playful, spontaneous attitude and therefore had a hard time listening and being respectful, sensitive, and responsive.

B. REC •

I think of these pieces as inspirational seeds for reflection and/or action whether individual or collective, leading towards real, imaginary, virtual or any other type of communication and/or interaction. With these interactive pieces, I dream of helping to promote an exchange that could foster a more lively awareness of one's *way of life* and its impact on both oneself and one's own environment, hopefully leading to long-term individual, collective, and environmental improvements. According to the reviews of former players, the games have been successful in providing a fertile ground for reflection and interaction.

Before every performance, I reflect upon the following questions, which help me initiate a survey of personal and social relations with the five elements. They are also intended to provide a referential framework for other potential performers.

through the air

What is the air for you?

And what was it yesterday?

And what do you believe it will be tomorrow?

What do you believe is the air for your family?

And for your ancestors?

And for your descendants?

What do you believe is the air for your friends?

What do they say about it?

What do you believe is the air for your animals?

What do you believe is the air for your plants?

And for your rocks?

And for your stars?

What do you believe is the air for your communities?

And for the political institutions of your communities?

And for the religious institutions of your communities?

And for the financial institutions of your communities?

And for the educational institutions of your communities?

To what extent is the air important to you?

To what extent do you care about breathing?

with the water

What is the water for you?

And what was it yesterday?

And what do you believe it will be tomorrow?

What do you believe is the water for your family?

And for your ancestors?

And for your descendants?

What do you believe is the water for your friends?

What do they say about it?

What do you believe is the water for your animals?

What do you believe is the water for your plants?

And for your rocks?

And for your stars?

What do you believe is the water for your communities?

And for the political institutions of your communities?

And for the religious institutions of your communities?

And for the financial institutions of your communities?

And for the educational institutions of your communities?

To what extent is the water important to you?

To what extent do you care about reproducing yourself?

of the earth

What is the earth for you?

And what was it yesterday?

And what do you believe it will be tomorrow?

What do you believe is the earth for your family?

And for your ancestors?

And for your descendants?

What do you believe is the earth for your friends?

What do they say about it?

What do you believe is the earth for your animals?

What do you believe is the earth for your plants?

And for your rocks?

And for your stars?

What do you believe is the earth for your communities?

And for the political institutions of your communities?

And for the religious institutions of your communities?

And for the financial institutions of your communities?

And for the educational institutions of your communities?

To what extent is the earth important to you?

To what extent do you care about your neighbors?

in the fire

What is the fire for you?

And what was it yesterday?

And what do you believe it will be tomorrow?

What do you believe is the fire for your family?

And for your ancestors?

And for your descendants?

What do you believe is the fire for your friends?

What do they say about it?

What do you believe is the fire for your animals?

What do you believe is the fire for your plants?

And for your rocks?

And for your stars?

What do you believe is the fire for your communities?

And for the political institutions of your communities?

And for the religious institutions of your communities?

And for the financial institutions of your communities?

And for the educational institutions of your communities?

To what extent is fire important to you?

To what extent do you care about your death?

ether

What is the ether for you?

And what was it yesterday?

And what do you believe it will be tomorrow?

What do you believe is the ether for your family?

And for your ancestors?

And for your descendants?

What do you believe is the ether for your friends?

What do they say about it?

What do you believe is the ether for your animals?

What do you believe is the ether for your plants?

And for your rocks?

And for your stars?

What do you believe is the ether for your communities?

And for the political institutions of your communities?

And for the religious institutions of your communities?

And for the financial institutions of your communities?

And for the educational institutions of your communities?

To what extent is the ether important to you?

To what extent do you care about not existing?

Personal performing premises

I use this set of premises as inspirational seeds and metaphors that trigger a variety of thoughts, feelings, sounds, movements, and various psychosomatic states. Furthermore, they help me focus my performing activities.

Air

Basic elements in performance: **speech, languages.**

Performing character: unpretentious, clear, spontaneous.

People: airplane crews and supporting teams, hang-gliders, dreamers, ear-nose-and-throat physicians, air administrators, yoga practitioners.

Animals: birds, bees, flies, grasshoppers, butterflies, moths, eagles, vultures.

Plants: pollen, fragrances, reeds, pine-trees, almond trees, olive trees, fig trees.

Rocks: dust, meteorites.

Artifacts: wind musical instruments, organ, pipes, fans.

Machines: wind machines, air conditioning, electric fans.

Sounds: erratic rhythms and phrasing, multidirectionality, crescendo, diminuendo, wind-like behavior (gusty, blast, smooth breeze).

Musical quotes: airs; songs, symphonic poems, etudes, preludes, etc. about air.

Texts: related poems, stories, news (paper, TV, radio, etc.), essays, movies.

Popular expressions: in the air, on the air, up in the air.

Actions: being born, breathe, smell, smoke, blow, whistle, sigh, burp, sneeze, fart, snore, fly, acrobatics, juggle, sweep, dry clothes, desiccate food, levitate, asphyxiate, interpenetrate, pollute, envelope.

Parts of the body: nose, mouth, trachea, lungs, skin, ears, butt, neck, hair.

Philosophical concepts: appearance, invisibility, transparency, ambition (of reputation rather than of material objects).

Objects: woodwind and brass instruments, airplane, balloon, kite, air conditioning, air bag, air mail, automobile and bicycle tires.

Qualities: clean, dirty, fragrant, poisonous, asphyxiating.

Lights: all colors from blinding white to pitch black, transparent.

Temperature: all temperatures from deadly cold to deadly hot.

Humidity: from very dry (0%) to soaking wet (around 99%).

Foods and drinks: eggs, poultry, pollen, spices, carbonated beverages, some snacks and breakfast cereals, flatulent foods (beans, cauliflower).

Water

Basic elements in performance: **percussions on the body, percussive sounds with the mouth.**

Performing character: erotic.

People: plumbers, chemists, sailors, scuba divers, surfers, physicians, water administrators.

Animals: trout, dolphins, whales, beavers, fish, starfish, crayfish, ducks, frogs, seals, jellyfish, corals.

Plants: seaweed, agar, anemones, plankton.

Rocks: of the seas, of the rivers.

Artifacts: water gongs, pots, glasses, bottles, straws, umbrella.

Machines: ship, submarine, surf-board.

Sounds: direction(s) affected by gravity (including the tonic of a mode or a tonality), sound envelopes with sharp attacks like drops but also smooth like the ocean.

Musical quotes: courantes; songs, etudes, preludes, symphonic poems, etc. about rain, tears, the sea, rivers, lakes.

Texts: related poems, stories, news (paper, TV, radio, etc.), essays, movies.

Popular expressions: to hold water, to wet the bed.

Actions: drink, wash, clean, swim, rain, surf, splash, most sexual activities, sweat, piss, dive, pollute, water plants, spit, cry, sniffle, sneeze, to have a runny nose, to burglarize the US Democratic Party headquarters (as in "Watergate"), to defeat French troops (as in "Waterloo") like Greenpeace currently pretends in the Southern Pacific.

Parts of the body: eyes, glands, mouth, nose, skin, sexual organs, hands, heart.

Philosophical concepts: fertility, fluidity, adaptability, prenatal life.

Objects: percussion instruments, bottle, pipe, a glass, spoon, pot, pan, hose, boat, surf board, waterbed, bathtub, shells, faucet.

Quality: clean, dirty, fragrant, poisonous.

Lights: colorless, transparent (drinking water), all colors: white (milk), blue (sea), green (sea, pond), red (blood, tomato juice, wine), golden (beer), orange (orange juice).

Temperature: from freezing to boiling. Humidity: around 100%.

Foods and drinks: virtually everything; fish, water chestnut, watermelon.

Earth

Basic elements in performance: drones, cycles.

Performing character: serene.

People: farmer, bone specialist, house and road constructors, land administrators.

Animals: spiders, ants, cats, worms, donkeys, monkeys, horses, cows, goats, scorpions, snakes, lizards, gophers.

Plants: almond trees, olive trees, walnut trees, persimmon trees, fig trees, poplars, pine trees, tomato plants, peppers, lettuces, eggplants, carrots.

Rocks: fossils, dirt, granite, rolling stones, diamonds, jewels, sand, dust.

Artifacts: plow, shovel, broom.

Machines: tractor, car, truck, van.

Sounds: slow singing and/or playing; playing with rocks, wooden objects, reeds, etc.; steady rhythms; linearity; texture; cyclical events; low frequencies.

Musical quotes: songs, etudes, preludes, symphonic poems, etc. about earth, land, home, harvest, etc.

Texts: related poems, stories, news (paper, TV, radio, etc.), essays, movies.

Popular expressions: down to earth, grounded.

Actions: bury, seed, plow, walk, run, sit, stand, lie, dig, cultivate, smell, step on, gravity, gymnastics, sweep, pollute.

Parts of the body: feet, hands, skeleton, hair, finger nails, butt.

Philosophical concepts: identity, origin, property, border, home, fertility, solidity, structure, heaviness, organic, practical, ambition (of material objects).

Objects: string instruments, shovel, plow, bulldozer, house, gems, pottery.

Qualities: clean, dirty, fragrant, poisonous, soft, hard, fertile, barren.

Lights: all colors from blinding white to pitch black.

Temperature: all temperatures from deadly cold to deadly hot.

Humidity: from very dry (0%) to soaking wet (a lot %).

Foods and drinks: all natural (as opposed to synthetic) foods..

Fire

Basic element in performance: **movement.**

Performing character: ardent, luminous, brilliant.

People: fire fighter, military personnel, nuclear bomb tester, garbage incinerator.

Animals: fire fly, dragon.

Plants: burnt and dry wood.

Rocks: lava, vulcanos, flint.

Artifacts: match, lighter, candle, stove, lamp, oven.

Machines: power plants, electric oven.

Sounds: non-intentional sounds, sinuosity.

Musical quotes: songs, etudes, preludes, symphonic poems, etc. about fire; pieces with indications like: con fuoco, con brio.

Texts: related poems, stories, news (paper, TV, radio, etc.), essays, movies.

Popular expressions: fire in the eyes, to be on fire, to be under fire.

Actions: change, burn, melt, attack, smell, blow, asphyxiate, bake, cook, explode, lay off/lose job, purify, kill.

Parts of the body: skin, nerves, aura, heart, sexual organs, feverish head, upset stomach.

Philosophical concepts: change, revolution, destruction, fear, Hell, purity.

Objects: lighter, candle, matches, fireworks, coal, wood, oil, oven, fireplace, ashes, sparks.

Qualities: smoky, glowing, magic, fragrant, asphyxiating.

Lights: all colors from blinding white to pitch black.

Temperature: high temperatures. Humidity: around 0%.

Foods and drinks: spices (pepper, cayenne pepper, jalapeños, etc.), cooked foods and hot beverages, alcoholic beverages, drugs.

Ether

Basic element of performance: **silence**

Performing character: mystical, non-rational.

People: astronauts, astronomers, priest(esse)s, gurus, martians.

Animals: centaurs, unicorns, hydras.

Plants: unknown.

Artifacts: unknown.

Machines: U.F.O.s.

Sounds: of ethereal nature, silence.

Musical quotes: songs, etudes, preludes, symphonic poems, etc. about ether and ethereal things.

Texts: related poems, stories, news (paper, TV, radio, etc.), essays, movies.

Popular expressions: ethereal.

Actions: listening, not thinking, purposeful purposelessness, imaginary.

Parts of the body: supernatural (maybe the soul?).

Philosophical concepts: all encompassing nothingness, God, eternity, infinite, timelessness, paradox, Heaven, emptiness.

Objects: of ethereal nature.

Qualities: imaginary.

Lights: cosmic (from black holes to supernovas).

Temperature and humidity: imaginary.

Foods and drinks: of ethereal nature.

C. FF>>

The main focus of my descriptions is the relations among people and other living beings, yet the generic titles of the pieces of this cycle refer to the basic elements of life: the air, the water, the earth, the fire, and ether. Basic in the lives of people, animals, plants, and rocks, I regard these elements also as life. From my point of view, the grouping of interactions among living beings around their basic elements has the advantage of keeping the categorization process of activities within the realm of life without exclusively anthropocentric distinctions of the life forms involved. Furthermore, my titles have a vaguely poetic flavor which manifests an important aspect of my texts. Instances of groupings around other referents, resulting in different titles, might have been done in the following ways: performances with family, or between humans and animals, or in the winter, or related to food.

The tone of my scores is essentially spontaneous and intimate, like annotations in a diary. Indeed, in the process of transcribing to paper the thoughts aroused and the emotions felt during the selected interactions, "spontaneity" has been preferred to a more "formal" attitude, due both to my character and to the nature of the activities described. Moreover, my election of a general "writing attitude" of this nature occurred after long and careful consideration both of the

community this text is prepared for and of my aspiration that it be accepted as a doctoral dissertation.

According to several commentaries by prominent members of my academic community, ideally, a doctoral candidate in musical composition has to achieve a *unique* creativity and a *unique* artistic personality and demonstrate both by means of a "major work." Being unable to know the reader's estimation of the uniqueness of my texts, I believe that, in general, the more spontaneous one's expression is the more unique it may result. In this regard, formality seems counterproductive for it implies conforming to a conventional homogenization of one's own tone. Moreover, the "diary" type of tone was chosen for its explicit particularity and momentariness: it frames the "performances" within the specific context and circumstances where they occurred, clearly in the past, and totally devoid of any desire on my part to either repeat them or be repeated literally. In this regard, I would like to explain that, while it has been a common practice of mine, as a composer, to notate more or less fixed codes of actions in the form of musical scores aiming at their possible repetition, these descriptions respond to different premises, attitudes, and purposes already explained.

It may seem paradoxical that, despite its focus upon the "personal" and its diary type of tone, I have placed emphasis upon those activities and aspects of my life susceptible of being extrapolated by others, in relatively diverse situations and contexts. As stated above, my texts attempt to *inspire* the reader, providing examples that may induce a variety of actions, suggest certain attitudes, seduce, etc. They are not intended to command any determined action, they do not demand any specific set up or equipment, expect any response (except,

perhaps, that someone reads them), aspire to convince anyone, or serve as a record of something to be repeated.

My basic tool for stimulating the imagination of the potential performers and for providing an adequate inspiration is *metaphor*. The reason for this is that I often find metaphor very inspiring and useful in my own understanding of life and the world. In this regard, I agree with philosopher Mark Johnson who, in *The body in the mind*, makes the following assertions:

To make sense of our experience we also need ways to understand one domain of experience in terms of structures from a domain of a different kind, that is, we need *metaphor*. And we often need to understand one aspect of a single domain in terms of another aspect of that domain, that is, we need metonymy—as when we need to understand a whole in terms of a part of that whole, or in terms of some related attribute.

[...]

There is no aspect of our understanding that is independent of the nature of the human organism [...] Understanding is an event—it is not merely a body of beliefs (though it includes our beliefs). It is the means by which we have a shared, relatively intelligible world. The basic epistemological finding of this “experientialist” approach is that knowledge must be understood in terms of structures of embodied human understanding, as an interaction of a human organism with its environment (which includes its language, cultural traditions, values, institutions, and the history of its social community). This finding is set within a realist conception of the world and our understanding as part of the world (p. 209).

With regards to my ideas about the possible “repetition” of some of these performances—concretely in the way that most

machines and artifacts are expected to (or thought of) perform(ing) it—my texts would rather be the opposite: a record of something not to be *repeated*, something that was done by certain people at a certain time and in a certain place. If a record of a performance is made, it may help that performance be remembered—perhaps to be used as a reference. A performance should not be repeated, it should rather be “recreated,” and, hopefully, “re-enjoyed.”

III. PERFORMANCES

A. CONCERTS

1. Alicante 1994

On September 19th, 1994, *through the air*—with the title *al aire* (“to the air”)—was premiered in the 10th International Festival of Contemporary Music of Alicante (Spain), the best funded festival of its kind in Spain, organized by the Center for Contemporary Music of the Spanish Ministry of Culture, located in Madrid. In January of that year, this institution had commissioned from me “a work for tape alone, to be included in a computer music concert, which should be realized at L.I.E.M.,” their computer music laboratory. At the time of this commission, I was living in Las Rozas, a suburb of Madrid, enjoying an intense, inspiring relationship with a splendid, solitary tree of the surroundings. The idea of traveling frequently to hectic, polluted Madrid to work on a “tape piece” was repulsive. Moreover, the mere idea of working with technology—including conventional acoustic instruments—was even problematic and also not appealing to me. To make things more difficult, the computer laboratory where I *had* to make the piece was dark, artificially ventilated and subjected to rigid schedules and strict security regulations.

After long consideration, I decided to accept their commission: the first in my life coming from the Government of my country, which I took as a “welcome back” gesture on their part, after my four year stay in the U.S. pursuing graduate studies in music. But the principal reason why I accepted was that I found a satisfactory solution to the requirement of composing for tape alone: to use the voices of people I

love profoundly speaking about something so important and necessary that is frequently taken for granted: the air. In addition, I was able to “add” two performers for the concert (as long as they were “free”), and, secretly, I thought of inviting to perform whoever came to the event as “audience.” These premises made this commission acceptable.

I thought that the people I would record should be individuals I feel very close to (as opposed to interviewing people in the streets or in a television studio, for instance), and people who had never had a chance to speak in public, concretely in front of an (expectedly) attentive audience. Finally, I chose my grandmother, my mother, and my son. For some time, I considered recording my brother, my sister, and a very good friend, but they did not pass my personal “public voice” test: my brother is a musician and engineer whose voice has been on national television (in commercials) and currently is on millions of slot machines all over Spain; my sister is a physicist specialized in air through books at a university (rather than *through the air* itself), plus she had a radio program broadcast by the National Radio (R.N.E. 3) for two years; and my friend, Rafael Luque, a pianist in the past, had participated in several records of his uncle, a reputed composer.

