

# SOUNDS UNFROZEN

by

Jean-Claude Kuner  
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Composition and production: Jean-Claude Kuner / Berlin 2024

**Krapp/Lichtenhahn:**

*Just been listening to an old year, passages at random.*

**/ Music: Bach, Die Kunst der Fuge, Contrapunctus 13**

**Tom O'Horgan:**

There is no discernible thread of drama.

More like poetic view of the subject.

**Laurie Anderson:**

The most important thing for me is the stories and the images and the way something makes you feel.

**Etel Adnan:**

If there is no past, there is no life.

Memory is life. The life of thought. And to exist in thought is words. But words exist because they are remembered, that is memory. Being human really is memory. And I wonder if our identity is not our memory.

**// Sounds : Laurie Anderson / chorus from synagogue in Basel**

**Tom O'Horgan:**

Nobody is, no person is just one thing.

**Jean-Claude Kuner:**

What I found so fascinating is that the Talmud can also serve as a source of inspiration for philosophers and artists beyond religion. But what is even more important is that you can leave things as they are. That you don't always seek synthesis, but ... that things can remain as they are.

**Laurie Anderson:**

Don't use beginnings or ends.

**Jean-Claude Kuner:**

If you found a solution, you immediately have two new questions. I guess that's a legacy I somehow grew up with.

**Laurie Anderson:**

Made of many little fragments.

**Jean-Claude Kuner:**

What I have always refused to do is using this kind of authorial narration, to say: I have understood the world and this is how it is.

**Laurie Anderson:**

I don't believe in a concept of an end. I am also afraid of ends.

**// Sounds : Basel carnival**

**Grete Sultan:**

You grew up in Zurich?

**Jean-Claude Kuner:**

No, in Basel.

**// Sounds : Basel carnival / music school / Bach French Suite**

**Grete Sultan:**

What are you, are you a musician?

**Jean-Claude Kuner:**

No, I play the piano. But not as a professional musician, I wasn't good enough for that. My talent is also to be musical.

I love Bach.

**João Carlos Martins:**

Bach it's like a Steinway. Each year you improve yourself playing Bach.

**/ Music: Bach, Concerto for Piano and Orchestra Nr. 2, 2. Siciliano, João Carlos Martins**

**Zhu Xiao-Mei:**

I've always said that Bach's music knows no boundaries. In fact, Bach is a Buddhist, because he touches many Buddhists, as they're looking for balance in life.

Because polyphony - you're a musician, you know - voices, four voices at the same time. That's harmony.

How we can live together? That's Bach's music. He gave us the best lesson for it.

Jean-Claude Kuner:

Let's try to begin. Alright.

Ok ... I would like to ask you ...

Does that mean that you didn't have a normal youth?

How did you prepare those pieces and for how long?

And did you meet Bartok then?

So you still think that songs can change the planet?

Did you also work with other musicians?

But after these initial successes, was it completely clear to you that theater and film would be your life? That you wanted to do this work?

Did you play for him?

I would like to ask you something about computer music? You think it is ...

When you were still in China and studied the music of Bach, culturally, was this far away or not?

I asked you if you went out with that lady, the one you were with ... ?

Curt Bois:

Yes, yes, of course ... I went out with every lady!

// Sounds : Basel carnival

/ Music: Arthur Honegger: 4. Symphonie „Deliciae Basiliensis“

/ Music: Virgil Thomson: Symphony on a Hymn Tune

// Sounds : New York City - sirens

**Jean-Claude Kuner:**

First I would like to know why you went, when you were 24 years old, to Europe? Why didn't you stay in in the United States?

**Virgil Thomson:**

With the age of 24 everybody wants to go somewhere. Why didn't you stay in Switzerland?

**Jean-Claude Kuner:**

No, was it for questions to to ... de continuer les études avec des autres ...

