

Robert Danziger interview by Dan Ouellette held on 09/23/19.

- **Dan** - There you go. So--how do you long anticipate this being, in terms of what you're going to do with it, our conversation?
- **Bob** - Well, I was thinking, you know, half hour, 40 minutes, somewhere in that range. I'm not--I'm really open, I mean it could be relatively quick, it's just--I feel that I've--I'm so deeply in the weeds on this--.
- **Dan** - --Yeah--.
- **Bob** - --I really thought that talking to you, and asking questions the way that you do would hopefully give [me] a little perspective, a little overview of what the hell I've been doing for the last . . . 40 years.
- **Dan** - Yeah.
- **Bob** - And I think over the last five years, ~~you know~~—because so much has happened - I just really feel like this might help me sort it out a little bit.
- **Dan** - That's cool. Is this going to run as a part of the archives?
- **Bob** - --Yeah, probably. I could screw it up and kill it, it could disappear if I do real bad, you know.
- **Dan** - Yeah.
- **Bob** - But I'm hoping that it makes sense in the context of the archive, I would certainly hope so. I mean, it's becoming to a large degree the Dan Ouellette section of the archive, and I think that's really great. I'm really pleased that that's working out that way. Because you have had an amazing career, and have done so much. You are master at what you do, and it's really a great addition to CSUMB. It's a whole different level than what was happening there before in this area.
- **Dan** - What did you learn from the process of putting this amazing, amazing piece of work together? Is this class two hours long?

- **Bob** - Yeah, it's two hours long, and there'll be dozens of additional hours available online.
- **Dan** - That's great, that's terrific.
- **Bob** - That's what I like to do, I sort of like the classes to be an introduction to--the journey that I went through, or the other artists went through. And they can get that through the website, there's links to all that stuff. And that way I don't have to try to cover everything in the class, I can just sort of use that as a base that they can jump off of if they want to.
- **Dan** - What was your first experience with the Brandenburg Concertos?
- **Bob** - I was swimming in the bay in Moorea, Tahiti. And it was my first real vacation that I'd had after working for a long time. I was doing tai chi on a wharf at sunset. And this sailboat came across not far from where I was, and it was playing the Brandenburg Concerto on its loudspeakers.
- **Dan** - Wow.
- **Bob** - And so after I did my tai chi set, I swam over to the boat, and I said, "What was that?" And they said, "It's the Brandenburg Concerto." And so when I came back from that trip, I was 25 years old, I bought a copy of the Brandenburg Concerto and I listened to it every day for two years.
- **Dan** - Now which number was it?
- **Bob** - It was all of them. The one that they were playing was the second, I'm pretty sure. I'm not completely sure, but I think it was the second. And then the version that I got was the Carl Richter version, Munich Bach orchestra--
- **Dan** - --Yep--.
- **Bob** - --And I listened to it every day.
- **Dan** - And--
- **Bob** - --That's when I fell in love--.

- **Dan** - --What did you--what hit you in a place that really struck you as being something incredibly unique, and incredibly special? Where did it hit you, in the brain, in the heart, you know, all through your body?
- **Bob** - When I think of the phrase "blew you away," it describes [how I felt] because it just--it just stunned me, you know? It was--there was something about it that I immediately was entranced by. And I just had to listen to it over and over and over again. It was beautiful and compelling, and you're kind of beyond words in terms of my reaction to it. I certainly didn't know anything, there was no real intellectual engagement with it, because I didn't know anything.
- **Dan** - Yeah.
- **Bob** - And that was--so it pretty much hit me, you know, in the stomach. Like when Regina Carter was describing how when she hears something and her stomach kind of tightens up, and she just has to dive into it, I think that was kind of how it was, because I couldn't get enough of it.
- **Dan** - And you were a musician at this point already?
- **Bob** - Yes, I was--I'd sort of retired at that point, or stopped playing professionally at that point. I was still doing a little bit, I was still doing occasional recording sessions, but I had gone through law school. And I'd worked--the first two years of law school I'd worked with a musician, and then the last year I had not, and then I passed the bar and I was about to go to work at Jet Propulsion Lab, which was my first real job. And in that interval between taking the bar exam and starting at JPL was when I took this vacation. So I wasn't playing professionally at that time, and I was kind of floundering in music, actually, at that time. I'd been a bass player, an electric bass player, and instead of playing, you know, six, eight, 10, 12, hours a day, I was playing a half hour, hour, maybe two hours a day.
- **Dan** - Gotcha. But being a musician, at one time professional and then more amateurish, you would bring--it seems to me you would bring a lot to the table in terms of, once the Concertos hit you in the gut, that you wanted to go further with it than just have that kind of experience of appreciating it.
- **Bob** - --Yeah, because I spent the next 25 years trying to figure out how to play it, and I kept at it. And it's interesting, on reflection, I think that what Christian McBride was saying about being the first bebop piece, every piece of music I was ever super attracted to like that had great bass lines. That was the first thing I was clued into. And so I'm sure that the basslines had a big impact. And I'm sure that I was sitting there trying to pick them out, trying to figure

