the Conversation

LARS AND TORBEN ULRICH

Interview Steffan Chirazi
Photos Steffan Chirazi, Lars Ulrich and Molly Martin

I've wanted to put a conversation between Lars and Torben Ulrich together for some years. Three, maybe four? Something like that. Why?

Well, ever since I first officially met Torben in 1987, he struck me as a tremendously unique, warm and fascinating person. Indeed, I would go as far as to say Torben had (and still carries) an almost seer-like presence. This, as you will discover, is through no fault of his own (indeed I can imagine him cringing a touch as he reads the aforementioned), but the fact remains that when you spend time with Torben, you are aware that he is significantly different to anyone you've ever known.

Over the years, whenever I have spent time with Torben I have continued to be left with a warm glow, a feeling that this man is in such total control and comfort that he has sprinkled some of that soul-nourishing pixie dust on all around him. And it is impossible not to start thinking about how varied, creative and interesting his life has been. From jazz to painting to film to sketching to sculpture...and a professional tennis career too.

Extraordinary. Unique.

We all know his son. We all know Lars, the dynamo, a man constantly in forward motion, a man who never stops taking in 1000 things from 1000 directions in the same 24 hours every day, a man who also leaves you with a glow (which is certainly warm at least 75 percent of the time!) and a man, too, who is unique in his explorations of life, art and boundaries.

I wanted to have the two men talk about the Ulrich family. I wanted Torben to tell us about his childhood, his upbringing, his life, about his parents, and I wanted Lars to be there in case he had questions to ask or perspective to offer.

I wanted to have Torben discuss his art and his energy, primarily because it's fascinating, but also to help us get a greater understanding of Lars Ulrich, and in turn some of the mental processes which have influenced Metallica over the years.

The conversation took place on May 12, 2005, over a six hour stretch from 5pm to 11pm in Torben's downtown Seattle apartment, a constant conversation broken only occasionally for some fruit and cheese.

It was a deep, long and enlightening conversation, one which will give the reader a **rich understanding of what lies behind Lars and what has motivated and moved Torben all these years. That is not to make** the mistake that a son can only be the sum of his father's parts, not at all, but it gives a greater depth and understanding of a person when you not only talk with their parents about them, but converse with both parties together about the family.

I think this conversation is about as personal and unique as we've had in SW!. It is my aim to bring you to the same floor seats, snack table, candles and conversation that we shared. Understand that this is an Ulrich family invitation to 'talk' family history, and as such I hope you feel every bit as welcome a guest as I did. Also know that we decided to keep it verbatim to convey the flavor and interplay of the conversation. Thanks to Lars for supporting the idea and making sure it happened, and thanks to Torben for his warmth, trust and expression.

Finally, I'd like to offer a special thanks to Molly Martin, Torben's wife, partner and collaborator. Always ready to help with a minimum of fuss and always a fastidious host in all respects, this issue would've been impossible without her. Thanks Molly.

Steffan Chirazi, June 2005

LARS AND TORBEN ULRICH

the Conversation starts here...

UNTITLED, TORBEN ULRICH

SC: Let me start with some pretty basic, just some family history. Talk about your family and where they came from, and what their situation were, was.

TU: Okay. So, Lars's grandparents, my parents, if you take my mother's side, they were a Jewish family. And on my father's side, he was out of a non-Jewish family and when I say that, it came to play into my upbringing later on, that's why I say that now, so you understand it.

SC: But both were Danish.

TU: But they were both Danish, yes. And my father, his name was Einer, E-i-n-e-r, and my mother's name was Ulla, U-l-l-a. My mother was born in 1902 and my father was born in 1896. And my father also had a first marriage, and in that marriage there was a daughter called Kirsten, K-i-r-s-t-e-n, and then my father remarried, and married my mother. They had two children and I was the oldest. And they had Jorgen, or in Danish ø, J-ø-r-g-e-n. And he married a Norwegian, and Jørgen also played tennis a lot. And if we are speaking tennis, we could also say that my father, our father, Jørgen and mine's father was a sort of, you could say, a ball player in the sense that when he grew up he was interested in all kinds of 'ball' and he played a lot of soccer, cricket. In the wintertime he played bandy. And so he played on, like he played First Division football in Copenhagen. Copenhagen Ball Club and also—

SC: Copenhagen FC (a professional side).

TU: Yes. KB, it was called at the time. Yeah. And then, you know, there was the First World War and all that, and he did that, and then he was an officer in the Danish horse kind of, dragoon, dragones or dragons?

SC: Yeah, it's the Dragoons. Yeah.

TU: So he was doing a lot of that. And then after the war in 19-, let's say '20 onwards, then he became more and more interested in playing tennis. And then he met my mother, who also played tennis.

SC: Oh, so both played tennis, right?

TU: Yes...they both won Danish championships but not with each other, you know.

SC: Did you ever ask them why? I mean did you ever inquire as to why they were interested in tennis?

TU: No. No, I never asked that.

SC: Really? Did you never wonder, were you never interested? I mean it's pretty rare that someone would have two parents that played tennis—

TU: Yeah, but it was almost, it was such a given thing that you could almost not, I mean it's like asking why are you breathing or something. And then my father was also a soccer referee, refereeing in all the First Division matches later on in the '30s, you know. And at the same time he played tennis, and then he played bandy in the winter time. This is just what was.

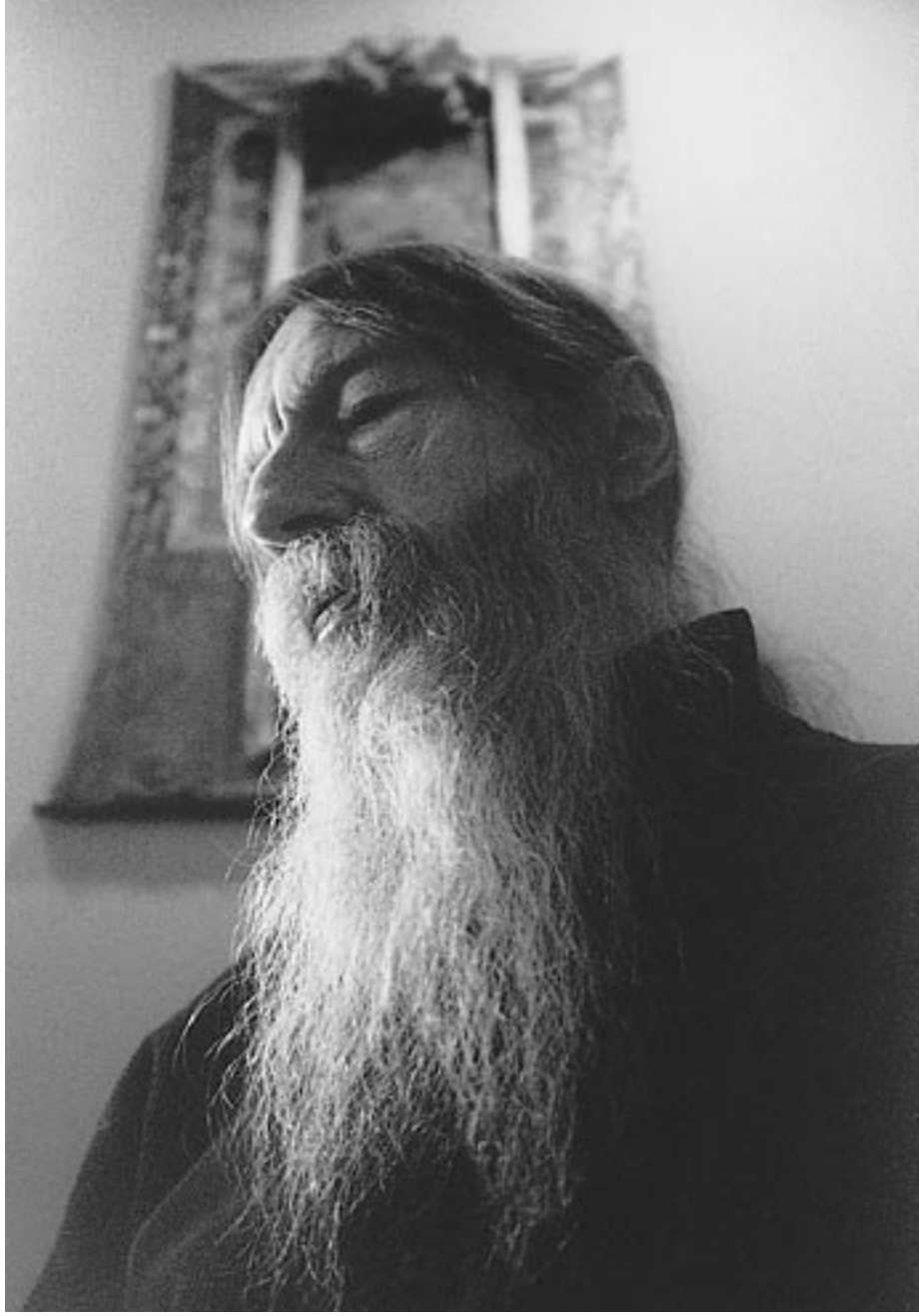
SC: Bandy is what, now?

TU: Bandy is, it's a winter thing on ice, with, almost like—

LU: Related to curling?

TU: Yeah—no, not at all. No, much closer to soccer. In other words, if ice hockey is with an angled stick and a puck, right? And a kind of a disc. If from a ball point of view, it's a disc, right? But in bandy you play with a ball, and you play with like a hockey stick. You could say it's kind of hockey on ice. And eleven people on each team.

SC: A Danish sport?



TU: I would say not much anymore, but when I went to a boarding school during the war years, then I played a lot of bandy in Sweden, and in Sweden they still play bandy. Which is a very popular thing relative to, what can I say? Relative to, Swedes play a lot of hockey. But a lot of people in the mountain cities are still interested in playing bandy, and you know, so still there's strong tradition as far as I know. Of course it's many years ago that I've been there and played myself. But at least in those years in the '40s and '50s, there was a lot of bandy going on there.

SC: Let me ask you something that I read in an old *Sports Illustrated* story on you from the '60s. There was something to do with having to evacuate during the Second World War. And I was going to ask you about that, and having to go—which I mean, this was pretty heavy to me—having to go to a German camp? Go to a prison camp?

TU: Yes. Yes.

LU: To Sweden. First to Sweden.

TU: Yeah.

SC: And this was basically because the Germans were moving in, right?

TU: No. No.. It's not quite like that. It's more like, I try to make it fairly short—

SC: Oh, take your time.

TU: Okay. Yeah, yeah. Let's say 1940 or something, in 1940 then the Germans came into Denmark, right? And so at that time there was very little military resistance from the Danes, unlike for instance the Norwegians or in Holland and Belgium and stuff, you know. So it was kind of a 'smooth takeover' from the Germans' point of view. And since nothing was destroyed and Denmark was of course still producing a lot of bacon and milk and dairy products, it seemed from a German point of view that it was a sort of a nice, quiet place where many people who came from the different fronts, you know, that they could come and sort of, what is it called, re-con-, how do you say that?

SC: Reconfigure it.

TU: No, rec-. It was called—Molly?

SC: Reconstitute?

TU: Yeah, what is that called when you go back and sort of, like (convelsie)?

Molly: Convalesce.

TU: Re-convalesce?

SC: Oh, just to spend—

TU: Or just convalesce.

SC: Okay. I got you.