**Virgil Thomson:**

Peut-être. Ce n'était pas vraiment vraie, mais ... Well I am speaking in English ... In 1921 you see we couldn't go to Germany, there wasn't anything to eat there. Because Germany after World War I was pretty much kaputt.

**Jean-Claude Kuner:**

And when you went to France you met Getrude Stein and you were ...

**Virgil Thomson:**

I didn't know Getrude Stein at that time. I knew her work, but I did not know her till 1925.

**/ Music: Virgil Thomson: Four saints**

**Jean-Claude Kuner:**

You were also influenced mostly by French composers like Satie.

**Virgil Thomson:**

Well one is always influenced by the people one knows.

**/ Music: Curt Bois: Sprechen Sie sich aus**

**Krapp/Bois:**

*Just been listening to an old year, passages at random.  
It must be at least ten or twelve years ago.*

**Curt Bois:**

So now I don't know. I mean, I know you're a director, but of course, as a person of 88, it's only natural that he has difficulty hearing, poor eyesight - but everything's fine with me. Physically. It's only natural that I'm tired, but I was already tired as a baby. It's also clear that I won't live much longer. But now I have a question: maybe I could ask you a question. You want to - as one says in German - you want an "interview". Ok, so I wanted to ask you how did you get to do something like that, what I'm going to ask you now?

**// Sounds: New York City / Broadway / plays**

**Tom O'Horgan:**

I don't know anybody who knows, any director who knows as much about music as I do and they won't let me do a musical or an opera or anything, you know. And then I did *Hair* in '68 and then they wouldn't let me do anything else but musicals.

**// Sounds: New York City / Laurie Anderson**

**Laurie Anderson:**

We have a lot of things going on in our heads, you know. Yes I could do that, it contradicts that, but so what! I am not a logical system.

**David Wojnarowicz:**

Like now a month later I'm back in New York, but you go through this thing ... The last week where all day long I just feel this weird fatigue and I'm realizing fear or fear death. What's happening is every time I go through these periods for every time I turn around suddenly people are dying. Suddenly people are dying in numbers. Yes I have this virus. Yes I have this disease. Yes I have certain symptoms, but I can use this denial, therefore I can create this fiction.

**Jean-Claude Kuner:**

I'm standing on Broadway behind the ticket office, where you can buy half-price tickets for the current evening shows.

David Wojnarowicz:

I don't have signs of these things at the moment.

Jean-Claude Kuner:

The lights are flashing everywhere.

David Wojnarowicz:

I have a kind of reprieve or extension of time.

Jean-Claude Kuner:

Advertisements for Howard Johnson, Canon, Kodak, Minolta, Kirin beer.

David Wojnarowicz:

But then realizing that the breakdown can come momentarily.

Jean-Claude Kuner:

There is a new law to recreate here the glittering mile of a world city.

David Wojnarowicz:

And try and understand what I fear about death. Like what I fear about living.

Jean-Claude Kuner:

This flashing light. The dirt has been removed.

// Sounds: New York City / sirens

/ Music: Curt Bois: Sprechen Sie sich aus

Ingrid Caven:

It was unimaginable back then to be the descendants of such a terrible past.

They wanted to wipe out an entire spirit.

Jean-Claude Kuner:

If you were to explain young people today how that actually was?

Ingrid Caven:

Well, we were the children of murderers!

// Sounds: Hitler, Berlin Sportpalast 10.02.1933

Curt Bois:

I was invited by Max Reinhardt to come to the Deutsche Theater. As I was driving along Kurfürstendamm in my car, I came across about 1,000 brown shirts. I instinctively said to myself, I can't stay here. And so I left Germany on February 7, 1933.

Because I couldn't see this brown plague, I couldn't bear that such a thing was possible.

Yes, they shouted and shouted and shouted. There was nothing but shouting. And I can't stand a lot of shouting. And so we stayed at the Navarro Hotel. Does that still exist?

Jean-Claude Kuner:

I don't know.

Curt Bois:

You don't know. But you speak very quietly!

