APPENDIX 2

TRANSCRIPTION OF THE MEMORIAL HELD FOR JOHN FAHEY IN SALEM, OREGON ON MARCH 3, 2001 AT WILLAMETTE UNIVERSITY[1]

John Doan (Introduction and Welcome). Master of Ceremonies and Associate Professor of Music at Willamette University.

"I'd like to welcome you all here to the Collins Center, and thank you for coming and being friends of John. I know that you wouldn't be here if you hadn't been touched by John in some way. For those of you who don't know me, I'm John Doan, and I'm an associate professor of music here, and I'm a guitarist and a fan and an old friend of John's.

To bring you up to date of the events of this last week, [I will] run through a few things. You know that John passed away on February 22, three days after having heart surgery. He passed away at the Salem Hospital, which is on Winter Street, just south of here. He had a number of health problems that seemed to complicate the surgery.

There was a funeral that happened this past Friday, and that happened at Rest Lawn, a funeral home that is just west of Salem on Highway 22 as you go out of town. And that is also the site where John is interred, and there will be a plate with his name on it. It was decided that this should be a place where people can go to remember John, and so that is there for you.

Reverend Willie Davis presided over the service. Eulogies were given by Verlyn Mayer and Leo Kottke. Masumi Timson, Koto, and Eden Davis sang "The

[1] Recorded by Nick Schillace. Initial transcription by Lisa Belanger. The first seven speakers were scheduled speakers at the memorial. The remaining were allowed to speak.

Due to some inaudibility and grammatical phrasing, editing has been necessary in some sections. Additional editing has been done for clarity. Editing by Nick Schillace.

Eleazar Song" and Terry Robb played an arrangement of John's "In Christ there is No East or West."

I [would] like to thank Willamette University for recognizing the significance of John's passing and donating this place [student lounge at Willamette] for us to be here. John was no stranger to Willamette. He played concerts here. He played the Smith Auditorium and the Bistro, he lectured in the class room on occasion, and we even had a time where he worked with the English department in an effort to try to transcribe some of his writings.

I would also like to recognize Tim Knight, who has spearheaded all of these events, without him we might not have been able to gather as readily as we have. He has worked many hours and I hope you will have the opportunity to go up and personally thank him.

We worked close to Melody Fahey and Mitch Greenhill who are long standing people in John's life, and we are just grateful for all the friends who came forward and offered to assist and speak with you today.

I talked with various people about coming and speaking and most everyone said "What can you say? I wouldn't know what to say," or "If I started talking I wouldn't know when to stop." John was one of these people who was an extraordinary individual, and as you will hear today there are many sides to John. I sort of got to thinking about an old tale from India that had four blind wise men consulted to describe an elephant, all from different parts of the body, and they all had different explanations. I sort of think that's what we are going to get today. We are going to get quite varied stories from various people who knew John."

Mitch Greenhill. Folklore Productions.

"I first saw John Fahey perform in the mid sixties–- maybe at the Club 47 in Cambridge, maybe the Cabal in Berkeley– I can't remember which. I have to admit at first I didn't get it; the music seemed hard to crack. It didn't have a structure, or at least one that I could relate to. It seemed harsh and confrontational and challenging. Fahey himself seemed much the same, with little regard to the amenities that one

expects from a performer. I was kind of expecting a performer to present songs to the audience as an offering with vows and seductive entreaties that we should accept the gift. But John more or less flung his music at us and if it slipped by our ears like a fast ball thrown through butterfingers, too bad.

But unbeknownst to me I was already under his influence and owed him a debt of gratitude, because some months earlier I had attended the Newport Folk Festival, and there in the dewy grass of the blues workshops Skip James had showed up and blown me away.

Several of the older blues singers had already been rediscovered, Mississippi John Hurt, Sleepy John Estes, Sun House– these were familiar names, or becoming familiar names, to those of us whose hearts had been taken over by the Delta blues sounds. But to me the early recordings of Skip James were especially affective, and I had a dream of hearing him in person and didn't think I ever would. So he stepped onto the misty workshop stage and began to sing, '[singing] High times here everywhere I go, all the people are driftin' from door to door, hmmm.' And I was transported. It was just as beautiful as I could have imagined. I didn't think much at the time of who might have taken the time to track down this guy from clues and recordings and rumors. And what sort of insane person would go to that extreme to give me this beautiful experience? And it was, of course, John Fahey.

Years later I joined my father, Manny Greenhill, at Folklore Productions in Santa Monica, California, and one day John called up; he had landed in a confusing mess of business problems and asked my dad to help him sort it out– which he did, with the result that John's early Takoma recordings are now available on CD on Fantasy Records.

These may well have been my first conversations with John, and a number of things struck me about the man. One was his sweetness and gentility. Where in performance I had found him difficult and kind of in your face, in person I found him gracious and gentle. I was also struck by his intelligence. He was not what you would call 'consistent' intelligence. There were areas in which he was really sharp. Bill

Belmont of Fantasy Records has called him 'a true American musical genius, and he will tell how John knew the matrix numbers of all the old Charlie Patton records. Charlie Patton was the subject of his Masters Thesis.

And yet there were other seemingly simple tasks, like returning an important phone call that seemed to be beyond his abilities. At first I thought he was being a willful artist, but eventually I began to realize that in a number of respects, especially in the business arena, he needed some taking care of. Gradually, and especially after my father died, that became my job.