TU: Yeah, okay. So in any case, you could say that in some sense there was not much of a problem with the situation there, let's say from 1940 to '42, into '43, and it was more like Denmark was completely run over, you know. But then slowly, slowly, a resistance was beginning—

SC: So in a sense it was easier when there was no resistance because there was just nobody really doing much. It's just like—

TU: Well, easy only in the sense that the Germans saw it as kind of a peaceful place where, soldiers would come and take it easy, be 'fed' up, you know, eat and drink Danish beers and

milk and butter, you know, and then be sent back to their different fronts. But then slowly maybe also (Danish) people could begin to see that was not kind of, let's say, a dignified response, you know? And many also went over to England, and they would come back at night and be dropped by parachute and stuff, sabotage and that kind—so resistance was building slowly over those years, you know. So everything was sharpened in that sense. And unlike, let's say in Holland and Belgium for instance, the Jewish people in Denmark had never been sort of questioned. But in August, September of 1943, then word got out that the Germans were beginning to look into the, you could say the Jewish issue in Denmark, more seriously.

SC: The holiday camp is over. We're now suddenly going to—

TU: And then let's say the police, the Danish police had already been arrested there in the summer of 1943. And so the resistance was sort of hardening, if you will. And so this sort of 'sweetheart' situation that had prevailed was beginning to—

SC: Dissipate, disappear, right.

TU: You know? And I think people were also to listening more to British radio at night. And so at night for instance, let's say in 1942 or something, we had to get up and we could hear the British planes rolling overhead, and then we'd have to seek shelter in these shelters. So it was increasingly a dramatic thing and everything was tensing up and, you know, maybe we didn't get to sleep much at night, because first it was all over, and then, you know, then we get up again, then two hours later maybe we had to go.

LU: I'd still like to hear the thing about going to Sweden.

TU: Okay. Yeah. Okay. Sure. So you just have to see that as, you know, this kind of thing changing, changing, changing. And so all of a sudden okay, we've heard now the Germans are going to take the Jews. And I mean I heard that but it wasn't like I was in a position to relate to that as anything. I mean it was, there was all this stuff and I had been—and I don't know if you have heard this Lars—that with all this going on that I've just told you, people in our neighborhood we felt were what we called fraternizing with the Germans and stuff like that. And so at a certain time, one of my friends and I, we were going to one of these people and we threw these things (almost like those spring rolls that we had today for lunch) that we had ignited, you know (Torben is talking about primative smoke crackers – ED). And then—

SC: A little, a small device.

TU: Yeah, yeah. Device, not the explosion so much as smoke, you know, it'd burn up and then you blow it out, and then it smells and smokes like crazy or something like that. So then we were caught doing that, and I was admonished that if this would happen again I would be sent away to some kind of prison or something like that, you know. So, I mean, there were things like that going on just in the day. And then at that time, you know, I was still going to school, I don't know, I was maybe fourteen at the time, right? Thirteen, fourteen. And so all of a sudden there was this about the Jews, but I didn't feel particularly that, I, that that was something I could relate to because I had never had a kind of a Jewish upbringing. And that's because my mother was never sort of, you know, pursuing that, and my grandparents that you saw in those pictures, they were not doing that stuff either, you know. So my mother had never talked to me about this, you know. And maybe I'd never, like you just said to me, 'did you ask those questions?' But I hadn't particularly asked those questions, and—

LU: Where was your dad at the time? Where was your dad?

TU: What was he?

LU: Where?

TU: Okay, yes. He was just around. I mean, he was there all the time at that time, and nobody saw that as a problem, particularly. But then when it turned serious in terms of that (the war), a lot of people felt that they had to get out of the country, get over to Sweden. That was maybe the most, sort of, problematic moment in my life because I was not at all prepared for this in the sense of knowing who I was in, you know, in sort of blood terms, if you will. Because to me, I had been confirmed. I'd been baptized, you know, when I was little.

SC: So you were baptized in the one sense, on the other sense you're having to move from your home for your Jewish blood.

TU: Yes. I was baptized. And then when I was thirteen and a half or when, early on—I was confirmed, you know... I was not particularly interested in having that sort of confirmation, but my mother was very interested in this. And that's why I say my mother was there. My father was okay, but my mother was the one that really felt maybe we shouldn't make waves or something. You know, particularly at that time with the German situation. And then we were, 'okay, now you have to go to Sweden' and the story, Lars knows this also of course, was that part of all this was that my father was friends with the Swedish King, King Gustav V, and they

All of a sudden there were machine guns, you know. And it was coming, and I could feel that, I had this little child on top of me and the machine gun was *deh-gegegeh gegegeh teduh. Bzzzche!* Like this, you know. And I couldn't get down, and we were under water [level] but we could hear the things going and so, so I didn't know for instance that, if this little child that I had on my shoulders was hurt. Torben Ulrich

played tennis together. And when I was young, let's say when I was, say, five and six and seven, I can still remember my father called off to Sweden, taking the night train and and playing tennis with the king, up in Sweden. And then in Stockholm they played, and then they had lunch, and then he was free to go back. And then come back the next day! So, that meant also that at that time, you know, that we had visas and all that, so we felt that, okay, maybe we can just get over to Sweden. But then it turned out we couldn't leave, so now we had to get out secretly just like everybody else. And then we had to get out on a certain night, you know, early October in 1943, we then went up to the north coast of Zealand where Copenhagen is situated. And from there we were supposed to go to Sweden, and I think we were maybe 17 people in a small fishing boat. And we all had to go down and into this, into the deep, into the ship, into the fishing thing downstairs. And I had my clarinet—

SC: This is the four of you or the five of you?

TU: That's my—yeah, that's a good question. Yes. Only the three of us. Only my mother and my brother and myself. The three of us.

SC: Mother, brother, you. Your father stayed behind?

TU: Yes.

LU: Why?

TU: Why? Well, in some sense I think that he felt that, you know, he was already going back and forth to Sweden maybe. And so he was, he didn't have to go there sort of secretly. You see? And so he felt that he could come over and visit with us, which he did actually. So—

SC: But he was able to continue visiting?

TU: Yes, because you know, he was not endangered. And of course the ferry was still going back and forth, you know. But you had to have a visa to go out and you had a visa to go into Sweden, you know. And that's why I say that through the king, and you know, that he could do that. And so I think, and of course I cannot know all the details since I cannot quite see it from their perspective, that maybe he felt that he could come and go. And of course no one would harm him, you know. But we at that time, we could be sent to Auschwitz or to Theresienstadt as it turned out that many of those people that I was with were sent out to Theresienstadt. Theresienstadt was the name, one of the German concentration camps, you know. Belsen, Auschwitz—

SC: I know Belsen and Auschwitz.

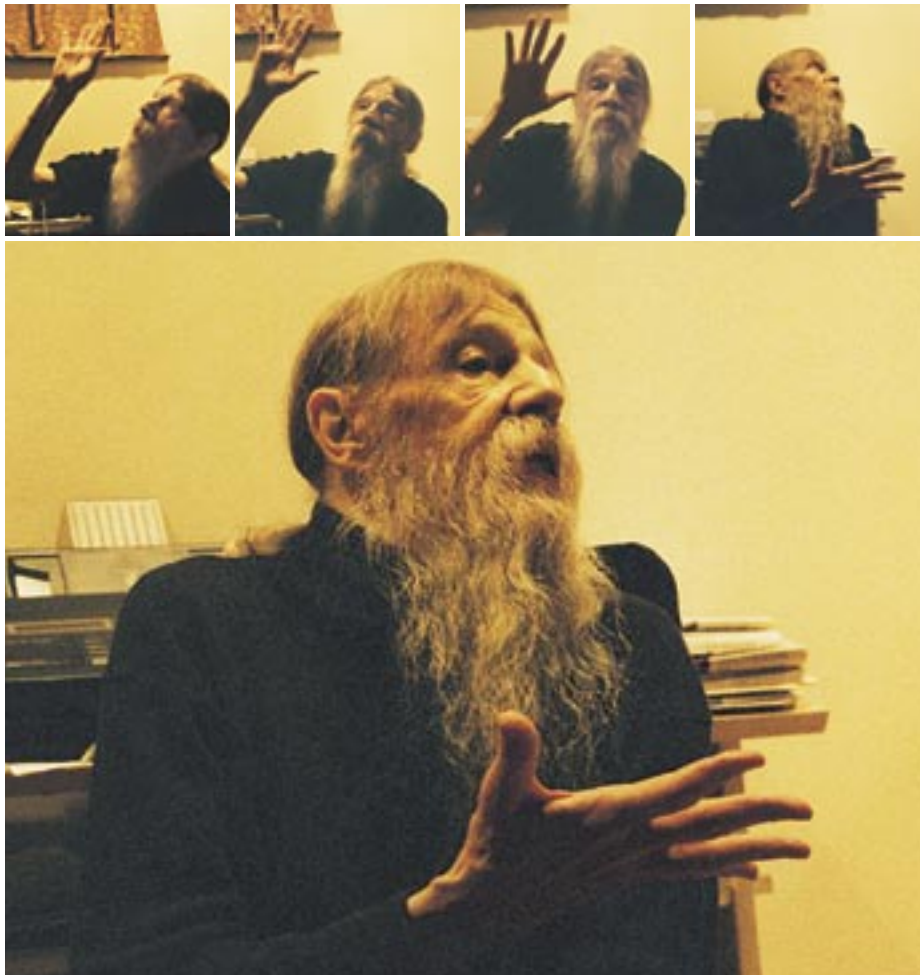
TU: And Theresienstadt was one of them.

LU: But finish the—

TU: Yeah. Okay. And so we went out and then we went into this, you know, the harbor with a little bit like, I can show you quickly, sort of. (Torben gets small sticks of Haribo liquorice, a Lars favorite, and starts to diagram the following – ED) Sort of, let's say this, if this was the harbor here, and then this was sort of a little bit like stone boulders. And I had my clarinet in my hand, and then because it was very tight down there, let's say if there were 17 or 18 or 19, I had a little child that I didn't know on my shoulders. And so we were coming out of the harbor and soon after it made a hell of a noise. All of a sudden there were machine guns, you know. And it was coming, and I could feel that, I had this little child on top of me and the machine gun was *deh-gegegeh gegegeh teduh. Bzzzche!* Like this, you know. And I couldn't get down, and we were under water (level) but we could hear the things going and so, so I didn't know for instance if this little child that I had on my shoulders was hurt. It was a little bit like a crowded elevator or something. I mean the drama of the story let's say was then that we were coming, and then we had been shot at from these two points here. And then as we came out, some of the older people downstairs, the Jewish elders, came up and to see what had happened. And then they tried to get the engine going but they couldn't, you know. And it turned out later on that the fishermen had jumped overboard, you know, and had thrown sand into the engine so we couldn't move. So we couldn't do anything—

I mean there were people, maybe older ladies that were in their 70s or 80s, you know? And it was an October stormy night, you know. And there were quite big waves. Not very big waves but still enough, they were coming in. And then we got thrown some lines and the strong men and me who could help, you know, had to go and tighten them on these boulders, so that there was a crossing line over to them. And then finally after several, several hours, you know, we were onto these boulders, almost safely, all of us. And nobody had died. And then apparently the Germans heard about this, so then at a certain point, let's say maybe 4:00 or 5:00 in the morning, October night, some big lights were coming, these kind of searchlights like those, sometimes at Tivoli or something, they're pointed up like that. And then they spotted us out here, and then in another couple of hours the German soldiers came all the way out here and picked us up and then we were taken to Elsinore, to some sort of a kind of an office and had to register and all of that and tell our stories, and then we were sent to this camp, you know, in Denmark. And then of course

HE WAS STANDING… BEHIND A KIND OF A WIRED FENCE OR SOMETHING, AND HE WAS LOOKING RIGHT AT US AND HE WAS POINTING HIS RIFLE TO THE GROUND. AND WE WENT STRAIGHT THROUGH AND HE DIDN'T MOVE. I MEAN, OBVIOUSLY HE HAD BEEN BRIBED OR SOMETHING.



the question was, and this is again where the story of my father comes into play, that then we, my mother and Jørgen and I were in this camp for several days, and then my father worked sort of feverishly to try to see if we could get out, since we, since, you know, his wife was Jewish but married to him, since the kids were not Jewish but only half Jewish, all that kind of stuff.. And so it turned out fine, from the point of view not being Jewish or not to be sent or whatever, or how my father had tried to help from outside. So all of a sudden after having been there maybe not that long, we were taken back to where we lived. And the question was then, should we try again? Should we not try again? Should we try again? And it was, also for me very sort of dramatic in many ways, and of course very stressful for my mother. And her mother, you know, Lars' grandmother—no, Lars' great grandmother. She and her husband were both very sick. And they were *(turns to Lars*), you know that stuff? *(Lars nods in the affirmative)* The same night that we tried to get away, they were taken in this big boat that was going to Sweden, but it was not going right away and so they were too, they couldn't have done this because he was too sick also, so they were put into a kind of, one of these big containers? And then they put these, what is it called, through little holes—what is that called, Lars? A kind of—

LU: Straw.