Thus, the basic content of the tape part of this piece consists of the voices of my grandmother (“helped” by my aunt Ascensión who lives with her), my mother, and my son answering spontaneously to the question: what is “air” for you? Bits of their speeches were processed using the phase vocoder designed by Mark Dolson at the Computer Audio Research Laboratory (U.C.S.D.) which I used to stretch some of their key words, from four to two hundred times their original duration. The recordings were realized between March and

May, 1994, and the computer processing between May and July. The tape was in two sections that could be played in any order, but Jane and I had an inclination to begin with the part that starts with my grandmother and end with the part that includes my son.

The texts included in the tape that we used as the basis for this performance were as follows:

Conversations held between March and May, 1994:

R: Rafael Liñán Vallecillos; A: Ascensión Nievas (the mother of Rafael's father); P: Pilar Vallecillos (Rafael's mother); AL: Ascensión Liñán (the sister of Rafael's father); and E: Eduardo Liñán (Rafael's son).

Please, note that these written transcriptions respect both the phonetic peculiarities of the speakers, which not always conform to proper pronunciation, and their reiterations and elongations of words:

R: Bueno abuela, pués dígame usté: el aire qué, qué lee, qué le sugiere.

A: ¿El aire? Pué una cosa muy sencilla: el aire e' mu bueno, pa respirar, pero hay vece' que e' muy peligroso, da miedo del aire, porque se siente mucho ruido, porque te impone... cuando el aire está fuerte, pués te impone...

R: 'mhum

A: ¡Claro!

P: Bueno pués ¿del aire...qué te voy a contar yo del aire? Hombre, algunas veces es muy molesto, porque vas por la calle y, aparte de lo peligroso que puede ser que te pueda caer algo en la cabeza, de que se desprenda unaa cornisa ooo un tiesto de una maceta o de cualquier

cosa... pero bueno sin el aire tampoco podríamos vivir, es tan necesario comooo comooo, pues no sé, como el agua o como cualquier cosa así, tan necesaria que no podríamos vivir sin él.

R: ¿Aquí en Quéntar, ss' hay viento fuerte..?

A: Sí, hay ve'...vece'...

R: ¿Sí?

AL: En mi casa e' algo horrible...

R: ¿En la nueva?

AL: allí, 'khumh, cuando seeee hay una noche de viento, no sé si es porque hay unos saliente' de los vecino' y... silba el aire allí como en esas películas de miedo...

A: Se siente...

AL: ...que hacen eso' ruidos...

A: si va'...

AL: mira, es que es uuuuuuuuh uuuh...pero que no tiene que estar muy ff, vamos noo necesita estar muy fuerte para que se oiga allí así.

A: Sí.

P: Perooo...si es muy fuerteee puede molestarnos yyy incluso ya no digamos de destrozó' y cosas que puede hacer, como arrancar árbole'...uummm...tirar uuunn tejado ooo...yo qué sé, volarrr cosas... Puede ser desastroso, si es muy fuerte. Pero vamos queee el aire... pues no sé, nos refresca sii en el verano hace mucho calor y viene uunn un airecito, una brisita pues nos refresca yy nos puede hasta beneficiar. Ya te digo que es una cosa tan necesaria que no podríamos vivir sin él.

R: mmh'm

A: Pa ezo zi te parece que haa llorao un chiquilloo o que haa dao una voz una persona y ya estás, con la cabeza levantá de la almohada viendo a ver...

AL: de dónde viene esee...

A: ...si hay peligro en la calle o le paza a arguien argo...pué sí.

P: Yym... no sé, pués, no sé qué más decirte...es quee del aire ¿qué te puedo decir?

R: ¿Recuerdas...

P: j'mm, j'mmm

R: ...alguna historia, algúuun hecho en tu vidaa que te haya pasao con amigos o con, conn nosotros...

P: No, de hecho así...

R: la familia y tal, del aire?

P: ...bueno hace unos años iba yo con Eduardo precisamente bajábamo' en el ascensor eenn al jardín, y de pronto un ruido espantoso. Salimos corriendo a ver lo que pasaba, porque oímo' un ruidoo c', pero bueno uuuna cosaaa... y era que había caído un árbol, porque habi haz se levantó un huracón, un huracán tan fuerte que se cayó el un árbol encima de un coche y el toldo dee... de Rosa se looo voló también, se lo llevó el aire, en fin una cosa desastrosa... Pero vamo', esto es lo más reciente, pero yo así de mi niñez no recuerdoo...aparte deee que se vuele alguuuna teja de los tejado' y eso, noo no recuerdo yo ninguna cosa grave ni...

A: ¿Qué ma' o' cuento del aire? Que tiene una vecina una perziana...

R: (risa)

A: ...y cuando empieza la perziana, pue' está' diciendo: ¿estará alguien subiendooo...

R: por la escalera

A: ...por la paré?

AL: No...

A: Claro.

AL: ...por nuestra paré no puede subir nadie.

A: Por nuestra paré no pueden, ni en niguna parte pueden por la paré.

AL: No, en otros sitios sí, porque si hay reja' pueden subir, pero en la nuestra no.

A: pueden subir pero a la nuestra no, perooo...

P: Si está' en una habitación cerrada ooo pasaras mucho tiempo, yo que tengo hasta mi problema deee de asma, pués yo creo quee.. que vamos no resistiría mucho tiempo sin abrir una ventana o rro respirar, o respirar aire.

R: Muy bien.

P: Para mí e' e' fundamental.

* * * * *

R: No se trata deee...

A: Bueno, una vez pasó en Quéntar una cosa que aquello fue únicaa ve'. Estaba yo todavía mozuela, mira a ver cuánto' año' hace, y estaban...tenía trapo' tendió' en la era, en la era 'el pilar, yyy se levantó un huracán de aire, que e' lo que me dice' que cuente, y en el cerrillo de lo' almirece' que está al lao allá del río, cuandoo salgamo' a la calle yo te voy a decir: "¡el cerro de lo' almirece' eze e'!"

AL: Si lo sabe él cuál es ¿no?

A: ¿Sabe' tú?

R: Lo conoceré, pero no por nombre.

A: Por donde está el Tejal...joé.

E: Hola.

R: Otra vez.

E: Hola.

R: Sigue.

E: Hola.

R: Muy bien. ¡Pueés hala! ¿Sabes lo que quiero que me hables? Quiero que me hables de lo quee significa para ti el aire, que me hables del aire, ¿qué significa para ti?

A: Total, el cerro de lo' almirece' yo te diré el que e', pa que lo sepa'. Y allí traspusieron...

AL: La ropa que había tendida en la era.

A: Lah camiseta', lah camiseta' mojaa'...

R: (risa)

A: ...de manga larga.

AL: Claro, lo' huracane' puée forman unn...

A: Lo' huracane'...el huracán de aire levantó lo' trapo' de la' piedra' que había al lao de allí en la hierba, que estaban tendió' pa que le' diera el zol, lo' levantó y al cerrillo lo' almirece' fueron, y al Tejar...

AL: Y al Majano...

A: ...que había enfrente donde...

AL: ...y al Majano dicen que también fue ropa.

A: ¿Eeh?

AL: Al Majano, que dicen que también fue ropa allí.

A: Sí. Allí fueron...en uunn, en un cerezo del Majano había enganchao' camisa' de lo' hombre', de la' que había tendía' allí...

R: Sí, sí, sí.

A: Allí traspusieron, la' camisa'

E: Pues que el aire es puro...

A: Y en el río...

E: ...a veces...

A: ...en la era 'e lo' viejo'...

E: ...cuando llueve.

A: ...había trapo'...de lo que se levantó en la era...

E: Que de los coches...

A: ...un huracán.

E: ...para el aire se sue así un poco el humo, yyym... que el aire da frío.

R: ¿Sí?

E: ...a veces. Y que del...y cuando llueve...y que hace un poquito de aire, el vaporrrr sube al aire, para a nue.

A: Pero que estaban haciendo un hoyo, que estaba el cementerio allí, que es lo que yo iba a ver...

AL: Eso, eso...cuenta...

A: Estaban haciendo un hoyo pa' un muerto, que se había muerto un hombre...

AL: Pa enterrarlo...

A: y estaban haciendo un hoyo...y asomaba, como eso tiene suuuu...

AL: La cabeza de la caja...

AL: ...suuu li, se asomaba una caja, y el que estaba...lo' chiquillos se asomaban a ver cómo estaban haciendo el hoyo, a la puerta, aquello estaba abierto, ' y creo que uno de ello' dicee: ¡de aquí va a salir un gato negro! y le dio con el astil del azaón a la caja aquella. Fue cuando salió el huracán...cuando traspusieron to' ezo' trapo' y tó eso.

R: ¿Qué más cosas sabes del aire, a ver, cuéntame? ¿Sabes mucho, eh?

E: Nada más.

R: Joé, si has dicho muchas cosas, seguro que sabes más.

E: Ee, pués, que el aire...en ' ...en invierno hace frío a veces.

R: Qué bien.

E: Y quee...(cómo se llama aquello de la nieve)...y queee...pués que en invierno queemmm...(cómo se llama...) que en invierno hace mucho frío, mucho frío porque hay bola' de nieve.

R: (risa)

E: (¿Qué más?) ¿Ahora de qué hablo?

R: Por ejemplo, el aire en verano, ¿cómo es el aire en verano?

- E: ¿En verano? Pues que hace muchos rayos, en verano.
- R: ¿Y qué más?
- E: Pues que...¿qué? (¿qué más puedo decir?) .
- R: Pues que hace mucho calor, ¿no?.
- E: Y que hacee un calor. No, no hace tanto.
- R: ¿¿No hace calor en verano??
- E: Tch, sí.
- R: Jolín que no hace calor...
- E: Y en primavera salen los arco iris...y y salen las flores...
- R: ¿Y en otoño, qué hace el viento?
- E: Que sopla las hojas.
- R: ¿Yy?
- E: Y queemm, se ca'n.
- R: Muy bien, sabes mucho tú del aire.
- A: Y aquello quedó en el pueblo como si no' hubieran echao, mmm como dicen, una caldera de agua hirviendo. Aquello impuso mucho en el pueblo a lo' mayore' ...y a lo' menore'.
- R: Y a ver, que decías que el aire a veces es puro a veces no es puro ¿qué sabes tú de eso?
- E: Pues queem, tch cuando es puro es cuando llueve...y cuando no es puro es cuando hay coches, porque hay coches, y con tanto humo el aire...

* * * * *

The two "free" performers I had in mind were, for obvious reasons, Jane Rigler and myself. Jane moved from the U.S.A. to Spain in April and, soon afterwards, we began preparing our parts for this performance. As basic musical material I proposed Johann Sebastian

Bach's *Air* from the 3rd Suite for orchestra, in D Major, for several reasons: it is a piece we both like much, and one we know from long time ago; it has a connection with "air" in its title and, to me, the music itself has an "airy" as well; and, lastly, it is a very well-known piece by a major master. Our intention was to play *with* it, rather than to play *it*. The latter would have been very difficult anyway, because it is scored for a string orchestra. So, in conjunction with the speeches of my family, we selected parts of the score which we used in three ways: a) as melodic lines for the recorded words, b) as a basis for improvised elaborations; and c) as in the original, but in different contexts.

The program notes I supplied for this performance, which reflect the frame of my mind at the time of its preparation, were the following: "To what extent is what we call 'air' a mere symbol, invented and legitimated by our institutions? And to what extent is it an 'object' institutionally administered? What does this alleged vibrating matter—which, apparently, envelops us, licks us, enters and leaves us, and, supposedly, we *all* share—have to do with *us*? *A l'Air E* (the title in Spanish—*al aire*—unconventionally spelled) is a collective exploration as well as an opportunity given by the Center for Contemporary Music (C.D.M.C.), whom we thank for letting us be with our humors *A=LA y RE(=D)* [in this context it means 'naked,' spelled in a quasi musical way]."

As stated before, I was going to invite the audience to share their ideas, feelings, memories, etc. about the air during the performance. Likewise, I would invite those people who would collaborate with me before, during, and after the performance, who did not have a "public voice": the concert hall manager, the ushers, the technicians, the janitors, etc., depending upon their availability and their willingness to participate.

Prior to the premiere, we visited the concert hall to learn about its dimensions, shape, location, lights, doors, etc. as well as to ask the people who worked there if they were willing to speak publicly about the air either live or in recording.

Located inside the cultural center of a local bank, access to the hall was preceded by an art gallery holding a marvellous exhibition. The concert space had a capacity for about 200 people, with the rows of seats disposed on a very steep plane. To our surprise, a single person was in charge of the gallery and the hall, so we asked him if he would be willing to speak in our performance. Amazed by our proposition, he asked for 24 hours to deliberate. After this time, he gently refused to do it. Fortunately, two other members of the supporting team accepted enthusiastically: a technician of the National Radio of Spain called Salvador Prades, who was recording the events of the festival, and Juan Avila, a sound technician of L.I.E.M. Mr. Prades was recorded during the dress rehearsal. He spoke very inspiredly, in Valencian (the local dialect), about the air of Alicante and its fragrances. Juan Avila prepared his own part based on the word "movement" which he would sample live during the performance and then play with it in different ways. Lights would be managed by composer Adolfo Núñez, director of L.I.E.M. There were no ushers, probably because this was a "free" concert and the hall was relatively small.

Jane and I had prepared various actions aimed at focusing the general attention upon the concert hall, the air, our bodies, and the various interactions among us and with the people recorded on tape. For instance, I began the performance juggling an egg, a small globe (the garbage container of an original pencil sharpener), and a piece of fruit, concretely an orange, chosen because Alicante is a land of

oranges. During the pause between the two tape parts, while Jane was improvising on Bach's *Air*, and with the hall lights off, I ran around the concert hall with a flashlight pointing at various things, as, for instance, a sign of "No smoking," or the large window of the booth where the radio personnel were broadcasting the event, apparently unconcerned by what was happening inside the hall.

To me, our most relevant reading of Bach's *Air* consisted of an interpretation a duo in which Jane and I alternated the slow execution with our voices and instruments of notes from the "basso continuo" while exchanging our instruments: I would occasionally play her flute and Jane would play my guitar. We adopted a sitting position on the floor with our bodies close to one another and our legs interlocked. I was sitting on the right hand side, with the fingerboard of my guitar in front of Jane, and she held her flute so that it was in front of me. This action sprang from my idea of "air" as something shared among people, animals, plants, and rocks, but also as an attempt to deviate our roles as instrumentalists in a de-specialized direction. I had never played the flute in public before nor had Jane ever played the guitar.

Another relevant action for me was moving my lips in perfect synchrony with my son's speech, as if it were me who was speaking, during the section in which he speaks about the seasons of the year. With this gesture, I wanted to emphasize, in a humorous way, our profound connections and our shared identities.

From the beginning of the performance, I remember being surprised, in a positive way, by the warm, sympathetic reaction of the audience to the voices of my family. At first, they laughed discretely, as if they were uncertain about the correctness of laughing in a such a "serious" concert, but, gradually, they laughed more and more openly. The audience itself would have become actively involved in the

performance, as planned, if major problems with the electronic equipment had not arisen. In fact, one microphone placed in the back of the hall, which I was supposed to use first, then would be passed to Juan Avila, and finally to the audience, began to make all kinds of electric sizzlings and explosions, to which Juan responded by shutting it off. Thus, my performance in the first section turned into a distant echo, Juan was not able to make his part, and the audience never had a chance to speak on the microphone.

Despite the technical flaws, the piece was enthusiastically received by friends and audience alike. Colleagues and press critics were very positive as well. The latter wrote flattering comments like: "Liñán has thrown "to the air" a trail of grace and intense human content, which questions the patterns that rule the staging of conventional concerts" (Manuel Ferrand, ABC); "in his exploration, midway between objective and distanced, Liñán showed proofs of imagination and great knowledge" (Enrique Franco, EL PAÍS); and "[*through the air*] is a proposal full of irony and uninhibitedness (*desenfado*) of the best kind" (Leopoldo Hontañón, Scherzo).

2. Madrid, "Point of Encounter"

On November 25th, 1994, *through the air* was performed in one of the events of a series called *Punto de Encuentro* ("Point of Encounter") organized by the Electroacoustic Music Association of Spain (A.M.E.E.) at the Manuel de Falla Hall of the Spanish Authors' Society (S.G.A.E.), in Madrid. As a member of the A.M.E.E., I was invited to present this piece in a concert featuring pieces for tape and flute. The flutist of the concert was Jane Rigler.

Two days before the performance, we visited the concert hall to survey its characteristics as well as to ask the people who worked there and who would be helping us if they wanted to participate with their thoughts, feelings, memories, etc. The hall was a large room on the second floor of an impressive modernist palace designed by one of Gaudí's pupils, located in a busy street of the old part of Madrid.

At first sight, the hall looked to me more like a conference room than a concert hall: a large rectangular table with microphones presided the stage, which stood one meter above the seats level, the ceiling was low, and there were thick drapes on one side and naked walls on the other. Nevertheless, I was immediately attracted by the ceiling, decorated with two frescos. One fresco portrayed a large, colorful male peacock, with his feet lying on the edge of the stage's ceiling, occupying half of the ceiling of the space for the audience, and looking down to the seats. The remaining half was covered by a perfectly geometrical spiral of swallows in flight against a realistic blue sky. On both sides of the stage, there were two golden ashtrays the size of a car's wheel.

Again, this hall was run by a single person who, kindly, refused to speak for the performance. Since I needed help with the lights, and got it from my friend Rafael Luque (one of the initial candidates to be on the basic tape), I asked him if he would like to share with us his words, which he accepted. Thus, my friend was pre-recorded, and I selected a fragment of his speech for the concert. The sound board would be controlled by Adolfo Núñez (who had controlled the lights in Alicante), also a member of the Association. Finally, our friend Arantxa Knörr (married with Rafael Luque) offered help with passing one microphone through the audience.

Jane and I agreed to follow the basic scheme of the premiere, because the former circumstances had not been very fortunate, and we wanted to try our initial ideas a second time, since this was a relatively similar context, although with a more “specialized” audience. However, there was a significant difference for us: this time my mother and my son—together with other relatives and friends—would be there. Eduardo even attended the dress rehearsal, and the expression on his face was one of total amusement and delight: his mouth and his eyes were wide open for almost the entire run through of the piece and, occasionally, he would laugh at his own words with a gesture of complicity.