While John had trouble with some basic business concepts, he was in other respects a brilliant business man. Since John's death, George Winston and I have been talking on the phone. George has pointed out that John has pretty much invented the artist owned record label. Takoma Records preceded the Beatles' Apple Core by quite a few years. Today we are not at all surprised when artists from the Rolling Stones to David Grissman to George Winston control their own work. But it was John who first went out and did it, without a model from which to work. And of course he was a smart enough business man and had keen enough ears to record George Winston, Leo Kottke– others in this room, you know who you are– when no one else was all that interested.

Now John knew he had trouble handling money, so he asked me to put him on an allowance. We were managing his publishing company, and he wanted a pretty modest amount of money to be sent to him every couple of weeks. At one point I suggested that he had enough resources to increase his allowance, but he wouldn't hear of it; he said that he had 'no self control' and would do 'bad and wasteful things with it.' With some trepidation I asked him what his weaknesses were that he was so afraid of; he said 'CD's, buying CD's and taking women out to dinner.' Relieved, I tried to talk him into easing his self-imposed restrictions. 'John,' I said, 'These are two of life's great pleasures, maybe you should indulge yourself a bit.' But no, he was afraid of the gaping maw of too many CD's and too many flirtatious dinners. Now I'm kind of sorry I didn't insist a bit harder.

[I] got a note from Pete Seeger last week. Pete wants guitarists to 'start now

[learning] John's Christmas repertoire so we'll have it together by December.' He calls John a 'stubborn genius.' To that I would add he was a kind and graceful man, and an artist perhaps too sensitive to the harsh world around him.

The other day I was listening to The Voice of the Turtle, and now when I hear John's music I find it wonderful. It is infused with the spirit of the old blues masters like Skip James and Booker White, John's other major rediscovery.

Fahey's guitar casts a wide net over American traditional music, even as it pushes its boundaries into a strange world all its own– odd sounds bump into each other, harshness becomes sweetness, and parallel dissonance somehow coexist in a beautiful [and] fragmented reality. I think I get it now. John Fahey, hail and farewell, we miss you."

George Winston. Solo artist, Producer and Owner of Dancing Cat Records.

"I just came from doing something that John was my role model in doing: recording the great solo harmonica player Sam Henton. Sam is eighty-three, and I've been trying to get him to record for eighteen years, so he finally agreed to. We just got done last night and I was able to get here. John changed my life more than any other person ever has. I wouldn't be doing anything that I spend my twenty-four hours a day [doing] without him: playing solo concerts, making solo instrumental albums, or recording the Delta blues players from Hawaii, which is called 'slack key' over there, and having my own record label. It all comes from hearing him.

I first met him– I went to a concert of his; there was piano around [and] I played a song. He said, 'Sign him up.' I hadn't sent a demo tape or anything. So he was the doorway through everything I do and the whole purpose of being here.

I was a bit much of a groupie in the beginning. I was so much in awe of the guy. He cured me of that really quick. He taught us to be ourselves, to not even care what he thought. In the end, what he thought did matter to us anyway, didn't it?

We didn't know whether he was going to attack or tolerate our nonsense. The lingering problem, besides not being able to hear him play, hang out with him, and hear his incredible slant on history and so many other great subjects, and to be with

him for whatever was happening right then, is how do we explain him to the uninitiated? I need five books; but I made myself promise to just say it in five minutes.

John has been and will continue to be a great influence on music as we know it: as a solo guitarist, a composer, and independent record owner/producer. Starting your own label in 1958 is like a million years ago, relatively speaking. He's one of the great individuals of all time. I love his enduring smile, his rascal smile; sometimes they're the same.

He issued albums of the great guitarists besides Leo Kottke: the late Robbie Basho, Rick Ruskin, Michael Galeasean, [and] Peter Lang. He produced Tinh Mahoney's first record. He has always been my role model and always will be. Suffice to say, things would be very different if he had not been around. He was my very dear friend. He's certainly the one and only person who would have recorded me in 1972, the beginning of the disco era. I thank you John, but just knowing you or hearing you would have been enough– all the doors that [you] opened for me.

I share with all of you here a love of the whole person, of which his great and unique music is just a part, as you all well know. We will never see the likes of [another] one like him ever, and I had the privilege of knowing him for thirty years now.

One of the greatest things about knowing John, and there were many things, was that I appreciate the individuality of everyone else more; everyone has this in him, even if it is covered and repressed by society. Nothing ever stopped him for a second. May we all become ourselves. He was and is a teacher in a great way, because he did not want to be one.

I was very happy that he had much more peace in his life the last five years. Another amazing accomplishment is [that] he totally reinvented himself about five or six years ago as an electric guitarist. Inventing yourself is one thing, but reinventing yourself is another. He continues to inspire me in that way. I'd always urged him to publish. I'd say, 'I love your writing. I love the notes in the back of the records.' He did not even tell me he published his book [How Bluegrass Music Destroyed My

Life], which I only knew about a week ago. He didn't say anything about it; he didn't like to talk about himself.

What I like to do is play John Fahey songs on instruments other than guitar, because I can't get his guitar stuff right. I'm not saying nobody can, but I know I can't. One of his great slide pieces [is] on his Riverboats and Religion album. There was a review back in 1971 when that album came along that said, 'Riverboats and Religion and John Fahey just keeps rolling along.' And he did. So this is a piece called 'Steamboat Gwine Round the Bend.'"

[Winston performs on harmonica]

Tinh Mahoney. Guitarist.