them out when I was--when I finally got back to LA and was listening to it all that time, I'm sure I would do that.

- **Dan** - And were you following the basslines on your bass, or were you doing it on piano, or how was it that you were trying to figure it out?
- **Bob** - It would've been electric bass at that time. I didn't switch over to keyboards until a few years later, about four or five years later is when I finally--I gave up the bass and switched over to keyboards.
- **Dan** - Uh-huh.
- **Bob** - So it definitely would've been trying to pick it out on the electric bass, at the beginning. And I had a way of bowing my electric bass, so I'm sure I was using that technique to try to recreate some of what I heard. But I couldn't do it, that was part of the thing was, I never was able to do it. You know, I'd get a line, and then I'd lose it, and I just wasn't good at it. And then, subsequently, when I switched over to keyboards, I started to try to play some of that stuff, and I wasn't good at it on keyboard. So then I played a number of other instruments, you know, a bunch of different instruments through the years. And on every single one of them I would try to play the Brandenburg, or some portion of the Brandenburg, and I never did it at all well. And then when I got the EWI, which would be you know, 2010 or something, 2008, something like that. I picked it up, fooled around with it for like five minutes, and I was playing the Brandenburg on it, after like five minutes, the second Brandenburg. I was playing that (HUMMING), that line, which I've been trying to play on a dozen other instruments unsuccessfully, I was playing in the first few minutes once I picked up the EWI.
- **Dan** - And what is it about the EWI? What is called, Electronic Wind Instrument, right?
- **Bob** - That's right. I don't know, I mean I think that it may just have been that the whole thing finally penetrated my brain and whatever the next instrument I picked up would do it, or--but there's no question I relate to the EWI very well. It--I think that part of it was that I had gotten really--I love good intonation. And from the time I was very young in music, I would listen to people like Buell Neidlinger, or Ray Brown, people like that, who had just amazing intonation. And I always strove for that, and I never really got it to my personal standards, or their standards. But with the EWI, the notes are fixed, you can't miss on the intonation. And I think that that freedom, of not having to worry about intonation, allowed me to take it to the next level, because I think I was stuck on that [lower] level.
- **Dan** - Then, from there, once you started realizing you could play the introduction, you just continued then, right?