As stated above, this performance was arranged according to the guidelines of the premiere, which, with the proper adjustments, are reproduced in the following pages. At the end of this outline the 6 musical fragments drawn from the *Air* of the D Major Suite for orchestra by Johann Sebastian Bach, which we used as the bases for a series of improvisations, appear:

time	DAT	mic 1 (stage)	perf. of	through	the air	25/11/1994	stage lights	house lights
- 5"						Rafael	gradually Up	
0"	ON					comes on stage juggling and whistling f.1		
14"	A: muy peligroso			1 long reverb	Jane yamahaS PX	drops egg, throws objects and jumps	with jump - -->OFF	
20"	A: te impone	ON				improv. on "te impone"	ON ---> OFF	
55"	P: como el agua	ON				como el agua (f.2)		
1'32"	AL: uuuuuuh					uuuuuuuh basso continuo (f.3)		
1'37"	AL: fuerte							
2'50"			ON (R. Luque)	2 harm.		fills yellow balloon	gradually Up to mid level	gradually UP to mid level
3'00"	A: pvoiced "que ha llorao..."							
3'50"			STOP					
4'18"	P: un ruido espantoso					ballon deflates	OFF with blue balloon	OFF with yellow balloon

time	DAT	mic 1 (stage)	mic 2 (house)	cassette tape	SPX	Jane	Rafael	flash light	stage lights	house lights
4' 36"	P: se lo llevó el aire				1 reverb	se lo llevó el aire (f.4)	se lo llevó el aire (f.4)			
5' 28"	A: por la pared					flute loops (f.5 A&B)	guitar loops (f.5 A&B)			
6' 10"	P: es fundamental					improv. on f.5 B	dance improvisation	ON		
6' 15"	STOP					walks towards the audience				
time ad lib.		OFF	OFF							
	SEARCH									
0"	index #2							OFF		
45"	RESET counter & PLAY 2							ON		
	E: Hola							---		
1' 00"	R: el aire ¿qué significa para ti?		ON: AK speaks			walks to the stage	lipsync with E:	OFF		ON
1' 20"	A: pveced "y allí transpusieron"					takes R's shirt off and runs away	follows J		ON	
1' 45"	E: pues que el aire...		STOPS talking, mic Off						---	OFF

time	DAT	mic 1 (stage)	mic 2 (house)	cassette tape	SPX	Jane	Rafael	flash light	stage lights	house lights
2' 55"	A: de aquí va a salir un gato negro R: qué mas... E: se caen					jumps back on stage, plays cat-hurricane		ON ----> OFF		
3' 05"							lipsync		ON	
4' 24"						takes guitar back to stage	takes mic down			
5' 09"	E: con tanto humo, el aire...	ON								
5' 10"										
5' 25"						continuo sharing instr. (f.6)	continuo sharing instr. (f.6)			ON
9' 10"	END					AK passes mic to the audience ON & OFF while being passed AK decides when mic fades out	listens to the audience		----> OFF	----> OFF

A: Ascensión Nievas; AL: Ascensión Linán; P: Pilar; AK: Arantxa Knorr; E: Eduardo; J: Jane; R: Rafael; f.: musical fragment

fragment 1 (from the 1st Vln. mm. 1 →)

fragment 2 (from the 2nd Vln. mm 16 & 17) fragment 4 (from the 2nd Vln. mm 13 & 14)

fragment 3 (from the Continuo mm 1-3)

fragment 5A (from the 1st Vln m. 2) fragment 5B (from the 1st Vln m. 15)

fragment 6 (from the Continuo mm 3-6)

If desired, all fragments can be transposed

From the beginning, the performance unfolded more smoothly than in the premiere: everything was occurring (more or less) as expected. The audience's response was, at first, more inhibited, also as we expected. My mother told me later that, in the initial minutes, she had a hard time not laughing, particularly at the tape, and that my brother kept asking her to behave. When the audience somehow realized that "it was okay to laugh," the atmosphere improved enormously.

One event played a major role in the general change of attitude: in the middle section (in between the two parts of the tape), while Jane was improvising and I was running around in complete darkness—except for occasional flashes of my flashlight, I opened the main door of the hall, very abruptly, and found, in the blinding light of the adjacent room, a frightened face standing one inch away from my astonished face. A tall, skinny man who had arrived late to the concert and was kept out until the following piece seemed to be listening through the door, unaware of the danger. He apologized with a gesture and, in response, I smiled and invited him to the inside with a reverence. As soon as he found a seat, and with Jane still playing intensely, I ran towards one of the golden ashtrays of the stage, bent down on all fours, and stuck my face inside it, like a pet eating on a plate. This succession of events made the audience more relaxed and responsive.

An important section of this particular performance was based upon the two frescos of the ceiling. Playing slowly with my fingers on the surface of the flashlight, I pointed at the peacock, and went over his head, his body, his colorful tail, his feet; then I moved backwards to the spiral of swallows and played with each bird of the line from the center out.

Finally, the section when the audience is passed the microphone came and, this time, at least a dozen people were able and willing to share their feelings in public, showing imagination, sensitivity, and concern about air. Like the former performance in Alicante, this one was also very enthusiastically received. It helped Jane and I come into contact with some remarkable people who gave us valuable advice and who have offered us new performance possibilities. Soon afterwards, a prestigious composer from Barcelona sent us a wonderful book of poems about the elements: *Odas elementales* ("Elementary Odes") by Pablo Neruda. This book I keep close to another inspirational set of poems: *Sombra del Paraíso* ("Shadow of the Paradise") by Vicente Aleixandre.

Despite the number of people who have intervened in the realization of these performances, there have, systematically, been only two "officially" acknowledged performers in the advertisements of the concerts: Jane Rigler as flutist and vocalist, and myself as vocalist and guitarist. Actually, the complete list of activities we perform should have been: Jane Rigler as flutist, vocalist, guitarist, actress, and dancer, and myself as guitarist, vocalist, flutist, actor, juggler, and dancer.

To a certain extent, I understand why the organizers of concerts, in general, keep the attribution of authorship (and its associated responsibilities), together with the acknowledgement of contributors and collaborators to a minimum: the number of participants in any performance is always large, and an exhaustive list would occupy plenty of space. Nevertheless, I wonder if, in the context of this festival as well as in other concerts of so-called contemporary music, there are traces of both individualism and classism in the way in which the various contributions in the realization of a performance are valued,

which lead to give more importance to the actions of a professional artist—like a composer, for instance—over the actions of another professional artist of a “lower” category—like a performer—and/or over those ones of an “ordinary person”—like a person of the audience.

In fact, it is very surprising to me that the journalists who have attended the collective concert performances of these pieces and have made comments upon them, have invariably identified them as performances of a piece of **mine** and have given me, as composer, much more credit for the multiple, undeterminate interactions that occur in each presentation than I deserve. On the other hand, Jane, who has usually been the most visible and audible performer, my grandmother, my mother, my son, my aunt, the various pre-recorded speakers, the controllers of the light and sound equipments, and the rest of participants of the “audience” have rarely (if ever) been mentioned. Likewise, those musical administrators who paid for this composition had no problems in giving me *all the money*. These facts remain intriguing to me.

3. Pedagogical Concert Series 1994-95

For the last two years, I have been involved in two kinds of pedagogical activities: as a music teacher in one of the schools of the City Council of Madrid (between February and July 1994), and as a composer/performer of so-called “pedagogical” concerts. Whereas the former activity falls outside the main scope of this text, the latter is in close connection with it and consists of the preparation and presentation of the last two editions of the Pedagogical Concert Series for Schoolchildren organized by the *Ayuntamiento* (City Council) of

Madrid. Both series have been created under the influence of the “elementary pieces,” but, while the 1994-95 series was based, specifically, on three of them, the 1995-96 series are related to them in a more subtle way. Consequently, I present in this chapter the former series, and the latter one in Chapter IV: “Related Events.”

In March 1995 Jane and I gave a series of fifteen concerts for youngsters, ages 12 to 14, with the inestimable collaboration of two exceptional friends: Pilar and Lucía. In former years, these events had consisted of a series of lectures given by a reputed conductor who played excerpts of well-known pieces by Mozart, Beethoven, Brahms, etc. with a small ensemble. We were invited to present an alternative project for various reasons: first, because some members of the Education Board of the City Council were not satisfied with the repetition of that scheme year after year; second, because they had noticed a decaying interest on the part of the children, some of whom had attended those concerts several times; and third, due to their high cost.

Our project included *through the air*, *with the water*, and *in the fire*, as “multimedia pieces of participative nature on environmental issues,” and was accepted. Whereas *through the air*, had previously been performed twice, *with the water* and *in the fire* were yet to be presented, in concert form.

Prior to the first concert, we rehearsed *through the air* with similar parameters to its two earlier performances for adults, although in a shortened version. We had a small number of children attending our rehearsals, and this version seemed to work out fine. On the day of our inaugural concert of the series, the hall was full of restless kids, many of whom were taller and bigger than me. We had decided not to

give them explicit clues of what actions would be performed, seeking to surprise them.

With the confidence given by a deep knowledge of the piece and the experiences accumulated, I jumped on stage juggling, in synchrony with the recording of my grandmother's speech. The shock effect of our unconventional beginning worked as expected, but, as soon as I jumped off stage and all the lights were turned off, I was the one shocked by the kids' response: they began to scream as if they were being slaughtered, and objects of various kinds began to fly all over the concert space. To my despair, Lucia (at this time controlling the lights), perplexed by their reaction, waited a very long time to turn the lights back on, which she justified later saying that she was waiting "to see if they would calm down." Needless to say, in successive concerts, we preferred telling the attendants in advance about the "lighting effects," rather than attempting to surprise them. The remainder of that performance was smoother and, over all, it was successful, according to the participants: the teachers, many of the kids, some of who came to talk to us afterwards, and the supervisors of the City Council.

With regards to other aspects of the fifteen performances of *through the air*, I was impressed and delighted by the engagement and enthusiasm of the kids, as well as by their imaginative contributions, including all kinds of original sounds, imitations of our gestures, and sentences like: "air is all and nothing," "it is life," and "it is something we all share."

The piece *with the water* was performed always in conjunction with *in the fire*, as a mixture of singing, dancing, and playing two kinds of musics: pre-composed and improvised. The performances featured works of mine (pre-recorded and live) and also gave a chance

to our colleagues, Pilar and Lucía, to share with us some danceable music from either their own compositional catalogues or from folk songbooks. The basic metaphor to introduce the rest of participants to these pieces was to consider our bodies either like drops of water or flames, interacting one with another and with the surroundings in multiple ways. Three groups of interchangeable, transforming performers were established: players of the music, water performers, and fire performers. Prior to the performance, each participant had to choose a group. Water and fire performers, had to additionally select a state within the group.

The water performers had to dance and play in one spot according to three basic states: vapor (vaporous dance, vocal sounds), water (fluid activity, tapping on one's own body and/or on somebody else's, including animals, plants and other animated beings), and ice (statue-like appearance, percussions on the walls, floors, rocks and other inanimate beings). Fire performers carried 1 to 2 meter long ribbons in three basic tonalities blue, yellow, and red, corresponding to three basic states of low, medium and high temperatures that correspond to the degree of mobility around the performing space. At any time, a fire performer could throw the ribbon away and become a water performer (in other contexts, I envision that he/she/it could also become an air, an ether, or an earth performer). A water performer in a vapor state could grab a ribbon left by a fire performer and become a fire performer. Depending upon one's own reaction to either the music (or its absence) and the surroundings (i.e. the states of one's neighbors) a performer could change state.

Once the performers had chosen an initial group and state, one of the musical sources available was played (live or playback) and both the water and the fire performers began dancing to it quietly.

After a while, the music faded out and the water dancers began reproducing the music just heard, performing a certain amount of sounds corresponding to each one's state: iced performers played occasional sounds, liquefied performers played about half of the sounds, and vaped performers played as many as possible. The fire dancers moved around always in silence. After a while, a different music faded in cueing the water performers to fade out their sound making and to adapt their dancing to the new musical features, and so on and so forth.

This game fostered a plurality of apparently chaotic rhythms, movements, and tones (not unlike the sound of rain or a water current), yet each participant was supposed to have a clear sense of his/her/its own actions as well as an awareness of the actions of his/her/its neighbors.

4. "Paths for the Year 2000"

On May 18th, 1995, the first public presentation of *of the earth* took place in a panel generically titled "Paths for the Year 2000." It revolved around the future of "serious" music in the 21st Century, and featured some eminent Spanish composers such as Cristóbal Halffter and Tomás Marco, together with other colleagues such as Llorenç Barber, Wade Matthews, Carlos Galán, and myself. The moderator of the panel was music critic Leopoldo Hontañón.

Whereas the other five composers spoke long about their individual careers, their ideas and updated us about their projects, I chose not to speak about myself at all, but to propose a performance of what I now consider a prototype of *of the earth*, which I never identified as a "piece of mine" but as a *collective game*. This "game" consisted,

basically, of singing very slowly (between 8 and 32 times slower) any song (preferably so-called children's songs), trying to keep the proportions among the notes as accurate as possible. If text was to be delivered, both phonemes and transitions between phonemes were to be performed very slowly, including consonants if possible. Both ornaments and the inclusion of timbral changes were encouraged.

Participants were encouraged to be aware of the singing and playing of other participants and react to them in various ways, for instance: if one performer hit a pitch someone else was already singing or playing then the newcomer should fade out, remain quiet for a while, and start again either the same song on a different pitch or a new song. If they did not feel inspired by "rules" of this kind, they were asked to disregard them.

We began our performance with two minutes of deep listening, opening our ears to the sounds of the building and the street which, to that moment, had been masked by our electronically amplified voices. The hall turned out to have a noisy ventilation system. The street was a busy concert hall itself. Starting with rather soft, undifferentiated tones, we gradually grew more colorful, the texture of our chorus becoming more rugged. Most of us sang in our middle register, others sang in their high or low, some whistled, some did not sing, but listened. After nine minutes or so both Cristóbal Halffter and Tomás Marco—who did not seem excited by the performance whatsoever from the beginning, asked Leopoldo Hontañón to stop us. When he was going to do it, the singing ceased smoothly and beautifully.

As I expected, this performance resulted in a polytonal, polyrhythmic, polyglot sort of motet which brought relaxation to many members of the audience. Some people told me that our singing together, in the ritualistic, playful way we performed it, was

enormously meaningful and thought provoking for them, specially in the context of this panel. My younger colleagues thought it was a "courageous," "necessary" proposal on my part.

In addition to my presence in the panel, I was asked by the organizers to provide an article including my compositional concerns and my ideas. My "article" is reproduced in the following page. Together with bits of the speeches of my relatives that I frequently use in the performances of *through the air*, various drawings and ambiguous, incomplete texts, the following questions are raised:

What similarities are there between:

- a composer and a notary public [*notario*]? (please note that "nota" in Spanish means "note" and "río" means "river")
- a conservatory and a seminary?
- a compact disc and a slice of Bologna?

What effects does it have (or may have):

- making music in modern cities (enjoying our modern lives)?
- washing the dishes with Gregorian chant as a background?

5. La Jolla, "Point of Re-encounters"

In December 1995, three public presentations of the whole cycle of elementary pieces took place in California. In September, I had initiated contacts by mail with good friends from the University of California at San Diego, in an attempt to recruit them for the performances. Those friends and exceptional artists are: Kitty Pappas, Bonnie Wright, Hannes Giger, Jason Stanyek, Vanessa Tomlinson, Joshua Levine, and Scott Walton. Through letters, I shared with them various aspects of my life in Spain, my ideas, my texts, and my personal performing premises. This was a very important compositional aspect of the pieces for me because, in fact, I think of musical scores as *letters to friends*, some of whom I know in advance, some others becoming friends through the common experience of "playing" the same music. Another friend, Mark Osborn, joined us once I arrived at the U.S.

For the most part, the contents of my letters are included in former chapters. Nonetheless, there are a few points, specific to these performances, that can be better understood with the following extracts from my last letter to my friends:

My idea is to hold a concert at C.R.C.A. that all my committee members could attend and to hold another concert with somewhat different materials, plan, elements, etc. In any case, there is no "required" anything, and this experience should be fun and pleasurable: it should not put any negative pressure on you because, on my part, that would be "abusing" my friends and, consequently, a failure in every sense. Please, think of our proposal as if we were inviting you to play a soft-ball game (in front of our coaches, though). I will be involved in the preparation-coordination of the concert(s) full-time and I can help you find anything you propose and/or need. Remember

that, even if you are not able to come to any rehearsal, you are more than welcome to show up only for the performance(s).

The "Personal Performing Premises" included in our former letter represent a sort of index of actions, popular expressions, objects, etc. related to the five elements that provides us with "ideas" and "materials" to be used before and during the performance, something inspiring we reflect upon and play with. It is an index about our personal relations and the relations of our relatives, friends, and neighbors as well as an index of things that we care about, remember and dare to include in a written (and now "public") index. In other words, the "Personal Performing Premises" include entries about our lives and lifestyles, and, ultimately, about our culture. Maybe, some of you would benefit from (and be interested in) making a similar index or maybe not but, if you do so, please keep it so that we can see it (and use it, if you do not mind). Of course, the scheme of your "Personal Performing Premises" (if you want to make one) does not have to follow ours: it can be any type of notes, quotes, sounds, drawings, scores, tricks, jokes, gestures, steps, chords, rhythms, timbres, etc...

From the beginning, we wanted to encourage every attendant to each event to get actively involved, in a coordinated way, that can be discussed among all of us. Our aim is to foster *collective interaction* so that everyone who wants to share questions, sounds, thoughts, movements, gestures, etc. has a chance to do so. In past presentations, we have passed microphones among the "audience," and almost everybody had something to share: a sound, a word, a sentence, a poem, a joke, a gesture, a smile... We can also use candles, flashlights, cameras, etc. and other kinds of objects to highlight the spontaneous contributions of people, animals, plants, rocks, artifacts, and machines present in our event(s).

