

## **Chapter 26: My Broadcasting Career**

Never miss a chance to have sex or appear on television.

Gore Vidal

It's not true I had nothing on. I had the radio on.

Marilyn Monroe

I tell in Chapter 25 how I came to live in Truro, Massachusetts. Truro is a rural town and there's not a lot for people to do there. For me as a new arrival, without much in the way of roots or history in the place, there was even less to do. For a while it was fun to have nothing to do except lie around and read books, and travel a lot. But after a year I found I did need something.

### **A. Radio**

Adam was also staying at the Truro property the first year I was there. Adam had done radio in college and a lot of it after college, too, as a National Public Radio stringer and otherwise. He is a professional radio guy to this day (2010). To amuse himself, he had a show on WOMR-FM, the local (Provincetown) public radio station. The show was called First Light, a morning variety DJ show, with music of his choice and as much talk as he cared to utter.<sup>1</sup> He invited me up to Provincetown to watch him broadcast, and it seemed like a lot of fun. In college I sniffed around WKCR, the college station in Ferris Booth Hall, right next to Fernald Hall where I lived. But I ended up not working there – I don't remember what I thought might have been more fun. But WOMR seemed worth trying.

WOMR broadcast classical music in the afternoons – Lower Cape Concert Hall was on Monday through Friday from 1 to 5, and Lower Cape Opera House on Saturday. Like First Light, Lower Cape Concert Hall had a different host for each day. I spoke with Bob Nelson, who did the opera show and was the head of the classical music department as well as a sort of *de facto* leader at the station, about doing Lower Cape Concert Hall. He asked me to write up a playlist to give him an idea what I would play – I think he wanted to be sure that I could do that, and that I knew enough about classical music to sustain the show. I put together a playlist that satisfied Bob, and he let me on the air, in relief at first and then as a regular weekly announcer. Adam showed me how to run the console, which was pretty simple with our level of equipment, and Bob fitted me out with a

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<sup>1</sup> Future researchers: *DJ* meant *disk jockey* – a slang term for someone who played phonograph records (disks) on the radio (or later, at parties or nightclubs).

license (in those days, and perhaps still, to broadcast on broadcast bands all you needed was to send a postcard to the Federal Communications Commission). I did my first show on December 16, 1983. I took a lot from Adam's example and was very relaxed on the air – I might have been nervous except I saw during that First Light show how laid back a person could be while broadcasting. I ended up doing 163 afternoons of Lower Cape Concert Hall – my last show was on August 10, 1988. My playlists are contained in two notebooks which I will send up to Yale among the Supplements. Document 26-1 is a typical page.

WOMR-FM, at that time 91.9 on the FM dial (“We’re almost 92”) although the frequency has since been changed, was an intimate affair. So was Provincetown, especially in the winter – population 3536 in the 1980 census. People who had been there for a long time knew everyone, and even new arrivals like Adam and me got to know people. WOMR was a group activity, a genuine community radio station. Everyone was a volunteer (except a manager was paid a pittance).

The station occupied a house at 14 Centre Street, on the corner of Bradford Street – Bradford and Commercial were the only two east-west streets in the center of town. (See Map VII – I understand the station has now moved to a disused schoolhouse.) There were shows for every taste. I have mentioned classical music, but there were also popular music shows, and blues and jazz, and country, and smorgasbord shows like First Light. And there was news and public affairs, and specialty shows like Karmechanics (about car repair) and Forward March (a weekly show devoted to march music). There was a show about musical theatre and another about the local environment. Adam produced Tom Stoppard’s radio play *Albert’s Bridge* on WOMR.

Because of the peculiar geography of Provincetown, at the very end of Cape Cod, more than 90% of our signal area was water. We only reached a few miles down the Outer Cape, perhaps to Orleans less than 30 miles away, because if we amped up our signal to reach more towns on the Cape, we would also reach Plymouth across Cape Cod Bay and jam a station there broadcasting on the same frequency (this is why the frequency was eventually changed). There was a transmitter out by Race Point, and the volunteers who liked technical stuff attended to that. Other



volunteers worked the business side, and sold underwriting (this paid commissions – Rosemary Woodruff-Leary did this for a while).

As a public radio station, WOMR paid the bills with a subsidy (including I think grants from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting), and with contributions, membership and underwriting. Every hour of broadcasting had three underwriting spots, and my show (12 spots) was usually fully underwritten. I remember reading the announcement for Seaman’s Savings Bank (Provincetown and North Truro), and there were others.

I also read public service announcements and program plugs and items from the community calendar (kept in a binder near the console), and station identification and occasional news flashes and other things. I developed a resonant FM announcer’s voice, modeled not-so-unconsciously on the FM classical DJs I used to listen to in high school. Provincetown had a substantial Portuguese-descended population, and I particularly prized a tape cartridge with the WOMR station identification in Portuguese.

- A typical opening would go like this: “This is WOMR, Outermost Community Radio in Provincetown, 91.9 on the FM dial – we’re almost 92! This is Lower Cape Concert Hall, and I’m your host David Phillips. I’ll be playing classical music for you from now until five o’clock. This afternoon we’ll hear the music of Haydn, Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Corelli, Gottschalk, Martinů, and many others, as well as an Indian raga and a special surprise. So stay tuned. This hour of Lower Cape Concert Hall is underwritten by Seaman’s Savings Bank, with a new location on Route 6A in North Truro.”

