INSPIRED ANYWHERE
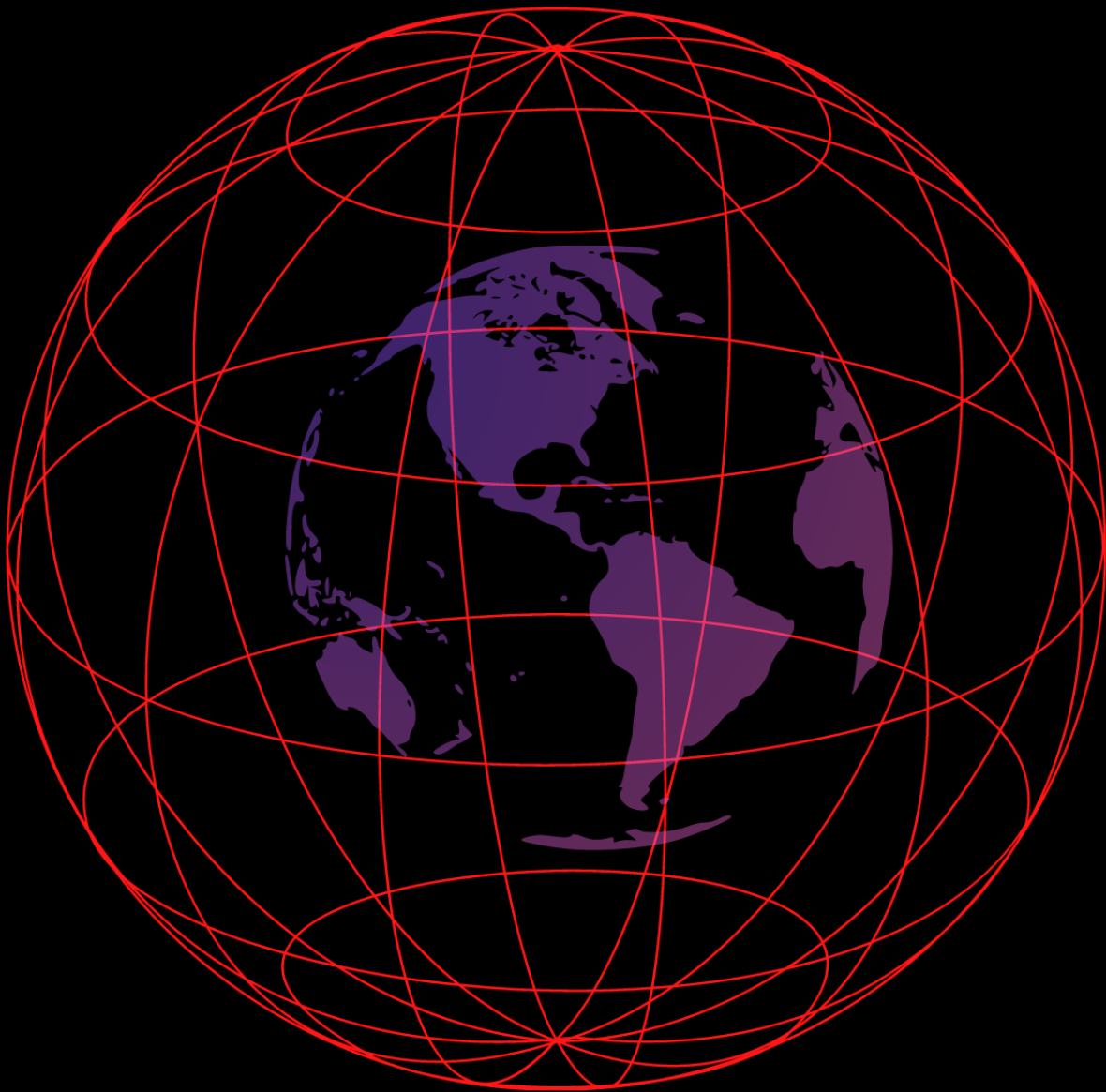
Part 2

SIX QUESTIONS FOR MUSICIANS AND SOUND ARTISTS

Random Transmissions is a sporadic digital publication for presenting random thoughts, research, and interviews created or facilitated by *Cygnus Onyx Flame* of Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.