Descriptions of past public presentations of some of the pieces were included in the first letter. As you know, there are also video recordings of different versions of two of them. However, these are only references, since we want to acknowledge the new contexts and circumstances in the new performances. This is very similar to some of your experiences as improvisors: you may talk about what, where, and how you are going to improvise, then play and, maybe, later you talk

about what you did. In this case, rather than improvising on a theme, or more or less “freely,” we invite you to play with/caress/think about, in a word *enjoy* the air, the water, the earth, the fire, and the ether, and share with us, in a concert-like setting, your impressions, feelings, ideas, stories, opinions, games, jokes, concerns, songs, dances, poems, sculptures, paintings, broken bones, etc...

In search of a performing space, I contacted the Center for Research in Computing and the Arts at U.C.S.D. Previously called Center for Music Experiment, it is a place where many creative musicians of our time have composed and presented their pieces: Pauline Oliveros (former director), Kenneth Gaburo, John Silber, Ed Harkins, Philip Larson, Mary Oliver, and George Lewis among others. C.R.C.A.’s administrative director, Carol Hobson, generously offered the Center and her support. Thanks to her mediation, the research assistant at C.R.C.A. from the Music Department, Harry Castle, also joined the group.

We held three informal, pleasurable meetings including food and drinks prior to the first performance (without audience) on Saturday December 2nd at C.R.C.A. In these meetings we exchanged our ideas about the pieces, designed a plan of possible actions and, in a flexible way, determined a minimum set of responsibilities. One of the issues that raised more concern was the group organization, because we wanted to avoid establishing fixed hierarchies. In view of the short time we had to prepare the performances, and in response to a general feeling, I assumed the role of general coordinator. The way I understood my role can be expressed with the following metaphor: imagine that you (the performers), Jane and I are going to have dinner together at a nice place that a common friend is lending us (C.R.C.A.).

Jane and I supply some of the ingredients of our meal and propose a way to set up the dinning room; you furnish some other ingredients, and bring your own recipes to be shared with everybody and everybody's ingredients. Accordingly, each of the performers created his/her/its personal performing premises and provided a set of instruments (percussions of various kinds, some home-made, as well as accordion, flute, contrabass, guitar, etc.) to be shared among all the people who would attend the event, including those who came as "audience," who, usually, do not have access to the performers, their instruments and/or the stage. Since I wanted to have an outdoor performance as well, I asked everyone to set another date and time for the "picnic" and choose the actual location where we could gather.

As an addition to the information I had already given my friends, I supplied the following personal considerations for these performances:

Participants: playful, spontaneous interactions among, people, animals, plants, and rocks inspired by the five elements and based upon affection and respectful responsiveness. Please, bring any friends, animals, plants and rocks you are able to. I have made a tape including the spontaneous opinions of several members of Jane's family and my own family (27 minutes aprox. in several sections) to be played at various times.

Clothing: comfortable, multipurpose, enhancing (as if we were flowers trying to attract our neighbor insects' attention).

Space: multifocal, de-centralized, mobile, traversable, modifiable.

Instruments: voices, bodies, floors, walls, percussions, contrabasses, pianos, guitars, flutes, microphones, recycled, made up, found, VCRs, lights, etc.

Toys: balloons of various kinds, objects for juggling, etc.

Food: natural, nutritionally sound dishes and produces (home made if possible).

Drinks: water and other natural beverages (home made if possible).

I asked the other performers to add their own personal considerations and let the rest of us know them, and they did, in oral form.

The usual disposition of chairs and lights at C.R.C.A., pointing at the one single spot of the space where the lecturers or performers stand, was changed to more open, circular arrangement. The area right outside the room, including some beautiful trees and plants, was also considered a potential part of the performing stage. To this end, the door was to remain open at all times. We also moved the sculpture-score made by friend-composer Frank Pecquet for one of his pieces from a corner to a more central location.

It is worth mentioning that despite the large number of words, both written and spoken, I had used to communicate my ideas to my friends since September, they did not seem quite clear about what they were supposed to do, until we interacted "in real life." Five minutes of actual performance, in what could be considered a "rehearsal" situation which occurred spontaneously during a meeting held on Wednesday, November 29th, made most of their uncertainties vanish.

Indoor performances at the Center for Research in Computing and the Arts (U.C.S.D.) held on Saturday, December 2nd and Sunday, December 3rd, 1995.

Most of my friends felt that a single preliminary performance of the "elementary pieces," prior to the one scheduled for Sunday the 3rd at 6 PM, would suffice for rehearsal. Accordingly, we scheduled that performance for Saturday the 2nd at 12 noon. We also thought of video taping this performance rather than the one to be held on Sunday, for two reasons: first, we wanted to focus all our attention upon the people attending Sunday's event, rather than sharing it with the camera-people; second, we preferred to have a generally low-intensity lighting and that could cause problems with the cameras. Although, in the end, we were able to video-tape Sunday's concert, the enclosed recording displays our lack of concern for its quality.

Saturday was the very first day we all got together ready to perform, including Hannes Giger from Los Angeles, and with the space set up the way we wanted it. Our main premises, decided minutes before the beginning, were "to be as playful and spontaneous as possible." I felt that the main spirit of this performance was one of exploration: getting to know each other in this context and with these premises, getting to know the space, the overall timing, the flow of actions, the instruments and their possibilities, etc. We improvised with our voices and our bodies, with our instruments and toys, mainly in various groupings, although at times in a more individualistic manner. We also played the walls and floors of the performing space, did yoga poses (Joshua did a beautiful headstand for several minutes), spoke in different languages, lighted small fires, drank water, relaxed, etc. At the end of the performance, Sophie Walton and Annette Poitau acted as a sort of "Greek Chorus," as the voice of the "audience," and

they concluded the piece with comments in their native language: French.

From my point of view, we succeeded in the satisfaction of our priorities—playfulness and spontaneity, but I felt that I could have enjoyed the performance even more had we established a more continuous group interaction, articulated in a more focused way. With this idea in mind, I opened the preliminary meeting of Sunday's performance.

In view of our success in fulfilling our performing premises on Saturday, I proposed the addition of two new ones for Sunday: an enhanced sense of lyricism in our voices, instrumental sounds, and movements, and an accentuation of the magical aspects of both our interactions and our treatment of symbols. Mark Osborn predicted that the presence of more people would probably change our attitudes, inducing us to a more "subdued" performance. I am not convinced that his predictions were right, but I am convinced of the success of the performance anyway. During the performance, my personal "performing thermometer," which checks both the status of my communications with other people and my level of happiness was very high, beyond my most optimistic expectations. The comments of all the attendants—faculty, peers, friends, and a few people I did not know very well—were also overwhelmingly positive.

One of the main issues of concern about this performance was the unpredictability of the participation of those who would attend this event expecting to be "audience." Prior to the concert, we had given long and deep consideration as to how to set up the space, whether to have chairs or not, etc. Finally, we established the circular arrangement mentioned above and placed the only two microphones used in the concert close to the areas where we expected people to sit.

We were interested in getting their voices amplified and projected through the four-speaker system, aiming at an integration with the people on the tape. During the performance, people did contribute their opinions, feelings and memories in rather poetic ways (paralleling the lyricism we wanted to emphasize) and, for the most part, the desired sense of colloquium among my relatives (recorded at different places and different times, all in the past) and the attendants (there, then) was achieved.

It is worth noting that Sunday's concert was advertised just by word of mouth and only friends of ours (the "elementary team") were aware of it. I was very happy with this fact, since I wanted all the attendants to be familiar with one another, as if we were a real community of small size established a long time ago (maybe with a few newcomers). In this sense, the lack of conventional publicizing was a success which, in my view, affected positively the way we all interacted with each other.

Our friend Shelley, an imaginative artist from Los Angeles who had witnessed and video-taped Saturday's performance made a remarkable comment about the differences she perceived on Sunday: "the first time I felt as if your performance were the strange ritual of a peculiar group of people neither totally acquainted with one another not fully knowledgeable of the characteristics of the ritual itself. The following day, I felt as if fifteen years had passed in the life of your tribe and in the maturation of your ritual." I felt the same way myself.

As explained above, both performances at C.R.C.A. were partially conducted by people not present at the events: my relatives from Spain and my relatives from Los Angeles. In fact, for the indoor performances in La Jolla I had prepared in Madrid a new tape, including recordings made in April of 1995 featuring Jane's mother

and the mother of Jane's father. Whereas, the members of my family speak in Spanish, the members of Jane's family speak in English. Although they were all recorded separately (with the exception of my aunt and my grandmother), the resulting tape sounds, in many occasions, as if they were all talking to each other, as can be appreciated in the following transcription:

Contents of the pre-recorded conversations in Spanish and English:

R: Rafael Liñán Vallecillos; A: Ascensión Nievas (the mother of Rafael's father); P: Pilar Vallecillos (Rafael's mother); AL: Ascensión Liñán (the sister of Rafael's father); N: Nana, Matyl Rigler (the mother of Jane's father); V: Vivian Rigler (Jane's mother); E: Eduardo Liñán (Rafael's son).

Please, note that these written transcriptions respect both the phonetic peculiarities of the speakers, which not always conform to proper pronunciation, and their reiterations and elongations of words:

R: Bueno abuela, pués dígame usté: el aire qué, qué lee, qué le sugiere.

A: ¿El aire? Pué una cosa muy sencilla: el aire e' mu bueno, pa respirar, pero hay vece' que e' muy peligroso, da miedo del aire, porque se siente mucho ruido, porque te impone... cuando el aire está fuerte, pués te impone...

R: 'mhum

A: ¡Claro!

P: Bueno pués ¿del aire...qué te voy a contar yo del aire? Hombre, algunas veces es muy molesto, porque vas por la calle y, aparte de lo peligroso que puede ser que te pueda caer algo en la cabeza, de que se

desprenda unaa cornisa ooo un tiesto de una maceta o de cualquier cosa... pero bueno sin el aire tampoco podríamos vivir, es tan necesario como comooo, pués no sé, como el agua o como cualquier cosa así, tan necesaria que no podríamos vivir sin él.

N: It signifies...life...

J: yeah

N: breathing, loveliness, a a aaa I dislike anything that's dark, that is where there is no air I I fear dark, airless places

J: right!

R: ¿Aquí en Quéntar, ss' hay viento fuerte..?

A: Sí, hay ve'...vece'...

R: ¿Sí?

AL: En mi casa e' algo horrible...

R: ¿En la nueva?

AL: allí, 'khumh, cuando seeee hay una noche de viento, no sé si es porque hay unos saliente' de los vecino' y... silba el aire allí como en esas películas de miedo...

A: Se siente...

AL: ...que hacen eso' ruidos...

A: si va'...

AL: mira, es que es uuuuuuuuuuh uuuh...pero que no tiene que estar muy ff, vamos noo necesita estar muy fuerte para que se oiga allí así.

A: Sí.

P: Perooo... si es muy fuertee puede molestarnos yyy incluso bueno ya no digamos de destrozo' y cosas que puede hacer, como arrancar árbole'...uummm...tirar uuunn tejado ooo...yo qué sé, volarrr cosas... Puede ser desastroso, si es muy fuerte. Pero vamos queee el aire pués no sé, nos refresca sii en el verano hace mucho calor y viene uunn un

airecito, una brisita pués nos refresca yy nos puede hasta beneficiar.
Ya te digo que e' una cosa tan necesaria que no podríamos vivir sin él.

R: mmh'm

N: You want, to me light and air are pretty much the same things, and of course I would want... I I like light and air. But of course, as you think of air you think of birds in flight, and mm plants... couldn't live without air, animals of all kinds couldn't live without air. No life could live without air, right?

Soo, it's it's really responsible for the state of being I think! Where would we be without air? We wouldn't have any...life.

R: I need more...

V: Hello!

R: A little bit more?

V: Yes, test!

R: More?

V: Yes, test!!

R: That's pefect!

V: Pgggh@#!!!

P: Yym... no sé, pués, no sé qué más decirte...es quee del aire ¿qué te puedo decir?

R: ¿Recuerdas...

P: j'mm, j'mmm

R: ...alguna historia, algúuun hecho en tu vidaa que te haya pasao con amigos o con, conn nosotros...

P: No, de hecho así...

R: la familia y tal, del aire?

P: ...bueno hace unos años iba yo con Eduardo, precisamente bajábamo' en el ascensor eennn al jardín, y de pronto un ruido espantoso. Salimos corriendo a ver lo que pasaba, porque oímo' un

ruidoo c', pero bueno uuuna cosaaa... y era que había caído un árbol, porque habi haz se levantó un huracón, un huracán tan fuerte que se cayó el un árbol encima de un coche y el toldo dee... de Rosa se looo voló también se lo llevó el aire, en fin una cosa desastrosa... Pero vamo', esto es lo más reciente, pero yo así de mi niñez no recuerdooo...aparte deee que se vuele alguuunna teja de los tejado' y eso, noo no recuerdo yo ninguna cosa grave ni...

V: It's like ammmm ... It's breath and air nn ammm freedom and song. Air is like something that envelopes you... and makes your head crazy sometimes...and also makes your moods change.

A: Pa ezo zi te parece que haa llorao un chiquillo o que haa dao una voz una persona y ya estás, con la cabeza levantá de la almohada viendo a ver...

AL: de dónde viene esee...

A: ...si hay peligro en la calle o le paza a arguien argo...pué sí.

N: I, I can't just aa. You know, I sleep pretty well...'cause I know I'm well protected.

A: ¿Qué ma' o' cuento del aire? Que tiene una vecina una perziana...

R: (risa)

A: ...y cuando empieza la perziana, pue' está' diciendo: ¿estará alguien subiendooo...

R: por la escalera

A: ...por la paré?

AL: No...

A: Claro.

AL: ...por nuestra paré no puede subir nadie.

A: Por nuestra paré no pueden, ni en níguna parte pueden por la paré.

AL: No, en otros sitios sí, porque si hay reja' pueden subir, pero en la nuestra no.

A: pueden subir pero a la nuestra no, pero...o...

P: Si está' en una habitación cerrada ooo pasaras mucho tiempo, yo que tengo hasta mi problema de asma, pués yo creo quee.. que vamos no resistiría mucho tiempo sin abrir una ventana o rro respirar, o respirar aire.

R: Muy bien.

P: Para mí e' e' fundamental.

* * * * *

V: It's life and it's... it's also ethereal which is...superf, supernatural...to me.

N: That I'm not so sure about! The California, well California air is supposed to be... much, um much brighter, more cheerful, when it is

V: It's flight it's...it's all those things that are material in it, be it itself.

It's like aa a mass enveloping with water the world and that's the the universe which is... light and darkness both.

N: But mm, I like Minnesota air quite well too...

J: What is different about it?

N: What?

J: What is different about it?

N: Well, seasonally you you know..

J: Aha

N: Minnesota has these four distinct seasons, and it has mm...only about a three months of summer, all the rest of the time you can have snow all through eight months

J: uow!

N: Not, not bad snow but aa but a good six months of snow and cold and ice, and...f whether that aff the air probably is crisper I would say

yes, it was in Minnesota when I spent most of my youth, and my early early married lives, you know my early life of married life and I I think it must have been much crisper...

J: mhummm.

N: than here...right.

R: No se trata deeee...

A: Bueno, una vez pasó en Quéntar una cosa que aquello fue únicaa ve'. Estaba yo todavía mozuela, mira a ver cuánto' año' hace, y estaban...tenía trapo' tendió' en la era, en la era 'el pilar, yyy se levantó un huracán de aire, que e' lo que me dice' que cuente, y en el cerrillo de lo' almirece' que está al lao allá del río, cuandoo salgamo' a la calle yo te voy a decir: "¡el cerro de lo' almirece' eze e'!"

AL: Si lo sabe él cuál es ¿no?

A: ¿Sabe' tú?

R: Lo conoceré, pero no por nombre.

A: Por donde está el Tejar...joé.

Total, el cerro de lo' almirece' yo te diré el que e', pa que lo sepa'. Y allí traspusieron...

AL: La ropa que había tendida en la era.

A: Lah camiseta', lah camiseta' mojaa'...

R: (risa)

A: ...de manga larga.

AL: Claro, lo' huracane' puée forman unn...

A: Lo' huracane'...el huracán de aire levantó lo' trapo' de la' piedra' que había al lao de allí en la hierba, que estaban tendió' pa que le' diera el zol, lo' levantó y al cerrillo lo' almirece' fueron...

V: Yeah, but it was more exciting...

A: y al Tejar...

V: than even the upstairs

AL: Y al Majano...

V: where the furniture was...

A: ...que había enfrente donde...

AL: ...y al Majano dicen que también fue ropa.

A: ¿Eeh?

V: We had coal in the coal bin,

AL: Al Majano, que dicen que también fue ropa allí.

V: and wine in the barrels...

A: Sí. Allí fueron...

V: all the shelves had canned goods

A: en uunn,

V: that my mother made the bottles of

A: en un cerezo del Majano

V: stewed rabbit

A: había enganchao' camisa' de lo' hombre',

V: and stewed tomatoes...

A: de la' que había tendía' allí...

V: and my brother used to shoot wild rabbits for my mother to can

R: Sí, sí, sí.

A: Allí traspusieron, la' camisa'

V: and where the hob would hang and my father would butcher it

A: Y en el río...

V: and then open it up and make sausages and

A: ...en la era 'e lo' viejo' había trapo'...

V: and mother had a stove down there

A: de lo que se levantó en la era...

V: where she cooked up this lard

A: un huracán.

V: that we ate, for everything...

I'm talking too much

J & R: Noo!!

R: It's fine!

V: No!

J: I seems like we've eaten it!

V: Yes, anyway, grandma used to have this old washing machine with a ringer and sometimes our arms would get caught in the ringer trying...

J & R: (laughters)

V: and mother would say: "Feed through the clothes," now our little arms would go through half waych and you had to wind it back!
(laughter)

J & R: (laughters)

V: We had a little swollen arm for a day

E: Hola.

R: Otra vez.

E: Hola.

R: Sigue.