I organized my four-hour show around categories. I had about 14 categories, and I usually managed to play one example from each. These categories were:

1. Early music (before baroque)
2. Bach
3. Baroque
4. Haydn
5. Mozart
6. Classical (in the limited period sense)
7. Beethoven
8. Romantic
9. Brahms
10. Early modern (for example Stravinsky, Ives, Schoenberg)
11. Late modern (something up to the minute, often wildly dissonant)

12. Something really unusual (for example, Javanese gamelan music, or an air performed by 100 accordions, or a saxophone trio, or a parody by PDQ Bach)
13. A classic piano rag, or something by Gottschalk or another 19th century American composer
14. A north Indian classical raga

I played these in a whatever order provided the most change of mood between sets. Sometimes I added a second classical piece, or a second romantic piece, or something extra, depending on how much time I had available. I planned the show out beforehand, with my list of categories and the times from the record jackets, laying out about 3½ hours of music. Half an hour would be taken up by talk – announcements and underwriting, and a brief *ad lib* introduction to each piece, usually based on the records' liner notes. I packed my records for the show in a bag (in those days we used 33⅓ rpm “long-playing” vinyl phonograph records) and took it up to Provincetown with my playlist. Here for future historians is what our equipment looked like – from left: record in sleeve, turntable, console, microphone on arm.



Each of the sliders (sliding buttons) on the console controlled the volume for a different input – the two turntables, the tape deck, the cartridge machine, the microphone – and each had a switch for on or off. Usually only one input was on at a time, but not always – for example, you could open the microphone and speak over the music. We had headphones also, but I didn’t use them, preferring to turn off the studio speakers when I was talking on the microphone. Forgetting to do this meant horrible shrieking feedback, but I didn’t make this mistake. The dials monitored the output – too high meant distortion, too low could mean something technical was wrong.

My show was never casual or impromptu, but always well thought out in advance. I almost always started the show with a Haydn quartet. Sometimes I would play one work in a series every week, for example the Beethoven cello sonatas. Other favorites were Bartók, Boccherini, Chopin, Corelli, Debussy, Elgar, Hindemith, Kodály, Mendelssohn, Prokofiev, Ravel, Scarlatti, Schubert, Schumann, Shostakovich, Strauss, Telemann, and Vivaldi. Some composers I didn’t play that often because I couldn’t find many of their works on second-hand records – for example Dochnányi, Glazunov, Miaslovsky, Nielsen and Villa-Lobos. For modern composers like Milton Babbitt, Pierre Boulez, Carlos Chavez, Morton Feldman, Ross Lee Finney, Erich Korngold, Otto Luening, Walter

Piston, Roger Sessions, and many others, I often had only one piece in my collection. A few composers I really loved hadn't written much, for example Gershwin and Field.<sup>2</sup>

I had distinct preferences which I indulged completely. For example, I don't care for orchestral music, such as symphonies or concertos. There are too many voices for me to follow easily, and I don't see what it adds to a violin line to have it echoed by eight more violins. In a quartet or other chamber piece, you can hear all the instruments individually; in symphonies the mass of voices overwhelms everything. I know this is a minority view, and I don't say orchestral music is *bad*, just that *I don't like it*. So I didn't play it. I was only on one day a week – the classical DJs on the other four days played plenty of symphonies. I stuck to chamber works – nine instruments was my absolute maximum. I didn't play vocal music or organ works either. But I ranged much further afield than the other DJs in playing music from other cultures, not only from India but elsewhere, and in giving air time to ragtime, 19th century program music, *avant-garde* music and other non-mainstream choices.

The raga was the centerpiece of my show, my trademark, and I became known for playing these. There were a few people around who played Indian classical instruments and they gave some concerts at my house. I was even the master of ceremonies at a live Indian Music concert at Provincetown Town Hall. Sometimes people came up to me on the street to thank me for playing Indian music – how they recognized me from the radio I'm not sure. I used to introduce the ragas on the radio by explaining in broad terms how they work, and then advised listeners not to listen for harmony and motif as they would with western music, and not to try to “understand” it, but just to allow the sound waves to hit their eardrums and see if they liked the sensation.

- The sarodist Amjad Ali Khan said: “If someone asks me for the meaning of Indian classical music, I say it lies in freedom and discipline. You should not try to understand it. The music should be felt and experienced.” The tension between freedom and discipline is the key to creating and understanding almost all art. For a discussion of this same principle in heraldry, see Chapter 6.B.5.

I used the just-listen-don't-think approach for modern music too, especially works relying on dissonance and microtones and works of what I sometimes called the “crash-bang” school, founded by that neglected genius Edgard Varèse. I copied the following quotation from the great Columbia musicologist and historian of culture Jacques Barzun, about electronic music, in the first volume of my playlists, and occasionally read it on the air. It is useful for all unfamiliar music, whether electronic, dissonant, or from another culture.

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<sup>2</sup> Gershwin of course wrote lot of popular songs, but not much “classical” music before his death at 38.

