

PART II

REPORT ON THE STUDY TOUR TO THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE UNESCO FELLOWSHIP FOR STUDIES IN ELECTRONIC MUSIC

May, 1958

- (a) A visit to the UNESCO office, Paris, in order to fix details for the study tour to the United States.
- (b) Performance of the electronic music composition, "Exodus", and explanations on the work for invited guests to the Broadcast studio, UNESCO House.
- (c) Performance of the same work in the studio of the BBC, London. A discussion with the Chief Engineer, Dr. Alexander, about technical and artistic problems in electronic music.

June, 1958

- (a) Fixing of programme, complete with all the details in the office of the I.I.E. in New York.
- (b) Meeting with the Director of UNESCO in the United Nations Office.
- (c) First meeting with Professor Ussachevsky, Head of the Music Department and the Electronic Studio of Columbia University.
- (d) Meeting with Professor Milton Babbitt, Head of the Music Department, Princeton University.
- (e) Period of practical work in the electronic studio of Columbia University under the guidance of Engineer Dr. Mausé.
- (f) Visit to the electronic music studio of Louis and Bebe Baron, New York.
- (g) Meeting in the Rockefeller Foundation office and discussion of financial problems in connection with the building of the necessary equipment.
- (h) Several meetings with Mr. Nathan Haynes, President of General Amplifier Company; discussions of technical problems about time coding, drum memory, and combined oscillation.
- (i) Meeting with Professor Etzold of the Berlin University; discussion of keyboard system to ease the process of pitch regulation.
- (j) Several meetings with Chief Engineer Otto Popelka of the Magnetape Electronics Co; discussion of a new kind of sound production instrument

which assembles different processes of sound production for tape recording.

- (k) Performance of "Exodus" in the NBC studio.
- (l) Performance and discussion on "Exodus" with the dancer, Martha Graham.
- (m) Performance and discussion on "Exodus" with the dancers, Meta and Hari.

July, 1958

Washington

- (a) Meeting with Engineer Henrik Galmus, of the Bureau of Standards; discussion on sound moderation instrument, based on transistors which will produce a great variety of harmonics to a sinus tone through lights beams
- (b) A visit to the Library of Congress; discussion about electronic music with the Director, Dr. Spivak, and Mr. Waters. Performance of "Exodus".

(Boston

- (a) Several meetings with Professor Melvin Clark Jr. of M.I.T.; planning an electronic music instrument for music lovers. Several lectures by Professor Clark on basic technical problems in electronic music.
- (b) A visit to the electronic music studio of M.I.T. and discussion with the composer, Ercolini Ferratti, Head of the Studio.

Brandeis University

- (a) Lecture by Professor Habitt on twelve tone system and electronic music; Meeting with Professor Shapiro, Head of the Music Department.

New York

- (a) Meeting with Mr. Abraham Friesch; explanation on his new method of magnetic nails, (transfer of sound wave forms on tape with the help of magnetic nails). Theoretical thoughts based on the Schillinger System.
- (b) A visit to the Colosseum where an automation exhibition was being held. Several discussion there about computer machines and newest technique in tape recording.

Allentown

Visit to the Allen Organ Company; discussion with Chief Engineer, Mr. Jerome Markovitz on problem of tone colours.

August, 1958

Illinois University

Meeting with Professor Adam Hiller, composer and teacher on the staff of the University's music Department. Performance of his composition, executed on the Illiac Computer Machine. Explanation on the Random Information Process in composing music through a computer machine.

Chicago

- (a) Meeting with Professor Hans Tischler, of the Roosevelt University; discussion on the aesthetic aspects of electronic music.
- (b) Meeting with Professor Leonard Meyer, of the University of Chicago; discussion about Information Theory and Communicative System.

