

14 July 2014

8:55 am – My first scorpion sighting, in the stairwell leading to my room. Immediate reaction was to find someone with a strategy for killing scorpions. Note: black ones are apparently non-aggressive, or at least don't jump on you.

Woke twice in the night. Bed is not particularly comfortable, or maybe I just don't sleep well, here. Odd dreams, too. Aileen Bunch showed up in one.

Better sitting. Pretty sure I skipped a step.

On to waking up.

3:00 pm – Guitar meeting at 10:00, 1st primary work. Left at 10:55, for head cook duties. A recipe that was frankly a little too complicated for two people to reliably complete in two hours. Tasy, but overly complicated.

So tired. Should be. Oof. I know that once I start practicing, I'll be able to keep going, but lord knows I need a nap.

11:00 pm – Long day. Skype meeting at 4:30 with Frank for Keynotes, then Body Beat at 5:30. A very clear noticing of catching myself shift strategies in the middle of getting confused about the beat. Pretty interesting to watch that happen.

Dinner was tasty. But for fuck's sake, cleanup was a disaster. Way too much went into making of. This is going to be a long week for cooking.

Broke another dish while cleaning up.

Work on *Third Relation* in the ballroom. Tough.

This might be one of the longer weeks.

Poor Lola back home has a significant prescription.

Today was a real energy drain. Feel like a lot of progress was lost, though that probably isn't true. But I sure as hell feel more drained than usual. It's only the second week....

Really intensely miss Ieva, and being able to crawl into bed with a warm body. How has it only been a week?

I will also not miss scorpions. The rainstorms are pretty amazing, though.

Issue with the guitar has been practically resolved; I can just tighten the bolt (of course) next time I change strings.

Had a few big ego moments, today. Wish I could just get over myself. Even though I know that's the point of being here.

That vow with Ieva is really fascinatingly... there.

15 July 2014

12 noon – I was up way too early. Breakfast scheduled ½ hour early, and unnecessarily so. Julia joined me at 6 am for a very quick sitting, and then straight into breakfast prep. Having the extra time was nice, but it did make for a sleepier morning.

Comments at breakfast about necessary house/kitchen issues, like how to clean faster, lint on dishes, etc. I've been practicing "clean as you go," so it's not such a big deal for me.

Massive rainstorm last night.

Guitar meeting this morning: more calisthenics, followed by scale work and circulating scales in 3 octaves.

Body is starting to complain about the food.

6:30 pm – Noticed during guitar meeting that we all do something when we make a mistake, all of us. I put it out there as a question as to why. Interesting discussion; Carl pointed out that it can be a positive thing, with the right people. Typically, though, I'd see this as a waste of energy. Negative emotion.

Wish I wasn't so dour all the time.

Joe had a special project of cleaning a pair of fridges out, but insisted on doing it at the same time as kitchen restoration and lunch cleanup and the beginning of dessert prep.

Probably the reason nothing happened is that we're all becoming much more sensitive to each other. Granted, I also intentionally went slow – the last thing we need is for more broken dishes, or worse, a broken fridge shelf.

Took a shower afterward. Body continues to complain. Slightly late for tea; I got the very clear feeling that the house was experiencing some sort of deep quiet, so I was careful coming up the stairs.

A bit of practicing, and Body Beat at 5:15.

Afterward, more practicing; *Where is the Nurse?* is starting to sound okay, and broke out *Moving Force* for the first time in a while. Quiet time at 6:30.

Also, at 12:30: circulating without words. Powerful stuff. Dropped a couple, here and there, but no matter.

How on earth am I going to reintegrate?

I am watching the dinner team set out all the plates. They are all panicking a bit. And late, which is going to make them panic more.

I'm getting a little tired of eating the results of showing off.

11:37 – Dinner was late, through no fault of the kitchen team. Potatoes were undercooked, chickpeas were, as well. And now I'm on bread duty, but TBA, which means bread waits for the whim of Joe. This is really starting to piss me off.

Noted that no one ever wants to sit at the head table.