/ Music: Ingrid Caven: The wonderful widow

Ingrid Caven:

... very much like Rainer (Fassbinder), who himself, yes, I mean ... if he hadn't had so much success in Germany ... but he always saw himself as an outsider. Always!

Grete Sultan:

Do you go to synagogue?

Jean-Claude Kuner:

No!

Grete Sultan:

You're not religious in that sense.

Jean-Claude Kuner:

Not at all. No. But I mean, as a child with my parents, I just ... well, I had a barmitzvah.

Grete Sultan:

I see. Yes.



Jean-Claude Kuner:

And then when I was 15 or 16, I gave it all up and really had nothing more to do with it.

/ Music: John Cage: Harmony XXVII, XXIV, XIII

Grete Sultan:

Yes, even in my youth, I mean, my parents never went to the temple either.

Jean-Claude Kuner:

Yes, so it was all the more difficult with the persecution then, wasn't it? In that time? When you weren't a believer at all and then to be persecuted as a Jew?

Grete Sultan:

Yes, indeed.

I could only play Jewish or foreign music.

I got my visa in 41.

My brother died and many of my relatives perished and were transported to the East.

The journey from Berlin to New York lasted from the beginning of February to the end of June.

Ok. Don't expect anything, please.

I was left behind.

Besides, I feel a bit safer with the sticks.

Ah, I didn't put my shoes in the closet.

What are you?

Jean-Claude Kuner:

I used to work in the theater. As a director.

Grete Sultan:

I'm not a good housewife.

**Jean-Claude Kuner:**

The plays I directed very often had to do with outsider themes. In other words, people who become lonely and then either commit a heroic act ...

**Grete Sultan:**

Aha. Now what?

Do you play chess?

**Jean-Claude Kuner:**

I haven't played for a long time.

**Grete Sultan:**

Let's ... can we play a game of chess? That would be nice.

**Jean-Claude Kuner:**

And today I write documentaries. Mainly  
on cultural topics.

But then we can't talk really.

**Grete Sultan:**

Why not?

**Jean-Claude Kuner:**

And talk while playing?

**Grete Sultan:**

Yes!

**Jean-Claude Kuner:**

But first the piano.

**Grete Sultan:**

Where do I put these?

**Jean-Claude Kuner:**

I can take them.

**/ Music: Bach: Goldberg Variations /**

(telephone rings)

Jean-Claude Kuner:

That's awful.

/ Music: Bach: Goldberg Variations /

// Sounds: New York City / Broadway / plays

/ Music: John Chowning: Stria

/ Music: Bol Na Halke Halke

Jean-Claude Kuner:

Mr. Kakar? This is Jean-Claude Kuner. Good morning, Mr. Kakar. Unfortunately the appointment with the car didn't work out properly, we haven't been picked up yet, but I hope that will happen any minute now. See you soon. Bye.

Hello, sorry, Mr. Kakar, I'm ... now it's part two of the journey. The driver. Could you talk to the driver? Hold on, okay.

/ Music: György Kurtág: Hommage à Schubert

Good morning. Of course, again I didn't listen properly yesterday. Should I just keep going or do I have to walk back? Tell me again! I am at the bus stop in Walchwil. Engel.

*Track 34.*

Jean-Claude Kuner:

Okay. Good. See you soon.

Tickets for the Hudson River line?  
*Right over there.*

Jean-Claude Kuner:

Hi! I would like to have a return ticket to Cold Spring.  
Do you take credit cards?

// Sounds: voices

**Pete Seeger:**

Jean-Claude?

**Jean-Claude Kuner:**

Pete? Hi. How are you?

**Pete Seeger:**

I tell people I'm 80% here from the shoulders down. 20% from the shoulders up. That adds up to 100.

**Jean-Claude Kuner:**

Beautiful weather!

**Pete Seeger:**

Yes. Did you start off in Germany or did you ... how did you get the name Jean-Claude?

**Jean-Claude Kuner:**

Well, I started in Switzerland because I'm Swiss.