"I first met John from John Doan actually. He said, 'There is this great American guitar composer that I really want you to meet, so you've got to go and meet him.' I went there [and] I really didn't know anything about John. I didn't know that he was this great and wonderful guitar player. We just kind of started off as friends. I invited him and Melody over for dinner one night. I asked him if he likes Oriental food and he said yes; and I asked him if he likes spicy food and he said yes. But actually that is kind of a lie, because John pretty much likes beef and broccoli or wonton– that was his range of Oriental food.

He came over. I used to live in this little garage that turned into a house. I got some pieces of fish, and I cooked it, and I put hot pepper all over it; you couldn't even tell that it was fish. We started eating [and] we just took one bite, and we just started screaming it was so hot. It was really funny. And so the first time I met this great John Fahey guy, we ended up having scrambled eggs for dinner. And that's kind of how we started our strange and wonderful friendship. It evolved into playing music later, but actually at first it was just a friendship.

Well, you guys probably know John, and boy he likes to eat. We used to go to King's Table all the time, you know the three of us [with Melody Fahey], and people used to say, 'Hey are those guys your parents?,' because we were there all the time, the three of us. I remember there was a girl there, she was really cute and

everything. John was always trying to be match maker. Melody, she used to be in a poetry class with Jim Morrison, so she had it all down, poetry and everything, and we thought, 'Wouldn't it be funny to write poems and give them to this girl?' So we would go to King's Table and the three of us would sit down and write these stupid poems [laughs] to this girl and I think she quit before we quit going there [laughs]– we scared the heck out of her.

When I thought about sitting down and talking about John I [could] sit here for days: to talk about the stories we have done and the hours and hours I used to spend with him listening to these old 78 records in his basement. The quality was really bad, but John would always say, 'Listen to what he's [the performer] doing,' and it was just amazing. When I first met John I was studying under John Doan at Willamette University, and I played only classical guitar. So, John [Fahey] said, "Well your music is really good, but it would sound a lot better on the steel string guitar," you know, because that was his thing. I didn't have money to even get a guitar, so he lent me this little Yamaha guitar, it has really great tone to it; so that's how I started.

John taught me all of these open chords and he said, "You're doing a lot of good stuff, but try this." So he sat me down and showed me all these open chords and everything and listened to all these other great Delta blues players and eventually what happened was he liked all the music [I was writing] and said I'm going to produce your album. So we recorded the album and [it] was a great experience for me to have this man take me under his wing. [We] used to play all these concerts, and everything together and he was so proud to tell people that I was his protege, [he would say] 'I'm Tinh Mahoney's mentor and you have to remember that." He was really proud of me. We did this recording, and what a wonderful experience [it was] to have John there, and it was just amazing knowing John [as] just a regular friend and person, and all of a sudden he gets into the studio, and he turns into this musical genius or something. It was just an amazing experience.

About a year later he turned around and asked me to produce this album. His alter ego, as you know, was Blind Joe Death; that was his first album. Later on he had an album called Transfiguration of Blind Joe Death, and [then] he had The

Legend of Blind Joe Death. When we were making this album, he thought, 'Well, let's go back to my roots and just do a lot of these blues and things and we're going to call it I Remember Blind Joe Death.' So, I produced this album and, like George [Winston] said, 'You're so lucky, because with John Fahey people come and go, but you made a complete cycle with him. He produced [your album] and you in turn [producing his album is] sort of like a completeness with you guys somehow.' And within that year he was writing some new material, and he started writing this song, and he said, "Well I can't play it anymore, so I'm going to show it to you, I'm just going to show it to you and I'm going to give you this song– this is your song, you can do whatever you want to do with it, but I only got this one part down so it [isn't] complete," That was about fourteen years ago. So after John died, just a week and half or so ago, I picked up the guitar again and starting playing some of his music, and I remember the tune that he taught me; we didn't even have a name for it or anything. So, anyway, I completed the song and even in death he still inspired me. I finished up this song and I'm just going to play it really quick for you, and this song is called 'I Remember John Fahey.'"

[Mahoney performs song]

Tim Knight. Owner of Guitar Castle in Salem, Oregon and Member of The John Fahey Trio.

"Is the Lord ready for John Fahey? Does he have ample sunglasses? He's going to need them.

I got the opportunity to play a lot of shows with John over the last three or four years: the electric stuff that George Winston had spoke about, the direction John took. If you've ever seen him play, you know that he is very comfortable in sunglasses, and he used to say, 'I would take my sunglasses off, but the world will explode." The world exploded on February 22.

There are tons of stories. I spent a lot of time with John in a car, because you don't walk to a gig, and I rode many places and listened to a lot of stories. I wish I could have comprehended them all; I couldn't come close. But I'll share one story

with you. I just had to pick one, I'm going to share this story of John's 60th Birthday. I kind of had two roles, not only did I play with the John Fahey Trio, but I booked him shows on his own and made sure he got to those shows. I got a call from a good friend in Tacoma, Washington, about a place called Swiss Hall, a place where Terry Robb has played. It's sort of a blues club, generally speaking, and it's a very nice venue. We made an arrangement for John to play there and he hadn't played Tacoma in many years. For you and I to go to Tacoma it takes three hours. Well, there are a lot of Goodwill stores between here and Tacoma. And the largest Goodwill store is in Tacoma, and it's a big one. We made the arrangement, we got to the gig and it was like this [the memorial], it was standing room only. He hadn't played Tacoma, so they were really looking forward to John Fahey. Like I said it was his 60th birthday. So, the gig went wonderful. There is a local band in Tacoma by the name of Ring that John particularly liked. He liked their sound and their style, and so they warmed the show up. They were popular in Tacoma, so the crowd was really into them, and John played the show, he played it wonderfully. It was electric guitar, but it was still fingerstyle, open tunings, [and] it was a really neat show. As many shows, the show came, the show went, off to the hotel; let's get John into the hotel– all of that. The focus of my story is the ride home, which took several days.

