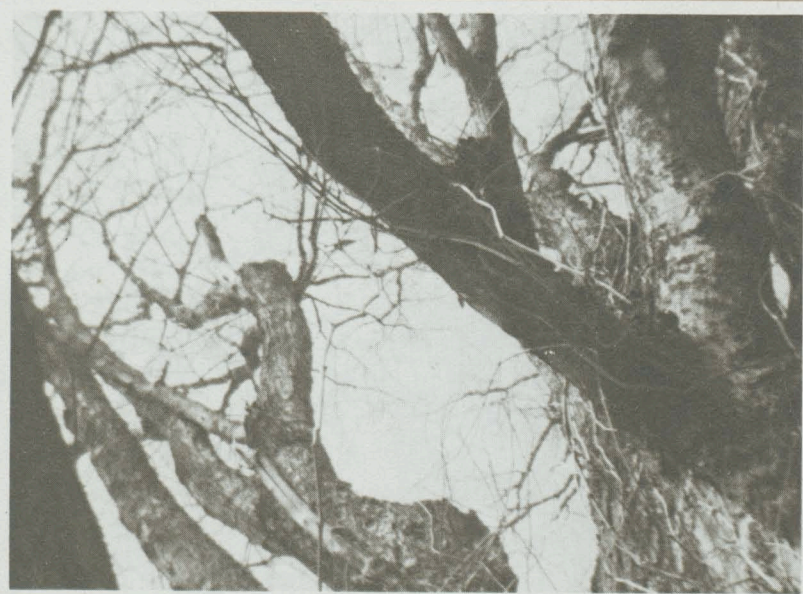


THE SEASONS: VERMONT

For Magnetic Tape Collage & Instrumental Ensemble

MALCOLM GOLDSTEIN

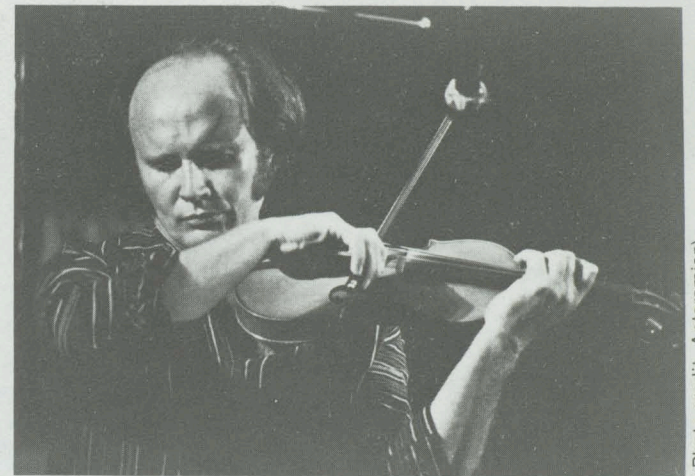


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COVER DESIGN BY RONALD CLYNE

FOLKWAYS RECORDS FX 6242

THE SEASONS: VERMONT



(Photo credit - Antaramian)

Malcolm Goldstein

SIDE 1

Band 1: Summer 14:50
Band 2: Autumn 10:15

SIDE 2

Band 1: Winter 19:40
Band 2: Spring 5:00

The music consists of:

a magnetic tape collage of sounds recorded in Vermont during each season (of brooks, birds, tractors, haying machinery, thunderstorms, fiddling, town bands, trucks, peepers, crickets, chain saws, etc.) that is played simultaneously with

an instrumental/vocal ensemble performing scores which realize, in an analogous manner, the sound texture resonances of that particular season.

"The Season: Vermont/Summer": Premier performance, February 23, 1980; Dartmouth College:

Jay Chivers, string bass; Malcolm Goldstein, violin; Yosha Goldstein, electric guitar; Harry Teahan, timpani, percussion; Richard Van Kleeck, French horn, pennywhistle; Robert Wigness, trombone; Christian Wolff, piano.

"The Seasons: Vermont/Autumn, Winter, Spring": from the premier performance of the complete cycle: February 26, 1983; Real Art Ways, Hartford, Conn.:

Robert Black, double bass; Mark Steven Brooks, wood flutes, electric guitar, percussion; Joseph Celli, oboe, English horn, ocarina; Malcolm Goldstein, violin; Tom Guralnick, tenor, soprano & bass saxophone, vacuophones; Brian Johnson, vibraphone, percussion; Kenneth Karpowicz, intensified vocalizing, accordion.