TU: Yeah. Breathing—

SC: They had a little breathing straw.

TU: A kind of a tube.

SC: For the air to come in, right?

TU: Yeah. And then, so then now they were in this container and they then they threw tons and tons of coal on top of them, you know. And I mean she was deadly sick and…

SC: This is your mother's mother.

TU: Yes. And my grandfather, and I mean basically they had to do their toilet and whatever, you know, in this container. And then they could breathe out of this tube, and then three days later I think they came to Gothenberg in Sweden and then—

SC: So they made it.

TU: Yeah, they made it over there. But unlike our little ship, this was a big official, big boat, you know, with coal and containers and all of that. And then she went straight to the hospital, and she died, you know, several weeks later, you know, after that kind of stress. So that certainly marked our lives, you know—

LU: But then you finally made it over—

TU: Yeah, some time later, maybe six weeks it was decided that we should go again and try, and then it was still quite incredible stuff, some of it. Also, like for instance, maybe you *(to Lars)* know the story how in full daylight we passed some of these German soldiers that were holding their guns? And we were told to go right at them and just go past them. As we came walking in a long line, with our bags, we could see one soldier, still quite far ahead. And he was standing down there at some harbor, completely unmoving, behind a kind of a wired fence or something, and he was looking right at us and he was pointing his rifle to the ground. And we went straight through and he didn't move. I mean, obviously he had been bribed or something.

TORBEN ULRICH
thoughts, ways & Musings

"I started out as an apprentice in journalism at Reuters news agency. They had a small office in Denmark right after the war in '46 or something, and I've been writing ever since that time. I came back from Sweden and right away I began writing. Almost at the same time I began writing for these Danish jazz magazines, then I became an assistant to the editor, and I ran around and talked to all these (jazz) people, wrote about it, and became (more) interested in the music that way also..."

SC: Right. I mean there's, because there's no other logical—

TU: I mean yeah, they were just, they were standing like that you know, like I'm standing looking at you, and you just go right here by me, almost touching or something. And we were, I mean, we were not that many, maybe ten-twelve people or something. And we had been told to just continue to, no matter—

SC: Just do it.

TU: Just do it, and don't stop, no matter what, just continue in that line. And that's what we did. And they were standing there and they didn't move, and we moved right past them. Then we got into, down into this other boat, and then we got out, and then they came down and they flew right over us. They flew back several times over, and then all of a sudden they came down and also there was some police people that came in and looked into our place, almost like, if you were, let's say, in the back of the car and police would come and look into the back of the car, and look at you and you're lying there. And they saw us all there. But they didn't do anything. Maybe they were bribed also, or paid, or—

SC: I would say so.

TU: Yeah you know, ten pounds of bacon (just to be sure for younger readers, Danish bacon is world famous – ED) or whatever it was! But that was the deal the second time.

LU: But then you made it to Sweden.

TU: Then we made it to Sweden, then later on my father came over because of all this with the Swedish king, you know, and also because my father had played (tennis) with this man, Mr. Wallenberg, a well known industrialist and all that. And then he would help, you know, his sons would go to a certain school, and then I could go to that school–

SC: So his friendship—

TU: I was very fortunate once we came to Sweden, you know. And in some sense had, compared to so many people, a very luxurious life, so that's what I mean that from that point of view I think we've all been fortunate. But from the point of view of understanding in some sense who you are and what does it mean to be Jewish, let's say from my mother's point of view, it's a different sense.

SC: Was this really a catalyst for you deciding that there's got to be life and perceptions and ideas of living and definitions beyond what you were brought up with? Do you think your subsequent life choices were a direct reaction to trauma?

TU: Of course... living in Sweden, you know, and being away from my parents, because I went to this school which was very luxurious, but of course I was without my parents—

LU: It was a boarding school.

TU: Yes, and I was without my brother. And then we came 'home' so to speak for Christmas and maybe spring break or, you know, that kind of thing. And—

SC: So you were growing up alone.

TU: I was growing... I mean it was, you know, those schools... (Torben's voice fades a bit as he grasps for a clearer explanation of boarding school life – ED.)

SC: No, I know exactly. What I'm saying is that at this very, very crucial point of your life you're growing up and you're having to answer questions for yourself.

TU: Exactly. Because I maybe couldn't understand why I had not known these things. And it's not like I blamed anybody, but in some sense we (the family) had never talked about these things. Of course, it's not like—

SC: There was no specific reason to talk about them—

TU: Right—

SC: Because they never—

TU: It wasn't like I didn't know about the Jews and Germany and all of that, but I just didn't relate, I didn't relate it to my own situation. And so when it hits you like that, then all of a sudden there's a kind of, you know, a kind of a crisis point, it's something, and you say, who are you? You turn out to be someone—you think you are, a Danish boy, you already played, you know (tennis), for your country in the junior teams. And I played table tennis. I was skating. I played soccer. You know, I played handball. We traveled. We played with English boys, and all of that, you know. But always thinking of myself as someone from, let's say from Denmark, and then all of a sudden you have to leave. You don't belong here. You're not one of those people, you know?

SC: Lars, I'm sure you and your Dad have discussed these stories before, but what's it like to hear it so tightly discussed? I mean, are you detached, can you detach from it and think, wow, this is a really interesting story? Or does it make you think—

LU: Oh, I mean I've heard stories or variations on the theme so many times. It sounds like a very long time ago, but y'know? As you were talking just then with my Dad, I was just sitting doing the math, and I said to myself 'when Deep Purple released Machine Head in 1972, it was only 27 years from when the war ended.' And we're further away from 1972, when Deep Purple released Machine Head—I don't know why I picked Machine Head—than when the release of Machine Head was from the war. So you know, it sounds like a very, very long time ago. It's

"GIVEN, PLAY OR GIVEN PLAY," TORBEN ULRICH

difficult to, I don't know, it just, it's difficult to comprehend. It's difficult to comprehend because it just sounds so—

SC: I mean is it difficult to place your father in that situation? Do you detach from the reality of it?

LU: Well, he wasn't my dad at the time.

TU: Right. Right. Right. I think, it's a good point. Yes.

LU: No, it's just interesting. I mean, look. Every time I hear it, I always ask different things, and this time I was more kind of wondering, *(shifts attention to Torben)* because to be honest with you I'm not 100 percent sure of, you know... were your parents together all the way up until your mom died?

TU: No.

LU: So they separated and divorced at some point.

TU: Absolutely.

LU: In the '50s.

TU: No, very early, you know. And that was also tough...anyway, I think that when we came home then after the war, right, on the, let's say the 5th of May, 1945, it was sort of the day of liberation for Denmark. I was there together with a Danish friend who also, who was a schoolmate in Denmark and is sort of family also. His name was Ralph Dessau. And what could we do to celebrate? We could go downstairs at this house where we were living in school and we played table tennis as a celebration of this liberation. And then the master of the, I don't, what is that you call this—

SC: Headmaster.

TU: The head-, no, more like the guy who was in charge of the, of that home where you live. He's called, you've got some good, good names for those.

SC: The dorm master or the house master.

TU: Yeah, I think the house master. All of a sudden, it's ten past ten, and we were supposed to be in bed and lights out by ten or something, and he comes into the table tennis place, you know, and we were playing like crazy. And he's standing there in the doorway coming in the door, and he's looking, and he had this very stern look. I can still see it. And then we said, "Look, Captain. It's this liberation day in Denmark, and we felt we had to celebrate," and he said—

LU: I don't understand one thing, weren't you in Sweden?

TU: Yes.

LU: This is in Sweden.

TU: This is in Sweden.

LU: Oh, okay.

TU: North of Stockholm.

LU: Okay.

TU: And then we're here—

SC: In the boarding school.

TU: And we're going to boarding school—

LU: Yeah, I get it.

TU: So what I'm saying is that here's this liberation day, let's say on the 5th of May. And of course, now we can go back to Denmark. And I was still going to school and there were still examinations and all of that, so I couldn't go back immediately. But Jørgen and, you know, my Mom, they could go back. And they did go back, you know, so that when I came back I think it was already over (Torben's parent's marriage – ED), so to speak, between them. Because at that time, during the war years, my father had fallen in love with this other lady. And so I didn't know this at the time but I could sense it immediately when I came back.

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SC: So is the time then when you start experimenting in terms of music, and finally when you are 17, 18, 19, is this when you start to stretch out and cock an ear to the rest of the world? What's the catalyst, what's the catalytic point for you to go merging into wanting to then ten years later go to India, then write—

TU: Okay. I see. Sure. Very easy. During the war years when I'd been up there, I'd been very interested in jazz music, and I was already from before going to Sweden. Yeah. So when I was eight, nine, ten, eleven, I was already—

SC: Why jazz so young?

TU: Why? I don't know. I just don't know.

SC: What did you hear that you liked?

TU: I heard Lionel Hampton and Louis Armstrong, and—

SC: Who was playing this?

TU: I don't know. I mean everybody in Denmark. A lot of people that I knew played this, you know.

SC: Well, I mean you're eight or nine at this point. I mean surely—

TU: Yeah, but I mean sometimes you just know... I can still hear some of that music on the way back from school, you know. With Hampton, Teddy Bunn, Louis Armstrong,

Mills Brothers, all of that. Why or how I heard—I mean, you could say that in Denmark those things made a big impression, you know, when Louis Armstrong came to Europe, and to Denmark you know. It made a big impression. Almost like when, Sonny Boy Williamson or, you know, Muddy Waters, when they came, it really rocked the place kind of thing. It did, you know? And at that time, right? I mean, everybody was talking about it. So everybody was talking about jazz music in the '30s in Denmark, you know. Freud, Marx, and Louis Armstrong, I would say. That kind of thing. (n.b. The first two are obviously philosophers, but jazz and philosophy share common space in this case – ED)

SC: You have to admit, eight or nine years old is a pretty young age to be self-dialed into this stuff.