We left Tacoma for the long journey of thirty miles to Olympia, and we hit it hard and I was so happy. We needed to gas up, get food, and hit those thrift shops. I found a Fahey album back in the glass case; there was a bunch of them at a really neat store. We went to a couple places, had lunch, and were only 30 miles away, [and] there are more Goodwill. Let's go! We hit the highway. John is in the backseat; Tina and I are in charge, we're happy. New Vinyl! John Fahey record! Good! We've had food, John had more food in the backseat where he had his books and all the stuff he'd bought at the Goodwill, and he's going though all that, getting a little nap in– all of a sudden the car stops. I realized we ate, we Goodwilled, we went to record stores, [but] we didn't go to gas stations. In my adult life, in my teen life, in [all] my life I've never run out of gas, and it's not something I was to do with my wife in the car, my friend John Fahey in the car. We have an itinerary, we

need to get back. There are more Goodwill stores in front of us and I am in charge of my vehicle, my wife and my friend, and I'm thinking, 'Oh my God, I've run out of gas! I'm not having a good time,' and John just says, 'Tim, it happens to me all the time. What's the big deal?' Well, the big deal is that we're on the freeway– we're nowhere. So, I just get out a piece of paper and scratch the word gas on it and stand out in the rain, in the Washington rain, and got soaked. It wasn't too long that a car had gone its six miles to the exit, seen us, turned around and came and pulled over to assist, get me to the gas station, and make the long loop again and bring me back. And, of course, he thought we looked like musicians or something, so he was a drummer and we had a good time and when we got there John autographed his newest CD and we made it. But for him to say to me, 'It happens to me all the time,' to me that typified my relationship with John. I'm nervous about it, [and] he couldn't care. So, we played together for four years and I remember every note that he played."

John Doan.

"John Fahey, we all know him as the American icon. He probably will be remembered for his public image, media soundbytes, books that chronicle American fingerstyle guitar, in the annals of pivotal figures of the 1960s, and in the minds and hearts of all of his fans. He'll be remembered as a Grammy winner, America's leading fingerstyle guitarist, prolific recording artist with forty-five albums, pioneer of the alternative music industry, as musically innovative, brilliant, eccentric, and so forth. The list really goes on, and he should be remembered for all those things. His public life reflects remarkable achievement, considerable creativity, insight, and innovation.

By contrast, I'd like to remember John the person, at least to the extent that I got to know him. I first met John when I opened a show for him at Boon's Treasury, a little performance site here in town, in the early 1980s. It was a wonderful time; we had a great concert. John always looked forward to playing Boon's. It was a place he always could count on [to have] a full house of fans. And he had decided, with his wife Melody, that they would escape the insanity of Los Angeles, where they had

been living, and they would move up here to kind of the peaceful, laid back Northwest. Before this, they were up here at Boon's [and] the show concluded, and Melody came up to me and said, 'You know, John's had too much to drink. Can you help bring him back to the hotel?' So I got him in my car. He sat in the passenger seat and I followed Melody over. Well, he got it in his mind that he wanted to lay down in the backseat, and so without much announcement he started to maneuver his big body over the seat and kind of got half way stuck between the ceiling and the seat, and I was watching him half out of the corner of my eye and through the rearview mirror. And then he finally flopped over into the backseat and let out a groan, and then was sound asleep. From this point on I realized that John really wasn't capable of being anything or anyone else but himself, and he didn't seem to be concerned about making a good impression. He just was simply who he was and where he was. I found him incredibly refreshing, uninhibited, and one the most memorable people that you just couldn't forget; and [he is] impossible to replace.

I can remember sitting with John listening to classical music. He really loved classical music; he loved all sorts of music that was played with soul and with heart. He didn't just listen to it, he was engaged in it; he would talk about it as it was going by. I remember listening to Mahler's Fourth Symphony and all the different allusions to childhood, all the struggles that were confronted in childhood and then life taking over: the seriousness of it– the adult world.

He played music of country blues guitarist Charlie Patton, which he knew quite a bit about, as he wrote his [thesis on Patton] at UCLA. He mused about a track that he played; he said that this piece had been sent out into outer space, and it was apparently in a Mariner space probe. He was musing about what other life forms might think of us, you know, hearing this soulful wailing of Charlie Patton. He said his life had never been the same after hearing him, and I think a lot of us might say the same about his [Fahey's] music and how it has shaped us.

John was a man of strong contrast. He was often very gentle with a convincing childlike manner. He had a remarkable way of being present, of being spontaneous and painfully transparent. To me, he was like a house with no walls, a

room with all windows. He told you what he thought whenever he thought it, whether it was good or bad, and sometimes his behavior ran both extremes as well. You never had to wonder what John was thinking because he told you, and often times in great and sordid detail. I'd hear him in an interview, or from the concert stage, or at a party, or even across the table at a restaurant, and he would tell you about his daily things or his bodily functions. He would tell you about how his father would read to him from the Bible and then, in short order, would proceed to molest him. This was John; he was just very comfortable and knew no other way to express himself [about] whatever was on his mind.