- **Bob** - Yeah. Well then I was able to pick out the entire second Brandenburg, I was able to figure it out, you know, without even looking at the music. And then I said, okay, you need to learn more about this. And I got some music, and I hadn't read music in years. I had--when played with Cecil Taylor, he had his own notation system and I had stopped reading music conventionally. But I bought the music, and I developed my own little notation system based on the music. And so I translated it into that notation system, which was based on numbers, sort of like figured bass. And then I learned how to play not just the lead line, or the primary counterpoint on the second Brandenburg, but I went through and I systematically learned all of the lines--
- **Dan** - --Wow--.
- **Bob** - --In the second, using that method. And by the time I finished that, I could read music again. So at that point I discarded my system and just went to reading conventionally, because using my system was slowing me down -- I'd done it enough that my reading chops had come back.
- **Dan** - Wow. Now, do you know all of the Concertos, you can play them all now?
- **Bob** - Yes, over the course of doing that, the project, after that point, I went through and I played every note of every line in all of the concertos.
- **Dan** - Wow.
- **Bob** - And I played them forwards and backwards, because Cecil Taylor used to have us do that, play things backwards. So I did that, I did the whole thing. And I loved it. I mean, every morning I couldn't wait to wake up and do some more. And I would literally wake up in the middle of the night, one or two times, and play for an hour or more. And I just became obsessed with playing every bit of it.
- **Bob** - And then I was listening [to every version I could find]. And then, of course, at this point, I started having ideas for changing it around. I was watching some performance of the Brandenburgs, and I noticed that the audience was responding to the counterpoint the way that they were responding to the melody. And I realized that over the years, a lot of what was originally composed as counterpoint had become the melody in people's minds.
- **Bob** - I was going, okay, well let's look at this differently. Let's look at it as, what is the melody in each one of these pieces that I personally love the most, whether it was originally intended as the melody or not, and sometimes it was the bass line that I loved the most. And so I started transposing the baselines up a few octaves so I could play them as lead lines. And

then I was going, this is cool, and then I started improvising all over the thing, because that's what I did more or less every day of my life. So that's how I started thinking about how I could make transitions between what was written on the page and other parts of Bach's composition. I [found that I] could improvise these transitions from one to the other while still keeping the primary melody, or primary counterpoint, or primary bass line right in front as, in effect, the lead line.

- **Dan** - Wow, that's fascinating. And you--so did you ever have a feeling of going back and performing again?
- **Bob** - I have that feeling every day, I have that feeling every day. I would so love to perform again, I can't tell you, but it's just not physically possible. So I channel all that in to doing something special not just within, but because of the opportunities created by my challenges. That was a big part of my decision-making in terms of how I approached [doing the Brandenburg 300 Project].
- **Bob** - I'm going, okay, you're never going to be able to perform again, Bob, you're never going to be able to go on the road, because of my physical problems. And I miss that terribly, and I also miss the interaction with the other musicians, because that takes you to a whole different level. But that's not available to me, so I had to--I was going, okay, well what could I do on the Brandenburg that's unique, because there's so many wonderful versions of the Brandenburg, you know, what could I bring to the table? And I decided that I would try to do something using instruments and techniques that were not available in Bach's time. And the other thing I would do is, I would try to do it for just two instruments, any two instruments, where it could be a flute and a trumpet, or it could a piano and a bass, or whatever. But if it's going to be for any two instruments, it means you can only have one line, one note, monophonic--both lines have to be monophonic. And that was sort of the breakthrough for me because I was--and that also fits in with an ethic that I have, which is that I try to never do anything that will take a gig away from a working musician. Because they have a hard enough time supporting themselves and their families, they don't need somebody who's comfortably retired to be taking their jobs away.
- **Bob** - And so I've tried to do things that you couldn't do live, that would be impossible to do live, but still sound like they could be done live. So for example, I might be using a trombone sound, but do it over five or six octaves that would kill a real trombone player to play, because they can't play that high without hurting a lip--right? But with the EWI, that's not an issue. So I would do instruments outside of their normal ranges, I would use computer techniques to do things that I couldn't physically play, that kind of stuff, and that's how I put it together. So those are kind of the guiding principles, is that it should never take a gig away from a working musician, and it should use techniques that, you know, great musicians don't do in their normal days.