San Francisco

- (a) Meeting with Engineer Thomas Yaski; discussion on borderline cases in electronic music, i.e. music therapy and brain influence.
- (b) Visit to the Ampex Factory, Redwood City. Meeting with Engineers Snyder and Longfellow. Discussions and explanations of new methods in Stereophonic Recording, Multitrack Recording.
- (c) A visit to Varian Associates in Palo Alto; discussion with Chief Engineer Mr. Carnahan, in connection with the "Light Beam" ideas of Mr. Calmus of Washington.
- (d) Lecture on electronic music for a specially invited circle in the home of Mr. H. Popper.
- (e) Round table conference on electronic music, over station KPFA of Berkley University. The participants were: Professor Kirschner, composition; Professor Imbar, performance; Professor Shiffrin, sociology; Mr. Allan Rich, Chairman, and myself.
- (f) Performance of the Vortex System in the San Francisco Planetarium.
- (g) Dance performance by the dancer Anne Halprin, which was danced entirely to electronic music. Discussion on artistic aspects in connection with this music after the performance.

F Professor Ringer, History

Ottawa, Canada

A visit to the National Research Council; discussion of several aspects of electronic music with Chief Engineer Mr. Hugh Le Caine and Mr. John Bowsher. Negotiations for acquiring Mr. Le Caine's Multitrack Recording Machine.

September, 1958

New York

A meeting with Professor Ineving of Columbia University and another meeting with Professor Ussachevsky.

Ottawa

A meeting with Engineer Mr. Osmond Kendall; discussion of his new method of wave scripts. Second meeting with Mr. Hugh Le Caine and the director of the Microwave Section, Dr. Miller.

New York

- (a) Meeting with two publishers; discussion of the technical problems involved in the printing of electronic music notation.
- (b) Performance of "Exodus" in the office of Mr. David Woolinger, Director of I.I.E.
- (c) A lecture on electronic music for the Claudio Arrau Circle in New York.

London

Visit to the electronic music workshop of the BBC, Maidavale; discussion with Chief Engineer Miss D. Oram on several technical and aesthetic aspects of electronic music.

Paris

Final talks in the administration office of UNESCO.

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SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE, Sunday, Aug. 10, 1958

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JOSEPH TAL
He still believes in the human being

Music to Oscillate By

Composer Tells of Electronic Works

By Carolyn Ansbacher

The composer of tomorrow's music may be required to know more about electro-physics and logarithms than he does about counterpoint and harmony.

So believes Joseph Tal, the 48-year-old "enfant terrible" of modern music.

The German-born Israeli pianist, composer, and conductor, who is touring the United States under a UNESCO grant, is reluctant to describe his music as the product of this atomic age.

"People hear the word 'atomic' and immediately think of something that will kill them," he said.

The music he is composing for oscillating instruments, still in the process of invention here and in Europe, will not kill the auditor, Tal insists.

It may momentarily shock the average listener, Tal said, particularly the one steeped in the Bach-Beethoven-Brahms school of musical expression. But, Tal said, the new auditory experience will not prove lethal. It may even be an exciting emotional experience.

Tal pooh-poohs the current French vogue of "music concrete" an expression of contemporary sounds set within the traditional harmonic pattern, and the modern German musical concept built on pure electronic frequencies.

"I do not like noises that pose as music," he said, "nor do I care for the ultimate projection of the logical mind. I still believe in the human being."

TOMORROW

It is Tal's belief that the musical media for tomorrow's music will be electronic oscillators and during his three-months stay in this country, he has been conferring with engineers about their construction.

"This is the idiom of modern times," he said.

So far Tal has composed one experimental composition employing the new idiom, a choreographic, tape recorded work called "Exodus." For it he used what he described as "primitive" equipment—an oscillator he obtained in Jerusalem.

The pioneer work, performed in Israel and Europe, is "controversial," Tal acknowledges. But, he hastily added: "I think Bach and Mozart would have been interested."

Tal, who occasionally is called upon to carry arms for his adopted homeland, finds it a little strange that the average listener is burrowing deeper and deeper into the past for his music rather than projecting into the technological present and future.

"We cannot live and re-live history," he said. "The present is here. The future is at the next corner. And we are ecstatic over the pre-Bach composers..."

Tal, whose name in Hebrew means "dew," will not admit that his residence in Israel has given him the determination to pioneer in the new musical idiom.