He was quasi-scholarly, in a way that I found somewhat difficult to comprehend, as his thinking was not confined to linear thoughts, but rather was a result of imagination that flowed in a stream of consciousness– a free association of ideas. Consequently, John is an enigma, standing out from all the sameness of the world around him. When most people present some air that they know who they are, and they have defined the world, and they know the order of things– John wasn't like that. To him everything seemed to be a riddle, and most of all he was a mystery unto himself. His fame even seemed odd to him at times. After receiving a Grammy for album notes he thought, 'Well, what happened to the notes that came out of my guitar.'

John oozed expressiveness and creativity; it was just natural for him. Whether it be in conversation, or in writing, or even some of his experiments in his painting; it is absolutely fabulous. He did a recording of Tibetan throat chants with guitar playing. I thought it was absolutely brilliant. It was haunting– It was a haunting window into this inner John, this pain that lurked inside that was looking for a way to escape.

David of the Psalms wrote how one solves the riddle upon the harp. I think that John's harp was a steel string guitar. Although known for his guitar playing, paradoxically it was the one thing that seemed to bring him some of the most discomfort. Especially as he was placed, reluctantly, in front a crowd of his peers who were waiting for him to entertain them. It seemed to me like he was a bashful

child who had to sit for extended periods of time with people watching him with nowhere to go but within. I remember hearing him numerous times in his later years, playing; he [had] to try to settle down when he was performing. So his way of settling down was to play whatever came to mind– for a half hour or so– just meandering from one hammer on to one fingerpicking pattern to another; the faithful stayed.

He had a stretch where he tried to find solace in relaxation from drinking alcohol, but the demons unleashed from that wanted more and more of him, and it was both overwhelming for him and those close to him. Concert promoters became concerned. The less faithful fans began to leave his concerts and close relationships became undone. John found himself at times lonelier than most people could bear.

I often wondered if John was used to being misunderstood, as it so forged his isolation. There is a theory that I have that John was comfortable with being rejected and unwanted in various ways, [and] he was just used to it. He would often go out of his way to say the unexpected thing, to put people off and be separate from them– apart from them– and I think that this is how he felt anyway.

He told me once that he thought that he frightened children, that he was uncomfortable with people his own age, and that the greatest people were the young gothic persuasion people. People wearing black and with spiky hair doos. He said that they were the best people because they accepted him; they didn't judge him. John self admittedly scorned his parents and from time to time seemed to blame them for almost everything. And early abuses either real or imagined, appeared to deflect John from any course of normalcy, leaving his emotions in an apparent, kind of frozen state of development, mingled with the innocence and wonderment of childhood, with a brooding anticipation of some sort of adult world. Adults making sense just didn't make sense to John– every word was suspect of concealing meaning. His conversations were really quite extraordinary, as he would delve into the meaning of words and what was said.

You could greet him with a, 'It's good to see you, John, ' and he would say, 'Is it?' He just seemed like a child, locked up in an adult's body, kind of estranged

from himself and from anyone else who tried to define him. He could tell if you didn't love him, that part was easy, as most of us in this world look from the outside in, instead of from where it really matters.

John did not stay the course down the center of the road in life, but rather found himself at its extremes. On one side he experienced great fame and financial rewards, and the other side there were long stretches of obscurity and crippling poverty. He had seen decades of adoring fans in major cities wither away to almost unbearable loneliness at times in a little hotel room here in Salem, Oregon. In spite of his personal problems, John was a survivor. At one point when he needed money, he'd even sell his guitar, thinking he'd just find another one later. If he couldn't afford his rent or medications he would just check himself into the Union Gospel Mission here on Commercial Street, and there he slept on a cot in communal sleeping quarters. In spite of all of this, John never stopped dreaming dreams, and he never stopped doing creative work. There were still recordings, and writing down his thoughts on napkins, and he even completed a book recently, and he always enjoyed searching for LPs and all sorts of other discarded things at Goodwills and garage sales. He found value in the discarded; I only pray that we too will do as much. I for one will miss John Fahey the American icon. And more importantly, John the person– who he was, and who he was struggling to become."

Terry Robb (Eulogy). Guitarist and musical collaborator.

"Well, the deal with sunglasses, I'd like to clear that up, is that John used to buy his glasses at the Goodwill, and the only ones he could find that one time to fit his prescription needs happened to be sunglasses. So that's way he was wearing the sunglasses for a while.

John Fahey; the great John Fahey. A fearless man who often lived in fear. A man of great strength who could succumb to weakness. A man of great achievements who would often reevaluate them as failures and unimportant. [He] touched so many people, friends, and strangers, and would put off those very same. Duality? Maybe. Up and down, east and west, joy and despair; John Fahey

embraced both. Whereas [with] all great men, he was on a search for the truth, or maybe just a search for what it's really all about. He could easily laugh or cry at the same time about the same things– a big man who was not ashamed to be a child. The child wanted to be a big man, but at times there were obstacles to go through. This he understood; we would only watch with amazement [the] great discoveries and pain. Fahey changed people's perspectives with them knowing it or not knowing it. I know he changed my life over and over again, always for the better though. All these things came through in his music, [for] which he will be best remembered. This man truly wore his heart and his soul on his sleeve and, astonishingly, like few others, through his music.