[T]he new electronic devices are but a means for producing new materials to play with. What matters is not how they are produced but how they are used. And as to that we are entitled to ask the old questions – do we find the substance rich, evocative, capable of subtlety and strength? Do we, after a while, recognize patterns to which we can respond with our sense of balance, our sense of suspense and fulfillment, our sense of emotional and intellectual congruence?<sup>3</sup>

At the start I didn't have a lot of records, and wasn't much of an expert on classical music, although I knew the composers and the forms and had a basic overview of the development from my college survey course (Music Humanities).<sup>4</sup> I borrowed records from a lot of people, and used some from the WOMR record library, which was not catalogued or even organized in any coherent way, and from the Wellfleet and Provincetown and even Orleans public libraries. The front pages of my first playlist notebook are full of notes on where to find pieces I might like to play, and a discussion of my method in the monthly station publication *Airwaves* (coming in the Supplement) was full of appeals to readers to lend me records.

But I began buying second-hand records for a dollar or two, on visits to Boston and on my annual visit to San Francisco. Using my usual collecting techniques (see Chapter 29.C), I managed to form quite a substantial collection built around my categories for very little money. I would look for composers I didn't know, especially modern ones, and would gradually fill in the ones I knew and liked, such as Hindemith and that other unfairly neglected genius Boccherini. Keeping to chamber music made this easier. I also bought boxed sets of complete works, like Beethoven sonatas and Mozart piano works.<sup>5</sup>

I got very comfortable with the microphone right away. Some people are scared of the mike – I loved it. The microphone was my friend. Sometimes I made jokes in a deadpan way, keeping to my FM radio voice – for example, in announcing the musicians in a raga,

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<sup>3</sup> Barzun's comments on electronic music were originally delivered as introductory remarks to two concerts at the Columbia-Princeton Electronic Music Center in 1961. They are reprinted in his 1982 collection *Critical Questions: On Music and Letters, Culture and Biography 1940-1980*, and in, e.g., Christoph Cox and Daniel Warner, eds., *Audio Culture: Readings in Modern Music* (2004).

<sup>4</sup> See Chapter 11.B.

<sup>5</sup> I kept all those records until 2009, but after I stopped doing the show in 1988 I never played them. In my leisure I am usually reading, and I can't divide my attention enough to read when there is music on. So they sat in a bookcase in my living room for more than 20 years, a constant reproach and a black hole of bad *feng shui*, until finally I called Amoeba Records on Haight Street and sold them all as one lot, about 1000 records, for \$200. The money was just gravy – the real benefit came from freeing up that physical and psychic space. And I was glad to throw them back into the stream I fished them out of, for someone else to catch.

I would give the sitarist's true name and then list the tabla and tamboura player as John Ehrlichman and Howard Hunt.<sup>6</sup> People would call up the station and ask if they heard what they thought they heard. Another time I was called to the station in a hurry to fill in for another DJ who had fallen ill – I came on the air and reported, as if it were news, that a helicopter had landed on Centre Street and a squad of marines had entered WOMR and taken the previous DJ away to Washington for a meeting of the National Security Council. And there was the afternoon a bunch of gay men were having a party on the terrace of a house across the street from the studio – I broadcast highlights from the party live, as if it were a sporting event. I identified Mozart on the air as a space alien because his music was suspiciously too perfect to have been written by a human. I had a lot of fun with the microphone.

Sometimes I stayed at the console and engineered the news broadcast which came on after my show – the newsreaders were in another studio and I alternated among them, the tape cartridges used for program promotions, and my own microphone for announcing (including underwriting spots). I did some of this for other shows too, NPR shows for example – someone had to be in the studio while the tapes ran.<sup>7</sup>

I did a few interview shows – authors with books to plug, Joel Solkoff among them – and enjoyed it. I always read the book, and had bookmarked crucial passages and prepared more questions than I had time for. But I let the conversation range widely rather than just work my way through the list if it made for good radio. I would have liked to have done more of this, but somehow didn't get around to it. I also did an Indian music special, a jazz show one week when the jazz DJ (Arne Manos) was away, and a number of pledge drives and fund-raising spots.

I liked filling in for people on holidays like Christmas and the Fourth of July – it was fun to be on the air when nothing else was open. On July 4th I always took an unsponsored hour and made up patriotic underwriting announcements – this hour of Lower Cape Concert Hall is sponsored by the United States of America, I would say, and express my gratitude that my family was able to come here and not be exterminated in Europe, or read Emma Lazarus' *The New Colossus* or President Roosevelt's Four Freedoms speech.

I really enjoyed the radio project – it was one of the things I was sorriest to leave when I moved away from the Cape.

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<sup>6</sup> These were figures in the Watergate scandal which brought down President Nixon in 1974.

<sup>7</sup> NPR (National Public Radio) produced shows that public stations like ours could air for a fee. These fees were one of the costs we needed underwriting to meet.

## B. Television

The television thing began after I had been on the air at WOMR for a while. I knew there was a public access cable channel – Channel 8 in Provincetown, operated by Continental (later American) Cablesystems – but we didn't have cable service in Truro, so I never watched it. I got the idea, though, that if radio was so much fun, why not try television? I don't remember if someone suggested it to me, or if it was my own idea. But anyway I approached Tom Cole, who was then in charge of Channel 8, about doing a show.

Cable television companies get monopolies in individual towns, and part of the deal often is that they must provide a public access channel which local people can use without charge to present local programming. Channel 8 was the public access channel for our area. A public access channel is necessary overhead for the cable company – they make no money at it, but it is a franchise requirement, and also it can build local loyalties and provide a reason to subscribe to the cable service. They provide the equipment and the staff, and put the program *on the cable* (as I learned to say, not *on the air*). But the programming comes from volunteers, and the cable company is usually short of programming. It is therefore not hard at all to get a show, at least in a small market like Provincetown – they are usually glad to have a reliable volunteer producer provide programming for their channel at little extra cost to them.