Guitar meeting tonight. *Third Relation, Study for the Left Hand*, part of *Calliope*. Chris pulled me onto the veranda to see Cuernavaca at night. Beautiful.

Keynote this week is general theme of Responsibility. Ticked into my head earlier today, after Body Beat, maybe because of reminding Scott and then Ricardo about Quiet Time?

Also, I actually felt a silence in the dining room, from downstairs in my room. That was a new one.

16 July 2014

12:45 pm – Very tired today. Got up approximately 40 minutes after my alarm went off. Sitting was okay, but I could have been more present, I guess. But that's missing the point entirely, innit?

Questions at breakfast on noise in the feelings (negative emotions), how they relate to the sitting, how to stay awake, etc. Also didn't realize this was Dev's last day.

Guitar meeting. Had the experience of having no connection to my hands: just a pair of appendages on my arms that didn't really follow my commands at all. Absolutely hilarious to witness.

Took a walk around the garden, to try and wake up. Walking backwards is a noticeably different experience. Lunch sounds like it's late, too. We're now on day 3 of consistently late meals; the current system is not working. Perhaps it could, with simpler meals.

Anyway.

The *Garden* piece is almost there. There's transitional stuff that needs to go in. And I'm not sure about the ending; letting it go on the subdominant seems too easy.

Notice up on the board from RF re: points of seeing, noticing, comments, observations, etc. As I'd suspected, points of seeing (according to RF) actually do have a sort of outside-the-timestream quality to them.

The circulating group I saw the other morning was definitely of that nature. Moving to Boston definitely was. Same with the possibility of Seattle.

11:13 pm – Lunch was damn hot. Technically, everyone knew it was good for them, though poor Gabi couldn't eat it. Too hot for most gringos; I could eat it, and I liked it, but it was too much.

Passed out after lunch, instead of doing housework. Only realized it when I'd woken up and realized I'd drooled all over myself. Classy.

Tea at 4. Dev and Leo telling stories about their first long course in Kiel in 2002. This went long, till about 5. Body beat at 5:30, set up for dinner at 6:30. Dinner team in a state of panic; this isn't gonna get better until it gets worse.

Dinner was relatively tasty, but the discussion was better. "Squerdaritas" are born.

Practicing after dinner, a short meeting with Chris, Carl, Julia to run *Bicycling*, and into the Ballroom for 9:30.

Circulation, working on *Calliope* (sections and ensemble), and a bit of work on the opening riff for 333. Final circulation, with three chords at the end. Beautiful.

Diarizing; the food is not agreeing with me. The diet here is just not enough for me, though it's more accurate to say that I just need protein.

The middle is slowly approaching.

I talk a lot. I had the notion that I'd be able to not comment during dinner, but there I go....

Conscious eating is on through Friday.

And the decision exercise has finally started up again.

To bed. Run in the morning?

18 July 2014

I let the diary go for a day. Not much happened, outside of the usual course stuff. Beginning to feel a little alienated, which is normal for me.

Was head cook for dinner last night; this was the first meal I've made that was late. But it tasted good. It wasn't really very late, only about 5 minutes. But, that's not the point.

A new piece of music, 333, was introduced last night—or rather, more of it was. A killer piece of music: Shred City.

Official sitting order of the circle was set last night. Flow is one of those weird things that just seems to work, when it's there. The established order really has a sort of science to the organization: putting this or that person here, making sure that there's a woman on the other end, where does one strategically place weaker and stronger players? And as non-scientific as it sounds, there does seem to be an element of evidence-based replication to it. Even though it should be construed as art.

A long talk with Chris, last night. We're both "irritable bastards". And I'm grouchy, because I can't bear to listen to self-bloviating, or to solipsistic yammering, or whatever. What a grouch.

I sincerely wonder how this place would function if there were to be an entire day mandated of necessary talking only.

Anyway: on to the sitting.

12:15 pm – no comments at breakfast, just quiet and eating, and then plans for the morning. Wondering what to do on the day off tomorrow. Ralston apparently wants to show three gringos around the pyramids and Mexico City. It seems like a complicated affair.