So many things can be said about his music, but that would take a long time. This is for later, for the historians– I only hope that they find it in themselves to search as he did for the reasons. The music reflected joy, happiness, sadness, darkness, horror, love, humor– but it made us all feel better. An intensity followed by a calmness upon hearing it and a wanting to return to hear more, to experience [it] once again. For his search was our search, his beauty and his ugliness is ours, only he had the nerve and the bravery to pursue it for us. You always felt through his music, or when you saw him perform, or when you were with him, that you were in the presence of greatness– genius. I've met a few so-called geniuses, but without question he was genius. He wasn't afraid to show his weakness, or sadness, or perhaps most likely, he couldn't help it for reasons already mentioned.

He was academic and street at the same time; he saw the beauty in Stravinsky and Charlie Patton. He enjoyed and appreciated the great thinker's mind and the common man, and could converse joyfully with both without prejudice.

I first heard John Fahey's music thirty-three years ago, [and] it changed my life. When I saw him perform, it changed my life. When we became friends, it changed my life. I loved the fact that he was a grown adult and a child at the same time. When I first heard his music, it struck a deep chord inside. It sounded familiar and new at the same time. It had the past, present, and future all together at once, like all great art has.

Why Fahey befriended me, I'll never know. I can only guess that he trusted me and although I idolized him as a musician, I always treated him like a friend– that was important to me. We liked to make each other laugh– there was an appreciation of the absurd. He was gracious and generous with me beyond belief, both professionally and as a friend. The trust was that neither of us could fool the other. I would push him in the studio, and sometimes he wouldn't want to be bothered, but he would come through– he'd always come through– because he trusted me, and that's what I was there for, producer and friend. He was the same with me as well. I remember once I played him two new songs that I had written to get his opinion. He really liked one, but he said the other was just awful. He said it was like some bad song he might have written. He was excited about this one song I wrote, but about the other . . . We went out to dinner with Melody, John and I, [and] he continued all day and all through dinner about how he couldn't believe I had written such a terrible song. In a way I was flattered, but I knew he was right, and deep down I knew he would say this all along. Our friendship was the most comfortable then, even if we hadn't seen each other for a couple of years, we would pick up where we left off, as if we just had breakfast together. I always treasured this and I never took it for granted.

I don't think that there has ever been a day that I haven't thought about John and his music since I first heard him thirty-three years ago. I know it's a sad day, that in the physical sense he is no longer here, but he enriched our lives and when someone enriches your life, that person will always be there with you.

John didn't like adulation, he simply wanted love and care in its purest form for what he himself was. Just like all honest people, he was always honest with himself even in denial. Love is supposed to be an easy thing, this is what we are told, but in this day and age, or any day and age, it can sometimes be hard to muster, because love embraces all things good and bad. I know that I love John Fahey, and I always will."

Dan Leasy. Music Millennium.[2]

"John Fahey was so comfortable with the concept to death, that as Tinh Mahoney said, he used Blind Joe Death as his alter ego. One of the very first experiences I had with John, that showed me how he liked to use the concept of death as material for his creative process, happened when we produced a concert in Portland in 1969. We met John in '68, but I'll get back to that in a minute. In '69 in about October or November, John drove all the way from Los Angeles up to Portland, to do the 1969 Odd Fellows Hall concert, with myself, John Bunts, Stu Dodge, George Hood, and a few others. He made it in his car all by himself; he drove 920 miles and stopped in Albany, New York.[3] Then he called me on the phone and he said, 'Dan, I'm here in Albany and I'm sick. I don't think I can make it all the way to Portland, in fact I think I'm dying.' I didn't know exactly how to react to that, so I said, 'How long do you have John?' He said, "I think I can make it through tomorrow night's concert.' And he did. It was a marvelous concert; he brought his turtle along– he often did this. I managed to produce four or five concerts with John over the next four or five years in Portland. The '69 concert was a very unique show. He brought his turtle with him and talked about the perils of turtles on the highways, and he was so sincere about his love of animals. It was a reflection of his love of all life forms and it came out in his music and it came out in him personally. And as Terry has pointed out, and Tinh, and you others who have spoken so nicely about John, he was very, very human.

I first met John Fahey in 1968. I went down to LA specifically to meet him. My wife at the time said, 'It's beautiful down in Malibu, can we maybe move to California.' I said, 'I'll tell you what, if we can move to Venice, California, so I can find John Fahey, you've got a deal.' So, we moved down there specifically to meet John Fahey. I didn't meet him by looking him up in the phone book, as a matter of fact I went to Safeway to get some groceries, and who should lumber up behind me with his gigantic influence? John Fahey. I turned around and there he was, and I said,

[2] Begin non-scheduled speakers.

[3] It is recognized that the geographic preciseness does not match the story. It is assumed that Leasy simply misspoke or confused the details of two separate events due to the nervousness incurred from speaking.

'You're John Fahey!' He said, 'Yeah, I think so.' [I said], 'You changed my life!' John said, 'Oh, I'm sorry. Excuse me, I didn't mean to.' Anyway, we arranged to meet, and we did meet and had a great evening over there with Jan [John's first wife] who is here with us today, and arranged for John to come up and do some shows with me; we talked about it at least. We made the plans and they were fulfilled. I moved back up to Portland in December of 1968, got snowed in at my brother-in-law Don McCloud's house, and for three days we couldn't move, we were stuck. At least we pretended we were stuck, we probably could have walked out of the bus. Instead, I proceeded to tell Don McCloud and my sister Lauren how wonderful this man's music was, and turned them on to all the music, and talked Don McCloud into starting this record shop with me called Music Millennium. The thing is, in a way, John was somewhat responsible for Music Millennium. If I hadn't gone down to LA I would have never seen this little music revolution shop up in Beverly Hills, [and] I wouldn't have gone back equipped and ready, and inspired by this great man to do something with Takoma Records. So, Music Millennium opened in 1969 as a showcase for the largest selection of Takoma records on the West Coast. It's true we sold a lot of Fahey, and soon after [Leo] Kottke and the whole catalog.