E: Hola.

R: Muy bien. ¡Púes hala! ¿Sabes lo que quiero que me hables? Quiero que me hables de lo quee significa para ti el aire, que me hables del aire, ¿qué significa para ti?

* * * * *

N: I I a well, wait... a a tornado of small nature, not important. I I really haven't lived through aa, any such hazardous experience, I've only read about them, o, or you know like here we had that... te terrible

fflood you know and... Well, we had an earthquake didn't we, recently?

J: mhum.

R: (laughter)

N: But it didn't affect me, it didn't affect this area, but mm...

V: Aaa, ours always had big boilers of water and they'd boil on the stove my father would move over from mother to soap with some big...

N: I'm just thinking...

V: Aaaamm, some big stick which was heavy that he could pound the clothes down with. Oogh! It was exciting! The big drainage hole for the water to run. The big cistern to collect the waters of the rains so that we could have water for the washing, through the pumps upstairs... and we had our own, we had also our own water well outside for drinking water.

E: Pues que el aire es puro...a veces, cuando llueve. Que de los coches... para el aire se sue así un poco el humo, yyym... que el aire da frío

R: ¿Sí?

E: ...a veces. Y que del...y cuando llueve...y que hace un poquito de aire, el vaporrrr sube al aire,

V: It was really exciting, our own gardens...

E: para a nue.

V: like you want to have, with vegetables. Again, that's when air comes in, doesn't it?

J: mhum.

V: Air, pollinating all the flowers that grandma grew everywhere. We had more bees than anybody in the neighborhood. But it was wonderful, it was the best, best time of my life, besides having my children.

A: Pero que estaban haciendo un hoyo, que estaba el cementerio allí, que es lo que yo iba a ver...

AL: Eso, eso...cuenta...

A: Estaban haciendo un hoyo pa' un muerto, que se había muerto un hombre...

AL: Pa enterrarlo...

A: y estaban haciendo un hoyo...y asomaba, como eso tiene suuuu...

AL: La cabeza de la caja...

A: ...suuu li, se asomaba una caja, y el que estaba...lo' chiquillos se asomaban a ver cómo estaban haciendo el hoyo, a la puerta, aquello estaba abierto, ' y creo que uno de ello' dicee: ¡de aquí va a salir un gato negro! y le dio con el astil del azaón a la caja aquella. Fue cuando salió el huracán...cuando traspusieron to' ezo' trapo' y tó eso.

Y aquello quedó en el pueblo como si no' hubieran echao, mmm como dicen, una caldera de agua hirviendo. Aquello impuso mucho en el pueblo a lo' mayore' ...y a lo' menore'.

* * * * *

N: Hu, you know I lived in Malibu for, we had a home in Malibu for several years right on the ocean front there. And, that certainly I thi I think affects the mind, the... the light over the ocean. Of course sunsets, if you're going to talk about light and dark, sunsets affect me very much.

R: ¿Qué más cosas sabes del aire, a ver, cuéntame? ¿Sabes mucho, eh?

E: Nada más.

R: Joé, si has dicho muchas cosas, seguro que sabes más.

E: Ee, pués, que el aire...en '...en invierno hace frío a veces.

R: Qué bien.

E: Y quee...(cómo se llama aquello de la nieve)...y queee...pués que en invierno queemmm...(cómo se llama...) que en invierno hace mucho frío, mucho frío porque hay bola' de nieve.

R: (risa)

E: (¿Qué más?) ¿Ahora de qué hablo?

R: Por ejemplo, el aire en verano, ¿cómo es el aire en verano?

E: ¿En verano? Pués que hace muchos rayos, en verano.

R: ¿Y qué más?

E: Pués que...¿qué? (¿qué más... qué más puedo decir?) .

R: Pués que hace mucho calor, ¿no?.

E: Y que hacee un calor. No, no hace tanto.

R: ¿¿No hace calor en verano??

E: Tch, sí.

R: Jolín que no hace calor.

E: Y en primavera salen los arco iris...y y salen las flores...

R: ¿Y en otoño, qué hace el viento?

E: Que sopla las hojas.

R: ¿Yy?

E: Y queem, se ca'n.

R: Muy bien, sabes mucho tú del aire.

N: I I don't know, i it's like the end of a of a of day of a period in your life eachchndt evening is sunset.

J: hmumh

N: Aaand um, a'course I I think sunset has certain mystical qualities as you see it settling down over the water's edge, and then the follow up of th through the the clouds coming through the sunset is so beautiful. And I'm moved very much by that sort of light and dark experience...right.

V: How much more do you want?

N: I'm just thinking...

V: Ooh, I used to love, when I was a child we were so poor that we would lie, because we had no toys, we'd lie as people did and watch the clouds which were a part of air,

J: mhummm.

V: Air also are clouds, and free and movement. And we used to watch the clouds and see things and feel the coolness of the air that moved in the grasses that we would lie in.

N: Well of course, the atmosphere was dark and gloomy and I, I saw all around us the roads were terribly icy, that naturally affects the mood of the person very much.

V: and your body and your skin touches the air and the coolness of it and...

N: I couldn't live in a, you know the way uh in a prison you're put into a a private cell in the dark and you never get to see the ligh' hh...

V: You're poor, but you have everything, you've got the earth around you and the coolness and the peace that nobody else has.

N: I need light to live with, I'm sure, and to breath with and to be happy with and...

V: But my pa parents were very rich,

J: mm

V: in those things that are, that we have, love and giving and caring and nurturing, and sharing....

...I can remember my first time flying, it was the most, ughooh, I felt like I was up in heaven...

J: in an airplane?

V: flying over the clouds, yes, flying over the clouds and looking down these clouds that use to be above my head and now are below me.

N: I, I thinks the all important, umm, substance of of life is light.

V: But it was excitement the anxiety and,

J: hummmh

V: looking down and not seeing anything and you see clouds only you just don't know where you're going. Even though you know you're going you're not so sure where you're going, it su it sort of removes you.

R: Y a ver, que decías que el aire a veces es puro a veces no es puro ¿qué sabes tú de eso?

E: Pues queem, tch cuando es puro es cuando llueve...y cuando no es puro es cuando hay coches, porque hay coches, y con tanto humo el aire....

* * * * *

V: We're off.

J: No.

V: We're,

J: Yes, is, is that good?

V: yes we are, we're off!

* * * * *

Outdoor performance at the beach, held on Wednesday December 6th, 1995.

As a ritual celebration of the full moon of December, I invited some friends to go to the beach on December 6th, about one hour before sunset. Professor Jann Pasler proposed the beautiful beach near her house, in Solana Beach, for this performance, and offered to video tape it. Besides Jane, Professor Pasler and I, the people that were able

to come to this event were: Vanessa Tomlinson, Mark Osborn, Alan Rosenblum and a friend of his called Jason.

For this performance I did not carry any artificial instrument but my voice and my body. Apart from the video camera, of all the other performers, only Mark brought a self-made slide-whistle-recorder.

Albeit the sky was overcast, the temperature was very pleasant. The ocean looked fabulous as usual. On the foggy horizon, the ocean and the sky seemed to be the same thing. The water and the air were fused in a humid hug, indistinguishable from one another. In the solitary beach, the low tide accentuated its splendor.

We began to perform the moment we arrived, as we were all immediately enchanted by the wonderful sounds of a pond nearby. As we walked towards the ocean, I played on a large bottle of water sitting by someone's door. Once we got down on the beach, Mark improvised a tune on his recorder, inside a small cave in the cliff carved by the water, which resonated in very unusual ways. Very close to him, Vanessa danced to his music inside an orifice of the cliff, the size of a large door. This orifice was the "eye" of a gigantic elephant head, according to a Balinese visitor of Professor Pasler's. Attracted by the sensuality of the water, I run towards the ocean and danced playfully with the waves. Jane began to play with seaweed and the sand in the wide, wet hand of the tideland. Alan and Jason began to do yoga, in front of the sun.

Vanessa, Jane, Mark and I enjoyed playing with water-sand balls, tossing them to each other and throwing them up to the air. We also made a wonderful sand pie and played with the hungry water which, over and over, would lick our pie all around and above it.

As the sun disappeared and the full moon rose, we moved away from the sand pie, each one drawing a different score on the sand, in four different directions...

B. RITUALS

Scratch Music fulfilled a particular need at a particular time, at a particular stage in the development of the Scratch Orchestra. Such a need may be felt by other groups passing through a similar stage either now or in the future, and some or all of the basic notions of the Scratch Music may again be useful, but for now, as far as the Scratch Orchestra is concerned, Scratch Music is dead. (from *Scratch Music*, p. 12)

This chapter contains a collection of texts around the air, the water, the earth, the fire, and the ether in the tradition of the "Scratch Music," with two basic differences: first, my texts do not include commands, and second, they are not supposed to be musical works or compositions (much less concert pieces), but rather intimate rituals and games. These texts consist of descriptions of personal experiences, dreams, wishes, jokes, etc. Some are real, some imaginary, many of them are a combination of both. They show the reader certain ways of living as well as certain ways of imagining ways of living.

I tuned the sea, by swimming in it.

At the same time, the sea was tuning me.

The newly tuned sea tuned the sun with its sweat and its breeze.

I got out of the water and the sun, the clouds and the wind newly tuned me.

Later, I ate and my guts moved on to a loud, jumpy tune,
 that resulted in more wind.
 My breeze re-tuned the wind, and the wind brought in new
 clouds,
 and the clouds re-tuned the sea and the sea re-tuned the sun.
 The sun tuned the moon and the newly tuned moon re-tuned
 the sea, and the sea tuned the stars, and the newly tuned stars
 re-tuned me. (After Scratch Orchestra member John Nash).

Early this morning my hands flew as high as they could. My
 fingers danced after a spider on the ceiling making a web. My arms
 danced after our neighbor snake. I breathed deeply and slowly while
 listening attentively. I moved my head like our baby poplar's top
 moves in the wind, and then my tongue, my body, my legs, my feet
 and my toes. I continued breathing deeply and slowly as the music
 grew more dense...

Every day, Jane and I do yoga for several hours, usually in the
 bullring, naked. Yoga has fostered a profound sense of peace and
 well-being in me. It inspires love and appreciation for other people,
 animals, plants, rocks, and the elements: air, water, earth, fire, and
 ether. When I do yoga, I think with my whole body and my brain
 sweats. Each *asana* introduces me, if only for several minutes, to a
 different way of being, that one of a tree, of a cat, of a mountain, of a
 dog, of a grasshoper, of a crow, of a diamond, of a lotus flower, of a
 child, of a corpse...

One evening in October, 1994, Carlos, Sanaâ, Jane and I were
 taking a walk along the road to the Quéntar's dam. A very affectionate

gray and white kitty joined us for about two hours, and then left. A couple of weeks later it showed up during a family gathering where some young relatives named him Gusiluz after a popular toy. In December it was brought back to our place by my aunt, now as a gift. And what a gift! Gusi is loving, playful, clean and patient. He likes to sleep and play (like me). He teaches me dance, music, ecology, theology and ethics. I am considering a new reckoning of my years: before Gusi (B.G.) and after Gusi (A.G.).

Many days, Gusi and I dance in our bullring: mostly pieces that resemble chasing games. Lately, he seems to have become more independent and does not come to play as frequently as he used to. It is very hot now and I do not go out as much either. Today he is sick, and we are all sad and worried.

Gusi likes to play with lizards in the morning, although they do not look thrilled with the game at all. He dances with them in the house, which does not make us thrilled either. I wonder if such a loving being enjoys being mean sometimes, I mean: how does he feel about lizards running away spreading their guts all over the place? (Not unlike the actions of some people).

To me, now, here: WAR IS NOT A GAME!!! (nowhere)

I took a walk to our orchard in the evening, to enjoy the weather and pick up some tomatoes and figs. In our neighbors' path, a happy looking donkey was rehearsing a folk dance I had seen other donkeys dance before: she would lie down on dry soil and roll to one side and then to the other, and so on and so forth. Every once in a while,

through a thick cloud of dust, she would stop and look at me, as if she were inviting me. After some consideration, I decided to join her: I lied down, at a certain distance from her, and rolled to one side and then to the other, and so on and so forth. I followed her, synchronizing my movements with hers, which seemed to amuse her quite a bit because she began to sing enthusiastically a long aria, first “a solo,” but it soon became a duo. When I ran out of breath, she stopped, stood up and walked up to me. She kissed me twice, like it is customary in Spain, and offered me some flies that I welcomed. I said goodbye and continued with my plan.

A week later, on a hot and dry day, we gave Gusi a bath. We used a special shampoo that his bugs do not like much. Gusi does not like taking baths either, I wonder if he is good friends with his bugs. A while after the bath, he was shiny and fluffy, but only for a while. He went straight to a dry, dusty place and performed the happy donkey dance in his own version, over and over and over. When he finished, he came back to where we were and shared some dust with us. From that day on, I dance a “happy donkey” dance of my own every morning at dawn.

Many mornings at dawn—be it sunny or not, I get out of the house and let the land select a spot for us to dance. Sometimes, it is in the shade, sometimes it is in the sun. I bury my feet and enjoy the energy of the soil, I continue with my legs, my body, my neck and my arms. I breathe deeply inside the earth and the earth breathes deeply inside me. After a while, I roll on to one side, and then to the other, and so on and so forth. I call this ritual “the happy monkey” dance. Most of our neighbors—ants, spiders, rosemaries, pinetrees, scorpions,

birds, thymes, snakes, olive trees, grasshoppers, rabbits, fig trees, almond trees, and thousands of others—have their own versions of this dance as well.

During the Fall, one of my favorite games is picking up persimmons at dawn. People I use to play with are modest yet knowledgeable vocational players (no professionals needed). The settings are beautiful and quiet (when they are...). The score of this ritual, passed from generation to generation through oral tradition, begins: “When they are ripe, persimmons are sweet, their color is red. They are messy to eat and juicy like hell. In this valley, they are not sold, so many remain on the trees long after the leaves are gone...” To me, persimmons look like musical notes on the branch-like staves of a living page.

I like to bury my feet in the earth and remain still with my body straight and my hands up high. Other times, I rest on my shoulders and raise my legs up. I try to feel like a tree, breathe like a tree, sing and play like a tree. A few times, one particular tree has talked to me. Mostly she-he asks questions, like: how does it feel moving so fast? How do you feel being so soft? How does it feel to be so detached from the earth (while you are alive)? How do you manage to be so self-centered and yet so self-destructive?

Following the plans of my father, we have built a (more or less) semispheric outdoor oven made of brick and clay. Thanks to it, we have been able to cook delicious food: roast potatoes, eggplants, and tomatoes, banana bread, lasagna, cakes, etc. In addition to these goodies, I have enjoyed looking at the hypnotic dances performed by

the flames of burning wood, with its striking colors, with the intense smells of the wood and the food. After the flames fade out, I remain looking at the ashes, feeling their heat, listening to the sounds they make, thinking that they look like a microscopic universe with stars of all sizes and colors, with capricious constellations and occasional shooting stars. Every time we cook in the oven, I witness a different version of this magnificent creation.

Today, June 18, 1995, the Fifth Annual Deep Listening Retreat is supposed to begin in the Rose Mountain Retreat Center in Las Vegas, New Mexico. Led by composer Pauline Oliveros and T'ai Chi, Taoist and Creative Movement Specialist Heloise Gold, it aims to be: "a meditative exploration of listening and sounding, designed to help people gain flexibility in as many forms of listening as possible." Their brochure explains the retreat in the following way:

The training includes attention to breathing, exploration of unusual acoustic environments and phenomena, just listening, listening as an ensemble, strategies for creating and performing pieces, using voices and found sounds, keeping a sound journal, group interaction and discoveries and twice daily movement sessions with Heloise in the open air. There will be seven hours of Daily Ritual with instruction by Pauline and Heloise and fourteen hours of silence, as well as opportunities for exchange and lively conversation with other retreat participants...

Through movement and sound activities participants are supported in the creation and dissemination of their creative process.

Participants need not be trained musicians. The exercises are designed to facilitate challenge for each individual at her [or his] own level of understanding and experience. The Deep Listening Retreat is for anyone

interested in expanding and deepening respect and appreciation of one's inner music and the possibilities for expressing it: musicians and artists interested in expanding their understanding of sound; meditators interested in enhancing their depth of practice through listening; teachers who want to encourage appreciation for listening in their students; and those interested in well being, relaxation, excitement and connection with others and the environment.

Pauline describes her life as a composer, performer and humanitarian as being about opening her own and others' sensibilities to the many facets of sound

I would love to be there for three main reasons: first, because my two encounters with Pauline have been very inspiring (long time later); second, because I suspect that the people this retreat may bring together may have similar interests to mine; and third, because the training itself sounds very interesting. I like Pauline's emphasis on "listening" and I appreciate much her attentive listening to me in Telluride (Colorado) and San Diego (California). I like listening to her: she is open and friendly. She knows how to set up environments in which a special awareness of self and community, as well as the place of one within the other can flourish. She stimulates positive thoughts, and makes me feel good. In addition, there are few things I am aware I want to gain and flexibility is one of them, together with a deeper knowledge of my body, my breathing, my voice, and improvements in my connections with others around me, and my environments. I also like the front drawing of the brochure (which for me resembles at once a breast and an eye), and the quotes from past attendants: "lots of fun!" (Wendy Burch, Poet); "words can do little to express the depth and nature of such experience" (James Alcorn, Composer).

Similarly, I like the descriptions of the place: "Rose Mountain Retreat Center is situated high up (8,000 feet) in the pristine Sangre de Cristo Mountains of New Mexico. From the whisper of the wind in a grove of aspens, and the hush of the pine needle floor of the camping site to the spectacular views from Moon Meadow, the experience alone of their special setting is transformative. Far removed from the sounds of urban life, Rose Mountain provides a rich silence for deep listening."

The cost seems quite reasonable: tuition, camping, and delicious, healthful vegetarian meals for one week: \$450.00

Yet, I wish they would have presented Heloise Gold differently from "a T'ai Chi, Taoist and Creative Movement Specialist."

