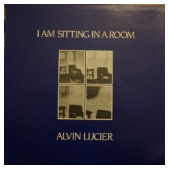
Alvin Lucier – I Am Sitting In A Room (1981)



1. *I Am Sitting In A Room (For Voice On Tape)* *45:21* Edited By [Digital Editing], Mastered By [Digital Mastering] – Allan Tucker Edited By [Tape Editor] – Bob Bielecki

The recording on this CD was created on October 29th and 31st, 1980 in the living room of Lucier's house at 7 Miles Avenue, Middletown. The material was recorded on a Nagra tape recorder with an Electro-Voice 635 dynamic microphone and played back on one channel of a Revox A77 tape recorder, Dynaco amplifier and a KLH Model Six loudspeaker. It consists of thirty-two repetitions of a simple paragraph of text, spoken by Alvin Lucier. ---dicogs.com

In 1969, Alvin Lucier, an American composer, performed his most acclaimed work, I A Sitting in a Room, for electromagnetic tape and voice.

"I Am Sitting in a Room" is a simple piece, lasts over 45 minutes and consists only in re-recordings of an original tape, in which Alvin Lucier records himself saying: "I am sitting in a room different from the one you are in now. I am recording the sound of my speaking voice and I am going to play it back into the room again and again until the resonant frequencies of the room reinforce themselves so that any semblance of my speech, with perhaps the exception of rhythm, is destroyed. What you will hear, then, are the natural resonant frequencies of the room articulated by speech. I regard this activity not so much as a demonstration of a physical fact, but more as a way to smooth out any irregularities my speech might have.". This process is repeated 32 times, and Lucier's recorded speech starts to sound distant, distorted, and specific sonic frequencies starts to dominate the recorded sound. As these frequencies grows,

reinforces with each playback, the result is an erasure of the human performer and the dominance of an environmental music, or the acoustic space.

It's not only a fascinating experiment, it's a unique piece of work, but unlike John Cage’s 4'33", the listener becomes aware of the spaces and empty silence between words and sounds. As the words continue to disappear, the sounds emanating far longer than seems necessary, and the mind begins to wander. Lucier shows that there is no room, and given long enough, everything fades until wisps are all that remain. ---I.M. Zig, sputnikmusic.com

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