The really, really important thing about John was the effect that you all know he had. John interpreted a whole universe with his music; he would take a simple folk tune that was at once extremely familiar, and yet revolutionary. We had never heard it before, and yet we had always heard it; and this music was brought up, and then it was brought up, and then it went through into another dimension and we got to go with it. And this is the effect that John had on me, and so many of you, with his music. He took us places we didn't even know were there until he invented them, and then they were always our world.

Thank you for enlarging our world with your great vision."

Melody Fahey.

"John overcame a lot of things. He no longer drank. He was through with a lot of the drug things that he had done before. And he was through with a lot of the

anger that he had had and he came to a lot of peaceful resolution. He didn't smoke anymore, and he wanted to live. He said to me that he wasn't sad if he was going to die during this last episode with the heart, and he didn't want me to be sad. He did want to live, but he was satisfied with the music he had performed. I believe if he had lived, he would have overcome some of the other things that he had problems with, such as his diet, because he had overcome a lot of other things, and I am very proud of him for that."

John [last name unknown]. Former neighbor of John and Melody's.

"I was a neighbor of John and Melody, and I just knew him as a person in the neighborhood. His simple joy of life is to be noted. Just a kind and gentle nature. I said, 'John, it would be nice if my son could learn the guitar. He's been begging me to play since he was four.' He [Fahey] said, 'Bring him over.' So, Luke bought an electric guitar and a six inch amp, and I brought Luke down the street and John would say, 'Just let me finish up frying this pound of bacon and I'll be right with you.' And he'd slap it on a couple pieces of toast and say, 'OK, Luke, start working on this.' He laid out a plan for Luke, and he played at the Richmond School for the Christmas show with Luke.

He was just a sweet caring fellow. It was just a pleasure to know him. I felt obligated to say just how wonderful he was, he was quite an eccentric guy. We talked about the hippy days and his face smiled, he said, 'I had quite an adventure in those days. I think I was a God at one time.' You know, people on acid thought all kinds of things, especially when you play like that. He had a lot of memories, and at times would go back and share some of those. He's a great story teller, and a very gentle person. It was a pleasure to know him."

Glenn Jones. Musician, writer, and member of Cul De Sac.

"Hello everybody, my name is Glenn Jones. I recorded a record with my band Cul De Sac and John Fahey in 1996, and it was probably the worst experience, and the best experience, of my life. I'd known John since the mid

seventies. I used to see him and Melody when they came to Boston on his many tours, and they visited about three times a year.

I was invited by John to come backstage and meet him after I identified a song that he played as being by Bola Sete. After saying, 'If anyone knows who this song is by let me know.' And everybody yells, 'Chet Atkins' and 'Bar-B-Q Bob,' all to John's astonishment that anybody could possibly think that what he played sounded like either of them.

I became friends with John over the years. I was working for Rounder [Records] at the time that John and Terry Robb were recording their various records for Varrik during kind of a low period for John in terms of the Epstein-Barre that he was suffering with. But I visited John many times here in Salem, and in Boston, whenever he was out there. I won't go into the horror story of the making of the record that we did, which John named The Epiphany of Glenn Jones, except to say that the record, which at the time we made it I described as a bit of a psychodrama– because we rehearsed the album for two weeks, and John was very excited about the material, very excited about the band, and I have tapes and tapes of our rehearsals and his enthusiasm is just all over them– and then when we got into the studio he said, 'Fuck you, I'm not recording this music.' He pulled the rug out from under us, and the pain of that experience, when we had spent all this time preparing for it– and not just preparing for it physically with the music that we were playing, but preparing for it emotionally as well– hurt in a way that things rarely hurt in life. I have to go back to remembering moments when I had a crush on somebody in high school or something like that, and was rejected by the woman, to remember something that was as painful. Or a moment of realizing that you very much disappointed a parent as a young adult or something, to remember something you couldn't understand, or something that you were powerless to change, to think of an example that compares to what I felt in the studio when John said, 'I'm not doing this any more.'

My desire was to run away from it, away from the thing, and to just let the project go and not worry about it; I didn't know what else to do. It was a bit of a psycho drama at the time, but I now look back on it as a bit of a morality play in a

way, because I think that for John, in retrospect, the making of music came first, and when he couldn't any longer put himself with an agenda that was ours alone, I think he had to say the music is more important, and friendships and everything else comes secondary. I have an absolute devotion to my muse and this is not my muse, and I'm not going to go along with it. It hurt painful; but out of that whole experience came something, as Terry Robb was saying, changed my life over and over, it definitely did change my life. I needed to sort out the event of making that record in my mind, and that became the notes to the album, which I had never planned to include in the album. But when Fahey saw the notes he said, 'These have to go in the album, it was about the horror story about the making of the record.' I said, 'Are you sure John, because none of us come off particularly like beautiful people in this story,' and he said, 'It doesn't matter Glen, it's true.'