- **Bob** - So for example, I love Christian McBride's bass-playing, I love his bass-playing. So I always tried to--when I was doing my stuff, I tried to think, what would Christian like to play here? Not so much how would he approach this music, but what would really get him excited about playing this particular line? And of course, it would have to have a lot of notes, right, because -- you know, it's more fun.
- **Dan** - Yeah, yeah.
- **Bob** - And also it'd have to have that incredible percussive [drive] going, and it would have that blues-soul thing that he does so beautifully. And it would have to have this intellect attached to it, it couldn't be random, it had to have a reason. And so I literally thought about, you know, how would--what could I do that if it was ever presented to Christian, that he would go, this is fun, this would be really fun to do. And then I would make up the lead line. If Christian was on this gig, he'd be spending a lot of time bent over his bass playing the high notes (because I made the bass line the lead line)?
- **Dan** - Okay. So, obviously, this has become a life-long interest, should I say, obsession, with the Brandenburg Concertos? But how did it turn it's way around into you doing this incredible class with a lot of voices who are very articulate, talking about the Brandenburg Concertos? You've kind of keyed into something that really, a lot of people want to talk about, or can talk about. How does this obsession become reality?
- **Bob** - Well the big that happened is, when Cal State at Monterey Bay gave me their first honorary Doctorate in music for what I was doing on the Brandenburg. I wasn't even done yet, I was about halfway through.
- **Bob** - I was hanging out with one of the teachers, Drew Waters, and he became aware of what I was doing, and pushed forward with suggesting I should get an honorary doctorate in music for it. And so that kind of not just validated it, but also--since I didn't go to undergraduate school, except for, you know, one quarter, it gave me sort of a home. CSUMB became a sort of academic--and an alma mater for me, if you will. At that point, I was going, okay, I really want to give something back because what they did was so nice for me, I wanted to give something back. And then, I met you [Dan Ouellette], through Bill Minor. And then we got that opportunity to do those videos for the Jazz Festival, and we got to work really closely together, and you did these interviews and stuff. I started becoming really fascinated with what these musicians had to say. You know, some of them were extraordinarily capable in a range of areas, but some of them, you know, were put on the earth to do music. And I would listen to your conversations with them, and it was like--you know, I never went to music school or anything, so it was sort of like my music school, listening to them, the way they talked, the intonation of their voices, the rhythm of their voices, the way they look at different things, the things that they knew and knew well, the things they thought they knew and really didn't know that well. But it's this whole universe of

musicians and musicianship that I was exposed to through you. And the other thing that I learned from you was how to listen. I always thought I was a good listener, but you listen differently as a journalist than the musicians, or business people, or politicians, or other people that I had encountered through years. You have a way of waiting for an answer to be completed before you interject anything. You ask a question, and then you go to this quietude, and I learned a lot from that. I really love that, I love that waiting for someone to fully give an answer before you go onto the next, and so not only can the artist think about it fully. But you know, the listener, me, could think about it more fully. And the light went on, and I went, you know, this is something that you could use to communicate to other people using that [interview] kind of an approach. So I really think the Monterey Jazz Festival videos were the turning point on that.

- **Dan** - Uh-huh. I sure enjoyed working with those--with you on those. It was a real--it was a great experience. It was, you know, obviously disappointing in certain ways, the way they showed those, and then pulling the plug on certain ones was kind of hard. But, you know, the ones that we did do and got out there in the mix, you know, were great. And Herbie Hancock continues to get hits, right?
- **Bob** - Yeah, we're up around 11,000 hits on Herbie, and Regina's still going strong. And between that in the other videos, it's something like 40,000 hits in total. That's a lot.
- **Dan** - Does anybody recognize that, the important people?
- **Dan** - Yeah. At any rate, well, that's nice. So then when did--you liked this whole idea of getting artists to talk about, you know, their passions and what they know, and to, you know, to dive deeper into subjects such as the Brandenburg Concertos. When did the idea to do the class come up?
- **Bob** - --That was a couple years ago. Last semester I did the Jazz and Jazz Stories class, that we [Dan and Bob] did some interviews for, and really featured the artists-in-residence, Allison Miller and Derrick Hodge. A couple of years ago I endowed an ongoing concert series, a partnership between Cal State Monterey Bay and the Monterey Jazz Festival, where every year the artists-in-residence give a concert at Cal State Monterey Bay because the music department had suffered through a lot of issues through the years, and really didn't have its feet under it. And I thought that if we could have an artist-in-residence level of talent at Cal State Monterey Bay every year, would at least provide an example of where you want to get to, and expose them to some greatness. So we did that, and then the first year was Tia Fuller, and then--and that went pretty good. But then--
- **Dan** - --That was Tia Fuller and Ingrid Jensen, right?