TU: Yes, yes. And this is what I cannot explain, you know. Because this is where, you could say, there was a deviation from being born into this family of ball playing. And the ball was everywhere in its various ways. Sitting there with my father at the goal, you know, or with my father as a referee and, you know, seeing all these First Division soccer matches, sitting, talking to the goalkeeper when play was down, you know? You remember in the old days there was a kind of a bench next, right next to the goal, where all the photographers were. And I always sat there next to the goalpost, you know, and saw that. And then talked and asked questions about that. And then of course I played myself, so I was so much into that. And then there came this kind of a 'side wind,' coming to this music, you know?

SC: Wow. Yeah, so it's all coming at once.

LU: But I mean, Steffan, when you ask a question like that—

TU: And in some sense all of that's not so far from what happened to Lars also, you know.

SC: Well, we're gonna get there, yeah.

LU: No, but I was just gonna say, I mean, you know, why?

SC: Why what?

LU: Well, why did you listen to that? Why did I listen to Deep Purple in 1972, '73, or to Sweet, or why did you—I mean at some point, I mean the practical explanations for it, but once you start getting beyond the practical explanations for it, it becomes difficult to try and articulate. What is it about me in 1973? The reason I was listening to Deep Purple was because I went to a Deep Purple concert. But what was it I responded to? I responded to this, this, this, this, and this. Why did I respond to it? I mean at some point, then you have to say, there were 24 chromosomes in my body, you know, the makeup of my genes or something.

SC: But it's interesting, I mean the reason I would ask that of Torben is that to my little brain, someone who went through a period of intense structure and stress would immediately gravitate to music that encouraged no structure.

TU: Okay.

SC: That's why I was asking, because I wanted to know, early on. I mean—

TU: Okay. Okay. Okay.

LU: Sure. I think that's a great question, great analogy. I would almost dare answer in saying that from what little I know about this music (jazz), to say that Benny Goodman or Lionel Hampton had no structure, that's probably pushing it a little bit. I mean you could say Ornette Coleman in 1968 had little structure, but I think in some way, you know, with Benny Goodman or with some of those guys, they were probably almost like the Saxon of the day in terms of, I mean they were the *(turns to Torben)*. Were they?

TU: Yeah. We had also in Denmark a violin player called Svend Asmussen, you know, that had listened to a guy called Stuff Smith, and then, you know, (Louis) Armstrong had played with a band in Denmark. Then Coleman Hawkins had visited in Denmark. And there were Danish people, like there was a guy called Leo Matheisen who played like Fats Waller. Then there was, you know, the violin player like played that Stuff Smith and all that. And so pretty quickly we also knew of many people that played like that in Denmark after their idols who were sort of, you know, the American/Black players. So very soon it became also a kind of admiration for Black music in some sense. And then it spread out to being also interested in blues music and gospel music and in rhythm and blues later on, and so the whole spectrum of Black music became sort of

TORBEN ULRICH
thoughts, ways & Musings

...I had been playing music already. We went over to Sweden and I played for dances, so I already had played gigs over in Sweden at that time. And as I was playing all this music, at the same time I was playing all these ball games, you know. Also, early on I began to have a column in a Danish daily paper, because at that time it was not so easy to travel. But as a tennis player, you know, I was in Egypt, then Italy, I was traveling all over the place. And then I was going out listening to music, and then I tried all the time to have that kind of perspective of a 'criss-crossing' if you will. If I was playing tennis I sort of wandered into the night listening to music. And then when it was time to write the column I would write about all those things. So right from very early on, it came quite naturally for me to have a pretty broad palette...

...the press pass from Reuters helped me explore so much. If you were an amateur in those days there was a limit to how many days you could be away and travel (due to amateur sports Olympic rules at the time – ED). But if you were a journalist there was no limit of course. So if I wanted to stay a week, listen to music and be with my friends in London playing music, I could do that also because then I could write about it. It was also, you could say, a kind of passport...

When my father tells these stories about 'back in the day,' there's certainly not just a sense of wonder and the interest but also in some way a little bit of envy. Because it sounds like an incredibly fruitful and rewarding time. Lars Ulrich

the whole shield of something that you also tried to emulate or something, from early on, you know. And then likewise, let's say that we thought what would be sort of the best that we could do, in some sense let's say for Lars or something, that would be, you know, okay, his Godfather was Dexter Gordon, right? And we saw that as a kind of a strength. And we saw Black music and Black musicians as conveyers, if you will, of a kind of a music that was irresistible for us. But it is difficult to say for sure how, or why, we knew or felt this, only that we did and we followed that.

SC: Can I ask also about tennis for each of you?

TU: Yeah. Yes. Yes. Yes. Sure.

SC: I had no idea that it ran so long in the family. What's that? Is it an instinctual comfort, always, to return to a racquet and a ball and to play? I mean is it—

TU: No, I don't think so, no.

SC: Do you find it comforting? I mean is it one of the things that, you know, if you're—no?

LU: I can't say that I think of it as instinctual comfort.

TU: No, I don't think so.

LU: I'd say if anything it's more instinctual fun or something like that.

TU: Yeah.

LU: It's kind of fun.

TU: Yeah. I think that too.

LU: It's just kind of fun going out and playing tennis.

TU: And also he, I think it's something like—

LU: Anything deeper psychiatric—

TU: It's both, it's both—

LU: I mean I'd love to go there, but I... I just, I can't.

SC: Well, don't if there's nothing to find. I mean—

TU: No. But it's more like, it's in some sense, it's being at ease. I knew that as interested I was in all this music all that time, I was never, ever at ease with that to the same degree as with the ball playing. Then when I came back from Sweden, immediately I met a musician who was also a psychiatrist.

SC: Wow. That's quite a combination! That's quite scary.

TU: So he was very interested in music, and he was very interested in, you know, in psychoanalysis, in Freud, in Wilhelm Reich and those people. And what that meant was also then that I became very interested in many of those things relating to psychoanalysis and all of that, which again related to the music in the terms of we felt we needed to sort of loosen up, you know, muscularly speaking and all that. And so there was a little bit like, and then there was the political dimension of how many of those people, Freud, Marx, and Reich and also, you know, the Jewish stuff in all that—

SC: This is a very intense teenagehood.

TORBEN (SECOND FROM LEFT) ON CLARINET, SITTING IN WITH A NEW ORLEANS-STYLE BAND IN PARIS IN THE EARLY 1950S.

TU: And so in Denmark from '46 to '50, almost all the people that I knew were painters or medicine people or were all interested in all of this stuff.

SC: Can you honestly imagine a generation like that at that time in any other country?

LU: Paris, Amsterdam and—

TU: And London, too. Let's say when I went over there in the years of, let's say, '52, '53 or something, your George Mellie, do you know who that is?

SC: I know the name.

TU: Yeah, yeah, the name at least. I mean I would stay at his house and then I jammed with Humphrey Lyttleton and all those people... you saw that picture in the book from Paris. And next door, Sartre would sit, you know, and—

SC: As in Jean-Paul.

TU: As in Jean-Paul, yeah.

SC: Wow. Jean Paul Sartre! (existentialist philosopher – ED) This is a crazy time.

TU: '54 or something. It's a very intense time.

LU: But why is it intense? I mean a lot of the reason has to be also because it was all suppressed. That's also maybe why we can't imagine it, because we, none of us (referring to generations after Torben's – ED) have lived through a war on that scale, where the response to it becomes one that's life-altering. You know, on the other side of that war, even for the people that were not directly involved in it, it was still life-altering. I do think one other thing that I've come to understand in the last few years is obviously that we're talking about a very unique entity, a very unique situation that is probably difficult for anybody in America, Britain, France, wherever to understand. And that is how small a place we're talking about (with Denmark). Every time I hear a story from him about any of these things, at some point there's also always a reference to how everybody is completely interconnected. The next hour is spent talking about, "Well, your mom was, you know, lovers with that guy you met last night's father, and then somebody else, they went to school together, and somebody else was, you know, they worked together at the newspaper." And so it's like, every time you throw any random Danish name out there, there's always a fucking story, because the country's so small, Copenhagen's so small that the people that were part of this scene all knew each other. It was all such an intense and small gathering of people. There's 250 million people in this country (America) and I don't think that Americans can truly understand what a small scale operation we're talking about here. Nowdays what happens is that a lot of times you've got musicians hanging out with musicians. Writers hang out with writers, painters hang out with painters, but back then there was much more of a kind of cross-threading of people, simply because there weren't enough musicians to hang out with. So you ended up also hanging out with all the writers and the poets and the painters and the, you know, the—

SC: Things become much more productive that way.

LU: Yeah, and so there are many kinds of ideas and many kinds of things that flow through these types of situation, and maybe today, where all these scenes are much more segregated, that doesn't happen so much because they're more isolated from each other.

TU: I WOULD STAY AT HIS (GEORGE MELLY'S) HOUSE AND I JAMMED WITH HUMPHREY LYTTLETON AND ALL THOSE PEOPLE... YOU SAW THAT PICTURE IN THE BOOK FROM PARIS. AND NEXT DOOR, SARTRE WOULD SIT, YOU KNOW, AND—

SC: AS IN JEAN-PAUL.

TU: AS IN JEAN-PAUL, YEAH.

LU: EVERY TIME YOU THROW ANY RANDOM DANISH NAME OUT THERE, THERE'S ALWAYS A FUCKING STORY, BECAUSE THE COUNTRY'S SO SMALL, COPENHAGEN'S SO SMALL THAT THE PEOPLE THAT WERE PART OF THIS SCENE ALL KNEW EACH OTHER.

SC: Do you feel that you carry some of that with you, in terms of never wanting to sit still in one place and always being interested in moving from medium to medium?

LU: I think that's a great question. I never really thought of it like that. I never thought of my own carrying on of that—maybe. Sure.

SC: Torben, do you see it in your son?

LU: But I would say before he answers that, I would say that certainly when my father tells these stories about 'back in the day,' there's certainly not just a sense of wonder and the interest but also in some way a little bit of envy. Because it sounds like an incredibly fruitful and rewarding time—

SC: And free. It sounds incredibly free. What Torben describes sounds borderless.

TU: Certainly, yeah. But I think when I say these things and tell these things to Lars, then I feel that he understands some of that almost instinctively. He understands that very quickly, you know.

LU: It's also because of the visual references. Because I know all this took place within an area that was as big as from here to the restaurant that we ate at today, do you know what I mean? And visually when you go back to that part of town, it hasn't changed. You go back to that square mile of what we're talking about (in Copenhagen), and if you were standing there 50 years ago, it looked the same. It's the same bars. It's the same streetcars. It's the same road signs.

TU: And I think it's right what Lars is saying about, you know, segregation, now perhaps they'd maybe get so famous very quickly that the fame itself is a kind of a segregation. At that time, we could still move quite freely because that whole industry of paparazzi and that kind of newspaper, it didn't exist, you know. I mean I certainly feel that it was just beginning, but barely in those days that we are talking about, prior to 1955 or something, there was none of that. And so likewise, all these people, the jazz musicians could be together. All these blues musicians could be together. There were no walls in that sense.

SC: Well, it's not so easy today. I know that from time to time you (Lars) want to work with other people, and in terms of other types of touring acts and what-not. Am I right in thinking it's sometimes been a case of "Hey, let's go on tour. Let's get 'em on tour," and it's like, "Well, we can't do that because it doesn't fit the mold."

LU: Sure.

TU: Or sometimes you'd say, yeah, we cannot because we cannot play the second, we cannot be second on the bill or something like that.