**Pete Seeger:**

Oh, that's right. I forgot.

**Jean-Claude Kuner:**

And my mother was from the French part of Switzerland. And that's how I got my French name.  
So that's Beacon already?

**Pete Seeger:**

This is the town of Cold Spring. This was a town with very bitter unemployment. The Klu Klux Klan was strong. And they said if a black family moved into town their house would be burned down in two days.  
Don't try to pet the dog.

**Jean-Claude Kuner:**

Okay.

**Pete Seeger:**

He will sniff around you. But he'll never do it except when he sees a hand stretch out.

**Jean-Claude Kuner:**

Okay, I will not reach out for the dog.

Pete Seeger:

This one's very friendly.

Jean-Claude Kuner:

Hey. No hands, hi.

/ Music: György Kurtág: Hommage à Schubert / singing

Jean-Claude Kuner:

Hello! Good morning!

I was going to ask you that how ... ? Because I've read different stories like you played it to Martin Luther King?

Pete Seeger:

Well, first of all, the only thing I did was perhaps change one word from *we will overcome* to *we shall*.

Ah ... I have to get the guitar.

I have four beats, one two three four, but each one of those beats has three little short beats one, two, three, four.

// Sounds: sings *We shall overcome*

Well, the young students of the Civil Rights Movement, this is the way they wanted to sing it.

// Sounds: church singing *We shall overcome*

John Hope Franklin:

People continue to believe that blacks are inferior, that blacks are more criminally inclined than whites, people believe that. People believe that they don't have as much mental capacity as whites. And these beliefs inform their actions, that is the actions of whites. So whites still regard me as a servant as many of them do. If I walk out, if I go somewhere, they think I'm a servant. And I have been asked. A woman tells me, gives me her check. And says: you go get my coat! Me! I'm dressed elegantly, tie, new suit, everything, in a club. And she says to me go and get my coat.

// Sounds: church singing *We shall overcome*

Jean-Claude Kuner:

You participated in almost all the important social movements in these times. Where did this urge come from to engage yourself, to participate, to fight for something?

Pete Seeger:

Oh, I guess it comes from a long line of English Americans who got involved in one cause or another. Some of them were church people. One of my ancestors was the preacher, the minister I'm sorry, for the congregation coming over on the Mayflower.

I was in college in 1937 and was involved with other students what we are going to do about fascism. Germany invading Austria, Italy invading Ethiopia, Japan invading Manchuria. And at that time I didn't agree with the pacifist. I think now I probably would.

I'd say we got to find non-military means of handling this problem, because handling it in the military way is going to be so destructive. Of course, it's all one big crisis that human race faces. We just see different sides of it. It's a crisis of poverty amidst plenty. It's a problem of racism and sexism and various other kinds of foolishness. Problem of pollution.

How do you know they just might still be a human race here in a few hundred years.

// Sounds: sings *Sag mir wo die Blumen sind*

// Sounds: Sea waves

Leon Shenondoah:

Everybody is worried about the environment now. Water isn't clean anymore. Air is not clear. Land is getting bad. It's keep getting worse.

/ Music: Onandaga Chanting

Leon Shenondoah:

Our spirituality is: we live in harmony with nature. With nature depends on one another. Everything depends on one another.

Mother earth is really our mother. We are much alike.  
That's our life.

/ Music: Onandaga Chanting

Leon Shenondoah:

Here at Onandaga the capital of the Six Nations, we say we're not part of the New York State or United States. We got our own government here. We're a nation.

We are the Six Nations, we're unified. I'm a chief. I'm the headchief of the whole Six Nations. Like the president is the chief of the whole fifty states. That's where they got the idea. From us. In other words I'm the chief of chief. Same as the United States. The United States copied their form of government from us. Constitution and everything. It was born here within the Six Nations. When they came over here, they didn't have no constitution or anything. All they knew was king and queen when they came over. They copied it from us. They don't go out and tell the people, we got our government from the Indians. They won't tell that.