- **Bob** - Right, although Tia Fuller was the only one available for that concert, Ingrid Jensen wasn't in town yet. It was held on the Monday before the NextGen Festival. But then this year, we had Derrick Hodge and Allison Miller, who were both in town, it was the day before the NextGen Festival started. And they killed it, it was wonderful. But one of the reasons things went so well is that I decided to do that Jazz and Jazz Stories class where I taught people about, jazz and some of the jazz greats, we focused on artists like Gerald Wilson and Angelique Kidjo, and Clayton-Hamilton, and Mr. Sipp, a bunch of different people. Mostly, though, I spent an entire class teaching about Allison Miller and Derrick Hodge.
- **Bob** - We interviewed them and really got into their life stories, and I basically taught their life stories and exposed the students to their music. And that worked really good, so when the concert happened, the students already knew them in many ways, and liked them, and liked their music, and most importantly liked them as people, you know? Because they're both very, very nice people, and their stories are wonderful, on a personal level. So that was the beginning of it. And then, I was thinking, okay, what would you really love to talk about? What would you really love to teach the students? And the Brandenburg was obvious, it was a story that I really needed to tell. And the response to the original class, and this class, has been overwhelming. I've actually never had something sell out in 12 minutes before, had this kind of response--
- **Dan** - --How many people, what was that number? And--
- **Bob** - --Originally the class was going to be open to around 40 people, which is how the Jazz and Jazz Stories had, and then 66 people signed up within the first 12 minutes. So now they have moved it to a much larger venue where we can have, more like about 80 - 100 people. They're including some undergraduates--they've moved it to the music school, and so the the undergraduate students will be there as well. So we'll have 80-year-olds sitting next to 20-year-olds, and--
- **Dan** - --That's great--.
- **Bob** - --It's going to be great, it's going to be great.
- **Dan** - That's so cool.
- **Bob** - As you know I produce these videos for the classes, right? So, instead of standing up there and lecturing, and playing something and lecturing, I do a video of what I want to show them musically, and then I can have text that has--for example, out of the quotes that we gott, also interesting facts, or tidbits, or pictures, or those sorts of things. I'm pretty much along on the production, and the lineup of musicians who are going to be playing on these videos is astounding. You know, you've got everything from Aretha Franklin to Christian McBride

and Regina Carter to you know, Karl Richter and Pablo Casals and Kenny Barron and the Classical Jazz Quartet, and the list goes on and on. And now the addition of these elements from Mexico and Cuba, and Brazil, and Gabon, are just extraordinarily interesting, and will be included also.

- **Dan** - That's great. It's sounds like you're really--not single-handedly, but you are--you're bringing an incredible breath of fresh air into [a music program] that I had heard was kind of not--it was not top of the line, let's put it that way.
- **Bob** - --There's so much here, and it's never really been explored. I did these soundscapes--the other thing I got the honorary doctorate for were the soundscapes I did for local museums. And what I would do is I would explore the history of music and sound as it pertained to whatever the subject of the museum exhibition was going to be. And in the process of that, I discovered so much about Filipino history, music history, or Chinese music history--like that stuff I told you about earlier, about the rescue of the Chinese villagers by the black soldiers. I came across that because I found this picture of these black soldiers holding these musical instruments. And I said, well, what's that, and that led to that kind of story. So there were the Chinese opera, at what is now Pebble Beach, or all these different things. There's just some extraordinary music history here, and I really want people to know about that. I just have a passion for people to know about Monterey's music history, and this is a great outlet for it. And I'm really hoping that at some point, the Monterey Jazz Festival starts looking to have much more Monterey and less just a venue for a jazz festival.
- **Dan** - Yeah.
- **Bob** - Because there's a deep, deep musical history that pertains to jazz and music in general. And I think it's something that can bring people together, and that I think is a good thing.
- **Dan** - And do you think--and again, you can edit this out, do you think that there's a reluctance on the part of the festival to be in that complementary role with what's going on at Cal State?
- **Bob** - No, there's no reluctance on their part vis-a-vis Cal State, that's clear. There were funding problems, and then when we--and it didn't take much, and we're talking like 2,000, 3,000, \$4,000. So you know, plunk that down and say do something of mutual interest, and it's just exploded from there. There was clearly a pent up desire on both their parts to become much closer, but they couldn't figure out how to do it. And when just the little tiniest opening happened, there's all these different things going on now that--every day there's something new going on now between them. And when the Chair of the music department was hired, he was told his major job is getting closer to the Jazz Festival, something he is very passionate about.

