

*The following text is made up of questions and quotations. The quotations are some from the writings of others and some from my own writings. (That from Christian Wolff is from his article "New and Electronic Music," copyright 1958 by the Audience Press, and reprinted by permission from Audience, Volume V, Number 3, Summer 1958.) The order and quantity of the quotations were given by chance operations. No performance timing was composed. Nevertheless, I always prescribe one before delivering this lecture, sometimes adding by chance operations indications of when, in the course of the performance, I am obliged to light a cigarette.*

### III. Communication

NICHI NICHI KORE KO NICHI: EVERY DAY IS A BEAUTIFUL DAY

What if I ask thirty-two questions?

What if I stop asking now and then?

Will that make things clear?

Is communication something made clear?

What is communication?

Music, what does it communicate?

Is what's clear to me clear to you?

Is music just sounds?

Then what does it communicate?

Is a truck passing by music?

If I can see it, do I have to hear it too?

If I don't hear it, does it still communicate?

If while I see it I can't hear it, but hear something else, say an egg-beater, because I'm inside looking out, does the truck communicate or the egg-beater, which communicates?

Which is more musical, a truck passing by a factory or a truck passing by a music school?

Are the people inside the school musical and the ones outside unmusical?

What if the ones inside can't hear very well, would that change my question?

Do you know what I mean when I say inside the school?

Are sounds just sounds or are they Beethoven?

People aren't sounds, are they?

Is there such a thing as silence?  
Even if I get away from people, do I still have to listen to something?  
Say I'm off in the woods, do I have to listen to a stream babbling?  
Is there always something to hear, never any peace and quiet?  
If my head is full of harmony, melody, and rhythm, what happens to  
me when the telephone rings, to my piece and quiet, I mean?  
And if it was European harmony, melody, and rhythm in my head, what has happened  
to the history of, say, Javanese music, with respect, that is to say, to my head?  
Are we getting anywhere asking questions?  
Where are we going?  
Is this the twenty-eighth question?  
Are there any important questions?  
"How do you need to cautiously proceed in dualistic terms?"  
Do I have two more questions?  
And, now, do I have none?

Now that I've asked thirty-two questions, can I ask forty-four more?  
I can, but may I?  
Why must I go on asking questions?  
Is there any reason in asking why?  
Would I ask why if questions were not words but were sounds?  
If words are sounds, are they musical or are they just noises?  
If sounds are noises but not words, are they meaningful?  
Are they musical?  
Say there are two sounds and two people and one of each is beautiful,  
is there between all four any communication?  
And if there are rules, who made them, I ask you?  
Does it begin somewhere, I mean, and if so, where does it stop?  
What will happen to me or to you if we have to be somewhere where beauty isn't?  
I ask you, sometime, too, sounds happening in time, what will happen to our experience  
of hearing, yours, mine, our ears, hearing, what will happen if sounds being  
beautiful stop sometime and the only sounds to hear are not beautiful to hear  
but are ugly, what will happen to us?  
Would we ever be able to get so that we thought the ugly sounds were beautiful?  
If we drop beauty, what have we got?  
Have we got truth?



Have we got religion?  
 Do we have a mythology?  
 Would we know what to do with one if we had one?  
 Have we got a way to make money?  
 And if money is made, will it be spent on music?  
 If Russia spends sixty million for the Brussels Fair, lots of it for music and dance, and  
     America spends one-tenth of that, six million about, does that mean that one out of  
     ten Americans is as musical and kinesthetic as all the Russians put together?  
 If we drop money, what have we got?  
 Since we haven't yet dropped truth, where shall we go looking for it?  
 Didn't we say we weren't going, or did we just ask where we were going?  
 If we didn't say we weren't going, why didn't we?  
 If we had any sense in our heads, wouldn't we know the truth instead  
     of going around looking for it?  
 How otherwise would we, as they say, be able to drink a glass of water?  
 We know, don't we, everybody else's religion, mythology, and philosophy  
     and metaphysics backwards and forwards, so what need would we have  
     for one of our own if we had one, but we don't, do we?  
 But music, do we have any music?  
 Wouldn't it be better to just drop music too?  
 Then what would we have?  
 Jazz?  
 What's left?  
 Do you mean to say it's a purposeless play?  
 Is that what it is when you get up and hear the first sound of each day?  
 Is it possible that I could go on monotonously asking questions forever?  
 Would I have to know how many questions I was going to ask?  
 Would I have to know how to count in order to ask questions?  
 Do I have to know when to stop?  
 Is this the one chance we have to be alive and ask a question?  
 How long will we be able to be alive?

CONTEMPORARY MUSIC

IS NOT THE MUSIC OF THE FUTURE

NOR THE MUSIC OF THE PAST

BUT SIMPLY

MUSIC PRESENT WITH US:

THIS MOMENT,

NOW,

THIS NOW MOMENT.

COMPOSITION AS PROCESS/43