Random Transmissions #7 is dedicated to:

• Anyone who has felt the sharp slap of mystery and curiosity drag them to abandoning one type of instrument for something completely different.

• Anyone who experiences the numinous draw of starry mystery and is inspired to create because of that draw.

NOTICE

On the off chance that it isn't obvious, my rants in *Inspired Anywhere* do not apply to the contributors nor do the contributors necessarily agree with my rants. In fact, they don't see my rants until the issue comes out and I start the rants before I receive any replies to the Six Questions…and no, there was no incident that required me to write this…just heading off the potential problem now! :)

LK/COF December 2021

In this issue……

From *Ottawa* to *Anywhere*…

It's been a while since I put together the last edition of *Random Transmissions*. I never intended RT to follow a regular publication schedule so it comes out when it comes out. Welcome back dear reader!

It occurred to me that while I subject others to my 6 Questions, I've never answered them myself. I came up with the 6 Questions because I'm interested in hearing about what inspires musicians and sound artists and what they do with that inspiration. While some of the questions may seem to be very similar in content (like question 3 and question 4) they are, to me, intended to draw out or deepen the reply. How one *knows* when to start something and how one actually *begins* the creative process are two connected but very different lines of flight. At least I would like to dissect that process into two parts; hence two questions.

I join three remarkable and seemingly divergent projects of Jerry Lovett, Kaeti MacNeil, and Toby Chappell. Looking a little closer, though, I see a common thread between the three…a focus on creating a dark and beautiful atmosphere for the listener. Toby's projects are certainly atmospheric and mysterious. There is a sharp, angular, and heavy edge to the music but it is also filled with a deep sense of the numinous. *Cult of Sorrow*, Jerry Lovett's band, is *heavy*. There is a deep sense of foreboding in the music yet Jerry's vocal style brings a sense of illumination with it. There are no cookie monster growls or piercing screams. It is a story teller's voice bringing the listener into dark and fascinating realms. Kaeti's creations are dark too but the darkness is more ethereal…not less tangible just less *overt*. There is a subtlety to Kaeti's creations but in that subtlety are moving shadows seen in deep, archaic waters. Beneath the beautiful calm surface lies Tiamat and Rán.

My own work has taken on new directions. I've traded in all but two of my synths for electric guitars and basses. I wanted a new challenge and new directions. I am moving away from the cold spacey ambience of my earlier Cygnus Onyx Flame creations and moving into a strange hybrid space that flirts with existential Doom, Drone, and Black metal but doesn't loose the layered subtlety of ambient soundscapes…but more on that below.

My deepest thanks go to Kaeti, Jerry, and Toby…I'm sure they have their own reason for creating what they do but I know deep down they do it to inspire *me*. Well….that's what I like to think! :)

LK/COF

Jerry Lovett

(Cult of Sorrow) *(Set-Hen Ra)*

Question #1: How long have you been making/creating your music/sound art? Why did you start in the first place?

I started playing guitar when I was 13 years old. I wrote my first song when I was around 18. I played it in one of my first bands, but couldn't remember how to play a lick of it to save my life right now. I've pretty much played original music my whole life. I'm 54 now, so I've been at it for about 41 years. I did spend around 12 years in a cover band, although we did put an album out of original music. I also had some original side projects during this time to help keep my sanity. While I made descent money playing covers, ultimately, I just couldn't take playing music I didn't care about for the most part and went back to doing all original work. I started playing simply because I loved music so much, I wanted to be able to make my own and express the feeling that music gave me. My heroes were musicians and I wanted to be like them.

Question #2: How would you describe your music to a complete stranger who stops you on the street [being 2 metres away from you at all times of course]?