First, I suffer occasional attacks of *specialistphobia*, with a particular sensitivity when the term "specialist" is applied within the realm of one's own "professional" life, i. e. the field in which one makes (or may want to make) a living. For reasons probably related to my own reasoning, I relate specialization in a particular discipline, task, or skill with the expression of insecurity and/or of an obsession that commonly results in a compulsive machine-like behavior. I am less reticent to a vocational and/or peripheral specialization like mycology was for John Cage; and second, I have a very hard time believing that a specialist in those three particularly broad subjects can exist and, if it were the case, that he or she would make that claim. I rather prefer the other text supplied: "Heloise Gold is a dancer, performance artist, choreographer and T'ai Chi instructor."

Our land and the waters of rain have not played or danced together, like they used to, for more than ten years. The earth herself looks sad, and so do those who breastfeed in her lap. Many trees have

died, trees that nourished our ancestors, centuries ago, and trees that could have nourished our grandchildren. Their dark skeletons remain still, like standing shadows on a moon's skin. For me, they are dead dancers who remind us all—people, animals and other plants—of the importance of playing and dancing *with the water*, statues that reflect the fragility of our lives.

I am helping the dozen trees or so closer to our house with occasional waterings, but they are barely surviving. According to the media, this year has been the driest and hottest of this century. Surprisingly enough, our youngest tree neighbor, a baby four-feet tall fig tree, has managed to give wonderful figs, somewhat prematurely, specially considering the adverse weather conditions. I secretly take the figs as his-her gifts to us for our care and company.

Around the agonizing trees, there are villages of generous plants, mainly rosemary and thyme. Their fragrances dance in our noses and their juices dance with our stomachs. Their flowers and branches are beautiful and performers of many kinds come to play, dance and eat among them. These players have a special sensitivity for melody and polyphony, and they are excellent choreographers as well.

Our car has a stereo system of its same age, when no-one knew what a compact disc could be. The radio works adequately but the cassette player is in such shape that we have not dared to play any tapes on it, to date. This "technological inconvenience" has fostered numerous conversations and has animated many performances. We, passengers, mostly sing our favourite folk and popular songs,

accompanied by the loud drone produced by the car and by the sound of the wind. With such loud accompaniment we have to sing really loud, which gives us a nice boost during the long hours of our frequent trips to Madrid, apart from the bonding that results from singing all together.

Jane and I love to play and dance with our hands on our skins. Our bodies become bread which we knead. I need Jane and Jane kneads me. We need bread and so, we knead.

I love to play and dance with the water on my skin. I am a drop, and the water is me.

Water is fresh,

water is hot,

water is wet,

and wet is my...

faith.

In the small village of Quéntar lives one of the most outstanding performers of the world: my grandmother. She has a story, or a saying, or a rhyme for every thing that happens to me. Her memory is portentous. She never went to school, and has never learned how to read and write. She grew up in the village's bakery and, later, she ran her own shop. Through everyday interactions with the people of Quéntar, at the shop, she learned to be a happy, healthy person, loved by her neighbors. Is not this a revealing lesson on "Education in the Arts"?

Many days, I sit by the river, with my feet in the water. My back is comfortably straight. I look up. My arms become cobras as they rise enchanted by the sound of the wind dancing among the branches and leaves of a nearby tree. My hands become busy tarantulas upside down. My feet become crayfish playing with the current. My body waves rhythmically with the poplars around. Then my head rotates thinking of the earth around the sun.

Lately, Jane and I are making music with things and materials of our everyday life—rocks, trunks, branches, shells, reeds, flowerpots, spoons, glass bottles, balloons, chairs, etc.—as well as with objects we used to throw in recycling bins or put away as trash: boxes, cardboard tubes, cans, etc. By doing so, we feel the music of our lives more intensely—being surrounded by and playing with so many musical instruments—and we, somehow, alleviate the burden put on our land, our water, and our air by our village's pathetic dump site.

About a year ago, while waiting at the one and only local phone booth, Jane and I met an Italian man living in Quéntar who belongs to a new and rapidly growing Sufi community established here by a German master. After showing our surprise and our interest in meeting his master, we were led to his presence on that same night, despite the advanced hour of our encounter: 11 PM. We held a two-hour conversation with the Sufi Master and accepted his invitation to attend one of their rituals.

Last week, taking advantage of a visit by Carlos and Sanaâ, who are Muslims, we decided to attend one of their weekly, music-oriented rituals. All the adult members of this community we have seen, about twenty people in their late thirties, address their forty-year old Master

with a striking sense of solemnity and ceremony: they never speak unless spoken to, they kiss everything he touches (cups, plates, ashtrays, cigarette boxes, etc.), and they never turn their backs to him. The Master seems to lead every aspect of their lives: from guiding them along their spiritual paths, to permitting them to travel out of town.

Their ritual began with the men moving forward, towards a marvellous lamp located on the east corner of the room, and the women taking places behind a screen that divided the room in two parts. The floor was covered with rugs and lamb skins. With Carlos and I a little behind them, they performed an initial, physically demanding prayer, led by one man of Cuban origin. He put on a special hat and, standing, recited a text in the Arabic language. The response of the group was accompanied by a "dance" consisting of a series of agile movements that took them, back and forth, from an erect position to kissing the ground. When they finished, Carlos and I were invited to join their semicircle, while their Master picked up an acoustic guitar and proceeded to sit on his knees and heels, by the lamp in front of us. We all sat on our knees and heels, on the lamb skins, and began to sing the songs that the Master previously announced: songs about their God and about their faith in Him, both in Spanish and Arabic. In addition to their voices, the acoustic guitar, and an arab lute the Master picked up later, they used a tambourine, several drums and a small xylophone.

Their songs were, in essence, similar to the songs I have heard in Catholic churches. Half an hour into the performance, most of them, including the Master and two teenagers, seemed to reach a trance-like state that I enjoyed seeing. The Sufi songs were very rhythmical and had a clear, engaging formal shape, based on gradual

crescendos and accelerandos up to a climax, gradually winding down until the end.

This performance brought back memories of a very compelling ritual I attended at a Christian church of an African-American community in downtown San Diego—whose name I can not recall—which was my first and only exposition to Gospel in a church, performed by anonymous singers. Their enthusiasm, sense of togetherness, looseness, and inspired improvisations had a more gripping effect on me than other performances of professional Gospel singers I have attended or listened to on record.

The other day I was amazed by the beautiful music someone was playing in the toilet. It included various types of wonderful sounds performed with great taste and a marvelous sense of rhythm. I was particularly impressed by the round, clean percussive sound of the shit diving in the water. I have been practicing since then with enthusiasm and my sound is getting better. Nevertheless, I prefer to manure the soil without intermediaries, and to offer my neighbor flies the very best produces of my organic pantry.

Why am I asked so frequently what my profession is and rarely what my vocations are? Perhaps because most people, governments and banks want to know how I contribute to society, and/or because they are more interested in learning how I earn money and how much I earn, and/or due to some other reasons I do not even suspect. Who knows? What if my main contribution to society is *not making money at all*? What if there have been forms of life that did not revolve around money, professions, governments and banks? What if we ask old Pygmies and Yanomami, old olive trees and turtles? (Please read

carefully the question because it is my feeling that nowadays both the lives and the ancestral forms of life of the Pygmies, the Yanomami, olive trees and turtles do depend upon money, professions, governments and banks). Probably I am a “vocational professional musician” but I do claim to not even remotely think of music as *work*, much less as *business*.

Why do so many people ask me, first thing, if I have a job? Is it so important? Does everybody have a job? Do cats have a job? Do flies have a job? Do trees have a job? Is having children a job? Is loving the ones you are with a job? Is enjoying lots of time with your elders, your children, and your friends a job?

I tend to think that I do not have a **job**, and that fact makes me very happy, because I detest the common concept of job as “the boring routines one has to do five days a week in order to make money.” My responsibility, as a socially aware individual is to be as happy and healthy as possible and to enjoy life, not to be miserable trying to “make a living.”

C. GAMES

One day, Eduardo and I were travelling on the subway playing “veo, veo...” as usual, when an ear piercing sound surprised us. It seemed to carry a message from the subway company because, although it was basically outrageously loud noise, from time to time, I could identify words about some construction being done in our line. Everybody seemed very disturbed, as we were. After one minute or so, I realized that the initially strange, undifferentiated shape of that noise was actually not so, but very similar to a sort of distorted electric guitar

solo, and that it had a certain musicality. I began to like it more and more, and so much was I carried away by it that, at one point, I jumped in the middle of the shaking wagon and performed a wild dance as if I were playing that "solo." Holding an invisible guitar, I shook my long hair as I have seen rock stars do and I waved my body following the melodic contours of the wild solo. When, after two minutes or so, it stopped, I returned to my seat, with my son, and calmed down. I was, logically, out of breath and sweaty, but very proud of my powerful, inspired, and unexpected performance. Eduardo had tears in his eyes, and kept laughing and laughing, rolling as if he were suffering a stomach ache. An old couple in front of us had a distant expression on their faces, but they could hardly disguise their laughs. A young guy on the left was openly laughing at me, and I corresponded with a smile.

Today, Eduardo taught me how to play an amusing piece full of potential. We were in the subway and, surprisingly enough, he was very quiet and did not seem interested in playing any of our favourite "subway games." Instead, he had his hands on his ears, which made me think that he was protecting himself from the very loud noise. Actually, he was performing a duo with the train by opening and closing his ears with his hands with the rhythm of a song he was singing to himself. I joined them and we had fun. I have played with the subway several times since then.

In July, Jane, Edu and I received the visit from Vanessa, from Australia. On a very hot day, we visited the magnificent city of Toledo, 60 kilometers south of Madrid. After a couple of hours walking along its marvellous streets, we decided to see the inside of the cathedral. To

our surprise, we were stopped at the door by a guard: a tall, strong, armed man dressed like a bank guard. In fact, his uniform displayed the logo of a well-known security company I had only seen in banks and Government buildings. Maybe his presence at the cathedral was part of a campaign to help people figure out the connections among those three institutions. In any case, the guard told us that Vanessa could not enter because her top allowed one to see about an inch of her waist, including her belly-button. To make things worse, she was wearing shorts, although that did not seem to be a big problem. We apologized politely and explained to him that we lived far away and could not change clothes, that she was on a short visit, and that she had never seen any church of that kind in her life. After ten minutes of arguing, we found a solution: I took my shirt off and passed it to her. She was then allowed in. Since I was barechest at the crowded entrance of the cathedral, I decided to walk away some meters, although the guard did not mind my half-nakedness. I sat down on the sidewalk waiting for them to come back and began to improvise, singing and tapping on my body. I was quite inspired that day and the music soon took over. I noticed people coming closer, forming a semicircle around me. When I finished, I got a generous round of applause and some spectators dropped money at my feet. I tried to give it back to them, explaining that it was not my intention to ask for money, but I was left with some pesetas, enough to pay for all our tickets to the cathedral. Thanks so much, gentle guard!

Eduardo is a very musical kid: he likes singing and dancing, playing percussion, flute, and guitar, and listening to Jane and I when we play and sing. Actually, what he really likes is *to be* with other people, and music is one way to show his sociability. He sings

various kinds of songs, ranging from original ones my sister and I have composed for him to popular songs he hears on the radio and on television. For instance, during the trip to Toledo, Vanessa and Jane taught Eduardo and I the song "Old MacDonald had a farm..." Edu and I knew a Spanish version of it, but the way Vanessa and Jane sang it was more engaging and fun. After a while, we were able to sing along with them, not very fast. What Edu and I enjoyed the most was performing the animal onomatopoeias, since we both like languages so much.

A couple of months later, Jane and I went to Seville, to visit Hillary, a friend of Jane's from Northwestern University who plays piccolo in the Symphonic Orchestra of Seville. With Vanessa's precedent in mind, we dressed up properly to visit Seville's cathedral. Advertised as the second (or third) largest of the world, it interests me more for the fantastic Arab minaret that presides over it, the Giralda Tower, remains of the eight centuries that Spain was Islamic. The line of visitors was very long and we had to wait for almost one hour to get in. When we were close to the entrance, a group of six people began to speak animatedly to the three young people standing in line right in front of us. Although they all seemed to be a group of relatives or friends, the three young people seemed quite uncomfortable and, at one point, one of them told us, people behind in the line, that they had nothing to do with the other group and that they just wanted to sneak in. With a rumor of disapproval a group of about twenty liners agreed to not let them achieve their purpose, but, to our surprise, yet another different group of elegant elders, led by a young woman tried to avoid the long line and pass in front of our faces. Some people began to recriminate the newcomers, but I did something more drastic: in a

very operatic way, I walked to the narrow entrance and became a temporary guard, letting in those who were in line and looking furiously at the line-cutters. In view of the situation, the six “relatives” of our neighbors moved back stage, but the leader of the new group initiated an enchanting solo, with arguments like: “who cares if we sneak in?” “Come on, it is only a few minutes of waiting...” When she realized that I was not going to let them in, she changed her lyrical tone of voice and confronted me with an abrupt provocation: “You should worry more about *your* performance *in bed*, rather than playing local hero!” All this was happening in English and most people had no clue what we were saying. I answered: “Maybe *you* should worry about *your* performance in bed, since you are the one who brings that up here, out of the blue!” At this point, more than twenty people were yelling at them and the elegant elders began to leave. Nevertheless, one of them got in during the duo and yelled something to me before running inside the cathedral. When they left, all the people in the line began clapping and I proceeded inside thinking how difficult it is these days to enter holy monuments.

All the children I know love tales, and some adults—my grandmother, for example—too. Last summer, Eduardo and I spent a week with two cousins of mine who have two children each. I used to sit with them and improvise stories they would listen to very attentively. The stories had rather simple storylines but the way I told them had a feature the kids got very involved in. Every once in a while, I would stutter, repeating only a syllable, as if I could not remember or be able to pronounce certain words. Of course, the syllables I purposely chose could belong to many different words which would make sense within each context. At first, I thought of

this proceeding as a way to encourage them to interact with me and to give them a chance to conduct my storyline, but soon I had to stop: whenever they had a chance (and they managed to have many), they would invariably chose swear words or words they knew they are not supposed to say.

Gusiluz did not want to let us go the other day and he kept hiding under the car, so that we could not move it without running over him. I thought of singing a low drone that scares him and makes him run away. As I began to sing it, I noticed the sound of a plane approaching our area. Soon, my drone and the sound of the plane began to interact. At times, they resonated together, but I enjoyed more getting various combination tones, and playing with the resulting polyphony.

I climbed to a cherry tree that was partly dry and partly green. Cherries were ripe, perhaps for the last time. I danced a slow piece with its branches and leaves. At times, I felt scared: they sounded like they were going to drop me... Cherries looked like living musical notes, but they were soft mallets as well. Indeed, one cherry here, a pair of them there would fall and hit the ground with a delicate sound. I felt part of a piece partly composed, partly improvised: composed by the sun, by the earth, by the river and the wind; improvised by the ground and the tree, by the cherries and by me. This performance happened in our garden by the river, which is surrounded by many plentiful gardens. Some of our neighbors were there. I listened to them sing and talk to each other, and I felt that the neighboring animals, their food, the clouds and the rocks were part of the piece too.

I lay down on the ground near our house. I thought I was alone, but when my eyes got used to the closeness with the ground, I saw a jungle of plants and a bunch of little bugs in frantic dance. I was particularly amazed by two of them: an almost microscopic one that moved at the speed of sound, and another one, in a plant-like disguise, who did not seem to move at all!

On a gorgeous starry night, Fabián, Simone, Jane, Eduardo and I built a fire where we cooked potatoes, eggplants, and tomatoes from our garden with plenty of garlic and olive oil from our harvest. We ate and drank, and later we sang “old” popular songs mixed with laughter and jokes. We all improvised fairly inspired vocal and instrumental arrangements. Gusiluz remained quiet except for occasional yawns.

The following day we took a long walk around the mountain that shelters our house. When we reached enough height, we were able to enjoy the breathtaking view of the cumbers of Sierra Nevada. Later, we arrived at a small grove where a big walnut tree was falling asleep for the winter. Since the tree had fruits left, Fabián and I decided to lovingly rock it to see if we could get some. Sure enough, the nuts fell: clink, clong. Some of them caught us on the head. Were we the performers? Were we being performed? We enjoyed delicious walnuts and had a terrific time dancing with the branches, caressing them and being caressed.

For New Year’s Eve, the water was cut off due to yet another failure of the temporary system that serves us these days. This system replaces the direct flow of water from the Aguas Blancas spring well to

our house, while the road to Tocón is being improved. The grandiose performance of bulldozers in this valley is not only bringing progress, drastic changes in this ecosystem, loud noises of dynamite explosions and engines, together with thick clouds of dust and smoke, but other profound alterations in the life of our neighborhood through the water and its absences.

What great and rare performances we are witnessing these days! Day after day, clouds appear in the afternoon and, as they grow darker and louder, rain and wind and lights and smells begin what could be professionally described as follows: "*The Unnamable* presented a magnificent week-long multimedia show of Stockhausenian proportions. This Hyper-show was masterly articulated in a series of presumably improvised variations on a theme whose title—not supplied— could have been *Fragmented Seas Over Our Heads.*"

Jane told me that, while I was away, she heard a strange resonating sound around the house. At first, she thought it was a lost baby goat that had been seen the day before around our house. It took her several minutes to figure out what was going on. During that time, she was puzzled by the sound itself as well as by its weird echo. It sounded at once close and far away. Finally she located the source: a big wasp had got inside a large glass with a bit of water left and she or he was probably enjoying her/his own buzzing. Is it not wonderful that a wasp could be taken for a goat?