/ Music: John Cage: Harmony XXVII, XXIV, XIII

// Sounds: Sounds of waves

Hans Helfritz:

In the 1930s, you could only leave Germany carrying ten marks with you.

But you could pay for passages on foreign ships in German currency.

From Marseille to Japan.

// Sounds: Asian Sounds from Thailand, Vietnam, Japan / Spain

Jean-Claude Kuner:

Ibiza. Fx: garden with wind chimes.

Hans Helfritz:

That's why we were all waiting, that we could go back to Germany. It was our country after all. I mean, Hitler was only the government of the moment. The Jews were expelled, they were imprisoned, they had to leave. But if you didn't have to go.

// Sounds: Ufa-movie about Yemen, 1935 - German:

*Makalla - a port city on the south Arabian coast, remote from world traffic. From Makalla, about 300 kilometers inland, lies the barely explored land of Hadramaut. The explorer Helfritz succeeded for the first time in bringing home film footage from here. The only means of transportation in this desert country is the camel.*

Hans Helfritz:

Someone who has never been abroad for 40 or 50 years. How should he ...

Ufa-movie 1935:

*The lords of creation ride, the women walk alongside.*

Hans Helfritz:

How is one supposed to start over in a country where one has not a penny of money ... and nothing, that's impossible! He is forced to stay in his country for the time being and hope that things will finally come to an end. That's how it has been for me.

// Sounds: Santiago de Chile

Hans Helfritz:

There is still the old post office. There's the cathedral.

Jean-Claude Kuner:

Do you still recognize Santiago or is it a completely different city today?

Hans Helfritz:

Little has actually changed here. There a beautiful araucaria from Brazil and lots of palm trees.

When the war ended, I remained in Chile.

/ Music: Hans Helfritz: Musik für den tänzerischen Unterricht

Jean-Claude Kuner:

You were in prison just before you left, weren't you?  
Because of your inclinations?



Hans Helfritz:

Well, the personal difficulties I used to have in Germany, I had the same later in Chile, or in Arabia, where the English were, it has been the same everywhere.

Jean-Claude Kuner:

But you never had any problems in Germany? Did you hide so well?

Hans Helfritz:

I always kept a low profile and always played hide and seek. And I was terribly shy and never told anyone anything.

I came to Berlin in 1916, when I was 14 years old and so .... Well.

Jean-Claude Kuner:

And were you able to talk about it to anyone at all?

Hans Helfritz:

No.

Jean-Claude Kuner:

Sharing your experiences?

Hans Helfritz:

No.

/ Music: Hans Helfritz: Vier phantastische Impressionen aus Mittelamerika

// Sounds: Pacific Ocean

Jean-Claude Kuner:

Amazing how the sea is roaring here.

Hans Helfritz:

But not quite as strong as ... but the surf here is everywhere ... oh, but I want to sit down.

Jean-Claude Kuner:

We'll sit down in a minute.  
Look at the birds here.

/ Music: Frangis Ali-Sadé: Piano improvisation

Etel Adnan:

It's a big country. California is as big as Germany.  
The Americans call it Mount Tamalpais.

Jean-Claude Kuner:

You can see the sea from here.

Etel Adnan:

Yes, you can see the sea. It's over there. You can see it,  
it's shining because there's a lot of sun, it's shining,  
it's superb.

But it's a place ... look at the trees, they're bushy and  
you can see each one and they make shadows, they make  
shadows with a superb rhythm. Light and dark.

It's a lovely summit here. Look at the ocean, it looks  
high but it's actually far away.

Here we are, it's a magical place, isn't it? Superb.

It moves without moving. Like trees do that. The next day  
you think it is the same mountain, but it really isn't.

The earth moves. We forget that we are on a ship.

Being is a constant change.

Here we are, it's a magical place, isn't it? Superb.