I play doom metal right now. For your average person on the street who isn't hip to all the genres of music out, I think the vision they get is more of death metal when they hear that term used. So I basically just tell them we are sort of in the same vein as *Black Sabbath*. Most seem to "get" that. I actually had to make that explanation quite a bit right before the pandemic hit. My band, *Cult of Sorrow*, went on a week long road trip playing shows. I had never told anyone at work that I was in a band in my 4 years there. One person did know though and told some people while I was gone. When I got back everyone at work knew! They had watched videos on YouTube, listened to our albums, looked at pictures, the works. Upper management would also hear of all this, so I found myself explaining what I played to all of them. Besides the label of doom metal, we also fall under the Stoner Rock category. On top of that, all of our albums are about the occult with our last record being titled *Invocation of the Lucifer*, so the last thing I wanted was to be tagged as was a dope smoking, Satan worshipping, metalhead Lol. Luckily, they were all really cool and supportive of what I was doing. They thought it was great I was in a band that was signed to a label and was doing well enough to travel to play our stuff, so it all worked out well in the end. And yes, for a good portion of them I just said we played stuff sort of like Sabbath.

Question #3: How do you know when it's time for you to create something new or start a new project?

When the voices in my head tell me it's time. I'm not one to go and pick up my guitar and say to myself "I'm going to go write a song today". While anyone who can play an instrument can pick it up and string together notes to make a song, to me mine sound just like that's what I did. While that might not make for a horrible song, it doesn't feel like something that truly came from deep inside me or an expression of myself, but just a song I threw together using the basic skills I have playing an instrument. New projects come from idea's that don't fit my current project and need another outlet. How deep that well of creativity is determines how long the project lasts.

Question #4: How do you begin? What are your first steps? How do you know your project is finished?

This answer is really a continuation of the last. Idea's generally come to me in a liminal state, almost like a daydream. Once an idea comes to me, I try and flesh the rest of the song out by entering that same state and hearing the song play out in my head. My better songs are totally written that way, while others only partly. Lyrics are the same way. I can pretty much go through every song I've written and tell you where things flowed from this state or where I was forcing the part to just find something that fits, especially with lyrics. Once again, that doesn't make the song bad, it just seems like the ones I am most proud of are the ones that come from that "other" place. As I mentioned in my last answer, it really depends on how deep the well of creativity is for whatever project I'm involved with. My current band, *Cult of Sorrow*, was only supposed to be a project doing a 4 song EP recorded just for the fun of it. Here we are 8 years and 3 albums later still going at it. Lately I've been branching off into some other things. What project stays and what goes really just depends on how I feel like expressing myself. I would never want a project to continue just for the sake of continuing. It really just comes down to being truthful with yourself when you ask the question "did I accomplish what I wanted to accomplish with this?".

Question #5: What would your perfect inspirational space for you to create your music look like? Take us through that space.

My perfect space would be a cabin in the mountains where I could absorb the natural world around me, then turn that into something uniquely me. Nature has everything from amazing beauty to absolute terror. It is a place I can more easily find that liminal space in my mind and let my creativity flow. That doesn't mean though that I would want to be totally devoid of any human contact. I think the friction and noise of humanity can also be a great fuel for ideas, but ultimately, I would want to return to my place in nature to process that noise and friction and process it into my art.

Question #6: Is there a project you are working on currently or one that you've recently released that you would like people to know about?

Cult of Sorrow has been my main project for the last 8 years. We have 3 albums out, with our last album, *Invocation Of The Lucifer*, released in fall of 2019 on Black Doomba Records. Unfortunately, the pandemic took away a lot of our steam with the release and playing shows to support it. As mentioned before, we are a Doom Metal band. Recently, I started a Drone/Doom/Noise/Experimental project called *Set-Hen Ra*. To date only one song has been released, but I do plan on putting out more work with it. Here are links to both:

Cult Of Sorrow (bandcamp.com)

Trinity of the Sixes | Set-Hen Ra (bandcamp.com)

Kaeti MacNeil (*Animaeidos*)

(Animaeidos)

Question #1: How long have you been making/creating your music/sound art? Why did you start in the first place?