Did Tom Cole ask me for an outline of a sample show, or building on my experience trying out for WOMR did I prepare one in advance to show him? I forget now how it went. But my idea was to highlight some different object or process in each show. I attach my proposal as Document 26-2. My motto for the show was “the object is the subject.” The plan was to keep the camera on the objects and not on talking heads. Each show would be half an hour, of course with no commercials. The pilot show was to focus on the bassoon, an object I picked almost at random to try this out with. My plan was to find a bassoonist, introduce him, have him play something, and then speak with him about the bassoon, and then have him play something else, and then show us how the bassoon comes apart and fits back together, and how the reed works, and then play something different, and then we would talk about the problems of playing an instrument for which there is not much solo literature, and he'd plug an upcoming concert, and then play another piece, and so on for half an hour. Tom liked this plan.

I found a bassoonist who wanted to be on television. I outlined the show I just described, went to talk with him and scope him out, had him plan some things to play, and then we went to the tiny studio in an outbuilding behind the cable office on Shank Painter Road and did it. Tom engineered, and volunteers worked the two cameras. It went off just as planned. My outline had more than enough to cover if conversation lagged, which it didn't. I had an electric clock with a second hand to look at, at floor level behind the cameras, so I could judge where we were in our allotted 28:30 (we needed the remaining



1:30 for intro and credits). The show was taped in one take, exactly on time, and didn't need to be edited. And I was in business as a TV host and producer.

- As I had a bassoon for a pilot,<sup>8</sup> I chose a lively solo bassoon air by Bizet as theme music to go over the titles and credits. It can be heard on the videotape I'm lodging with Yale as a supplementary document. Researchers from the 24th Century: what equipment are you going to use to play this VHS videotape? Maybe the Paleotechnology Department has something.

Eventually I produced 63 episodes. I called it *Show and Tell with David Phillips*. I insisted that my name be part of the show and mentioned whenever the show was mentioned, for example in the Channel 8 schedule. For future researchers, *Show and Tell* was an activity in primary school. Each child brings something to school to show the class and talk about. It is a way to expose children to different things and give them a chance to organize information and stand up and talk publicly. Most people have pleasant associations with Show and Tell from their school days, and the phrase also communicated exactly what I was planning to do – have someone bring something in to show the audience and talk about.

Sometimes people brought in more than one object, but the objects were always of a kind – *netsuke*, for example, or art glass. Sometimes we focused on a process – for example, I did a show on the Tarot. And sometimes we taped the show in the field rather than in the studio – one of my favorites was the show we did in the local lighthouse in North Truro, run by the Coast Guard – we went up to the lamp chamber and taped the process of changing the bulb. Here's a picture of me on location in the National Seashore location with a park ranger as my guest on *Show and Tell* – I think that show was about a swamp.



I always met with the guest first, in a separate appointment I called a scope-out. I used this to learn about the subject, find enough visually interesting things to use on the show, select examples if it was a show where examples were brought in to display, like the ones about kimonos or children's art, and make a rough agenda. Sometimes I decided after the scope-out that there wasn't enough of interest to make a show out of, and scratched it from the list.

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<sup>8</sup> With God as my co-pilot? Just kidding.

Before the taping I gave the guest a rough idea of what I would be asking, but not a series of specific questions – I wanted to preserve spontaneity. I didn't use a script, but I always kept the agenda handy for my own use, with much more on it than I would have time for – this let me relax, knowing that I would not have to struggle to fill the time.

In the studio, as mentioned, I used a clock to time myself and always finished right on time. In the field this was not possible, as the taping usually could not be done in order, or with sufficient precision. But I didn't want just to shoot tape in an undisciplined fashion and rely on the editing process to make it into 28:30. I didn't like editing – I tried it once and it didn't interest me – so I had to rely on Channel 8 volunteers and staff to edit my shows from the field (they also added titles and credits). I wanted to make this easy for them and also keep as much control as I could. So I always included in my crew a person with a stopwatch, whose job was to time exactly whatever we shot and keep a running total. When I got to 28:30 of what I thought I could use I would be done – sometimes I redid a take, and often I would allow more shooting of background and establishing scenes (called in the trade the *B-roll*) than I would actually use. But with the stopwatch method I could usually take the tape home and screen it in my VCR, arrange the order of the takes the way I wanted them, indicate starting and stopping points with time notations, and hand in the tape and my notes so the show could be easily edited to look the way I wanted it to look.

In the studio Channel 8 provided the bodies: engineer, director, two camerapeople and a production assistant – but in the field I had to assemble volunteers. These usually included a camera operator, a sound operator, the stopwatch person, a production assistant, and a director if I could get one. The director told people what to do – put the camera here, let's try another sound check, we can't go from that angle because of the sun, let's set up the third shot next instead of the second, and so forth. I did it myself if I couldn't get a director, but I preferred not to have to do this so I could concentrate on being the host. I knew how to operate the camera, though, and did it sometimes as a volunteer on other people's shows. It's fun!

Document 26-3 lists all the shows we did. I have taken this information from a small notebook, of the same kind I had for daily use (see Chapter 28), called *Show and Tell Production Notebook*. This has a lot about the show, and will go to Yale along with the others. I started this notebook to keep records, but most of the day-to-day material was in my numbered current-use notebooks. Document 26-4 is my checklist of equipment for a field shoot.