// Sounds: Ud playing / at birthday of Etel Adnan in Paris

Etel Adnan:

It's like in Lebanon, but it doesn't have the same colors,  
nor the same shapes.

// Sounds: Ud playing

// Sounds: streets of Bukhara / Shashmaqam singing

Artjom Kim:

Koreans were deported here by Stalin. And Armenians and  
Georgians.

Jean-Claude Kuner:

Silk Road what does it mean here in Uzbekistan?

Artjom Kim:

I think it is something from brochures for tourists.  
Jewish people and Turkish people and Russian Germans...  
In a way Uzbekistan was Babylon. Really multilingual,  
multicultural place.

This is another richness which after independence started  
to disappear, because after independence the majority of  
Jewish people for example, they left.

// Sounds: synagogue in Bukhara

/ Music: Peer Raben: from film *Schatten der Engel*

Ingrid Caven:

That this was also an aesthetic failure on the part  
of these Nazis. When you see pictures today, mass  
gatherings, the masses, the masses, the masses, which  
is interesting again today, isn't it? That's  
something very, very boring, very boring, isn't it?

Heinz Homuth:

In a single street, the Stalin - Frankfurter Allee, I  
received four medals in three different political systems.  
Not everyone can say that, eh?  
War Merit Medal.

Ingrid Caven:

It was always about masses, mass rallies,

Heinz Homuth:

The Böckler Medal.

Ingrid Caven:

Mass marches, mass opinions.

Heinz Homuth:

Activist medals.

Ingrid Caven:

Yes, we inherited that, everything that is mass is perhaps  
already good anyway.

Heinz Homuth:

So four different medals in one street!

/ Music: John Cage: Sonatas and Interludes

// Sounds: New York City / sirens /

Jean-Claude Kuner:

If you imagine a situation being kept on an island just by yourself?

John Cage:

Oh now I remember, yes. It is the question of going to the North Pole, or what would you take? It's a very amusing question. I actually like the sounds that we hear in the environment (**phone rings**) more than I like music. Yes that one too. I think what I like about the sounds of the environment is that they don't have any intention. They're not saying something.

/ Music: John Cage: *Etudes australes*

John Cage:

I listen to the sounds of the environment.  
Which is so to speak my silent piece.

The way to broadcast it, which has never been done, is to turn the radio station off.

I don't think that's important how many people listen.

Thoreau is very important to us now and when he lived only four people would listen to him speak if he gave a lecture. But a hundred years after his death he changes the mind of Gandhi of Martin Luther King of the deeds against Hitler. I don't think that the numbers of things are of importance.

// Sounds: Névache, in the mountains/ river /

/ Music: Bach: Goldberg Variations

Zhu Xiao-Mei:

But do you speak French or English or...?

Jean-Claude Kuner:

Both.

Zhu Xiao-Mei:

Both. But what kind of questions do you want to ask me?  
I'd rather talk about others, not about myself!

Jean-Claude Kuner:

When you finally got out of China and came to the West,  
what happened musically?

Zhu Xiao-Mei:

In the beginning, it was a bit difficult because I was  
immediately forced to work as a cleaning lady, work in the  
restaurant... I had five different jobs to make a living.

For me, from the very first note of the *Art of Fugue*,  
you're out of this world.

Jean-Claude Kuner:

Listening to your interpretations of Bach, I sometimes  
wondered, maybe only someone who has really suffered like  
you did, can play Bach like that?

Zhu Xiao-Mei:

Maybe, yes, it helps me. Because I've lived through so  
many horrible, horrible things. I felt in his music that  
he was human. The dignity ... it gave me a little refuge.  
When I play Bach in the morning, if I'm a little  
depressed, I play Bach. Then I find my balance again. Find  
the ... a little peace. His music calms me. It also gives  
me confidence.

/ Music: Bach: Die Kunst der Fuge: Contrapunctus 1

But of course, I stayed much longer than everyone else in  
the education camp.

Jean-Claude Kuner:

And why in fact did you...?