Guitars at 9:30 am, running up to 12:07 pm. The Cage piece (*Dream*), *Third Relation* with marching, and the same with *Calliope*. Long. Grueling. Tough. A real rehearsal.

4:10 pm – Why am I always so sad?

5:30 pm – A meeting with Frank at 4:20 pm. Fun. He always has incredibly practical things to say, in regards to Work-y type stuff. Poked Joe awake in the middle of the meeting.

The most direct and practical observation came from Julia—little surprise there. Her feet are solidly on the ground.

“I’ll show you the life of the mind!” – Barton Fink

But, really: why am I so sad? Is this my defense mechanism for when I feel helpless or alone? It always happens.

Even days off are work. Even days outside the extent of a course are work. I’m not bothered by this, but it does bear mentioning. When I get out of here (both when I go somewhere tomorrow, and when we all leave here for good), the work will not stop. Ever.

But is the nature of this work inherently lonely? Granted, I can’t stand by and have someone else do it for me; I have to be the one to do it. This is what it is for everyone. We all have to have the experience in order to properly wear each others’ shoes. So why does it feel so intensely lonely, so detached from everyone else? Is it because I remain at the monastery?

The advisory for the day off is to “take a day off,” even from the sitting, though I know this will not be the case for me. I wonder how many people really take that at face value—I’d expect that some others will at least consider a sitting in the morning.

I should have gone to Ralston’s.

20 July 2014

Day off, yesterday.

The end of Friday: I read for a while, finishing *Godel, Escher, Bach*; made a quick biryani for the four of us here, then ran to call Ieva. A storm came, knocking out the internet service, as well as the power for a bit. I went back down to the dining room, talked to the others in the house for a while, and then went back up to the office to see if the internet service had returned. Finding that it had, I talked with Ieva for another 90 minutes, and went to bed very late.

Yesterday: up late, showered, sat, ate breakfast, did some laundry, practiced a bit, and went into Cuernavaca with Chris. An enjoyable day off: we went into *Palacio del Cortes*, which is now a major anthropological museum. A really interesting view of Mexican culture. Afterward, we walked around for a while, got some food (I had an honest-to-god salad with CHEESE), walked around more, and ran into Eduardo. We embarked on a quest for *queso*, saw the *Catedral*, walked even more, grabbed a beer, and came home. I got some ideas for a gift, practiced a bit more, and then called Ieva again.

It's looking like we're in Boston for another year. She's enrolled in an SMFA program for graphic design, which she'll be able to complete within a year. I can't say I'm overly thrilled, to be honest, but I also can't say that I blame her: she feels stuck, and there are many things she could be doing if she had more skills under her belt. It does seem a little arbitrary, and I'm having a little trouble discerning the real "why" for it, but it's what she wants to do, so I support it. I have a suspicion that it'll be very beneficial for her, but I do want to ultimately get out of Boston, and ideally to Seattle (or England), so I'm mostly just concerned this will give bad hiccups to that.

Either way: off to adjust a guitar.

12:35 am – Plenty of practicing the first six primaries today. People started coming back around 2:30 pm, and I took on tea around 3:00 pm. Teatime at 4:00, with different reports of the day off.

5:30 in the ballroom for circulations, covering basic forms (left, right, plus 1/minus 1, skipping, combining), mostly in F major. A really lovely key for the circle. Very warm.

6:30 pm, quiet time. Dinner at 7:00, with reports about conscious eating. Good reports all around; Angel wanted to continue working with it, but Leo advised him to let it go, at least for the time being. Josh made a comment... no, he began bitching about long and wittering comments and reports; the irony was not lost on Leo, who pointed out that Josh himself tended to comment a lot, and at length.

Strawberry mousse for dessert!!

Guitars again at 9:15 pm. Repertoire work, including more work on 333. I am in awe of the women here: *chugga-chugga-chugga* is in their blood. Afterward, I cleaned up tea, helped Julia clear old food out of the refrigerator, finished the dishes, and went to bed.

I might run again, tomorrow.