I did a few extra shows not in the list. These were specials for Channel 8 public affairs and not part of *Show & Tell*. They included a special on an igloo event at the middle school (a sort of science fair – remember this was a local station in a small town), a Psychic Fair at the Town Hall, and two Blessings of the Fleet (Provincetown was a fishing town before it was a tourist center and still had a substantial fishing fleet). We

did one of these Blessing of the Fleet shows from a boat in Provincetown Harbor. After my 50th show the cable company gave me a plaque in a little ceremony in the studio. See Document 26-5.

When I left for San Francisco in 1988, I had dozens more ideas for the show than I ever got to do. I really liked television and had plans for a different show for the local cable access station in San Francisco. The show was to be called *The Soloist*. The idea was to get an upright piano to keep in the studio. Then every show would feature a musician. The half hour would be a mixture of interview and performance. If the musician was a pianist, we'd use the piano; if s/he played anything else (or was a singer), we'd use the piano for accompaniment. I thought I could get plenty of musicians from the Conservatory, the colleges, and the Bay Area's musical community who would be willing to appear for the exposure and a copy of the tape, which they could then use for their own purposes.

I also thought that, since unlike *Show & Tell* it didn't have a local focus, I could perhaps syndicate this show for use by on other local access and public stations which needed programming. A small fee for each use could provide funding for the show with maybe a little left over. I was good at interviewing and had done this very format before on *Show & Tell*, and by this time I knew a lot about classical and modern music, although not much about other kinds except Indian. I thought I could branch out into voice and jazz too, and maybe some ethnic music (Arabic? klezmer?), beyond what I did on Lower Cape Concert Hall, although I would stay away from pop, rock, country, and other forms I didn't have much of a feel for. But I didn't have time to start this project – first I was getting settled in San Francisco, and then the habeas corpus projects started (see Chapter 27B.1) and it never happened. I suppose I could still do it – I have the time now, but probably not the interest or energy. A weekly TV show is a lot of work.

When I left Cape Cod I selected some highlights for a sampler tape. But the tape was never made, and the only tape I have now has two complete shows – one on the Japanese Tea Ceremony and one on children's paintings, with examples discussed and analyzed on their visual merits and never mind the age of the artist. I did 66 shows completely *ad lib*, but when I had to memorize 30 seconds of talk to introduce the sampler tape I almost couldn't do it – we must have gone through 15 takes before I managed to get through my lines even adequately. An actor I am not.



Tailpiece: Unattributed, from the Internet

**Document 26-1: Typical playlist from Lower Cape Concert Hall**

The figures in the left-hand column are the playing times, with colons left out.  
Thus 1617 means 16:17 (16 minutes 17 seconds).

Nº 141: 9 DEC 87

- 1617 HAYDN String Quartet #68 m E<sup>b</sup>  
op. 64 #6
- 1943 BRAHMS Cello Sonata #1 m E- op 38
- 1750 HANSON Quartet in one Movement<sup>23</sup>
- 1453 BACH Sonata #6 for violin &  
harpsschord, m G+ BWV 1019
- 2206 RAA HEMAVATHI (double violin + ensemble)
- 1711 { MOZART: 1) Allegro of a Sonata m G- K 312 (4:11)  
Piano pieces 2) Capriccio m C+ K 395 (3:18)  
28 3) 12 variations on Je suis l'auca  
from Beaumarchais' Barbier  
K 354 (299a) (9:28)
- 2353 CHOPIN Preludes op 28 nos 1-15
- 2447 KODALY Duo for violin + cello op 7
- 1134 COUPERIN Seventh Concert Royal (opoe + ensem<sup>667</sup>)
- 1524 BEETHOVEN Piano Sonata #27 m E- op 90
- 1113 <sup>András</sup> MIHALY 3 Movements for Chamber Orchestra
- 954 CORELLI Concerto grosso m G- op 5 #5.
- 441 JOPLIN Brk's Waltz (ragtime ensemble)

## Document 26-2: Proposal for *Show and Tell* with David Phillips

I only have a xerox copy and the edges are clipped.

### CONCEPT FOR "SHOW AND TELL"

This will be a half-hour show. I will appear with someone who has something to show. Sometimes the guest will bring an object or group of objects to the studio, and sometimes (equipment permitting) we will go to the guest's establishment. Under my questioning the guest will explain the exhibit. I will have a list of questions and topics suggested by the object(s) and will keep it moving right along. A demonstration is possible-- if necessary by videoclip.

By the end we will have touched on maybe 10 related topics of 2-4 minutes each, all arising from the object but otherwise varied. Any object has resonances in many different areas and I will emphasize this aspect. The aim is a half-hour of visually and thematically interesting television, amusingly presented and a good experience for everyone including the guest.

Rather than go on with an abstraction, here is a sample. I have chosen a talk with a bassoonist, because I do in fact have a bassoonist on tap. I have spoken to him about appearing on Lower Cape Concert Hall but I'm sure he would be just as happy or happier to do channel 8.

### BASSOONIST SHOW

Hi, bassoonist. Hi, David. Tell us about the instrument. He tells us a little. How does it work? Vibrating column of air. Thirty seconds on the physics of that. So why is the column bent this way? He tells me. How do they twist the metal just right? He shows a picture from a book-- closeup with pointer, 15-20 seconds. And so on. Why the wood? He tells me. How does the reed work? He prepares one for us, and demonstrates. Total rap on the instrument as an artifact: perhaps 5-6 minutes.