Zhu Xiao-Mei:

Because I played the piano.

/ Music: György Kurtág: Mikroludien, op.13 (1977/78)

**Krapp/Bois:**

*Shall I sing when I am her age, if I ever am? No.  
Did I sing as a boy? No.  
Did I ever sing? No.*

**Krapp/Lichtenhahn:**

*Just been listening to an old year, passages at random.  
It must be at least ten or twelve years ago.*

**Krapp/Bois:**

*These old personal memories are gruesome. Hard to believe  
I was ever that young whelp. The voice. Jesus!*

**/ Music: Bach/ Kurtág: Gottes Zeit ist die allerbeste Zeit**

**Krapp/Lichtenhahn:**

*This voice. Jesus! And the aspirations! And the  
resolutions!*

**Jean-Claude Kuner:**

You have birthday tomorrow and *Krapps Last Tape* comes into  
mind.

**Györg Kurtág:**

Yes.

**Jean-Claude Kuner:**

Are you also looking back on a birthday like this to your  
life?

**Györg Kurtág:**

Yes, yes. My life is for me ... is all in my compositions.  
Is ... I ... I told and and ... but but it's it's really so ...  
that that ... in in my compositions ... I I wrote always my  
autobiography.

**Actress Nadja Tiller:**

*Never get out of hearing.  
Never get out of looking.  
And then? And then?  
No then.*

**Actor Fritz Lichtenhahn:**

*Just as I said to myself one day, I will resolutely get lost. Us lost or embarked, lost and embarked. In the sense of Pascal, we are embarked.*

**/ Music: György Kurtág: Officium breve / Mikroludien, op.13**

**Laurie Anderson:**

We live contradictory lives.

My preference is to be with people who also don't know the answers to things.

That's more fun for me.

**Pete Seeger:**

You asked me why do I keep on singing and I told you I think I look on it as basically one cause is there going to be a human race here in a few hundred years? In spite of the problems which are so big that nobody knows how to solve them.

My father used to say the truth is a rabbit in a bramble patch and all you can do is circle around and around and say it's somewhere in there, but you can't put your hand on its pulsing little body.

**Jean-Claude Kuner:**

So you still think that songs can change the planet?

**Pete Seeger:**

Oh, they won't do it all by themselves, but they help to turn people's minds around. In some ways better than just plain talking does because you repeat it. And a simple song that's repeated and repeated finally sinks in.

Speaking of different times. I belatedly realized I wrote a better song than I thought when I wrote *Turn Turn Turn*. I give the words to the audience. I say it.

**// Sounds: sings *Turn Turn Turn*, in Beacon, N.Y. 1999**

**Pete Seeger:**

To every thing  
Turn turn turn  
There is a season

...

and a time to every purpose under the heaven

Dar Williams is a young woman, who got a beautiful voice ...  
And I had stopped singing the song, because my voice is so  
bad. But she sang it and all I did was to give out the  
words and the whole audience sang it with her in a very  
low key. It may be low, it's perfect for alto. A lot of  
women, you know, they don't like to sing high. Makes their  
voice sound screechy. But they love to sing alto. And  
that's the way Dar Williams sings. So it was perfect for  
her.

Any women listening – sing it!

A time of love, a time of hate  
A time of love, a time of hate;

of war - of peace  
a time of war, a time of peace.

A time you may embrace  
A time you may embrace;

a time to refrain  
a time to refrain from embracing.

Everybody sing it!

To every thing  
Turn turn turn  
There is a season

...

and a time to every purpose under heaven:

A time to gain, a time to lose  
A time to gain, a time to lose

to rend, to sew  
A time to rend, a time to sew

of love, of hate  
A time of love, a time of hate



a time of peace  
a time of peace, I swear, it's not too late.

Everybody!

To every thing  
Turn turn turn  
There is a season  
...  
and a time to every purpose under heaven.