Recording engineer, technician & editing assistant (Real Art Ways): Lonce Wyse.

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43 W. 61st ST., N.Y.C., 10023 N.Y., U.S.A.

THE SEASONS: VERMONT

For Magnetic Tape Collage & Instrumental Ensemble

MALCOLM GOLDSTEIN

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES ARE INSIDE POCKET

FOLKWAYS RECORDS FX 6242

THE SEASONS: VERMONT

For Magnetic Tape Collage & Instrumental Ensemble

MALCOLM GOLDSTEIN

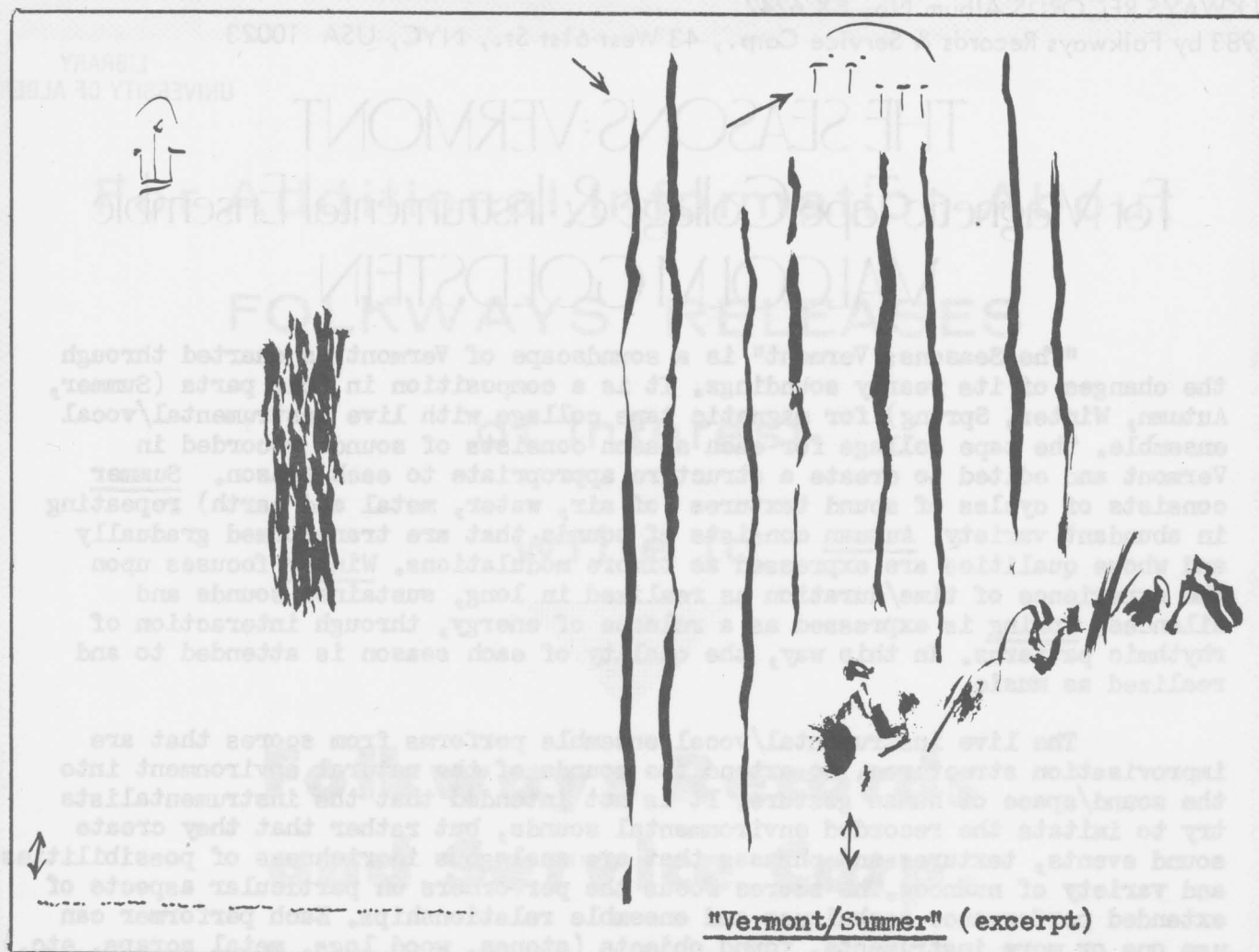
"The Seasons: Vermont" is a soundscape of Vermont as charted through the changes of its yearly soundings. It is a composition in four parts (Summer, Autumn, Winter, Spring) for magnetic tape collage with live instrumental/vocal ensemble. The tape collage for each season consists of sounds recorded in Vermont and edited to create a structure appropriate to each season. Summer consists of cycles of sound textures (of air, water, metal and earth) repeating in abundant variety. Autumn consists of sounds that are transformed gradually and whose qualities are expressed as timbre modulations. Winter focuses upon the experience of time/duration as realized in long, sustained sounds and silences. Spring is expressed as a release of energy, through interaction of rhythmic patterns. In this way, the quality of each season is attended to and realized as music.