"This is for history to decide," he said. "But I must acknowledge that this country of mine is a pioneer land where we breathe to build—houses, culture, everything. The pioneering climate may give a special drive, I don't know."

STUDENT

Tal started his career as a student of traditional music in Berlin and became a pianist and conductor of considerable distinction. His works are far better known in Europe than they are in this country, but not long ago the Rochester Symphony Orchestra performed his half-hour opera, "Saul and David," and a second one, "Amnon and Tamar" soon will be given its American premiere.

Composer of numerous symphonies, concerti (one of which won the 1954 prize awarded by the International Society of Contemporary Music) and smaller works, Tal said that each composition probes deeper into the future.

His next work, he said, will be a full opera in which he will use electronic devices rather than traditional orchestral instruments to back the human voice.

ENGINEERING

In fact, he leaves San Francisco this morning for Ottawa, to confer with engineers of the Canadian National Research Council about building the oscillating instruments that will give the new opera life.

Tal, married and the father of two sons, is a professor at the Hebrew University and also is on the staff of the Israeli counterpart of the Encyclopedia Britannica.

During his two-week stay in San Francisco Tal visited his sister, Greta Jacobson, at 1200 Third Avenue.

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Radio and Electrical
Engineering Division

Ottawa 2, 22 August, 1958

Mr. Josef Tal,
c/o Mrs. Joan Davis,
Institute of International Education,
1 East 67th Street,
New York 21, N.Y.

Dear Mr. Tal,

The head of the Microwave Section, Dr. G.A. Miller, who was out of town during your visit, believes that there would be a fair chance of a favourable reply to a request for a multiple-track recorder similar to the one you saw.

He believes that before we present the case to our Director, we should have a letter from you requesting the multiple-track recorder, stating the work for which it is to be used, the size of the electronic music group, or the number of composers involved, the nature of your plans for the future (for instance, whether a department of electronic music at the university is being considered), and finally some notes on your musical career;-- I am sure you can see the sort of letter that is required.

We should add a few notes on our "multiple-track tape recorder". It is basically a device for combining a number of separate tapes as conveniently as possible. It is not intended primarily for routine applications of combining musical parts played one after the other. (This purpose can be better served by the eight-channel Ampex, Model 300-- in which all the parts are recorded on separate tracks on a single tape. An example is heard on Gravesano Record V 8503, "The World is Waiting for the Sunrise", Gravesano Review, January 1956.) The use of separate tapes is an advantage only when each tape must be handled separately, as in Musique Concrete; or when editing or splicing must be done on one or more of the components. We propose to have provision for about ten tapes with single and/or double tracks. A variable-speed drive controlled by a keyboard will provide 37 speeds in the equitempered scale, with provision for obtaining intermediate speeds.

Best regards,

Yours sincerely,

Hugh Le Caine and John Bowsher,
Electronic Music Group,
Microwave Section

HLeC:HP

Paris, le 4 octobre 1958.

A i d e - M é m o i r e .

The second part of my study trip as Unesco-fellow has been a four-month-visit to the United States and Canada. In course of this research-study in electronic music I have had the opportunity to discuss the problems involved with a large number of top engineers and musicians in the following places: New York, Boston, Washington, Chicago, Alletown, San Francisco, Palo Alto, Redwood City, Ottawa.

At the National Research Council in Ottawa I found the most remarkable apparatus developed by the Canadian engineer Mr. Hugh Le Caine. I understood immediately the importance of this device and started negotiations on acquiring this equipment.

Mr. Le Caine promised me to ventilate the possibility with his authorities. From this followed the change of letters of which I copy here the following parts:

"The head of the Microwave section Dr. G.A. Miller who was out of town during your visit, believes that there would be a fair chance of a favorable reply to a request for a multiple-track recorder similar to the one you saw. He believes that before we present the case to our Director we should have a letter from you requesting the multiple-track recorder stating the work for which it is to be used, the size of the electronic music-group or the number of composers involved, the nature of your plans for the future (for instance whether a department of electronic music at the University is being considered) and finally some notes on your musical career."