When I told him that he had been my idol, and I now saw him as a man, he said, 'Good! Now perhaps we can be better friends.' And he said of that adulatory of him– which he saw from many people– he described it as a horrible thing and something which people did to him. I think a lot us, in John's later years, found ourselves in the position of defending John's own earlier works to John, and arguing its merits with him. And that was an unusual place to be, because it seemed you made these records, [and] you must like them. He would reevaluate them constantly in light of where he was at 'now' and he often said, 'No. They [the recordings] were dishonest,' or 'They [are] emotionally suspect now." He would challenge you on them. I said, "John, how could you possibly put down The Great San Bernardino Birthday Party? That's a record that changed my life.' And he said, 'Fine! But that has nothing to do with me.' It basically forces you to evaluate your system of beliefs, what you believe in yourself, what you believe in friendships, what you believe in relationships– all that sort of thing.

To the young man who said that you'd wished that you'd known John Fahey, let me tell you, you would be a different man today if you had, and probably for the better. But, don't make it too rosy. John was very specific and very bound if he wasn't going to make you understand the difference between the music and the

man. He made it very clear that those two things were not to be confused, and I think that right here, right now, is probably the last place he would want to be. He would probably want to be at a thrift store a couple blocks down and the hell with this. But, I do think it's wonderful to hear all of these stories, because it seems to me that there are almost as many John Fahey's as there are people who knew him. I hear some of these stories and think that half of that can't be true and I'm sure people are listening to me and saying the same thing now. I'll just finish with a few stories about the making of that album that are not included in the liner notes. John Fahey, in the recording of that album, gave me two pieces of advice. One was that he said, 'Glenn, never play the guitar standing up, that's one of your problems. You should never play standing up.' We were in a rock band and we always played standing up. The other advice he gave me was, 'Don't ever fingerpick, it's a disease. It's a disease which I never was able to overcome, but I wish I had been able to. Get away from it as soon as you can and be glad if you can do that.'

Another thing that happened during the making of that record was that he was staying at our house; we were rehearsing at our house for a few days before we actually went down to the studio to begin working on the record. I came in one morning– I don't know if any of you have pets, but as your cats, or dogs, or whatever grow old, your dentist may recommend that you begin brushing their teeth. The first time my dentist told me to brush my cats teeth– I was supposed to sit my cat in the sink and stick a toothbrush in its mouth, it seemed very unusual. But anyway, I had gotten in the habit of brushing my cats teeth, it was about sixteen or seventeen years old, and one morning I came in and discovered John brushing his teeth with the poultry flavored cat toothpaste. And at that point, there was really no point in saying anything, and he never said anything to us, and I wondered what he thought. You know, these Cambridge lefties or something with their weird new age toothpaste or something. Maybe he liked it, I don't know. But I never said anything about it.

My final thought is that no matter where we were when we were defending John's earlier work or thinking about it, John had really no interest in talking about his

old albums. The thing he was most excited about was the album he was working on now and I had ferocious arguments with him about City of Refuge, a record I hated then and hate now. But John felt it was the best thing he had ever done at the time he was making it. And I think that is the best way to feel. We should all be so engaged with our present work, and who we are currently, and not be worrying about last week's work, or what our audiences expect or demand of us. He was true to his own muse, to the good, the bad, or whatever, that it meant in his personal relationships. I shed no tears for John Fahey. I celebrate his life, and like Terry Robb said, I think about him almost every day. His music has meant so much to me and the man has meant so much to me and I will always love him, but I can shed no tears for him. I think he did in his life an amazing amount. He has accomplished so much, and he has given us so much, and there is still more to come. So, celebrate John Fahey today, if you're so inclined, and keep a good thought for the music, and keep a good thought for the man, but keep them apart if you can."

Peter Lang. Guitarist and Early Takoma Recording Artist.

"My name is Peter Lang and John Fahey saved me from a career in public health. I was a kid from Minnesota that had fallen off the pumpkin truck and rolled to Los Angeles. I was in school there and was actually on my way into upper division zoology with the idea of going into public health. I ended up on the doorstep at Takoma Records. Not by my doing, but by some friends who were pushing tapes around; and John signed me and John was my patron, my benefactor, my mentor, and eventually became my friend. He watched out for me, and eventually we became great friends.

There are a lot of stories I could tell you. John was one of the funniest people that I have ever met. We laughed until it hurt. We had a lot of commonality, and we got a chance to tour and do a lot of things together. There is one short story I can mention. We had shared an interest in blues and early American music. He had a huge collection and had me over to his house and played me some of his [records]. He was interested in what I had, which wasn't much, and we came back to my place

and I took out my record player, which was from Sears Roebuck, and it was a $19.95 battery operated monaural with a little speaker in it and I put on something, Charlie Poole maybe, and John looked at me and said, 'Pete, where's the tone control?' I said, 'John, it's in my head' And he laughed and laughed, and a short time later he hired me at Takoma, where I stayed until my album came out. A short time later was the Takoma Christmas party, and I got a wonderful stereo that I used for the next ten years. I still have the speakers.

My memories of John are that he was one of the sweetest people that I ever met. He was a man of tremendous appetite, and that occasionally got him into trouble, but my memories of him are of a sweet person, of a good friend, and as somebody who watched out for me. Everything in my life from that point on at Takoma Records forward, was changed by the Takoma experience and John Fahey. And though I left the business for the most part in 1981, everything that came to me since then was a result of that experience. I was trying to think of something to say, as I was listening to all these people say things about John. John showed me a road less traveled, and in the end it made all the difference."