The live instrumental/vocal ensemble performs from scores that are improvisation structures, to extend the sounds of the natural environment into the sound/space of human gesture. It is not intended that the instrumentalists try to imitate the recorded environmental sounds, but rather that they create sound events, textures and phrases that are analogous in richness of possibilities and variety of nuances. The scores focus the performers on particular aspects of extended performance techniques and ensemble relationships. Each performer can use one or more instruments, found objects (stones, wood logs, metal scraps, etc.), as well as their own voices and bodies in various ways. Performance techniques on "traditional" instruments include a wide range of activities, devised for the necessities of the music. Each season has its own uniquely notated score; so, also, the ensemble, listening to each other and the tape collage, creates sounds appropriate to each season.

* * * *

The premier performance of the complete cycle, "The Seasons: Vermont", which occurred at Real Art Ways, Hartford, Conn. on February 26, 1983, and reproduced on this record, was the realization of a ten year composition project. In the mid 1960s I bought land in Sheffield, Vermont, built a house and, in 1971, settled into living there year-round. The experience of the sounds, space and silences of that environment has become an essential ingredient of my art. Out of the living has evolved this music: my response to the environment, sounding.

In trying to create "The Seasons", I had to listen closely and become attuned to what was that particular sound quality of each season. I then took the sounds that I had recorded in Vermont (another way of listening to all those varied sounds) and made a tape collage which, for me, arrived at that particular, essential quality of each season. Then I had to think about what kind of notation could be created, a unique notation, that made clear to the performers what they had to focus on, in terms of their sound: how to make their sounds, what kinds of sounds they could perform, in that particular season. And so, this kind of very focus way, of listening and thinking about the sounds of an environment in a specific time, is what I present in the music, "The Season: Vermont".



"Vermont/Summer" (excerpt)

Summer focuses on specific sound materials which are endlessly varied; an experience rich in sound-texture. Looking at plants and trees or clouds, you obviously see what they are; but, looking closely, you see the endless variety of detail and endless richness of texture of each unique physicality. So, also, hearing the sound. The notation for Summer is calligraphic and graphic representation of four kinds of sound materials (phrase patterns; repeated pulses; internally evolving sound textures; elaborate timbre melodies), which the performers see visually - several pages of these basic materials - and use, in an improvisation structure, to relate to each other and the tape collage. The constant listening to each other and the tape, and choosing which material to play and how to do it, becomes a process, a kind of kaleidoscope and variation/repetition of these materials. The rich textures of Summer: Abundance.

Autumn focuses on the nuances and gradual modification of a sound. The actual performance technique is given in a notation which shows how to take a sound and gradually modify it; and also how to listen to the other musicians and the tape collage and to shape that relationship. There are numerous phrases that are given, with indications that shape the dynamics, timbre/overtone nuances, vibrato, etc.. A leaf changing from green, through processes of disintegration, becoming brittle. The sound of Autumn, for me, is this process of modulation of material: Transformation.