SC: And I mean I assume you find that incredibly frustrating.

LU: Yeah, well, I always think in my own ignorant mind that everybody always wants to do what I want to do, so!

SC: Fair enough.

TU: ...I mean also let's say Chelsea (a British soccer club – ED) at the time when Lars had (the scarf), you know. I mean how they were approachable, and relative to nowdays and the star machine. You know, the star thing, and the bloggers and the websites...

LU: It's the same thing with tennis, though.

TU: Yeah, yeah.

LU: And the fact that you guys were all...

TU: ...yeah, well that's what I mean. We were staying with families, we're still friends with

you know, the Newmans and da-da-da-da, because we stayed with them, you know. Now everybody's staying either at this Four Seasons hotel or this other Four Seasons hotel. You know—

SC: It leads me way across, I mean how did it feel then to see Lars come, you know, hit fame at a point when the 'star machine' was very much alive, kicking and very voracious. I mean how was that to watch? Did you give him advice?

TU: No, I mean it wasn't that difficult. And also I feel, you know, what can I say, thankful or grateful in some sense, because he wanted it, you know, that he came through those very hard years (in New York, early Metallica days – ED). Because if you turn that around, we didn't have the difficulties that they had, you know, when let's say they went to New York and had all the equipment stolen and all that. So those were hard times also, you know, and that's not even to speak of those earlier days where he would go to rehearsals in the evenings and was still going to school and all of that. For his mother and I, those were dangerous days for us, you know?

SC: When you say dangerous, what do you mean?

TU: I mean dangerous in the sense of coming back safely from rehearsals. He was going every night, you know, an hour down the road, and on those Los Angeles highways, so that's what I mean by dangerous.

SC: Right, simple parental things.

TU: Yeah, yeah. I mean before he was safely back or not we couldn't sort of rest. Of course it was maybe more dangerous to us than it was to him. You always think about that, 'will they come back safely.' And so then when they come back 'whole,' if you will, they're not arrested, the drugs are not taking over, or whatever, then you move into a more comfortable territory. And then I think we have also been able to talk about the music, or talk about the tempos, all of those things, so I think I am always just more grateful for everything.

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SC: Let me come back to, now, when you met Lars' mum, and just maybe go through that, and how you met her.

TU: How did I meet her? Okay, you want to hear that?

SC: Just your early days, your days together.

TU: *(To Lars)* Do you know that story with the Duke Ellington record?

LU: Yeah, I've heard most of 'em. Mostly drunk though, late at night. So let the record state that there's no alcohol involved and it's still daylight.

TU: Yeah, right, right, right, right.

LU: But hearing those stories again—

TU: Okay, so here's what happened. I'm down at court number five at the tennis courts. That's where we would usually hang out, and behind there, there's this girl...

SC: ...this is in Denmark.

TU: This is in Denmark. It's probably 1945, in late summer or something like that.

SC: Just after the war. So you're not long back home.

TU: Right.

SC: Okay. So you're hanging out on the tennis court.

TU: And so there's this—

SC: Young man who is—

LU: Overwhelmed by his mind, trying to escape into jazz music. Looking for answers and then some hot chick shows up!

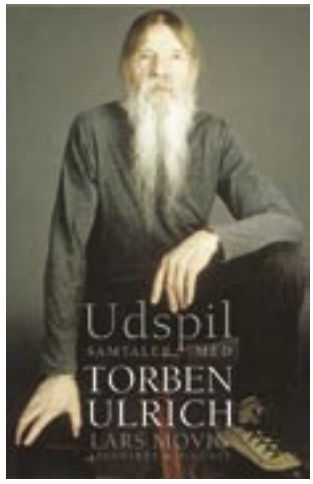
TU: Yeah. And then as I told you I'd been to Sweden so I knew these records. And in Sweden they had these records, but in Denmark not yet. So I talked with this girl, and she's standing sort of across from me with a bicycle, and we're talking, and then we were talking about records and I was talking about different records that I had or was looking for. And one record was Duke Ellington's 'Main Stem,' with a very good saxophone solo by a guy called Ben Webster, who later

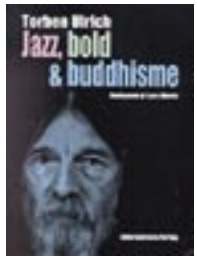
TORBEN ULRICH
thoughts, ways & musings

...The first one (book) was called 'Jazz, Ball & Buddhism.' The editor of that book, Lars Movin went back to all these writings that I had done more or less on anything. It was not exclusively about music, it was also about going to America, it could be about film, it could be when I was at the Olympic Games in Mexico City, it could be about going out and visiting Mexican graves or pyramids. It could be anything, you know. And let's say when I was going to India (playing tennis) or something, I bought a lot of records so that I could either write about Indian music or tennis. And then I could still review books and records in the music field. So 'Jazz, Ball & Buddhism' is about 500 pages of what he collected out of all these writings...

...Book number two is called 'Udspil,' and that's a little bit more about how I see the world and also where I was (am) coming from. It's in a conversation form so that the person asking the questions can have a sort of, almost, you know, like we had between us here, a conversation that goes back and forth. And then I'm working on the third book, and then ideally maybe there would be a book in English that would have excerpts from these three books...

...And then there's a fourth book which is coming out this fall, and that is this collection of these Lines and Off-lines, poetry maybe you'd call them, you know, which relate to the jazz band I play with called Clinch back in Copenhagen. And we also have this CD that's called 'Dice, Done...'





Of course I can recognize that I'm a product of, an offspring of those two people, but I also think in some way that I'm an offspring of that scene, of that time, of that point in time. Lars Ulrich

came to (Denmark). And so she says, "I have that at home." And I say, "You what?" "I have that at home." And I said, "Really?" "Yeah. Do you want to hear it?" I said, "Yeah, yeah." "Do you want to have it?" she says. I mean, wow! This is, I mean come on! Let's go! you know? Let's run and go.

SC: So she rolled out that famous old line 'do you want to see my record collection?'

TU: Yeah. Yeah.

LU: That's pretty good.

TU: I mean I got up on my bicycle and said, "Let's go." Lars went to school right next to the tennis courts, it'd take you seven minutes, eight minutes at a good clip to get to Lone's house, right Lars? Wouldn't you say?

LU: Yep.

TU: So, I tried to make her go as fast as I can. Sometimes I'm ahead of her, you know, and she's trying to *(panting)* keep up. So we go down to her home, and there's this big pile of old, of sort of records almost without any protection or something. There are some records in a big pile like this. One, two, three, four, five, six—

SC: Stacked vinyl.

TU: Twenty-three or so in a big stack, you know. And she points to it and says, "It's in there somewhere." And so I go through it feverishly. And so I come to this record, and it's a record by Duke Ellington and it's called 'Conga Brava'. And I knew it inside out. So I look through this pile and there's nothing but this Ellington record there, so I said, "I don't see it." "But isn't it that record?" she says about 'Conga Brava?' "No, it's not." So I said, "It was 'Main Stem' it was not 'Conga Brava.'" And so it cooled the whole thing down a little. So several years passed, you know, and I didn't see her again after that.

SC: Wow, really? Several years?

TU: Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. And I thought, maybe not. And *(to Lars again)* do you know the story?

LU: Yeah.

TU: Okay, yeah. So, and so then of course the next time was a little bit more like this where we were, actually we were up in Norway, Kurt Nielsen and I, we were on the the Danish (tennis) team. We played an international match with Norway. We were in Oslo, and here comes this girl with her mother, you know, and I say 'hi.' We know each other, from that time, you know. And so we meet there and we are playing there, and her mother said, "Oh, I'm sure we'd really like to come and see you play." And also her mother and my mother's sister, they knew each other. So there again, like Lars just said, small place, there's again a connection. And furthermore, which I didn't know at that time, her father had gone to the same school as my father, and her father was born in (18)94. And sometimes they would go home together from school and they played soccer together. So, the mother and the daughter now came to see us play in Oslo. And between the first and the second meeting, she had also been sent to (boarding) school in Switzerland to learn to speak French and German. And so later on she was very fluent in French. And then when I met her up in, *(to Lars)* do you know when I met your mother up in Oslo, that she was going to the cooking school? And she was sort of going steady with the son of the rector of the cooking school. So she was still seeing this guy up in Norway when I met her again. So when we were seeing each other more, then she started to want to become a photographer. And so she started as an apprentice in a well known photographer's place. I was playing a lot of tennis at the time, and I was also working as an apprentice journalist at Reuters in Copenhagen. So we would meet in the morning and go take the streetcar together, and go into town together, and then when she was finished I would sort of pick her up and we'd go from there.

SC: When did your first trip to India figure in, time-wise? Was she on that journey with you?

TU: Yes, she was. Let's call it 1948. Okay? And so there was a time when I was sort of very much ousted from...

LU: You should tell that, it's a funny story.

TU: You think so?

LU: Yeah, I think if you do it, you know, like say in less than ten minutes?

TU: Okay. Is there time?

SC: Yeah.

LU: It's a fairly funny story.

TU: Very funny? Or fairly—

LU: Fairly—

TU: Fairly funny, yeah. Okay. So—

LU: I mean for the readers of *So What!* now.

TU: Yeah, okay. So she—

LU: There goes the fucking '...Mailman' section of the magazine (correct – ED).

TU: Okay, so now we are really quite together, and things are going well, and we go up to the countryside, and Lone's father is very friendly and Lone's mother is very friendly, and that's good, all's nice. So I'm up there, and dada-dumdadum... and so we go back to

Lars and I have been able to share many of those things that I was not able to share with my father for instance, you know, those similar experiences. And that has been very precious…because what I could share with my father was always going back to the tennis thing and stuff like that…but there was a whole other range of things I couldn't so easily share with him. Torben Ulrich

where they live (the same house Lars lived in during childhood – ED.) And so we go back, and Lone's parents are going to Norway, so they went and I'm staying there, basically. And then one night unexpectedly, they return. So, let's say, on Thursday night we are going to sleep upstairs in her room, and all of a sudden there's some noise downstairs. And then the parents are coming home unexpectedly from Norway. I'm upstairs, now what? Do I jump out the window, or—

SC: And so what did you do?

TU: And so, at a certain point I come down tip-toeing and there they are, okay…

SC: You face the music.

TU: …Yeah, yeah, facing the music. So he (Lone's father) says to me, "I would like you to come to my office at 9:30 on Monday morning." You know in that sort of 'old style.' So I go at 9:30 on Monday morning and I go and in there, and he sits down, and he says, "Um hum," you know, and he says, "How about going to New York?" he says. "I will get you in, and then you can study advertising, and then you could come back and, in a couple of years…"

SC: He's trying to get you out!

TU: "…a couple years. And then you may, you know, work in the agency, and I'll take care of all the paperwork and whatever."

SC: Only thinking of you of course!

TU: Yes, ha ha…so, a nice education there. Okay, so okay. And so we talk about what about if Lone would get pregnant and stuff like that. I said, "Well, I don't know, but I don't think so." And so I thought, you know, this was really not the time for me to go that way because I was, with all of this. I was playing tennis like crazy, playing music like crazy, and doing all these, and studying medicine. At that time I was beginning to think also about becoming a psychiatrist, you know, and all of that. He also knew, my father had an agency and all that. So he's saying, if you go New York and come back, you take over your father's agency or take over here. And so of course, let's say this is still 1948 or something, a week or two later then, Lone gets pregnant. And that was not (predictable).

SC: So you became the bad boy in town, in his books.