Then he assembles the bassoon as we watch and he plays a scale and a few basic effects, to show the instrument's voice. We chat a bit about the place of the bassoon in the orchestra and how it developed. He shows how a certain pipe lengthened in the 17th century (or whatever). Why? Rise of centralized states led to concentration of arts in royal courts (or whatever)-- I rap for 15 seconds or so on significance of this development beyond bassoons. Another 5-6 minutes.

Then he plays a little something. But first he tells us a bit about what he will play, and what to ~~xxx~~listen for, and what to look for in fingering etc. Another 5 minutes maximum.

We chat a bit about the bassoon in his life. Why choose this instrument? Limitations versus opportunities in music. Recital reminiscences. A word or two on what has been written for the bassoon. Etc.

Then a jazz piece-- 3 minutes max. Oh, you play jazz? Talk about seedy night club in Tangier where he got his start. A short digression, maybe, if time permits. He plugs his next concert.

And also you brought a piccolo bassoon and a contrabassoon? Show us the differences and play a little on each. Column of air, reprise.

Final encore-- then we're out of time. Half an hour goes very fast when you have a list of topics on a clipboard sufficient for 45 minutes.

#### OTHER TOPICS

This is only a sample, of course. Many other topics suggest themselves. Just offhand I can think of:

##### FOR STUDIO

Artist shows some work and demonstrates her technique. Especially good for craftspeople.

Enthusiast shows prizes of his collection of--- what--- whatever. Art, butterflies, it doesn't matter as long as it is visually interesting.

Director of the museum brings Indian artifacts and pictures and we talk about the Indian life of the area.

Historical Society provides a few juicily evocative objects from Ptown's past.

Professor who has been working on something brings some things to help us discuss his specialty.

Tarot explained.

Everyone liked the bassoon so much we are back with a cellist.

Engineer with mechanical model of--- what?

Etc etc.

##### ON LOCATION WITH VIDEOTAPE CAMERA

A visit to the duck farm

Inside the police station, coast guard station, etc.

Packing cranberries

Paving the road

Inside a sculptor's studio. How do you decide where to cut? Why did you make that one smooth instead of rough? Show us how you did that? What does this piece express?

With the County Agricultural Agent on her rounds

Inside the TV studio

Inside the Lighthouse, drawbridge, airport, etc.

A birdwalk with a park ranger

DL

NOTES

Invisual style SHOW AND TELL would bear a resemblance to THIS OLD HOUSE and also to 3-2-1-CONTACT in directness of approach and in focus on the object. In fact as an artistic dictum for the show I say:

→ THE OBJECT IS THE SUBJECT ←

My own style would be much as in radio interviewing:

- fast pace, strong control, moving along a prepared list of to
- work with guest to develop information, rather than against a adversary. No attempt to show the guest up Mike-Wallace-styl
- Keep to the point, but also be open to digressions if interesting and short.
- Say something funny now and then.

ADDITIONALLY, because this is television, constant attention to how i looks. There must be continuous visual interest.

SHOW AND TELL is a good name because everybody gets the idea right away, and also because most people have positive associations with the name dating back to 1st grade. The show should appeal to people for the same reasons it did in school.

More ideas will come and suggestions will appear because people love to appear on TV. We would promise every guest a cassette of her appearance-- otherwise the overhead is very low. At the end of each show we flash our number and tell people to call if they would like to be on SHOW AND TELL.

If necessary I bet I could learn to do a TV interview in the field in one take of several timed segments, without the need for editing (or at least not much). I always do my radio interviews that way.



### **Document 26-3: List of *Show and Tell* episodes**

\* = Show done in the field

1. Bassoon: how it works and sounds, and about being a bassoonist.
2. Silicon: sand, glass, applications, and so on, with a chemist.
3. Antique jewelry from Simple Pleasures, a Provincetown gallery.
4. \*The Truro Post Office. What goes on behind the counter, sorting the mail and so on.
5. \*Etchings. How they are made, and how the etching press works. In the studio of a local artist.
6. Kimonos. From a Provincetown shop which specialized in these, modeled by local women. I wore one for the show.
7. Art Glass. I think a collector brought in pieces from his collection.
8. Knitting. Some demon knitters came in and showed us how to do it.
9. Crystals. A collector brought in examples and we talked about them.
10. Tarot. Two local fortune-tellers, my friends Peter and Diana Stander, showed the Tarot deck, talked with me about how it worked, and did a sample reading.
11. Channel 8 TV studio. How everything worked, including the control panel in the engineering booth. This was harder than it looked because the studio was so small we could hardly manage to see it all with our cameras.
12. \*Coast Guard. Through the Provincetown Coast Guard Station with gun and camera – on one of their boats too, I think.
13. \*Boatwright. A guy in Wellfleet was building a huge boat all by himself – we looked at the work in progress, examined and demonstrated some of the stranger tools, and discussed the project.
14. \*MacArthur. In connection with Philippine Veterans, on the anniversary of something. We talked with veterans of the Philippine campaign, and I showed a map explaining what the campaign was about, and we talked about MacArthur.
15. \*Police station. Like the Post Office, it emphasized what went on behind the counter, where people ordinarily could not see. One shot showed them putting me in a cell and closing the door.
16. \*Coins. A collector brought in examples and we talked about them.
17. Caricature. A caricaturist demonstrated his technique.