- **Dan** - And who's that, who's the Chairman?
- **Bob** - His name is Jeff Jones, Dr. Jeff Jones. The Jazz Festival put them on their education committee, they're talking all the time. And it's definitely blossoming really fast.
- **Dan** - That's great. It's nice to have--to be able to have two dynamic--what's the word, phenomenon going on--
- **Bob** - --Yeah--.
- **Dan** - --At the same time, and to be complementary as opposed to competitive, or anything like that.
- **Bob** - And you know, we have--the reluctance that I see at the Jazz Festival is that Monterey is not a great music town the way Santa Cruz is. Santa Cruz, there's three, four, five, 10 clubs you can go to every night, the music is usually great, and there's--you know, there's just all kinds of places. And you have to have your act together just to play up there.
- **Dan** - --Yeah--.
- **Bob** - --Kuumbwa is obviously one of them, but there's a bunch of them. And we don't have that, I mean, people don't go out every night to listen to music, there's concerts, and then there's the festivals and things like that that people do attend. But the general knock on Monterey is it's not a music town.
- **Dan** - Yeah.
- **Bob** - And that was true, and people are kind of used to that. But then the university happened, it's only 25 years old, and it really only got its feet under it about, you know, 10 years ago. And now we've got, you know, like nine, 10,000 people who weren't here before who are interested in all kinds of stuff, whether it be jazz, or you know, roots, or whatever. But it's now this community that can get attracted to it. And then the other part of Monterey is it's retirement community, which is huge, and they have interest in all kinds of stuff, including, specifically, jazz. So the question is, can we build an audience out of the people who are here now, who weren't here 25 years ago, and turn it into something that has--that deserves a local element, a local emphasis. And I would think that, to the extent that we include stuff that really is home to Monterey, that's really specific to Monterey, some of the great things that are here that would tend to attract more people in the community than they have in the past.

- **Dan** - Yeah.
- **Bob** - But that's my theory, I don't know if that's true, but that's the theory that I'm testing.
- **Dan** - Well I'm sure the local leaders feel the same way. I mean, there's so much to see in the Monterey Bay area from the aquarium to the Steinbeck influences, and you know, all that kind of stuff, taking the 17-mile drive . . .
- **Bob** - --Seventeen-mile drive, sure--.
- **Dan** - Yeah, yeah. Yeah.
- **Bob** - This is one of the most special places in the entire world environmentally, I mean, it's just--ecologically. This is--in my prior work, I worked in 20 countries and 40 states, I went to a lot of different places, and there's nothing like here, and the reason is the trench, there's a gigantic pool of fresh--of really cold water just offshore that's double or triple the size of the Grand Canyon.
- **Dan** - Wow.
- **Bob** - And that means--that's why we have moderate weather, that's why we have all this great wildlife that we have around here, why we have all the trees, and all the things people love. A big part of it is the trench. It's why we have such clean air, it's a very unique part of the world. What attracts people here usually is the great natural beauty, and being able to go to Big Sur and all the different things people do. And the beauty is as beautiful as any place on the planet, I mean, there's places as beautiful, but there's no place more beautiful. And then you add in the fair weather, and it's quite extraordinary. It's what attracted everybody from Jimmy Hendrix, from Joan Baez, to Bob Dylan, to--all those people used to hang out here all the time.
- **Dan** - Yeah, I was just reading a story about Joan Baez, she's done a Big Sur festival, like a folk festival.
- **Bob** - Right.
- **Dan** - Yeah, for several years, and it sounded really cool.

