



A Mess of Things  
4/1/11 @

↑ Treadmill to Oblivion  
Benjamin Seltzman, 1970s/80s

**A MESS OF THINGS:  
A NEW DOCUMENTARY MUSICPLAY**

April 1, 2011, 8 PM

ADAM TINKLE

*A Mess of Things* is a new music theater piece conceived, created and performed by Adam Tinkle, using interviews collected over the course of the last few years with his grandfather, Ben Seltzman, as well as his aunt and mother. Ben is alive and well and living in New York, where except for time in the US Navy and in Israel during the 1940s, he has spent his entire life. All the text in the piece was either collected on a 2-track portable field recorder or written by Adam. All video and audio is by Adam as well, though the form the production takes tonight reflects collaborations too numerous to recount. The piece will be performed again at the Hollywood Fringe Festival in early June, with east coast performances to follow. Since tonight's debut version is still a work in progress, your reactions and comments are very much appreciated.

*Sound engineering and designing: Dave Corsello*

*Lighting Design: Wen-Ling Liao*

*Lighting Op and Technical Wizard: Nick Patin*

**Please enjoy a reception** in the lobby following the performance, accompanied by the performance/installation *elevator music (for Cotija's)*.

Thanks to: the amazing artists I've met through the UCSD Theatre Department's Crossing Boundaries group, especially Colin McGurk, Wen-Ling Liao and Krista Knight, with whom I collaborated on an early sketch for this piece, as well as the inimitable sound wizards Dave Corsello and Nick Drashner; the warm, wonderful community of friends and fellow artists here in the Music Department; the entire department staff, but especially Nick Patin and Brady Baker for their many-splendored, multi-dimensional aid; all of the teachers who have helped me turn a critical eye on my materials and process. An extra special thanks to Jess, for her unremitting support and incisive critiques, to my Mom and Dad, whose unceasing encouragement over the years is the main reason I am here today, and of course to my Grandpa Ben, who has for as long as I can remember been for me an unimpeachable model of creativity, character and thoughtfulness. This piece cannot be anything but a tribute to my family, to whom I am so grateful for being the interesting folks they are and for allowing me to show you this work.

Adam Tinkle is an artist, educator and scholar active in music, sound, interdisciplinary performance and media arts. At Wesleyan University (CT), where he studied intellectual history, ethnomusicology and experimental composition, his main teachers were Alvin Lucier, Ron Kuivila and Anthony Braxton, improvising, performing and recording extensively with the latter. He performs on reeds, electronics, voice, fretted strings and steel guitars, and his work is heard in contexts ranging from rock and avant-classical to free improvised and electro-acoustic music, as well as in theater, dance and film. Now based outside San Diego, he studies improvisation and composition with Anthony Davis, Mark Dresser and others, working towards a PhD in Integrative Studies. He leads and composes for the experimental smooth jazz/minimalist improv septet Pacifighost, improvises with electroacoustic noise trio New Brutalists, and is the singer/guitarist/lyricist/composer for The Shade, a rock quintet that has toured both coasts and released two EPs in the last year ([theshade.info](http://theshade.info)). He was recently commissioned by British quartetone flutist Carla Rees and by Machine Project for the Hammer Museum, UCLA. Recent interdisciplinary collaborations include scores for dances by choreographers Eric Geiger (WinterWorks 2011, La Jolla Playhouse) and Shayna Keller (Joshua Tree National Park Artist Residency), for theater works by Krista Knight (*Phantom Band*, Baldwin New Play Festival 2010) and No Face Theater (*The Secret Science of Forgetting*, 2nd Stage, Middletown, CT), and a film by Alicia Peterson Baskill (*Malibu*, selected by the 2010 Loft Film Festival). He is an alum of several New York City bands, including Sewing Machines (on pedal steel/lead guitar, 2 US tours) and Tall Tales (now Headless Horsemen). His scholarly work has focused on the ideological content of midcentury US American popular music and youth culture, especially regarding environmentalism and nature, and excerpts from his thesis "Back to the Garden: Pastoralism, Country Rock and Authenticity in the U.S. Counterculture, 1968-1970" have been presented at conferences in ecocriticism, science studies and pop music studies. Adam co-directs the Universal Language Orchestra, teaching 8-12 year old musicians in Spring Valley, CA alternative approaches to music such as free improvisation, group composition and graphic notation; the ULO will perform at UCSD on April 14. With his partner, cognitive psychologist Jess Sullivan, Adam is working to build a sustainable (:-/ there's that word again) homestead in Descanso, CA, at the edge of the Cleveland National Forest. Jess and Adam farm at [tanglzone.blogspot.com](http://tanglzone.blogspot.com), and will host a public, outdoor arts festival there May 7. Contact them if you want fresh eggs, dairy or veggies.