18. \*Susan Baker. A local artist – we showed off her very amusing work in her North Truro studio.
19. \*Dunes. With a National Park Service ranger.
20. \*Dentist. We showed what goes on, which you can't usually see because it's going on inside your mouth. One of my most inventive shows, largely ruined by the mistake of a volunteer cameraman who screwed up the filter.
21. \*Rescue Squad. How the equipment worked, the Jaws of Life and so on.
22. Chinese characters. How to write them, why they're interesting to some people, and how to look at them so you can understand their structure.
23. Japanese Tea Ceremony. Some Japanese women came in and performed it for us; I did the narration voice-over. I wore a kimono for this one also. This is one of the shows on the sample tape.
24. \*Sculptor. In Nancy Webb's studio, showing her work and methods.
25. Indian Palmist. Like the Tarot show, the palmist explained her method and did a reading.
26. Guitar. Like the bassoon show, but with a master guitar repairer, showing the insides of instruments and focusing on how they work and are repaired.
27. Snake / parrots. Split show, half on some spectacular parrots a woman had, which she fed seeds to from her own mouth, and which climbed all over our set, and the other half on a boa constrictor which killed and ate a mouse I provided for the occasion. Because we couldn't let the snake out of the aquarium and for technical reasons couldn't shoot directly down into it, we held a mirror at a 45° angle over the aquarium and shot into that.
28. \**Rose Dorothea*, a historic ship at the Provincetown Heritage Museum. With the curator.
29. \*Provincetown Heritage Museum. Focusing on items in the collection other than the ship.
30. \*Llama. I forget the details of this show but it must have been on location somewhere – there was no room for a llama in our studio.
31. Asian art. Juicy examples from September Moon, a Provincetown gallery. We had *netsuke* and lots of other things.
32. Jazz films. A collector brought in some jazz films from the 30s and 40s – some of them were really hot.
33. [\*?] Butterflies. Was this with mounted specimens or live creatures? I forget now.
34. \*Beech Forest. With a park ranger, like the Dunes show.

35. \*Weaver. In her studio, as with the sculptor. We demonstrated the loom – how to set it up and how to weave on it – and showed some finished pieces.
36. Goddess. Provincetown was a hotbed of goddess worship – this show must have been based on art and on the explanations of local devotees.
37. Connoisseur. I have no idea now what this show was about.
38. \*Paper. A visit to a studio where they made art paper the old fashioned way, by laying fibrous slurry in trays.
39. Sappho. Provincetown was Sappho-friendly, to put it mildly. We had an artist who had made some images of her, and read some of her poems, and talked about her.
40. Scrimshaw. A collector or maybe a gallery brought in some examples, and we talked about them.
41. Japanese prints. Another gallery show, focusing on how to look at these prints.
42. Hand Study. No idea what this show was about.
43. Dream I: about dream art.
44. Dream II: was this one about dream interpretation, or the Senoi system of intervening in lucid dreams, or was this the one where a Jungian analysts showed how to use the sand table, or what?
45. Woodwind Ensemble. Like the bassoon show, but with more instruments.
46. \*Tai Chi. Some lissome ladies demonstrated this on the lawn outside the studio.
47. \*Chiropractor. At his office, demonstrating the technique, with models of the spine and so on.
48. \*Cedar Swamp. Like the beech forest, with a park ranger.
49. Children's Paintings. One of my most interesting shows. Someone brought in a whole stack of children's paintings, and we looked at them, disregarding the children's angle, just as art. This is one of the shows on the sample tape. I kept the focus on the paintings rather than on us. In the scope-out meeting before the show we went through hundreds of paintings and I selected the ones I liked the most.
50. \*Stained glass. At the studio where the glass and lead were cut and assembled into figurative and abstract panels.
51. \*Sculptor II. Like the Nancy Webb show, but with Del Filardi.
52. Indian instruments. Like the bassoon show, but with Indian instruments, with friends I had made from playing ragas on WOMR. The special chant used for teaching tabla was a big hit.

53. \*Lighthouse. This was the one where we changed the bulb in the lamp.
54. \*Choir practice. The focus was on the work of the choirmaster in teaching and directing the choir rather than on the finished performance.
55. Zeus Gallery. Masks and so on – I think this was from a Provincetown gallery.
56. \*Piano repair. In the workshop, pianos all taken apart – how does it work? What are you fixing? How do you do it?
57. \*Aerial photography. Taped in a tiny plane. Got a little queasy up there.
58. \*Sufi dancing. Was this one done on the lawn outside the studio also? I doubt there would have been room inside.
59. \*Fudge. In the industrial kitchen as it was made from scratch. Delicious!
60. \*Letter. I think this tracked a letter from the mailbox through the sending post office to the sorting station to the receiving post office to the delivery route.
61. \*Telephone. At the telephone exchange in Provincetown. Vast batteries of equipment. Was this the one where we went down into the manhole?
62. \*Fish. One of the most interesting shows – at the fish wharf in Provincetown, as the fish were taken from the boats, sorted and weighed, and prepared for sale.
63. Saxophone. Like the bassoon show.