When I was a toddler, our neighbor watched over me. She loved the piano, singing and collecting sheet music. She couldn't play the piano herself but always encouraged me to try. After my family moved, our upright piano was the least broken instrument leftover from my siblings. I began learning with a local piano teacher. One of my sisters and I would drive in her little car listening to my then favorite song, a cover of *In the Hall of the Mountain King* by the 80's band *Erasure*. (Her CD) When I began learning the piano, she found me the sheet music version of this song. It's the first 'serious' piece I learned to play. I improved enough that my family took notice and signed me up for lessons at the closest Conservatory of Music. I improved dramatically during this time. The song that inspired me to really develop my skill with the piano was the 3rd movement of Beethoven's Moonlight Sonata. I spent a summer at the Interlochen Arts camp and Brown University, both studying the Classical Piano. Ultimately, I never had what it would take to become a full concert pianist. As far as I knew, it was that or be a local piano teacher. I wasn't interested in either. During this time of my life, I composed one original tune. A portion of it can be heard here: https://youtu.be/K4CjXwpt92s and the full version is here: https://soundcloud.com/hkati/untamed-potential . After some years of not playing the piano at all, I taught myself to play the song that had inspired first me, Moonlight Sonata, 3rd movement. https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLLgIxigyh095Ak3eCuF80yZFPNVSMr54g ... As for singing, that's a whole other matter.

Question #2: How would you describe your music to a complete stranger who stops you on the street [being 2 metres away from you at all times of course]?

Haunting singing, ominous atmosphere, maybe a piano heard in the distance. Generally ghosts and deadly aquatic women. The new pieces will be a bit broader, but that's too fluid to describe yet.

I prefer the most hard-hitting dramatic classical piano pieces, particularly Rachmaninoff and Beethoven. Since the copyright on their songs is released, I can integrate portions of their compositions if I play them myself. I need to improve the quality of my recordings to complete these new songs.

Question #3: How do you know when it's time for you to create something new or start a new project?

I usually begin hearing it in my 'mind's ear.' I play it and replay it until I can either figure out the notes on the piano or sing them. I'll write down the rhythm and tones, but best is to just make a simple recording I can return to later. I usually collect a variety of these short clips and pieces of tunes and assemble them later on. This is determined when I have a new 'glue' tune or idea that is the skeletal structure that all the small pieces can be stuck to.

Question #4: How do you begin? What are your first steps? How do you know your project is finished?

Since I already covered the first two questions, my next steps are to record cleaner versions of the saved tunes. I like to assemble the pieces of the recordings like a mosaic in Adobe Audition. I aim to get an ethereal atmosphere using the digital effects. I record a lot of raw samples and then kind of 'paint' them together. I like shifting the colors of the tone, or stretching them out to be too long.

Question #5: What would your perfect inspirational space for you to create your music look like? Take us through that space.

I really loved the Music room in the Palace of Monserrate. This is an ideal space to think of an original tune, you know, imagining you're in there when you do so. :) It's a circular room with 8 doors and busts of the ancient greek muses above each door. When I visited, there was a grand piano and not much else. I have a few other notable music spaces that I'll recall when I create. I often find a space itself is inspiring. Perhaps something to do with how sound waves fill a space... Otherwise, I work with a utilitarian setup with my keyboard and computer, or visiting a recording studio with a separate room with a microphone. I currently have a Roland F140-R digital piano that records midi, and a blue snowball microphone that I use.

Question #6: Is there a project you are working on currently or one that you've recently released that you would like people to know about?

I have a release from the spring equinox earlier this year, Sirens: https://animaeidos.bandcamp.com/album/sirens This was brand new for me and began a new avenue for exploration. I created a single track for *Witches' Night* too. I began a track for the summer solstice but considered that the new approach would be better served towards the soundtrack of a short film I'm creating. This short animated painting will be completed next year.