Jane and I had been warned about a hard working man in Quéntar called Manuel "el Calises" ("the Cups") who drinks a lot,

sometimes becoming aggressive and obscene. In December, late at night, we were making some phone calls when we saw him dancing from side to side in the street. To our relief, he passed the phone booth, but then, unexpectedly, he turned back and came straight toward us. He hit the door with his whole body, his arms up, growling, and attempted to open the door, which finally he did not manage to do. He then sat outside. We planned the escape: Jane would go first, rapidly to the left, then me. She made it fine, but he got me. He grabbed me by the neck. I froze. He asked me to dial a number. I had the guts to ask him for a coin. I did not believe the number was right. Apparently, it was. Soon, he was talking to someone: I think it was his Mom! What a voice this man has: it is deep, broken and loud like the voice of an ogre. Yet, to date, he has been kind of nice.

One month later, Jane and I went to a grove nearby to enjoy the inebriating splendor of almond trees covered by marvelous white flowers. Although this grove was not ours, we were planning to pick up the quite rich harvest of almonds that had been left in the trees. We were told that picking them was a favor to the trees, because they were flourishing and last year's fruits were a burden. Nevertheless, we were concerned with someone catching us on this land. Gusi came with us and was enjoying the morning as much as we. Unexpectedly, we heard a deep, broken, loud voice from the road above our heads: it was Manuel el Calises! I almost fell from the tree, but finally managed to hold on to it. He had shaved his head, which did not make his look more quieting. A dog accompanied him: bad news for Gusi too. Manuel said: "Picking almonds, huh?" "Yes, sir"—I mumbled, shaking. "Well...", he continued (I could not breathe), "you are leaving a lot behind!" He said: "look over there, and back there, and high up

there, and don't miss those trees down there..." And he continued: "I know of a place behind that mountain, on the other side of the river, where there are more than ten big trees with great almonds..." He proceeded to give us all kinds of directions on how to get there. He rested for a while and then left. His dog did not care a hair about Gusiluz.

Jane, Eduardo and I went on an excursion with our friends Carlos and Sanaã. They wanted to show us a mountain wall where Carlos learned his rock climbing skills, an activity which he performs quite well. That day, the spider in me was awake. I put on the climbing gear and began to dance just like a spider, up the wall. When, after a while, I looked down to check where I was, the chicken in me took over the spider: I was more than fifteen meters above the ground on a completely vertical wall! Fortunately, I was able to recover my spiderness through deep breathing games and continued to a narrow balcony in the wall, at twenty-five meters. Back to chickeness, I sang the aria "Bring me a helicopter immediately, I can't go down!" Some more breathing games, accompanied by sweet recitativos from below, encouraged me to jump off the "balcony" into the air. I descended as fast as I could and, when I got down to the ground, I laughed and cried at the same time. This adventurous performance has raised my admiration for spiders.

IV. RELATED EVENTS

A. while caressing Chronos' throat...

In the Spring of 1993, I was offered the possibility of composing a piece for the carillon of the U.C.S.D. Central Library by the person in charge of the instrument: Scott Paulsen. A proficient oboist with whom I had collaborated in the past, Scott took me to the top of the Library, where the carillon is located, and showed me its functioning. I was immediately appealed by the rich, versatile sound of the instrument, consisting of two sets of metallic spaghetti-like rods with contact microphones attached, connected to a computer. Likewise, I was deeply impressed by the amazing views from its location.

My piece would be included in a concert scheduled for September 20th celebrating two yearly events of different significance: the beginning of the 1993-94 academic year and the birthday of the carillon's donor, Joe Rubinger. From a compositional viewpoint, this commission gave me a chance to explore the symbolic language of those who "conduct" people's daily lives through the sounds of bells, sirens, beeps, horns, etc. By playing with the artifact that represents the "time keeper" of the University of California at San Diego, I was able to speak to my community with the throat and mouth of the U.C. Regents, as representatives of a certain elite with specific ideas about both life and how to establish relations among people. However, I could not speak with their "institutional brain," but with the mind of an anonymous, peripheral cell of the university body.

I composed the piece while taking long walks around campus, listening to what my human colleagues, my animal friends, my plant peers and my rock neighbors had to say about the carillon and its

meaning for them. The result was a set of variations on the “Westminster Bells” theme as explained in the following pages.

"while caressing Chronos' throat"
 for two readers, two carillon players, computer
 and electronics

The two readers read the enclosed text in the following way:

- only "curved" words are to be read aloud.
 "straight" words are to be thought of but not to be spoken.
- the word "CHANGE" (in the center of the text) is to be read alternating with any of the words of the circle, which can be read in any order.
- the title should be read again before the last piece of text: "the forgotten".

The two carillon players follow the enclosed instructions.

The computer part was made by the composer prior to the premiere and contains the enclosed four lines based on the "Westminster Bells" theme plus a series of interludes based on the chord C-H-A-G-E (H = B natural).

For the premiere both the carillon (live and pre-recorded) and the two readers were amplified with two systems provided by the Central Library and the Music Department of the University of California at San Diego.

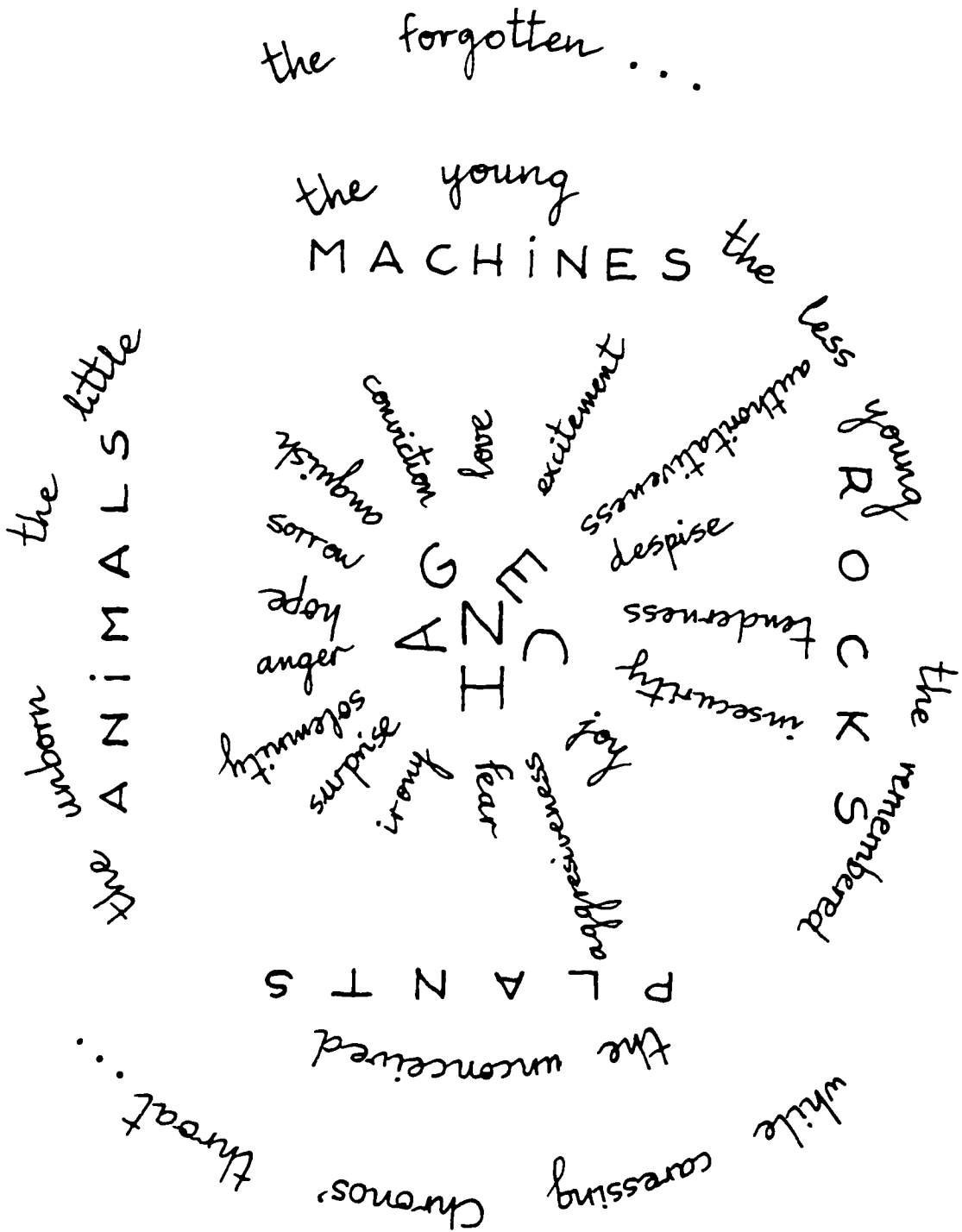
The performers were:

René Coulombe & Kitty Pappas, readers
 Jane Rigler & Rafael Linán, carillon

The piece is dedicated to Joe Rubinger, the donor of the UCSD carillon.

Rafael Linán

'93



original(G) $\xrightarrow{\text{Bb (Polytonal)}}$ $\xrightarrow{\text{polyrhythm (2 players)}}$ $\xrightarrow{\text{carillon outline}}$ C H A N G E

f **JANE: dynamics**

growing clusters
very slow

P

C# chromatic (paritonal) **mf** **violently muted (censorship)**

f **JANE: muting action**

Mi microlydian (modal) (semimuted) **mp** **Scratching (chains) accelerate**

f **JANE: dynamics**

PP

Tonal

Scale selector: 1#

Polytonal-Polyrhythmic (in conjunction with the tonal part)

Scale selector: 2b

Modal

Scale selector: 3#

Pantonal

Scale selector: b

B. *MUSICOLOQUIOS*

In May 1993, I was awarded the Center for Iberian and Latin American Studies (CILAS) Dissertation Grant, of the University of California at San Diego, for a project about the effects of ethnic music-making on racial prejudices which was to be carried on in Spain the following year. My project's aim was to explore the potential of music as an educational tool to promote collaboration, trust, and respect among people of different ethnic groups. In addition, I intended to show that music can alleviate some current tensions and improve future inter-ethnic relations.

In order to set up the necessary infrastructure, I initially contacted two institutions in Madrid: the city council of Madrid, through Mr. José Alamá, director of the Music School Network, and the Intituto Universitario Ortega y Gasset, through Mr. Pedro Pérez Herrero, coordinator of Mexican Studies. Due to the coincidence of the beginning of my contacts with the Spanish presidential elections, held in June, followed by the summer vacations, I had to wait until September 1993 for more precise terms in their commitment to the project.

Between September and December, the month in which I moved to Madrid, both Mr. Alamá and Mr. Pérez Herrero began contacts in search for financial support with little success. As I would experience myself upon arrival, the economy of Spain was undergoing a period of deep crisis worsened by a series of political scandals that threatened to cause the dissolution of the Parliament so both, people and institutions seemed paralyzed by the situation.

In January 1994, I began looking for alternatives and came into contact with the town council of Las Rozas, a 20,000-inhabitant town

10 miles Northwest of Madrid who finally sponsored it. Some of my premises were adjusted to the interests of Teresa Nieto who was responsible ("concejala") for the office of social affairs, and José Romero, coordinator of immigrant affairs.

The project, named "Musicoloquios," consisted of eight "intercultural encounters" in which members of the community sang and danced together the musics of both the autochthonous and the immigrant populations. Emphasis was placed on three groups with relevant presence in the region: Latin Americans, Moroccans and Eastern Europeans. The encounters were held in the beautiful interior garden of the Centro de Servicios Sociales and open to people of all ages.

Ms. Carmen Gregorio, a sociologist working on immigrant issues in the area, assumed the task of surveying the opinions of the attendants through two series of questionnaires she designed. The first questionnaire inquired about the initial opinions and the second one focused upon the opinion changes of the attendants.

During February, we began contacting musicians and dancers, and publicized the events both with posters and through the media. One of our main concerns, as expressed in our publicity, was to encourage the participation of all and the interaction among the attendants, independently of their musicianship or training. Thus, the banner's slogan was: Friday at 7 you perform! Free!

The publicity of these encounters included the following paragraph: "We, people of Las Rozas, owe a substantial part of our identity to the fact that we live in a metropolitan area where, permanently, millions of interactions of all kinds occur: among ourselves, with our environment, and with other people. These interactions are helping grow and mature our community so that the

one of tomorrow will have the characteristics that we are defining today. The people responsible for this process are all of us who are here now.”

The events were conducted by musicians and dancers from Argentina, Bolivia, Colombia, Paraguay, Morocco and Senegal. People who attended the events greatly differed from one week to another: in those events dedicated to Latin America there was a majority of women of ages forty to sixty who would form a group of regular participants, the event led by a trio from Senegal counted with a majority of children and in the one around Morocco there was a majority of Moroccan women.

Participation was a success: attendants sang, played and danced songs from foreign cultures, mostly learned on the spot, sometimes in foreign languages, and then asked questions during the colloquia that followed the performances. In these colloquia, relevant issues concerning personal experiences of immigrants in Spain, their living conditions and the attitudes they have found among the autochthonous population were raised. The tone of the conversations was always friendly and positive, in spite the difficulty of dealing with issues such as the jobs that some sectors of the Spanish society claim immigrants take from the autochthonous workers, at a time when more than 25% of the working population was unemployed.

In addition to being an enriching and fun experience, Musicoloquios provided a meeting place for people of the region to get to know each other, what they do, how they live, their backgrounds and interests. The creation of this public space for encounter, communication and sharing rendered a very appropriate forum which fostered real coexistence among people of various nationalities and cultures.

After the experience, I am reaffirmed in my conviction that culture, as a distilled manifestation of the identity of a community, constitutes a suitable ground to come to know and understand its members.

C. PEDAGOGICAL CONCERT SERIES 1995-96

Last June, once the former edition of the Pedagogical Concerts was over, we were offered the following year's series, again. This time we are scheduled to give two series of thirty concerts, between January and May 1996, corresponding to two groups of children, ages 4 to 8 and 9 to 12. The current team consists of six members, including Pilar, and Jane.

Our on-going project has four basic goals: first, to emphasize the importance of attentive listening, specially when listening to music; second, to stimulate the children's disposition to sing, play, and dance, both in group and alone; third, to fertilize the children's creativity, encouraging them both to invent their own songs and dances, and to build their own musical instruments; and four, to give the children clues for the comprehension of musics and dances of different character, in relation to their contexts. These objectives are not presented, explicitly, in the context of the elementary pieces, but they are, indeed, directly related to them, in a subtle way.

On November 17th, we held a "meeting-rehearsal" with all the teachers of the children that are expected to come to the concerts. In that meeting, we shared our premises and goals with the teachers, and they have already begun to practice the activities we showed them with their students. The following activities were performed in this day-long gathering.

To develop *attentive listening*, we proposed two approaches: to learn some basic relaxation techniques and to cultivate the awareness of sound and silence. Both approaches are directed towards improving the child's ability to concentrate on his/her own psychosomatic sensations (not just hearing) and on the interactions with the various bodies of the environments she/he lives in, with emphasis on the people. We consider this ability very necessary nowadays, when the amount of information that most children are subjected to is mind-boggling, and when music has frequently become a sort of "background noise" which "accompanies" other activities, if not just mere acoustic pollution. Both phenomena are more prominent in the saturated environments of large cities like Madrid.

Our concerts are planned as collective colloquia, based upon the constant interaction of all the participants. Thus, every attendant to the November 17th meeting-rehearsal was invited to interact, listening to one another and responding spontaneously, in a ludic, relaxed atmosphere. Despite the general lack of experience in events of this kind, the "conversation" was quite articulate and coherent, something remarkable considering that it was held in multiple languages simultaneously: the language of sounds and their apparent absence, the language of rhythm, of movement, of symbols, etc.

The activities we presented required, above all, to listen attentively, as an act important by itself which, in our experience, if practiced regularly, may improve the following aspects of any person: a) the sensitivity towards those musics which require profound concentration and a certain basic knowledge; b) the ability to both follow and assimilate a spoken discourse, a lecture, a reading, etc.; c) the aptitudes to hold focused and well articulated dialogs and colloquia; and d) the awareness of the sounds and movements of our

body (our voice, our breathing, our heart, our steps, etc.) and of our environment (our family, the people, animals, and plants of our neighborhood, our house, car, television, etc.). In addition, these activities are likely to foster a disposition to enjoy silence.

We proposed our colleagues to begin the development of the children's listening capabilities cultivating relaxation, through simple breathing exercises which are to be accompanied by appropriate poses and movements, in a suitable place. It is generally accepted that, any form of expression and/or communication—be it vocal, corporal, graphic, etc.—requires an adequate disposition of the body and the mind which, for our activities, benefits from relaxation and quietness. Indeed, according to our own experiences, when we are relaxed, we are more perceptive, receptive, creative and communicative than when we are tense. Furthermore, in a silent environment, any sound acquires relevance, especially our voices and musical sounds.

Relaxation

We performed the following activities, very concentrated on our own breathing, our own bodily sensations, and the sounds of both our peers and the environment:

- 1) We experienced relaxation in contrast with tension, playing to be:
- balloons that inflated slowly and then exploded
 - robots that gradually transformed into rag dolls
 - umbrellas that opened and closed
 - giraffes (stretching the neck up, with hands and feet on the floor) that gradually would become hedgehogs (shrunk in a ball-like shape)

—2) We explored diverse possibilities of stretching and relaxing our body: lying down on our backs, we stretched as if we were being pulled by our hands and feet in opposite directions and, after some time, we would loosen up; at times we stretched rapidly and released slowly, and vice versa, other times, we played with different speeds in different combinations. We also played individually with various parts of our bodies (the face, the hands, the arms, the legs, the feet, the back, etc.), first stretching as much as we could and then releasing. Moreover, we played all the exercises above in different positions: standing on our feet and on our heads, sitting, lying face down, squatted, rolled back, etc.

—3) We explored diverse possibilities of shrinking and relaxing: we shrunk as if we were frightened pill bugs and, after some time, we would loosen up; at times we shrunk rapidly and released slowly, and vice versa, others we played with different speeds in different combinations. We also played individually with various parts of our bodies (the face, the hands, the arms, the legs, the feet, the back, etc.), first shrinking as much as we could and then releasing. Moreover, we played all the above in different positions: standing on our feet and on our heads, sitting, lying face down, squatted, rolled back, etc.