TU: Well, so basically I didn't see him for maybe ten years.

SC: Wow.

TU: I didn't see him for—I mean if I saw him, I saw him in his car, like that, you know. And that ten year period, you know, we were still seeing each other. Then Lone went to America and had sort of, a kind of a romance with Nielsen, you know, the Nielsen—

LU: Leslie.

TU: Leslie Nielsen.

SC: With Leslie Nielsen?

TU: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

LU: Maybe he's my father?!!!!!!!

SC: You mean 'Naked Gun' Leslie Nielsen?

TU: Yeah, exactly.

LU: Maybe Leslie Nielsen's my dad!!!

SC: Let it be known that a conversation with the Ulrichs will always throw up a surprise, however much reading you've done.

TU: Yeah. Yeah, absolutely. Yeah.

SC: That's pretty good. And you knew this? Wow, that's heavy.

TU: Yeah. And also, Lone at that time saw—

SC: She split up with him because he wasn't funny enough!

TU: And so, and then she came back and then we saw each other, and then, you know, and then of course playing a lot of music, you know, you saw sort of a—so. Seeing her sort of off and on, you know. But then in 1958, Lone I think decided now we were going to get married. And then the question was who was to tell the father or something. And then it turned out that, you know, that when he heard he was really, really pissed off.

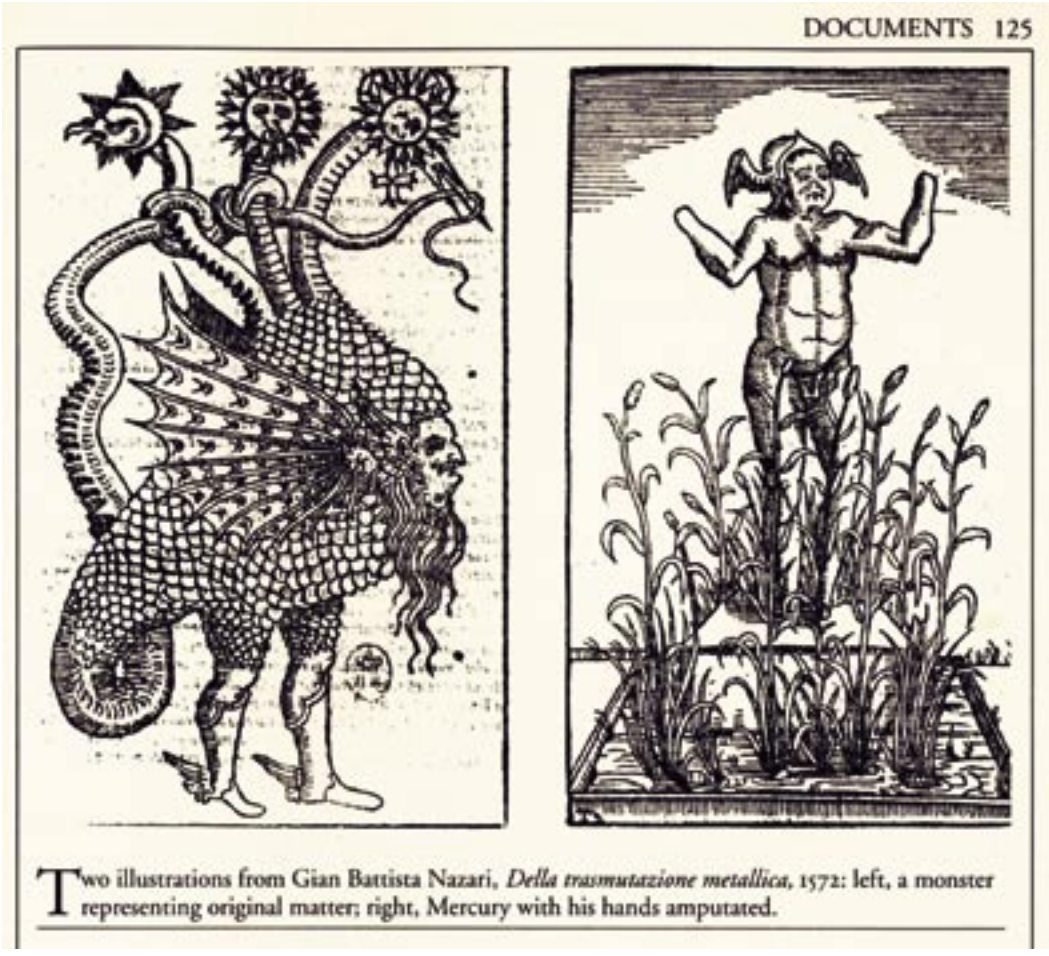
SC: Because he was a very conventional man.

TU: It got very dramatic. He started saying he didn't want to live anymore and all this. So on the very day that we were getting married, all of a sudden he decided that instead of maybe committing suicide he would show up for the wedding, and so he showed up for the wedding, we embraced, you know, and I hadn't seen him in all these years. And he said, "Why don't you come and stay at Lundevangsvej (the family home), and let's all be friends." We had planned to go to India, you see. And so we said, 'okay, we'll stay here maybe until we go to Pakistan and India together' and all that…*(drifts to an unrelated memory)* Lone was very good at driving. She thought about driving the Monte Carlo race, I mean when you saw her later on you'd say, 'really?' But she could drive, I tell you. She was eager, and she could go 24 hours driving like these Monte Carlo races, you know, where you go—

SC: When you think about both of these people, Lars, I guess you probably haven't—

LU: I'm listening.

SC: I know. So I guess you probably haven't thought about it much until recently. Do you



Two illustrations from Gian Battista Nazari, *Della trasmutazione metallica*, 1572: left, a monster representing original matter; right, Mercury with his hands amputated.

see yourself? I mean do you look and say, 'oh, well, that's where I get this from, that's where I get that from'? I mean frankly you both sound like enormous over-achievers.

LU: To me it's, I mean there's nothing, you know, when I hear this stuff and reposition my mind back into it and stuff like that, it doesn't sound particularly abnormal. It just doesn't sound abnormal. I guess, what I was just saying before I'll say again, is that to me that there's, you know, it's not just about these two people but it's also that these two people were the product of a scene, of a point in time, in a place that was vibrant and where this was a kind of almost fanatical search for all these types of things that just went on with all the people that were there. You know, just a frenzied journey of seeking all these things to experience, to get off on, to milk, to harness. Do you know what I mean? And so yeah, of course I can recognize that I'm a product of, an offspring, of those two people, but I also think in some way that I'm an offspring of that scene, of that time, of that point in time. I mean the dynamics that were going on, you know, it was a very, I think, culturally rich. And I think that sometimes it becomes a little limiting when you try to tie a particular scene together with a particular point in time. But it does feel to me, and also what I've also experienced and studied on my own, that those years, the early '50s, the mid '50s were a really fruitful time. And not just for him and her but for everybody. And so when I hear about that, I can totally relate to it. Not just because of who my mom and dad are, but also because I know enough about some of the surroundings that were going on at the time. So all of this stuff sounds completely, not only logical but it sounds in some way almost normal.

TU: Yeah. And we were all asking questions, searching, we were beginning to question the idea of empire and white power if you will, that kind of thing. And so when you begin to go that place then something opens up that is quite a new thing. You see what I mean? You open up to this music which is quite different from European classical music. Or you open up to this kind of thing. You know, or you open up to India, but in a different way, because, well, you remember the Beatles and all of that? (Torben is referring to The Beatles famous trip to India in the '60s when Harrison became infatuated with certain spiritual aspects of the culture – ED.) This is ten years before that. You also had that in this country too, you know, poets and musicians that would open up to that kind of thinking, a Kerouac and Corso, all of the poets, and they opening up to all of this. And all the drugs, the LSD and all of that opens up too, you know. But as things open up, let's say with all the psychedelic drugs, they also give you a different approach to things. It colors the vision. And so you come with a new vision to places (like India) that maybe had only been seen one way before when the white people had originally. So it

opens up and it becomes urgent to understand it in a new way, kind of thing. But at the same time it's very sort of laid back in one sense, because of all the drugs and all that. It's also about, you know, relaxing into a new situation. But at the same time it has a certain pace also because it's exciting to see this whole new world opening up.

And I feel that Lars and I have been able to share many of those things that I was not able to share with my father for instance, you know, those similar experiences. And that has been very precious, you know. All of that. Because what I could share with my father was always going back to the tennis thing and stuff like that, or the soccer, you know. We could share that. But there was a whole other range of things I couldn't so easily share with him.

SC: So was it a conscious effort on your part to make sure those doors were more open for him than they had been for you?

TU: I think a key point here is that his mother and I were very sure that he should contain these two strands, if you will, of possibilities. With the tennis, that he was sort of born into and also with the music that he was also born into in this way, that he heard all of that stuff, you know. And I mean...I don't know if you've ever seen this. Lars, can I go into your room just one second?

LU: Sure.

(Torben leaves for a moment.)

TU: I think this could even blow your mind, and the readers maybe too...Okay. So, this is my room. This is my room at (the Copenhagen) house. Okay. And Lars sleeps in here *(gestures to what would be a room next door)*, okay? And this picture is on this wall *(points to a picture of some artwork in a book, illustrated on this page)*, in this kind of size, like that. Okay? There's a picture on the wall, about this size. And I like that picture but I have no idea at that time where it came from.

SC: For the record the picture's about 5.5 by 3.5 feet.

TU: Very large. Okay? So that was the picture that was hanging there. You see what it says, where it comes from?

SC: *(laughing)* That's pretty great (the caption reads DELLA TRANSMUTAZZIONE METALLICA by Gian Battista Nazari, done in 1572, illustrating perhaps that Lars got the name subconsciously from childhood – ED).

TU: Isn't that something?

SC: Wow.

LU: Oh! I remember that! I remember the left part. Don't remember the right part. Where is this picture right now?

TU: Where is that picture? I don't know where it is. I think it's thrown away in the garbage can over at Jørgen's.

SC: I should explain that we are talking about a picture that there will be a copy of, (reproduced above left) and the picture has a title which includes the word Metallica.

TU: Right now? No, no, no. I've known that for quite... I mean later on I was wondering where it came from, so I was, so I've known this all along but what I meant was that as it was sitting there and Lars was in there—

LU: This was one painting, or just the left one?

TU: Just the left one.

LU: Well, that's what I'm saying. I recognize the left one.

TU: Yeah, exactly. No—

TORBEN ULRICH
thoughts, ways & musings

..It is important to preserve the feeling of these conversations. A classic example of that, I would just share with you very quickly, was when Louis Armstrong made a sort of a thing where he was also talking into a tape recorder to give his autobiography. And then he was talking about all this red beans and rice and all this stuff from New Orleans, and talking like he did, you know. And then at some 'esteemed' New York publishing house they felt, 'oh, we cannot print that kind of thing!' So they had an editor to sit and rewrite the whole thing, so that it became sort of some kind of English that he never spoke, and I mean that was a completely different idiom. Right? And then that book came out and then a lot of people began to see that there was no way that that had any real value as such. So a few years later, they went back and actually issued the original...

SC: Don't remember the right one.

TU: And while I remember this, there was this guy who was sitting right here where we are about a month ago. And he's also an artist, musician, saxophone player and a guitar player in Denmark. He was sitting here a month or so ago and he said he remembered clearly that Lars was crawling about on the floor as a baby, and over in the corner there was an African drum, a very nice drum. And he remembered Lars went over to this drum and sort of started banging on it.

SC: So you add drums to the Metallica name at the age of approximately one.