- **Bob** - Well, she's still around. She--her and her kids are still around, and her and Bob Dylan lived around the corner from here I live, back in the early 60s. And Joan Baez is still a huge music influence in this area.
- **Bob** - --When Keith Emerson covered the Brandenburg Concerto he was playing with The Nice. Before there was Emerson, Lake, and Palmer he had a band called The Nice, which he formed instead of joining the London Symphony. And they played the Brandenburg, and they combined it with Bob Dylan's Country Pie. So the same tune--I think it's the sixth--it's one of the Brandenburgs, plus Country Pie in the same tune.
- **Dan** - Wow. There you go. So the last question . . . What did you learn from the whole process of doing this, of putting this class, which should be a whole semester's worth of work, we certainly have the material, but what did you learn from the whole process of this?
- **Bob** - I learned--the story of the Brandenburg is that, when Bach started it, he was living with his wife and his brother, and five of his seven kids, the other two having died when they were very young, and he was very content. Then he went off to Carlsbad to the summer retreat for royalty where he provided the music for his prince. His wife, brother, and one of his kids started dying, they sent a letter to Carlsbad, "Come home immediately," the prince's handlers intercepted it and destroyed it because they didn't want to upset the prince. So when Bach walked home from Czech Republic, he walked into find his wife, brother, and child dead.
- **Dan** - Wow.
- **Bob** - How he must have felt. And then a few months later, he meets Ana Magdalena, a soprano who came to audition for the choir, and they fall madly in love. He finished the Brandenburg, and then a few months later they're married. And so to me, that arc of being content, to the depths of despair, to the heights of new love, to the seeing your path forward for the rest of your life and being content with that, and doing hard and genius things, that that arc, that story arc, is in every note of the Brandenburg. And it's every note of the people playing, and that brings all of us together through the common experience of contentment, despair, ecstasy, death, and then normalcy, life. And that those are common experiences, it doesn't matter how much money you have, what your background is, or anything else, it's something that we all experience. And to me, that's what brings it all together.
- **Dan** - Are you going to--that to me, what you just said, is such a brilliant way to start the class, you know, it's to give--again, you know, talking about, you know, artists through their stories and all that kind of stuff, but to--you know--
- **Bob** - --The class starts that way, I guarantee you. Sorry, it's in the first two minutes of it. Yeah, it's the whole thing, that's the whole thing, man. That's what it is, that's what attracted

me to it without knowing anything--I mean, I didn't learn that until 25 years later. But that essence, that artistic essence that goes beyond words, it was in there that whole time, and that's why I loved it so much, because it was everything that was important in life.

- **Bob** - Well it's--it means a lot to me. I don't entirely know why, and I don't really entirely want to know why.
- **Dan** - Yeah.
- **Bob** - I want it to be a mystery, you know. I want it to be something that I love for some mysterious reason, in addition to the ones you can articulate.
- **Dan** - Yeah. Well, it's like, be here now, just take it in--
- **Bob** - --Yep--.
- **Dan** - --And the history, the future, it's like be here now, and especially in the story you told me about when you first heard it, you just--it was so fascinating to hear something that you'd never heard, and to be struck by it like that.
- **Bob** - Yeah, by a passing boat, that was--
- **Dan** - --Can't believe it!
- **Bob** - Yeah. Yeah, that was wild. And then every night, before I went to bed, I would listen to it. Yeah, I enjoyed that. I don't know, I've never gotten tired of it, all this time I've spent, thousands, probably 10 to 15,000 hours on it, and I've never gotten tired of it.
- **Dan** - With a piece of music or a body of music like that that you always hear something new in it, every time you listen to it.
- **Bob** - Yeah.
- **Dan** - You know?
- **Bob** - Especially since I can improvise, you can take it in so many different directions.

- **Dan** - Yeah.
- **Bob** - Yeah. It's been a gift, no doubt.
- **Dan** - Okay, Bob. Great talking to you.
- **Bob** - Thank you. Alright, bye-bye.
- **Dan** - Take care, bye.