Lloyd Keane
(Cygnus Onyx Flame/Obsidian Will/UAST/Grave Warrior)
(Cygnus Onyx Flame)(Obsidian Will)(UAST)(Grave Warrior)

Question #1: How long have you been making/creating your music/sound art? Why did you start in the first place?

I would say that 2017-2018 was when I started focusing on COF as a specific sound project. Before that, around 2013, I was learning to use Photoshop and thought it would be interesting to layer sounds together into soundscapes like the layers used for image elements within Photoshop. I started using Garageband and as I learned more I became a little more refined in my approach. Eventually, this form of experimentation lead to the more structured COF. Also, 2013 was when I was trying to come up with drones or sustained tones for *Obsidian Will*. These various interests and explorations came together in COF.

Question #2: How would you describe your music to a complete stranger who stops you on the street [being 2 metres away from you at all times of course]?

Depending on the person and if I wanted to continue the conversation or not, I might use the phrase Dark Ambient Ritual Sound Art (if I don't want to continue the conversation) or dark experimental music inspired by the atmosphere expressed in industrial music and Doom and Black metal (if I'm ok with the conversation continuing). Either way, I suspect the conversation would end. I've come to appreciate the label of "experimental music." I used to think it was just a term used by people who had no idea what they are doing (because that's how I used the term to describe myself!) However, having spent time getting to know the experimental music scene in Ottawa, I started to understand how diverse and wonderful the genre (if it can be called that) of experimental music is. In fact, it was the tireless work of Adriana and crew at Ottawa Experimental Music that I started *Inspired Ottawa* which lead to the wider scope of *Inspired Anywhere*.

Question #3: How do you know when it's time for you to create something new or start a new project?

Usually it starts with an idea. Something I've heard, read, or something the weird voices in my head thrust into consciousness starts a cascade of ideas. I often think "Huh, that would make an interesting song…EP….ALBUM!" Once I get that initial sense of mystery and curiosity, I think about how I might encapsulate those ideas. There have only been a couple of times when I heard an actual sound or snippet of music that inspired me to create something. For me it's more about concepts or ideas that I try to translate into my particular vocabulary of sound.

Question #4: How do you begin? What are your first steps? How do you know your project is finished?

Once the initial *something* happens, I sit down and write out notes (sentences not musical). I'll write a story board of ideas if the concept has a beginning, middle, and end. Or I may dive into some mythology or religious text and research the history and culture behind it. My track *Sharp of Tooth* started by re-reading the spiritual and mythological wirings from ancient Mesopotamia. I worked with various sounds until I got the feeling I was looking for. I then added spoken vocals reading out a passage from the *Enûma Eliš*. Often, I might have a specific tonal feeling I'm going for but I just don't know how to create it. That usually leads me to different instruments or a different area of music theory to learn or explore. I will know a project or track is done when one of two things happen: 1) I have no clue how to add to or transform the track; 2) I just get a feeling that it's done. Luckily, I don't suffer from the need for things to be perfect since that can never happen. If it gives me the right sensation (emotionally or otherwise) then I know it's done. Since I don't rely on my music to live, I don't have to worry about if others will "get it". I am trying to communicate a subjective experience back to myself through music and sound art. Sometimes it makes sense to another listener and sometimes it doesn't.

Question #5: What would your perfect inspirational space for you to create your music look like? Take us through that space.

While my current creative space is a condo bedroom with a DAW, practice amps, and my guitars and pedals, I would love a dedicated space just for working on music. As I mentioned in the introduction, I sold my drums and sold or traded all but two synthesizers for two bass and two electric guitars. Before the mass exodus of instruments my ideal space would have been something that would have accommodated all of those wires, cables, and breakables. Now I would just want a really dark room with giant guitar and bass amps, my pedals, a DAW, and ear plugs....really good ear plugs...my hearing is fucked.