TU: I mean that's pretty wild, *(to Lars)*—do you remember him telling that story?

LU: Yeah. He's the guitar player in Gasolin, isn't he?

TU: Yeah— Franz Beckerlee. And he's one of the guys from Gasolin. And he remembered that still so clearly. He said Lars couldn't walk at that time, but that he crawled over to this drum and started beating on it. And then, the other thing which I really would like not to forget also, which I think is interesting—it is. I don't know how much—

LU: Take 'Shortest Straw' out of this one (done – ED).

TU: Then when he (Lars) got his first drums, he could play a lot of things—he says he cannot quite remember. But he would lis-

TORBEN ULRICH

thoughts, ways & musings

...I don't call them 'paintings' or something (referring to his art work -ED). There are great painters in that sense. I'm just someone that puts some ink on a skipping rope or something like that, you know. Just like I'm not saying that I'm a poet or anything like that, you know. So likewise I'm I'm certainly not a painter in that sense, but I certainly dabble with paint and ink, you know, or stuff, and marks or something. I'm more like sort of a 'marker' maybe, or something...

...I think it's being 'on the road' (a reference to Jack Kerouac – ED), you go into these marks, into the marks of writing, and then all of a sudden you hear something so instead of writing something you go into another language, maybe the language of music or painting, you know. So in that sense to me, it's like 'road' work...

UNTITLED, TORBEN ULRICH

ten to this number and then he could play a number. And that was sort of prior to when he became really 'bitten by the beat' if you will. You know, the sort of the just one-TWO-three-four type thing, never playing larger patterns than that. He had sort of a little doll that he called Slette, it's a kind of like a fox, and he called it Slette.

SC: Sletta?

TU: Slette, S-l-e-t-t-e. I don't know what that means. Do you know what that means?

LU: No.

TU: Slette. And it's interesting, it has no meaning in Denmark, in Danish or any other word that, I mean or any other language that I know. But he called it Slette. And so he would say, "Listen, I'll play Slette for you," and then he played this stuff. And I thought it was quite nicely constructed. And he could also repeat it, you know.

SC: And how old was he?

TU: I mean early, early, first, second drums. Or what?

LU: Fourteen?

TU: Was that when you got it? I'm almost thinking it was before that, and then you're saying "But I didn't have a drum set." But what could you have done? It was almost like you had some drums before you had that set from your, from—

LU: Maybe it was cardboard boxes.

TU: Yeah, maybe so.

LU: Paint cans.

TU: Yeah.

LU: I was just, you know, happy to play whatever I could get my hands on.

SC: Really, seriously, would you do that? You would arrange paint cans?

LU: Yeah, mostly cardboard boxes and paint stirrers. We used to, in '74, '75 we used to—I mean I didn't get my first drum kit 'til '76.

TU: Yeah. So you see that in '73, you would be ten.

LU: Seventy-five, '76.

TU: And he had already been to some of these concerts, but he hadn't taken up this kind of dum dada dum dada dum, you know—

SC: Right, he was still just doing it.

TU: And in some sense it's a little bit like, okay. Okay, that, and then, you know. And then, you know, it wasn't until we, that I thought—then I thought that when we recorded that thing, you remember, have you seen that film from Hawaii? (Lars went to Bob Rock's studio in Hawaii in February, 2000 to record some sounds/music for Torben's film 'Before The Wall: Body & Being.' – ED) I think that what he did over there is interesting. You know, and also for people to hear because it represents a side of him that people would not easily hear, or imagine, anywhere else. But in some sense, that's almost how he sounded before all that (Metallica) I think is interesting.

SC: So, let's talk about tennis, career, and family. When you're touring as a tennis player, is Lars also touring with you? Are you guys traveling all as a unit? Are you one week in South Africa, the next week in France, the next week—or, you know? Effectively, was he on tour from an early age?

TU: The answer is yes. One clear example is in the year of, I think, 1967 we started out with this guy called Jan Leschly in Denmark he and I were buddies on the Danish Davis Cup team, although he was more sort of friends and generation of my brother Jørgen, as he was maybe ten years younger than I.

LU: Yeah, I think in the bigger picture it doesn't matter how old he was. What matters is more that we traveled.

TU: We were traveling. And between us we had this nanny. So there were two kids, a nurse, and two sets of parents traveling together. We started out from Copenhagen right after Wimbledon (the tennis tournament – ED). Then we went to Sweden. After Sweden we went to America. We played at Forest Hills in September, and we played in San Francisco, and it was, you know, the summer of '67 and all that.

SC: Summer of Love.

TU: Yeah, and all of that. And so there was you know, the Fillmore, and Jimi Hendrix playing, and you know, the Jefferson Airplane, the whole thing there, at that—

LU: *(chuckling)* You could do a kind of Forrest Gump style movie around some of these travels, there's Hendrix playing the

Fillmore, Ben Webster emerges in there, that sorta thing...

TU: Okay, so onward. And then we went from there, and then we went, and then we stayed on, and—

LU: No, I was trying to... you know... don't get so mean.

TU: No, but to give it, just to sort of—look, then we stayed around and we buried the hippie. Then we went west—

SC: 'We buried the hippie'?!

TU: You remember that? The burial that we, there was—

LU: Now we have a story heading, 'We buried the hippie.'

TU: Yeah. That was in late October, I think. After that summer, all those people thought that now it was time to bury the hippie, so there was a big casket—

SC: And you were part of it?

TU: Well, we were around for that.

SC: Was he (Lars) part of it? Did he help 'bury the hippie?'

TU: He was there, yeah.

LU: I was there!!!

TU: I mean it's not like I can say, 'yeah, I can remember walking side by side with Lars,' but he was there. Anyway, now it's late October, early November. Then we went onwards to Tahiti... we played all the time, you have to understand. And then to New Zealand and we stayed there, then to Sydney, Melbourne, and north Australia. And I remember people coming up and saying, "Are you Willie Nelson?" or something. And I said, sure. And then we went to South Africa. Then I think Lars stayed, and this is why I bring this up, because I think it's quite interesting. Then he stayed around in the spring of the next year, 1968, for maybe three months or something while I had to go back to New York.

SC: He stayed in South Africa for 3 months with his Mum.

TU: In Jo-burg. And so he stayed on there. And at that time he played with some Black children and he could click his tongue like Zulu style. He spoke—

TU: WE'D PLAY EXHIBITION GAMES ON THE BRITISH OFFICERS' GRASS COURT IN PAKISTAN. THEN WE'D GO BACK TO THE TRAIN, AND THERE WAS THIS GUY WITH A BUCKET OF WATER. WE WERE DRIPPING, YOU KNOW, AND HE WOULD POUR IT OVER US AND THAT WAS OUR SHOWER. THEN WE'D CHANGE INTO WHITE DINNER JACKETS…THEY WOULD CABLE TO THE NEXT STATION, YOU KNOW, "WE NEED SOME TEA." THEN THIS GUY CAME AT THE NEXT STATION, AND HE WAS WAITING WITH TEAS AND CAKES AND POUND CAKE, YOU KNOW, ALL THIS STUFF. AND THEN WE'D SIT THERE AND WE'D HAVE TEA. AND THIS POOR GUY, YOU KNOW. HE HAD TO TRAVEL SOMETIMES EIGHT HOURS BEFORE WE STOPPED AGAIN, AND TAKE HIS FUCKING TEA WITH HIM, AND GET OFF AND GO BACK TEN HOURS TO GET BACK TO WHERE HE CAME FROM, WITH HIS TEA, YOU KNOW?! AND I MEAN THE WHOLE THING WAS LIKE A FARCE, LIKE A SURREALIST FILM.

SC: Xhosa…

TU: And Zulu, you know.

SC: So how old were you (Lars) when you were there?

LU: Five? Four and a half, five?

SC: So you and your mom stayed in South Africa, then.

TU: Yeah, for two, almost two, two winters almost. One period, right, and coming back, where your grandparents came back the following year or something.

SC: How long were you there?

LU: Long.

SC: Like two years or something?

TU: No, no. Six months altogether.

SC: That's a long time. And so when you hear about this (Lars), do you remember it?

LU: No, I remember the pictures that I've seen of it. I don't really remember any of the experiences.

SC: Do you think, without wishing to get too psychological, do you think it's contributed to your love of traveling? I mean, you get frustrated being somewhere for too long, even in a room sometimes.

LU: I've always traveled and I guess I have a love-hate relationship with it. I mean, I guess there's truth to what you're saying. When I'm traveling I want to be home, and when I sit at home for too long—I mean I guess what I'm driving at—

SC: Or do you think you're conditioned to that, from having traveled so much as a kid?

LU: Maybe so, yeah. The thing is, I'm not sure that I like traveling, and I see two elements of travel. I see travel that, you know, encompasses work. And sometimes that gets really, really hard and difficult for me, kind of tiresome. And then there's travel, you know, coming up here for the weekend, or going somewhere on your own, doing your own thing, that is more about kind of your own thing and your own experiences, your own needs. And you also know me well enough to know I don't like flying. So I don't like particularly enjoy the actual 'travel' part of it, but I guess there's something exciting about the mystical and exotic elements of some of the travel. I mean yeah, I sometimes like to dream myself to faraway

places. But it's getting there that's probably the pain in the ass.

SC: Yeah, it's funny with you and flying, because I mean you say you don't like it but I don't get it because you seem to kind of do it fairly competently.

LU: Yeah, well I've had a lot of practice.

SC: Did you ever want to learn to be a pilot, so that you could control it?

LU: Yeah.

SC: Okay. Have you ever—well, that's another conversation. We'll go there another time.

LU: The parentheses. See page 48.

SC: See page 148, because it'll be the extra, it would be the special.

LU: Torben and Lars Unedited. Know what you could do? You could do an asterisk the first time he says "in some sense" and then every time he says that later you could just put the asterisk, and save some space.

SC: We're all editors, right?

LU: Oh, I'm gonna fucking crack myself up.

SC: *(sighs)* Moving swiftly back on then to traveling, traveling, traveling. And then—

LU: *(To Torben)* How are you with traveling? I mean this is back in fucking 1970, they even had the airplane back then right? I mean, do you know what I mean?

TU: Yeah.

LU: I mean, okay, now it's 1952 and you're like, 'let's go to India.' How the fuck did you get to India in 1952? On the Orient Express to—

TU: No, I think it's a good question. I think the first times I traveled that was by train, let's say the first time I can remember going to Barcelona, and then to Italy to play, that was by train. But quickly after the war, we were traveling all the time by plane.

LU: How did you get to America?

TU: By plane.

SC: Were you scared? Were you anxious? Did you enjoy it, or was flying daunting?

TU: No, I've always liked all of that.

LU: When was the first time you went to America?

TU: '53.

LU: And how would you do that, what, Copenhagen, London, London—what route?

TU: No, you flew through Shannon in Ireland. Let's say Copenhagen, Shannon, Newfoundland, New York.

LU: How long did that take?

TU: Took 23 hours, maybe?

LU: And was it turbulent?

TU: No, not—

LU: But weren't these little planes that flew at 10,000 feet with the little clouds?

TU: No, no, no, no, no.

LU: Were they pressurized? Or did you have big, thick coats on!?

TU: No. I'll tell you, when we were traveling in those days, it was almost like you're traveling now. I mean, with the Davis Cup, (team—Danish team which competed on the Davis Cup international tennis tournament circuit – ED) we were pretty comfortable. And if someone said, "Yeah, I think we're a little bit delayed. Could you hold it just a little, couple of minutes," that was not a problem.