- END -

**Original recordings from the archive of Jean-Claude Kuner /**  
**in order of their appearance:**

**Tom O'Horgon** (May 3, 1924 – January 11, 2009) was an American theatre and film director, composer, actor and musician. He is best known for his Broadway work as director of the hit musicals *Hair* and *Jesus Christ Superstar*.

**Laurie Anderson** (born June 5, 1947) is an American avant-garde artist, composer, musician, writer, inventor, and filmmaker whose work spans performance art, pop music, and multimedia projects.

**Etel Adnan** (24 February 1925 – 14 November 2021) was a Lebanese-American poet, essayist, and visual artist living in Sausalito and Paris. In 2003, Adnan was named "arguably the most celebrated and accomplished Arab American author writing today" by the academic journal *MELUS: Multi-Ethnic Literature of the United States*.

**Grete Sultan** (June 21, 1906 – June 26, 2005) was a German-American pianist exiled from Berlin in 1941.

**Zhu Xiao-Mei** (born 1949 in Shanghai) is a Chinese French classical pianist and teacher, now based in Paris, France.

**João Carlos Martins** (born June 25, 1940, in Sao Paulo, Brazil) is an acclaimed Brazilian classical pianist and conductor, who has performed with leading orchestras in the United States, Europe and Brazil.

**Virgil Thomson** (November 25, 1896 – September 30, 1989) was an American composer and critic in New York City.

**Curt Bois** (born April 5, 1901 – December 25, 1991 in Berlin) was a German actor with a career spanning over 80 years. He is best remembered for his performances as the pickpocket in *Casablanca* (1942) and the poet Homer in *Wings of Desire* (1987).

**David Michael Wojnarowicz** (September 14, 1954 – July 22, 1992) was an American painter, photographer, writer, filmmaker, performance artist, songwriter/recording artist, and AIDS activist prominent in the East Village art scene.

**Ingrid Caven** (born 3 August 1938) is a German film actress and singer. She is best known for her roles in several films directed by her husband, Rainer Werner Fassbinder. She continued to appear in Fassbinder's films after their divorce 1972 until his death in 1982.

**Peter Seeger** (May 3, 1919 – January 27, 2014) was an American folk singer and social activist. A prolific songwriter, his best-known songs include "Where Have All the Flowers Gone?", "If I Had a Hammer ", and "Turn! Turn! Turn!", which have been recorded by many artists both in and outside the folk revival movement.

**John Hope Franklin** (January 2, 1915 – March 25, 2009) was an American historian of the United States. Franklin is best known for his work *From Slavery to Freedom*, first published in 1947. He was a professor at Howard University, in 1956 head of the history department at Brooklyn College. He later moved to Duke University in 1983, as an appointee to a named chair in history.

**Leon Shenandoah** (May 18, 1915 – July 22, 1996) was an Onondaga politician who headed the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) Confederacy from 1968 to his death. In 1968, Shenandoah became the 235th *Tadodaho* of the *Haudenosaunee Confederacy*. Shenandoah mainly lived on the Onondaga Reservation near Syracuse, New York.

**Hans Helfritz** (25 July 1902, Chemnitz – 21 October 1995, Duisburg) was a German composer, travel writer and photographer. Living in Berlin until WW II. In exile in Santiago de Chile from 1939-1956. After his return to Europe he lived in Ibiza until his death.

**Artjom Kim** (born 1976 in Tashkent, Uzbekistan) Composer and founder of the Omnibus Ensemble.

**Heinz Homuth** (born in Berlin) construction worker who participated in the uprising against the Soviets on June 17<sup>th</sup> 1953.

**John Cage** (September 5, 1912 – August 12, 1992) was an American composer and music theorist. A pioneer of indeterminacy in music and non-standard use of musical instruments. Cage was one of the leading figures of the post-war avant-garde.

**György Kurtág** (born 19 February 1926) is a Hungarian composer of contemporary classical music and pianist. He was an academic teacher of piano and chamber music at the Franz Liszt Academy of Music in Budapest from 1967 until 1993.