Question #6: Is there a project you are working on currently or one that you've recently released that you would like people to know about?

Obsidian Will has been on hiatus since the start of COVID so I focused on creating my own tracks. That was going along swimmingly until I sold everything. Right now I'm in the process of redefining *Cygnus Onyx Flame*. While I will still create drones and ambient tracks using my DAW, I want to see what I can create along the lines of minimalist Doom/Drone/Black metal. At the moment, that redefinition will maintain the same theme of spacey vastness as before but in a much more gritty, wall of sound way.

I was testing my pedal set up through my DAW and decided to add a muddy blast beat behind the recording. I then added some distorted vocals of me screaming archival terms and concepts…it was an improv track lamenting the often excessive excitement of genealogists. I used Google translate and called the track _genealogista-est-infernum_. I put it up on Bandcamp as a joke but I think there is a kernel of a direction I will be following buried in the noise…at least some of the time. I know it must be good because someone on Facebook criticized it for being too muddy for Black Metal. \m/

My first intentional foray into what I can only consider Existential Muddy Blackened Doom Metal Noise is the EP _Dance of Vacuum and Void_.

Toby Chappell (Eyes of Ligeia/Misdreamt)

(Eyes of Ligeia)(Misdreamt)

Question #1: How long have you been making/creating your music/sound art? Why did you start in the first place?

This is a question I have to answer in two distinct parts, as there have been two very different musical pathways I've gone down with their own beginnings and development arcs.

I began to play the guitar in 1987, and other than a few minor contributions here and there to bands I played with, I didn't really start creating my own music until 1997 or so. It was still another year or two before I began to arrange and record things -- this was around the time that affordable yet still relatively powerful home digital recording gear and software was starting to blow up, so I skipped the whole "4-track at home" approach which was probably for the best given how I found that I worked best.

The first music that inspired me to become a musician was *Iron Maiden*, specifically their 1986 album *Somewhere in Time*. Although interestingly very little that I've ever created had more than a passing resemblance to anything recognizably Maiden, other than perhaps the way I approach harmonizing guitar parts. My interests were never limited to just metal, though. I grew up on the classic rock radio my parents always had on, and had somehow acquired more eclectic tastes that veered into some the lesser known and remembered corners of music that would be broadly classed under "progressive rock" (I never cared for *Yes*, *Rush*, *ELP*, and *Gentle Giant*, but was very interested in other prog rock bands like *King Crimson*, *Van Der Graaf Generator*, and *Magma* along with a deep appreciation for more ambient side of bands like *Pink Floyd*).

During the times in the 1980s and 1990s when I worked within bands, I never found it to be very satisfying creatively (although I did have a lot of fun and developed the necessary ability to give-and-take when working with other musicians). Thus it was probably natural that when I began to get serious about learning how to create, arrange, and record music it was done primarily alone, and while I do have the occasional collaboration for the most part this has continued to be the way I prefer to work at least in the early stages of any particular recording.

The other distinct musical path is my study of and experimentation with computer-generated/manipulated sound. This one is a bit harder to pin down as to exactly when it was first on my radar, although to the best of my recollection it would have been probably around 2001-2002. Having been fascinated by some of the experimentation with electronic sounds by various black metal bands (there was a period in that scene when having an ambient intro or 'outro' on your CD was essentially required!), I started to explore some of the names that were sometimes mentioned as influences on these ambient experiments: *Tangerine Dream*, *Klaus Schulze*, *Popol Vuh*. My first

experiments with creating such music were very amateur, as it took some time to learn how to create interesting sounds of my own.

Around 2006 my work with electronic and manipulated sounds (usually based on manipulations of field recordings rather than relying on purely synthesized sound) became my primary focus for a while. I had returned to school, specifically attending the music school at Georgia State University. While my official instrument was classical guitar, I was in the music composition program with a concentration on electro-acoustic music. The professor who led that program, Robert Scott Thompson, was and is a prolific and well-respected composer of electroacoustic and ambient music who also taught students this arcane art.