Winter focuses on time, on some sound being sustained: the duration of sound and silence. The musicians are given a map of the townships around Sheffield, with various size areas marked with timings, and another page with suggestions as to different kinds of materials to perform. They realize the details

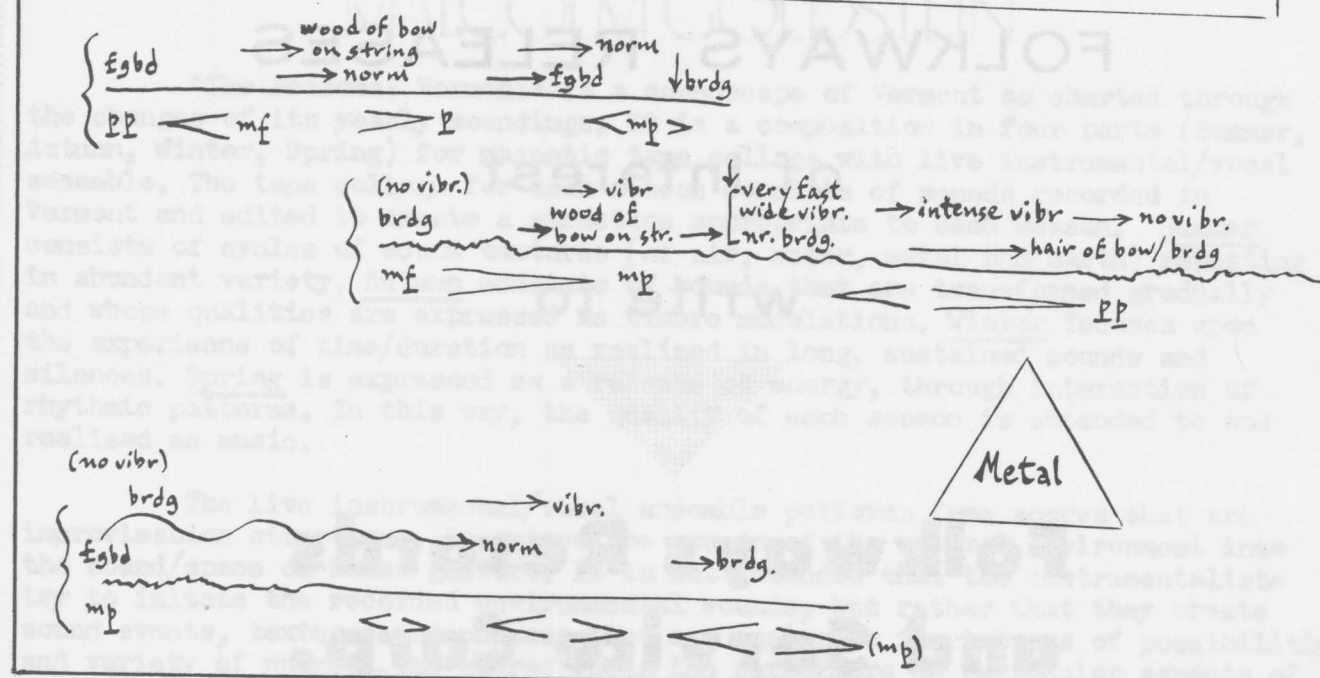
"Vermont/Autumn" (excerpt)

[strings]

Tremolo, irregular bowings:

etc...

with f/p and $<>$



of these materials, which are sustained as varieties of sound masses and silences. Winter is very long in Vermont and not too much happens. Time and space as a kind of cantilevered architecture of sound. Only once does the ensemble synchronize to perform Justin Morgan's "Amanda", in a much transformed rendition. "Death like an overflowing stream...": Submergence.

Spring is very short. The score/notation is the brooks that begin in Sheffield and feed into the Passumpsic River. The interplay of different brooks and their contour is realized in the process of developing complex material from very simple material. The focus of Spring is upon the energy of rhythm and the interplay of the performers improvising rhythmic patterns and developing a more and more extensive pitch gamut. The performers, listening to each other and the tape (which in this section is mostly a collage of the rhythm of water and the sound-texture of various brooks), build more and more complicated pitch/rhythmic patterns, as they follow the line of the brooks flowing downstream. A dance/song: Rejuvenation.

* * * *

The actual composing of the music was completed between 1980 - 1982. In the concert version, which is about one hour duration, the time proportion of each section was arrived at through experience of that particular season in Vermont: Summer, 15'00"; Autumn, 12'30"; Winter, 25'00"; Spring, 7'30". To be able to fit the complete cycle on one record, it was necessary to edit the recorded concert performances. (Spring was the most affected, with its beginning and ending cut out and the music faded into and out of mechanically.) Time proportions are approximately adhered to: 14'50"; 10'15"; 19'40; 5'00".