—4) We breathed and moved in various coordinated ways. For instance, we moved the head backwards while inhaling, and forward while exhaling; we rotated the head clockwise while inhaling and counterclockwise while exhaling; we raised our arms laterally with palms up while inhaling and lowered them with palms down while exhaling; and with similar coordinations we rotated our shoulders, stretched backwards and bent forward, stretched to the left and to the

right, etc. Sometimes, in the exhale, we accompanied our movements with determined vocal sounds we found adequate, for example, a descending glissando would accompany the act of either bending down or of stretching to the left.

—5) Whenever we got tired, after dancing and playing animatedly, we lay down on our backs and relaxed, concentrating on the movements of our diaphragm while breathing deeply. Usually, we invited the children to keep a mental record of the sounds they heard during the relaxation and, later, we talked about them (what they were, when and where they happened, how they sounded, what effects they provoked in us, etc.), and we tried to reproduce them as if they were the sounds of a composition.

Listening and dancing

We also played the following games:

—1) We danced freely along the performing space in “silence” and, whenever we heard a sound (with medium to long resonance), we stopped, listening attentively. When we were not able to hear the resonance any more, we began to dance again.

—2) We began being statues either sitting or lying on the floor and, whenever we heard a long decay sound, we danced, until we were not able to hear it.

—3) Each of us picked up a small percussion instrument (out of four different kinds) and moved to a freely chosen place of the performing

space. We all closed our eyes well, and each one began to play an improvised rhythmic call on his/her instrument. We then, carefully, moved towards the nearest player of the same instrument. Once together, we looked for other players of the same instrument, until we all formed the four corresponding groups.

Games

—1) We transformed ourselves into “robots” grouped in two parallel lines, each robot facing another one of the other line, about four yards away. After a signal, we began to walk forward (like robots) until each one encountered her/his partner. Each pair held an animated “robotic” conversation in an invented language, profusely accompanied by bodily gestures. After another signal, each one returned to his/her initial position, either turning around or walking backwards, and then stopped.

—2) A variation of this game consisted of replacing one line of robots with a line of rag dolls. In the middle point between both lines, we drew an imaginary border. The scheme of this game was similar to the explained above, except for two differences: first, the conversations were in two different languages (“robotic” and “rag-dollic”), and, second, each player trespassed the middle border, then adopting the opposite role and its corresponding language.

Other activities

—1) We practiced inner listening:

- lying on the floor, very quietly, we felt the “silence”

- we felt the rhythms of our breathing and listened deeply
- we felt our heartbeats
- at times, when we were very quiet, we were able to hear the low hum of our blood and the high pitch of our nerves

—2) We recorded some of our performances and talked about them: if the character of our interpretation was convincing, if the words were understandable, how satisfactory were our entrances, balance, tuning, etc., if sounds of the environment had got in the recording, etc.

The second goal of our project is to stimulate the children's disposition *to sing, dance, and play*, both in groups and alone. To this end, we plan to create a relaxed, cheerful atmosphere in all our events, including music, dance, games, stories, juggling, etc. The basic musical material consists of songs, dances, and games from the folklore of Spain. In our interpretations, we will use our voices and our bodies (probably the two more versatile, unknown, and intimate instruments that exist), as well as the (more or less conventional) instruments available. We will also draw material from tongue twisters and riddles.

Activities that help develop our awareness of our own bodies and our possibilities of moving in time within a space, that we performed in our meeting-rehearsal, were the following: we traversed the performing space walking, running, swimming, jumping, rolling, flying, crawling, etc., at different speeds, and in different groupings, usually imitating those animals whose movements are similar to the ones enumerated. In a more "cultured" mode, we both improvised and interpreted various choreographies, combining movement and static positions, with and without dance music or sounds.

Among the games we played, my favourite ones were those we call “sensorial games.” For instance, grouped in pairs, one “draws” with the hand a “musical message” on the back (or the entire body) of her/his partner, and the latter has to repeat it outloud. In this game, the acts of composing, tickling, feeling, interpreting, remembering, listening, laughing, in a word, of *playing* (with) music, happen at a vertiginous succession.

Rhythmic ostinatos, either extracted from pre-existent musics or invented, are one of our musical pillars. Our ostinatos are one or two measures long, and, with them, we have composed polyphonies of up to five parts. Almost anything is a potential instrument to perform with: our voices, our entire bodies, natural bodies of the environment, instruments we have previously built, chairs, walls, floors, and conventional instruments.

Our third objective is *to fertilize the children’s creativity*, encouraging them to invent their own songs and dances and to build their own musical instruments, both at school and at home.

We began by showing them how to make different versions of a couple of folk songs they already knew. Our versions had a kind of “ethnic” flavor which we fitted into an adventurous imaginary trip on a boat around the world. Thus, the Spanish folk songs and dances performed in our former activities, became Japanese, Indian, Arab, Senegalese, Andean, and Caribbean. Subsequently, we composed music and choreographies for tongue twisters, riddles, and popular sayings, and, in return, we invented texts for instrumental melodies originally without words. Likewise, we made up stories, scenes, and adventurous situations which we enriched with “special sound effects” of wind, waves, storm, fire, rain, etc. I always enjoyed, with particular delight, whenever we imitated animals of any kind.

In addition, we invented our own musics and games, based upon common actions, such as: walking, speaking, breathing, blinking, eating, sneezing, farting, etc. The use of ordinary actions as a source of inspiration responded to our interest in pointing out the musical qualities and/or the musical potential of many activities that, generally, are not considered musical or cultural. The act of walking, for instance, constitutes a cultural manifestation—combining music and dance—of long tradition in many parts of the world, when it is performed in a parade or a procession. Similarly, all our basic activities—like breathing, speaking or shitting—also respond to cultural patterns we proposed to play with, from a musical perspective and with a ludic attitude, to bring them “out of the closet.” By doing so, we aimed at demonstrating some of our conventions and cultural habits.

The next step was to create songs, dances, and games from scratch, using materials supplied both by the teachers (and, in the future, by the children) and by ourselves, put together in improvised combinations and arrangements.

Of great importance for us is building instruments with natural bodies (shells, branches, rocks, bones, etc.), and with common objects and materials, such as: boxes made of cardboard, wood, plastic, and metal, spoons, pots, bottles, tubes, pipes, etc. The use of these bodies and elements responds to two fundamental reasons: on one hand, they have a great musical potential, which is worth knowing, utilizing, and publicizing; on the other hand, the re-utilization of “waste” materials helps decongest our trash cans and dump sites, in other words, our land, our air, and our water. At the same time, these “recycled” instruments put us in contact with other people, in a

cooperative, communicative context, enabling us to play music that stimulates both our creativity and our sensitivity.

Our fourth goal is to give the children clues for *the comprehension of musics and dances of different character*, in relation both to their circumstantial contexts (a popular festivity, a “classical” concert, a hippy gathering, a mass) and to their socio-cultural macro-contexts (ranch music in eighteenth century Chile, symphonic poems in nineteenth century Vienna, this year’s Rainbow Gathering in the U.S.A., or a liturgical drama in tenth century Catalonia). At the meeting, we emphasized the fact that, these relationships are ultimately valid according to the personal perspective of each individual.

One of our procedures to exemplify how we plan to carry out this objective consisted in comparing the circumstances in which the folk songs previously played were originally created with the conditions in which we interpreted them. With these activities we intend to make the children think about the origins, means and goals of their favourite musics, with which they usually become acquainted through recordings, television, movies, and radio. We encouraged the teachers to focus, particularly, upon those musics which are arrangements of old classics and/or which accompany images (television, video, movies, computer games, etc.), dance, shopping, an elevator trip, etc. By playing to establish relationships of this kind, we aim at providing clues for the children to learn two things: first, how to relate cultural manifestations—such as music and dance—with their corresponding social contexts and historical periods but, primordially, with the particular *ways of life* which originated them; and, second, how to survey the multiple circumstances in which music and dance exist today.

It is generally accepted that there are two basic conceptions of teaching music: a) *instructing* the student, that is, passing unaltered (or with little modification) traditional techniques, ideas, and knowledge; and b) *educating* the student, that is, supplying the tools and knowledge to become acquainted with the tradition, but with emphasis on the ability to analyse, criticise and take that tradition beyond current boundaries. For me, education does not necessarily have to do with the development of a critical sense, but with the capability to assume multiple perspectives, preferably opposed to one another, and with the ability to choose according to the context and circumstances. This is the premise that animates this project.

V. RECORDINGS

Albeit fragmentary in their contents and limited in their own ways, the video and audio tapes included in this dissertation are intended to provide a few additional aspects to the written descriptions of the performances recorded. They show instances of how the participants in these events interacted with one another, how they interpreted their relationships in the context of my and their compositional premises, how the performing spaces were arranged, what instruments and elements were utilized in each case, etc.

The characteristics of different performances of pieces identified with the same—or similar—titles varied depending upon the performers, the space, the season, the time of the day, etc. Nevertheless, at various times, I have been able to assess the overall *past* identity of these pieces, in reference to the bases explained above, despite their multifariousness. I expect future performances to expand both my awareness of the relationships they foster and my understanding of the evolving identity of these pieces.

A. VIDEO

The enclosed video tape includes excerpts of the following performances:

1. Performances of *with the water*, and *in the fire* with our friends Pilar and Lucía, and about 200 children, in a concert held on Wednesday, March 8th, 1995, at 12 noon, in the Barbieri Cultural Center, Orcasitas, Madrid.

2. Performance of *through the air* with our friends Pilar and Lucía, and about 200 children, in a concert held on Monday, March 13th, 1995, at 11 AM, in the Barbieri Cultural Center, Orcasitas, Madrid.

3. First performance of the whole set of *elementary pieces*, at the Center for Research in Computing and the Arts, on Saturday, December 2nd, 1995, at 12 noon. The main performers (apart from the ones pre-recorded on audio tape) were: Jane Rigler, Vanessa Tomlinson, Kitty Pappas, Hannes Giger, Jason Stanyek, Joshua Levine, Scott Walton, Mark Osborn, Harry Castle, a little bug that lives in the carpet of C.R.C.A.'s main space, and two plants that live with Kitty. There was no "audience" in this event.

4. First performance with "audience" of the whole set of *elementary pieces*, at the Center for Research in Computing and the Arts, on Sunday, December 3rd, 1995, at 6 PM. It was preceded by a warm-up session in the sphere of *of the earth*. The participants were Jane Rigler, Vanessa Tomlinson, Kitty Pappas, Hannes Giger, Jason Stanyek, Joshua Levine, Scott Walton, Mark Osborn, Harry Castle, Jann Pasler, Carol Hobson, Alan Rosenblum, Sophie Walton, Annette Poitau, Cheryl Brown, Dolores Wesson, Matt Kiese, César Potes, Philippe Lierdeman, Andrew May, Chandra Mukerji and her children, John Fonville, Juan Campoverde, and about 50 other friends.

5. Performance at the beach, in Solana Beach, California, on Wednesday December 6th, 1995, at 4:30 PM. The main participants were: Jane Rigler, Vanessa Tomlinson, Jann Pasler, Mark Osborn, Alan Rosenblum, his friend Jason, and myself.

B. AUDIO

The accompanying audio tape includes the recording of the performance held on November 25th, 1994, at the Manuel de Falla Hall of the *Sociedad General de Autores de España* during the “Punto de Encuentro” festival celebrated in Madrid. Due to a technical problem, Jane’s flute improvisation in the middle of the piece was only partially recorded during the concert. In order to provide some continuity a new improvisation was recorded and re-mixed at the U.N.E.D. studios two months later. This manipulation of the recording was intentionally made perceptible in the recording.

Apart from my friends Rafael Luque (who played the lights) and Arantxa Knörr (who passed the microphone among the attendants to the event), the people who share their opinions at the end are: my brother Antonio, composer Marisa Manchado, Pilar Manzano (the friend who collaborates with Jane and I in the Pedagogical Concert Series), my friend Luisa, and other people whose names I do not know, although I had seen most of them in previous occasions.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

I believe that cultivating play and a ludic attitude towards life and music may help some individuals achieve an expanded sense of happiness. This sense may improve the relationships among the members of a community and with other communities, fostering a healthy, friendly and fulfilling co-existence based upon imaginative cooperation and connectedness with the environment. Indeed, playing is a collective activity, involving the individual *within* his/her/its community or communities. It is also open to unpredictable factors and sensitive to the peculiarities of each context and circumstances.

In my personal experience, I have often been able to improve my relationships with others by adopting a ludic attitude, open to the unexpected. In addition, this approach has helped me understand the different ways of life, the cultures, and the musics of various peoples of the world for whom playing and communicating with their environments are fundamental.

Adopting a ludic attitude does not solve all the difficulties of life, nor does it answer all the questions, but it may help to understand and correct some of the problems that we face today: lack of communication, intolerance, mercantilism, self-exploitation, violence, the extinction of ancestral communities, the destruction of natural environments, etc. Being ludic is only the first step in the process of becoming fertile soil for the maturation of expanded awareness, adaptability, communicability, sociability, receptivity, creativity, and expressivity.

With regards to my experience writing this text, it has generally been very positive. But there have also been times when I thought I

would not carry on. In fact, for almost two years, I have profoundly questioned the need and validity of writing a dissertation. A number of doubts kept haunting me during this process, such as: to what extent may a(ny) dissertation be considered as a product of a particular kind of individual with a certain way of life? To what extent may a doctoral candidate be considered as an individual who attempts to acquire a superior status—both within the academic community and society at large—which should help him/her perpetuate his/her way of life (hopefully improved with a better salary)? To what extent is a particular kind of society—individualistic, competitive, and classist—responsible for the existence of the ways of life of a doctoral candidate and a doctor? To what extent does the process of presenting a dissertation imply submission to a hierarchical conception of human relationships which, by participating in it, becomes strengthened and perpetuated? To what extent the social system within which my graduate education takes place is founded upon and supports an acceptable ideology? It is obvious that these questions have been answered, if only momentarily, in a way that has allowed me to arrive at the point of concluding this text.

Dissertations may be seen as cultural artifacts produced by members of the academic community who aspire to a higher status. As cultural artifacts, they spring from, embrace, and support a set of values and beliefs which, for some, may be susceptible to controversy. Some of these values are: discipline, diligence, orderliness, and seriousness. On his/her part, the personal “values” displayed by the candidate in the dissertation depend upon their assessment by both the committee members and the academic authorities, for their official approval. Therefore, the ultimate goal of those who undertake

dissertation work is to be validated by a relatively small group of members of the academic community, primarily selected by the candidate.

My values and beliefs have been explained through the various musical activities described in my scores. These activities have frequently stimulated thoughts and emotions which have helped me achieve states of "well-being." For me, this is a remarkable fact, considering the circumstances in which these states occurred: while writing a dissertation, a period that is commonly regarded (and for some is supposed to be) stressful and painful. The fact that my accounts of these states are "a part of" my dissertation is equally remarkable, for "pleasure" and "fun" seem to be incompatible with the "serious work" generally associated with a doctoral dissertation.

I feel very fortunate and grateful to be able to say that my experiences while preparing my dissertation have been very positive, surpassing my most optimistic expectations at the time when I chose a topic and a location.

An informal survey of conversations with my peers and neighbors, educational and philosophical books, poems, political and religious discourses, educational programs, colloquia, magazines, television and radio programs, commercial advertisements, personal observations, etc. leads me to believe that "well-being" is a common aspiration for people, animals and plants. The most optimistic ones seem to even aspire to "happiness," which, for me, is a global, stable state of the individual within his/her/its collectivity characterized by continuous and expanding adaptability, awareness and satisfaction. In this regard, it is my hope that this text might supply information and clues of some interest and value to others.

I am presenting this material as a doctoral dissertation because it is the most valuable contribution I can offer to the academic community. Including personal experiences of the process of “writing a dissertation” within an “investigative work of presumed general interest”—as dissertations seem to be expected to aim to—responds to my conviction that the ultimate value of any investigation relies, precisely, on the way it affects one’s own life and the lives of one’s own neighbors. Indeed, any hypothesis, any theoretical system, any research is actually tested in the realm of the individual and collective perception of the related experiences and their effects. It is my belief that the spontaneous account of positive experiences is a valuable contribution to the community I have been a member of for five years and to which I still belong to as a doctoral candidate. Besides, a dissertation seems an appropriate format to deliver the (for me) successful investigations of a couple (Jane and myself) of doctoral candidates (of the rather idiosyncratic Department of Music of the University of California at San Diego) while immersed in their “dissertational” lives, which may be of some interest for those colleagues who may find themselves in similar situations or, perhaps, for any scholar surveying different academic ways of life.

As noted above, properly speaking, this text is “a dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy” by a student of the U.C.S.D. Music Department whose committee members are... rather than just *my* doctoral dissertation. The mention of my department and of my committee members responds to the very important fact that this doctoral dissertation (as probably any other) depends closely upon the *community* where it is born and specifically upon the professors who,

in addition to preparing the student and guiding the process of writing, have the last word in approving it as “a dissertation.”

I want to thank you for having paid attention to this text: it would have not been born without my faith in your existence. While writing it, I have often thought of our relationship as if we were potential friends communicating through letters: I am the one taking the initiative this time, telling you what I am doing, what I have done, and what my plans are. But for our communication to work properly, it is necessary to get feedback from you. Thus, I would love to keep in contact with you, through the following address:

Calle del Pilar, 26. 18192 Quéntar, Granada. Spain.

It is my hope that, among the readers (if any), I will find new friends to play with, for finding new friends is a promise of new interactions, new perspectives, new players, new games, new ways to play the games, and new sites to enjoy. In other words, it may lead to an expansion of the community of players and of the games as well as an increase in the chances of playing, even if our games were to exist “only” in our imaginations.

Finally, I want to reiterate my gratitude to those people, animals, plants, rocks, elements, and artifacts that have participated in these performances, for the globally positive effects they have had upon my life both *during* and *after* the experiences, and even *before*, because my own past has been remembered at the changing light of my current perspective at every stage.

This text was animated by the well-being associated with its preparation and by my faith in its potential to transmit positive thoughts and feelings to others.

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