(I should probably include this parenthetical aside to explain what electroacoustic music is.... unlike with a synthesizer that may be trying to mimic an actual instrument [violin, piano, etc.], electroacoustic music seeks to create _new_ sounds. The focus is often more on the sounds than the notes, although electroacoustic music can be quite melodic as well. Sometimes sounds are created from scratch and are solely computer generated; sometimes the electroacoustic composer takes field recordings of existing sounds [like nature or machinery] and manipulates those sounds in ways not possible outside of the digital realm. While there may be bits of sounds recognizable for what they were originally were, the focus is always on stretching the boundaries of what types of sounds can be created and how effectively they create the right impression in listeners.)

Under Professor Thompson's tutelage, I learned quite a bit more about how to create and manipulate sounds in novel and unique ways, and to find my own voice through much as I had some time ago found my voice with guitar-based music. One of the pieces from that period I'm most proud of, which I created as project in one of his classes, is *https://saturninsektor.bandcamp.com/track/the-waste-land* (headphones highly recommended!)

Question #2: How would you describe your music to a complete stranger who stops you on the street [being 2 metres away from you at all times of course]?

My current musical project isn't quite ready for the 'elevator pitch' yet, but the succinct description for the two semi-active ones would be something like what I've used in my speaker bio for the Left Hand-Path oriented conferences I've spoken at:

"Toby's music and occult pursuits intersect in the solo projects *Eyes of Ligeia* (starry wisdom and ambient doom), and *Misdreamt* (found sounds, electo-acoustic experimentation, and apophenia). Over the last 13 years he has given various performances under the *Eyes of Ligeia* banner, both solo and with a group. In 2011 he created a new soundtrack for the silent film Faust (1926); this was commissioned by and performed at the German Cultural Center in Atlanta, along with other performances in the southeast and New York City."

The links for those two projects are *https://eyesofligeia.bandcamp.com* and *https://misdreamt.bandcamp.com*

Question #3: How do you know when it's time for you to create something new or start a new project?

I pick up a guitar almost every day, and am constantly looking for new parts or phrases that could be part of a song as well as working to refine existing bits. Once I have a few parts that feel like they might fit together, I'll start to arrange them in my typical workflow (more on that in a bit) and see if they gel like I thought they might (or if not, whether they could be made to fit!).

Knowing when it's time to start a new project name is a different quandary I face from time to time. I tend to focus my creativity within one project for extended periods of time. But then sometimes a musical idea will come out of left field... I'll hear music I've not heard in a very long time that will trigger some bit of ECI, or more often I'll discover a new artist with a unique sound that inspires me to explore some aspects of that sound in my own way. Earlier in my career I'd create new project/'band' names as umbrellas for different sounds and aesthetics, but these days I'm reluctant to create a new one unless there is a reason to create some distance from my other projects.

Question #4: How do you begin? What are your first steps? How do you know your project is finished?

This is my typical workflow for creating guitar-based music.

When making note of guitar parts that may be worth developing further, I still stick with writing them down with old-fashioned pencil and paper. That's the most efficient way for me to keep track of things, and it also creates a quick reference for finding parts when I start to turn them into MIDI files as part of the arranging process. After a part has been developed enough that it feels like a 'keeper', I'll sketch it out in the guitar tablature program TuxGuitar. This is important as it helps with pinning down the specific timing and rhythm (while I often work in simple meters, the rhythms _within_ those meters tend to be less conventional; this was a problem I had when working other musicians where the timing made sense *to me* but was more convoluted than I realized when trying to teach the rhythm to others).