In my answer I did send my curriculum and a memorandum of which a copy is attached to this letter.

On my second visit to Ottawa I discussed the matter personally with Dr. Miller who informed me about their principal agreement to provide the planned Institute of Electronic Music in Jerusalem with the equipment developed by the Canadian N.R.C.

The building of this machine will take about six to nine months. Meantime a way has to be found for the official procedure of this transaction.

Dr. Miller mentioned the idea of asking the UNESCO to function as mediator. In my opinion that would be the best way of the realization of this project.

Josef Tal
Jerusalem-Israel
Hassolel Street
House Saidof

Jerusalem, 9.12.58.

Dear Mr Carter,

I acknowledge with best thanks the receipt of your letter, dated November 20th. 58. Since my programme of studies in Electronic-Music as Unesco-fellow has had no precedence, might I be allowed to answer your questions in a different way. I understand that my remarks might be useful for future fellow-students.

I tried carefully to separate two different trends of studies:

- a) the technical conditions of the Electronic-Music equipment
- b) the art-istic consequences involved

1) in the composition
2) its reproduction.

Regarding the technical conditions I separated them again into two different approaches:

- 1) the acquisition of knowledge about existing Electronic-Music-apparatuses.
- 2) the search for new possibilities in designing these apparatuses, which are based on practical experience in this new technique of composing.

As I already became acquainted with the main existing equipment during the first part of my studies in Europe last year, I concentrated on the search for new possibilities during the second part in the States and Canada. Besides, I came to the conclusion that a far greater cooperation and mutual influence between the engineer of electronics and the composer has to be established. Obviously we are only at the beginning of this comparatively new development and no standards in technical devices are so far existent.

Therefore, upon returning home, I continued immediately in research work, both with engineers and musicians and hope to start experimental work in the very near future.

Concerning the organisation of my programme of studies, both in time and choice of personalities and institutes, I reached all my goals except some unavoidable minor gaps.

In the event of other fellowships in this field, it seems advisable to adjust the programme of studies according to each individual's aims and needs.

The final report on my fellowship will be send to you in about two to three weeks.

Yours sincerely

A. T.

JK/12 7-25

Mr. Josef Tal,
House Saidof,
Hassolel Street,
Jerusalem, Israel.
January 21, 1959.

Mr. William D. Carter,
Chief Exchange of Persons Service,
UNESCO House,
Place Fontenay,
PARIS VII.

Dear Mr. Carter,

Enclosed in this letter please find the report of the second part of my study tour to the United States and Canada. I apologize for the delay which was unavoidable due to some technical difficulties.

I would like to ask you to allow me to send a copy of Part III to Professor Hermann Scherchen, (or to do so yourself), as he might be interested in publishing the article in his Quarterly, "Gravesano Review". Professor Scherchen was of great help to me during my studies last year in Europe, and should he be interested in the article, I feel I ought to give him priority.

Part IV, List of Books, has been added with reference to your letter, dated 31 December 1957, No. EX P/F/745261. The publications are listed in order of preference.

With regard to your letter, dated 20 November 1958, No. EX P/F/815265, I understand that a catalogue of UNESCO Publications is being forwarded to me to enable me to select further publications.

I should like to take the occasion to express my sincerest thanks to all UNESCO officials concerned with my fellowship. Their generosity, understanding and support gave me the greatest encouragement possible for my work. I would like, too, to mention Mrs. Joan Davis, Secretary of the European Department of the International Institute of Education, New York, whose tireless help and advice enabled me to make the best of my studies. Moreover, I should like to extend my deepest thanks to Professor Vladimir Ussachevsky, Head of the Music Department, Columbia University, New York, who provided me with all the facilities of the University's Electronic Music Studio, as well as to Professor Melvin Clark Jr., of MIT, Boston, who spent many hours of his valuable time in lecturing to me privately in order to prepare me for further professional discussions.

I hope, soon, to be able to make my first major contribution as composer, and thus contribute myself to UNESCO's artistic aims.

Yours sincerely,

Josef Tal
Josef Tal