Piece Title: *Recording Piece*
Composer: Lou Harrison
Performer: Talujon

Last year, I was handed a score of a composition by American composer Lou Harrison. There were two peculiar things about this; 1. I had never heard of the piece (I am very familiar with Harrison’s work) and 2. Harrison famously hated electronics. After speaking to Larry Polansky, the composer who unearthed the score, I found that there is no record of it having ever been performed. The work requires that an acoustic ensemble perform the score, while electronic musicians record, and then play back these recordings at notated speeds that are specified in the score, as the acoustic instruments continue to play. I eventually contacted Daniel Steffey about performing the work with our trio Ctrl-Z, and with 2017 being Lou Harrison’s centennial birthday year, it provides a great opportunity to bring this piece to life.

Written for five percussionists and electronics, the work is dated July 29, 1955 and what Harrison signed as “Out-of-this-world Day," is the only known piece of Harrison’s to utilize electronics of any kind. The piece is dedicated to Bill Loughborough, who is credited as one of the inventors of the Boobams; drums made of long bamboo with a tuned head on top, making this work one of the earliest known scores written for the instrument. Harrison uses the idea of speeding up tape to alter the pitch of the tuned instruments, as well as the rhythms to create metric modulations and canonic structures. The recordings are also used by Harrison to further explore form and development, with repetitions and altering of the tape itself. While further research is still being conducted on the work and its history, we are lead to believe that Harrison wrote this for the Vortex Theater Group, with a possible premiere at the Morrison Planetarium in 1959. Because none of this has been truly confirmed, this is the first known and documented performance of the Recording Piece.

Ctrl-Z would like to thank Larry Polansky, Charles Hanson, Pete “Rat” Martin, William Winant, Talujon, and The Awesome Foundation for their support in realizing this project.

–Daniel Steffey, Ryan Page, Nick Wang (Ctrl-Z)