Once I'm ready to arrange individual parts into songs, I'll export the TuxGuitar files to MIDI then import them into my preferred DAW (digital audio workstation software), Logic Pro X on a Mac. I'll do a basic arrangement of a few parts, adjusting tempos as needed, then create a basic drum pattern so that I have something to play along to. At

that point, it's a matter of adding and layering parts until it feels like something coherent that flows well. Note that I've not actually recorded any performed music yet at this point in the process.... that only happens after the basic structure and at least one guitar part to use as a guide is in place. I'll usually only be working on the arrangement of one song at a time; I like to finish one before moving on, unless I get to a spot where I'm seriously stuck about where the song should progress. Whenever I'm finally happy with the basic arrangement (and have done multiple play-throughs to ensure that it feels right in my hands not just to my ears), I'll then record some basic tracks. This is the point where I'll think about layering guitar parts, adding keyboards (usually for mellotron or Hammond B3 sounds). Lyrics, if there will be any, and their accompanying vocal melodies are the very last thing to be considered and the last things to be recorded.

The workflow for electroacoustic music is very different.

I usually create field recordings using a Shure MV88 stereo condenser mic that connects to my iPhone; I can use this to record high-resolution, uncompressed audio that is suitable for further manipulation without loss of clarity. Then I'll copy the recordings back to my Mac. One criminally unknown, but immensely powerful, tool for extracting interest elements out of sounds is SPEAR (*https://www.klingbeil.com/spear* ; short for Sinusoidal Partial Editing Analysis and Resynthesis). I can use this to extract not just a section of the audio (for example, the section from 9 seconds to 11 seconds in the sound file), but to extract only parts of the sound wave itself (for example, only the sounds that occur between 900hz to 950hz). You never know what gems are lurking within other sounds until you dig around! From there, I will usually use Csound (*https://csound.com/*), which is a DSL (domain-specific programming language) for sound manipulation. Csound is immensely powerful, offering unlimited degrees of fine control over every aspect of manipulating sound by adding what are called 'unit generators' in sequence (think the modern equivalent of chaining together old-school modular synth units via patch cables!).

I was doing a lot of electroacoustic music based on field recordings around 2009-2011. One of my favorite example of this is *https://misdreamt.bandcamp.com/album/unreal-city* which was created using the various tools described in this workflow.

Question #5: What would your perfect inspirational space for you to create your music look like? Take us through that space.

Honestly the space doesn't factor too much into my musical creativity as long as it is relatively quiet so I can hear myself play. Anywhere I have room to pull out a guitar will do, although I generally dislike playing if there are other people around unless I'm there to show them how I play something.

Question #6: Is there a project you are working on currently or one that you've recently released that you would like people to know about?

It's been a while since I released new music. I tend to be focused on only one big creative project at a time, and for a while that project was finishing writing (and editing) _Infernal Geometry and the Left-Hand Path_. On October 19, 2016 I released an electro-acoustic piece (_https://misdreamt.bandcamp.com/track/the-krell-machine_) based on sound recordings I made inside the subterranean Walhalla chamber at the Wewelsburg Castle, which to date is my last officially released piece.

There is a new project I've been working for most of 2021, called Geometer. This is notable (and worthy of using a project name) for several reasons: 1) it is stylistically very different from all the other guitar-based music I've done before, falling more broadly in the "influenced by 1970s progressive rock" category (more _Pink Floyd_ than _Yes_). 2) for the first time ever, recordings will feature my own singing (or attempts at singing in any event), and 3) the lyrics will, as a result of the singing, have far more significance than they have had in earlier work. This is a very personal project, and is deliberately stretching my boundaries as a songwriter, arranger, and performer. So far, I have no plans to release this widely but will focus (for as a long as feasible) on sharing it with others when I am there to listen to it with them; that may change, but I'd rather it be part of a shared experience with truly interested listeners than something to cast out, unfettered, into the world. However it ends up, this will be a grand, boundary-expanding experiment.

Random Transmissions to Come

The next issue of *Random Transmissions* will be whatever the hell it ends up being!

If your band or project wants to give the 6 Questions a go let me know! cygnusonyxflame@gmail.com

Until the next issue, thank you for reading and keep the Flame of Creativity burning within you and around you!