

Who was Dr. Vladimir Ussachevsky? Why did he visit the portal, the front door of W2ZI Ed Raser in 1960 with recording equipment? Lets look at these questions and my attempt to check into the lives of these two talented people.

W2ZI a friend (1950's) from my early hobby radio days as a boy in Trenton, N.J. Ed was a source of immense knowledge and regional respect. He always had time for a problem or a chat over the telephone. Ed is a silent key and we miss his presence on the CW bands.

A musical work was requested by President of Broadcast Music to produce an electronics recording by a group of early radio buffs and researchers known as the De Forest Pioneers, named for Dr. Lee deForest whose invention of the vacuum tube made modern radio and recording possible. The electronic piece is meant to evoke the early period of radio communication by using wireless code as a primary sound source. For this purpose, Ussachevsky recorded signals tapped out by our friend early radio pioneer, Ed G. Raser, on old spark generators in his W2ZI Historical Wireless Museum in Trenton, NJ.

The following signals can be heard extensively in the recorded piece: **QST** - a stand-by call meant to alert listeners to a forthcoming broadcast or announcement of note; **DF**, the ID call of the Manhattan Beach Radio Station, one of the best known of the early broadcasters with a range from Nova Scotia to the Caribbean; **WA NY** for the Waldorf-Astoria Station which started broadcasting in 1910; **DOC** DF, deForest's own code nickname; and finally, **AR** for "end of Message" and "**GN**" for good night.

Under the montage of wireless signals, we hear a fragment of Wagner's Parsifal, electronically treated to sound like a short-wave transmission. With this, Ussachevsky is evoking the fact that Lee deForest used the music-drama, then being heard for the first time outside of Germany, for deForest's first musical broadcast.

DR. Vlad Ussachevsky 1911-1990 A Russian-American composer, born in Manchuria, emigrated to the U.S. in 1931 Graduate of Pomona College and studied for his PHD at Eastman School in Rochester in 1939. In U.S. Army Intelligence during WW2 and discharged in 1947 – Joined the faculty of Columbia U in 1947 composing many works for traditional instruments. Dr Vlad began working in electronic music in 1951, in collaboration with former teacher Otto Luening. These two with experts Mr. Babbit and Sessions became directors of Columbia-Princeton Electronic music center in NYC. This was pioneering electronic music class who composed and taught at C-P in NYC. Ussachevsky won a 1987 SEAMUS Lifetime Achievement Award. He was president of American Composers Alliance 68-70 - Also a recipient of two Guggenheim Fellowships.

I have ordered the CD involved in this writing and hoping that it will arrive before Christmas 2005. Produced by CRI 73 Spring Street NYC. To understand what we are doing during the wake of the 2nd World War in the 1950s something extraordinary began to happen almost simultaneously throughout Europe and in the States. Continued...

Perhaps its roots can be traced to the technological developments in warfare, or surveillance, or something equally scientific, or maybe it can be attributed in part to the creation of a new ethos in the wake of human disaster, an unmistakable shift in the direction of a world view among artists in general. This group we speak of are pioneer's Ussachevsky, Luening, Babbitt & Sessions engineering the new wave avant-garde Electronic Music.

It will be a true thrill to hear the fist of Ed Raser once again via CD when he recorded spark music for Dr. Vladimir Ussachevsky in 1960. Where were you in 1960? I was a radio man in Alaska in the U.S. Military running CW on the Coast Guard circuits in the communications division. Below Dr. Ussachevsky at Columbia with design equipment.

Ed, we won't again have a QSO top side of this earth, but we can hear your wonderful cw fist on the spark equipment over and over via CD recording Ussachevsky made in 1960.

Some forget Ed's long time involvement with the New Jersey State Police Communications Center, he truly was a man of service.

Long live, "Wireless Fantasy." Several audio clips of the full recording appear on YouTube Dot Com. 1 Sept 2008 is a good choice. MF/ussa



Old friend W2ZI Ed Raser's extensive collection, in 1975.

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