Three special reports (not part of *Show and Tell*)

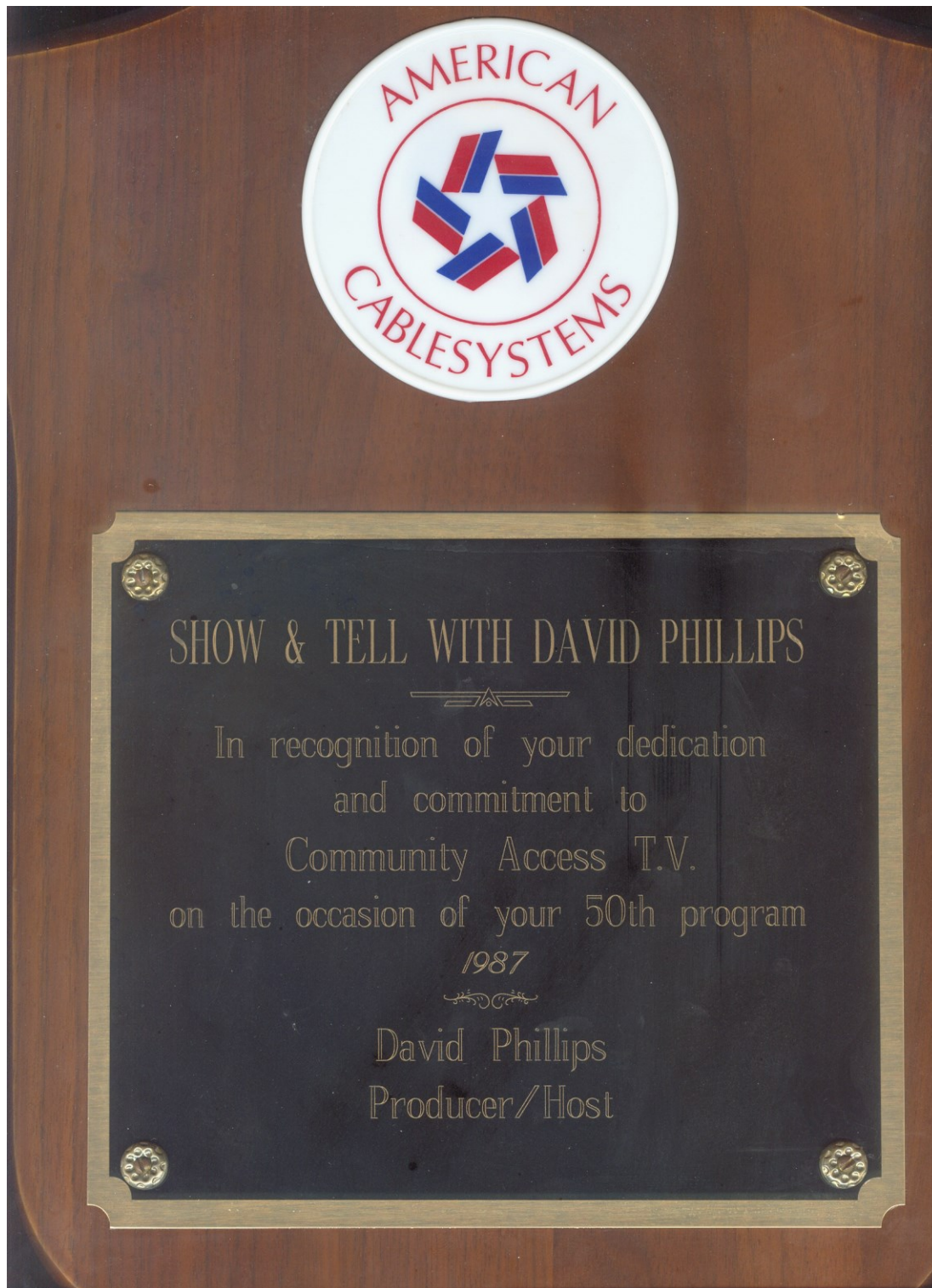
- \* Ceremonial Igloo (school project)
- \* Blessing of the Fleet
- \* Psychic Fair

#### **Document 26-4: Equipment for shooting outside the studio**

My production notebook includes a list of what we took on a shoot outside the studio. This included:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• video camera</li><li>• videotape</li><li>• tripod</li><li>• a/c adapter</li><li>• three-prong adapter</li><li>• power reel</li><li>• extension cord</li><li>• video monitor</li><li>• cable for monitor</li><li>• adapter for monitor</li><li>• sound recording deck</li><li>• adapters for deck</li><li>• charged batteries and spare</li><li>• spare charging units</li><li>• camera batteries</li><li>• 2 lavalier lapel microphones</li><li>• two mike windscreens</li><li>• two extensions (for what?)</li><li>• audio cord</li><li>• splitter</li><li>• hand mike (where lavalier not used)</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• windscreen for hand mike</li><li>• cord for hand mike</li><li>• mike stand</li><li>• white card (for setting up camera)</li><li>• light (sometimes two)</li><li>• light stand (sometimes two)</li><li>• light cord (sometimes two)</li><li>• spare bulbs</li><li>• diffusion screen</li><li>• screen holder</li><li>• headphones for sound person</li><li>• gaffer's tape</li><li>• chopsticks (to use as pointers)</li><li>• pen</li><li>• notebook</li><li>• stopwatch</li><li>• forms for recording time and take info</li><li>• <i>Show &amp; Tell</i> business cards</li><li>• Swiss Army knife</li><li>• clipboard</li><li>• script</li></ul> |
|---|---|

Document 26-5: Plaque from Channel 8





**Document 26-6: Staff picture, WOMR-FM,**

**Provincetown, 1980s**