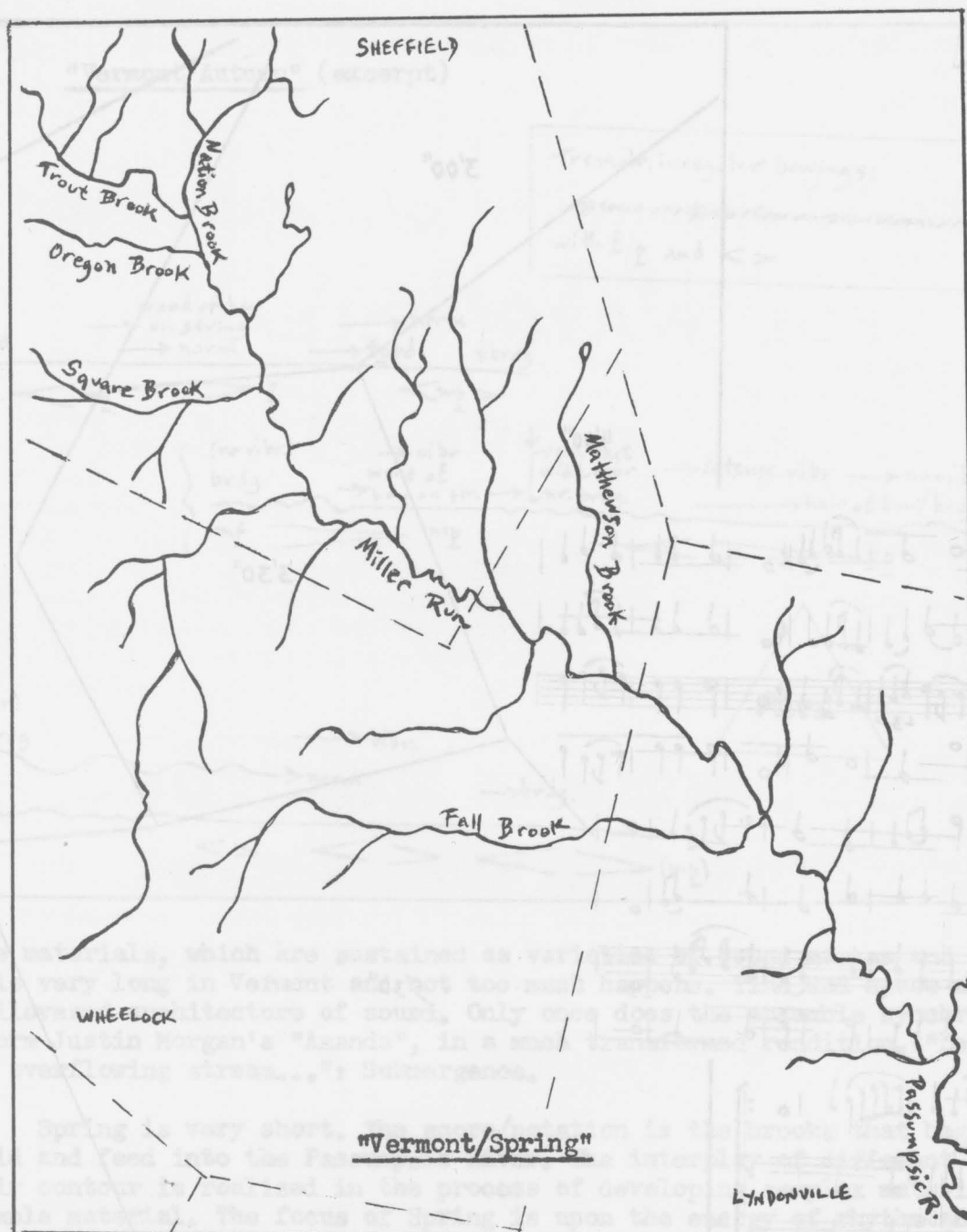
[Justin Morgan]

"Vermont/Winter" (time score and "Amanda")

"How far is anyone justified, be he an authority or a layman, in expressing or trying to express in terms of music (in sounds, if you like) the value of anything, material, moral, intellectual, or spiritual, which is usually expressed in terms other than music?"... Charles Ives, "Essays Before a Sonata".

* * * *

...With much thanks to Joseph Celli and Real Art Ways, for making the premier performance possible; and to Grita Insam, for permission to adapt material from an interview with her, in these album notes. And with special thanks to numerous friends in Vermont, who supported and endured my persistent tape recording activities.



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