LU: Oh, you called the airport and told them you were going to be a bit late?

TU: HIS MOTHER AND I WERE VERY SURE THAT HE SHOULD CONTAIN THESE TWO STRANDS, IF YOU WILL, OF POSSIBILITIES. WITH THE TENNIS, THAT HE WAS SORT OF BORN INTO AND ALSO WITH THE MUSIC THAT HE WAS ALSO BORN INTO IN THIS WAY…I COULD ALSO SEE THAT IF YOU WANTED TO BE A TENNIS PLAYER IN 1980, YOU COULDN'T NECESSARILY COMBINE IT WITH MUSIC. AND ALSO WOULD HE WANT TO REALLY GO THAT WAY? BECAUSE IT WAS ONE THING THAT I HAD FOLLOWED IN MY FATHER'S PATH PRETTY MUCH, BUT IT WAS IMPORTANT FOR ME THAT HE (LARS) WOULD NOT FOLLOW IN MY PATH IF HE REALLY DID NOT, YOU KNOW, WANT TO.

When you say that word like 'boundaries,' that's not a word I was familiar with when I was growing up. Never really heard that until 2001. Boundaries... it wasn't until I came to America that I started hearing those words. I never heard the words, you know, 'abnormal' or 'unconventional.' Lars Ulrich

TU: Yeah, "We're on the way," you know, "We've been practicing hard, and we are just a little bit behind schedule" or something. And I can remember many times—

LU: What, the commercial plane waited?

TU: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Yeah, because (we were) the Davis Cup team. And they had sort of a ladder for us out on the tarmac and we would climb up into the plane with—

LU: You didn't have to go through security?

TU: They didn't have security. And then sometimes we'd go by bus or something. Let's say we played in Egypt, in, maybe '47 or '48 or something, and Farouk was still King. Actually I can remember we played in Cairo, now we were down in Alexandria. And Kurt Nielsen and I had to get back to Cairo and play an exhibition that afternoon, so we had to catch a bus through the desert from Alexandria to Cairo. That took, I don't know, five hours or something on the bus.

LU: Alexandria was the harbor city in ancient Egypt?

TU: Yeah. Right. Where the Nile is and then goes down through the desert, to Cairo. And so we were sort of, I mean we were really 'living' a lot, and then we missed the bus. And so we said, "We're late. We missed it. But King Farouk is waiting, in Cairo. What do we do now?" So then they (the bus authorities, like in Europe affiliated with the government – ED) look into it. And they say, "Okay, here's what you do. You take a taxi now, and then that taxi will help you." And so we're standing there with our bags, you know, and then they have this yellow taxi waiting outside. And we don't know where we're going in this taxi, or if we ever coming back to anywhere again, you know? And so we go, and we go, and (to Lars)—you know this story?

LU: No.

TU: We go, and we go, we go. And then all of a sudden we feel, now we're out in the desert or something. And out in the horizon we could see something out there, and then we come a little closer and the closer we get can see that there is actually a bus out there. You know. And so we get closer and closer until the taxi is going up right near the bus. Now, in this whole fucking desert, there's nothing but a kind of an 'outhouse' or something, our taxi, us, and the bus. Then around the bus there're these soldiers with machine guns. And they are holding up the bus. They said to us, "Get on the bus." So, you know, okay! We got on the bus...

SC: This is, of course, the bus you missed.

TU: This was the bus we missed, yeah. So now we are not late for the bus anymore! And, this is what could happen at that time, you know? And, you're asking for instance in Pakistan, how did we get there? We took the plane to Karachi.

LU: Nonstop Copenhagen to Karachi?

TU: No, no, no. I would say Copenhagen, Frankfurt, Rome, Cairo, Karachi, something like that.

SC: That's a hell of a journey.

TU: Yeah, yeah. But that was how it was. And so we—

SC: Can I just ask, just to interject, was this expensive? Flying is not cheap at this stage, right?

TU: Right, right. But, I mean that was all taken care of.

SC: By the Danish Davis Cup organization ?

TU: Yeah...so we're in Karachi, we stay there, and then we had to get on the train, and I think we had to go for two weeks in a train, to play. And we just played, every day we went to a new place, and we had two carriages with Pakistani soldiers in front, dressed in tiger skins. One carriage was ours and the other was the soldiers.' And so when we'd get into town in the morning, the soldiers were standing out on the platform and playing in their tiger skins and DA DA DA DAAAA, the mayor would come, and then, you know—

SC: This is a crazy image, don't you think?

TU: And then the mayor would come, and we'd sort of stagger out there, and then we'd have to go to some luncheon or something. We'd play exhibition games on the British officers' grass court in Pakistan. And then we'd go back to the train, and there was this guy, he'd have a bucket full of water. We were dripping, you know, and he would pour it over us, you know, and that was our shower. So then (in the train), we would change into white dinner jackets, and then—

SC: All on the train.

TU: All on the train, yeah, all on the train. And then there was a big dinner. And then Lone was having dinner but with the ladies, you know, they could not be part of (this) dinner. So we had a dinner, and then the soldiers were then playing 'Alexander's Ragtime Band.' So Lars's mother was sitting behind kind of a 'lattice' fence or something, with these ladies, you know, and they could see us out there. And then the men would dance after dinner to this Alexander's Ragtime Band, in white dinner jackets, and our wives were sitting in there behind this lattice.

SC: So you guys were dancing together?

TU: Yes. And because the ladies were women they couldn't, they were not allowed to be there. So Lone was sitting with them—

...I could also see that if you wanted to be a tennis player in 1980, you couldn't necessarily combine it with music. And also would he want to really go that way? Because it was one thing that I had followed in my father's path pretty much, but it was important for me that he (Lars) would not follow in my path if he really did not, you know, want to. Torben Ulrich

LU: She wasn't a Muslim.

TU: And no, yes, she wasn't a Muslim, but she thought that was great fun, you know. And they talked dirty about their men, you know, and she said this and that, and they giggled, you know...

SC: That's quite a train ride!

TU: Isn't that something?

SC: That's crazy.

TU: And she thought it was great fun, you know. And speaking of 'do I have a brother,' then we went to Peshawar, and... I don't know if you've heard, Lars, maybe, do you remember this about the child?

LU: No. But carry on, speaking of 'do I have a brother?'

TU: Yes. Well Peshawar, you know, that's way up there, just next to Afghanistan. And we saw how all the people there were carrying these big guns and all that stuff, even at that time, you know? Weapons absolutely everywhere. And Lone really wanted to go and take sort of a day trip into Afghanistan with some of these people, you know, and we had to stay with these British officers. So then Lone went up there and into Afghanistan, not a lot but just enough. And there were these big houses with their flat roofs and protective walls, where they could shoot from the roofs maybe just like nowadays, you know, all these warlords and all that stuff. And so Lone had come to one of these big houses, and this woman placed a little child in her arms, and said—

SC: Had placed a little child in Lone's arms.

TU: In Lone's arms, yeah. And said, you know, please—because she'd asked Lone, "Do you have any children," you know, and Lone said no. Because this is '58, pre-Lars, right? So Lone said, "No, I don't." And then she said—

SC: "Here's one."

TU: Yeah, yeah. Or, like "Take this little child to Europe!", I mean, who knows what the motivation was, you know? But Lone was quite touched by that, you know. And, we had been in Spain a lot in those days, and we knew for instance down in Spain that the tradition was that if you said, "Oh, what a nice painting" or something, it was yours. "Please, you have it. It's all yours."

SC: So she constantly walked around in fear of saying that someone had a nice baby!

TU: Oh, yeah. Yeah, right. The tradition was, you said, "Oh, no, no" and they would say, "Oh, yes, yes." "Oh, no, no." "Oh, yes, yes...."

SC: That's an Irish thing.

TU: ...But then, the thing was that you would say at the end of the night or when you would leave, you said, "I've given much consideration," or "My husband and I have talked it over, but there is no place in our house where we can do justice to it, and the way it's hanging here, and it would be such an injustice to this painting to take it." you know, so "We urge you to keep it, and it hangs so lovely."

LU: Great, let's go to David Geffen's house!

TU: So in any case, Lone said, you know, "My husband and I, we're traveling with the tennis, you know, and we still have a long ways to go, you know, so we couldn't possibly give this child what they deserve, and we have to go on from here to the next place, and then we have to go up to Lahore," you know?

SC: Very good! So Lars was close to having an Afghan sibling.

TU: That's what I'm saying.

SC: What a thing!

LU: Could be that they were trying to smuggle a young Osama out of Afghanistan?

SC: Maybe. And look what happened. The whole course of history could've been averted right there.

TU: And then that was how we lived on that train. Or you know, we're going *(makes train moving sound)* dederon-dederon-dederon, and, 'you guys want some tea or something?' And then we'd say, "Okay, tea." Then they would cable to the next station, you know, "We need some tea." Then this guy came at the next station, and he was waiting with teas and cakes and pound cake, you know, all this stuff. And then we'd sit there and we'd have tea. And this poor guy, you know. He had to travel sometimes eight hours before we stopped again, and take his fucking tea with him, and get off and go back ten hours to get back to where he came from, with his tea, you know?! And I mean the whole thing was like a farce, like a surrealist film.

SC: It's quite a scene.

TU: Yeah. And then we'd get our daily allowance. "Okay, here's your daily allowance." Twenty bucks, "And here's, if you can, you sign for 20 bucks." "Yes, yes." Okay. Tomorrow you get, "Here's your daily allowance, 20 bucks, okay, please sign here. So yesterday you got 20, and now, so you've got 40, so sign there for 40." You get—

SC: Twenty. Yeah, you should sign for 20.

TU: For 20, you know, but they wanted to set you—

SC: Say 20, 40.

TU: Yeah. So now you sign for 60, right? You know, or—

SC: But you've only got 40. Right, they're trying to con you out of it.

TU: So, so the next day they said, "Here's your 20, you sign." So you sign for 60. So obviously you say, "But yesterday I signed for 40, you know. I cannot sign for 60 today. I sign for 20." "No, no, no. No, no, no. No, no, no. Oh, no—" "But didn't you get 20?" "Yes." "Didn't you get, you've gotten, what, three days? You got 60, right? Could you—so you be good boys. You sign for 60." So that was how they—

SC: Made their money.

TU: Made their money, yes, right.

SC: And that's how they paid for the tea boy to get home!

TU: Yeah, yeah, exactly, I mean just amazing.

SC: Bizarre *(to Lars)*. It's a bit different to your traveling. Okay, let's take it into a completely different sphere and let's talk about, well, first of all, do you need a cup of coffee or something? Are you—

LU: A cup of tea, you know, so—

SC: Do you want to take a break? Do you want to take a couple pictures?

LU: I'm taking some pictures. Haven't you seen me with a camera?

TU: But should we make some tea?

SC: Let's make some tea. Let's do that. Let's take a break for a second. And I also need to take a picture of the two of you together—

(Tape recorder is turned off and tea plus some snacks are had, sans Pakistani tea boy – ED)

SC: Can I ask you, Lars, what you remember about growing up, in terms of, was it an incredibly relaxed, free form household, or was it a pretty conventional upbringing? I mean everything I'm hearing would be, would suggest that it was probably an alternative childhood?

LU: Yeah, yeah, yeah, but alternative to what? I don't know because it's the only childhood I've ever known. And, you know, it seemed pretty right.

SC: For example, were there boundaries? Did your dad give you boundaries?

LU: Regular boundaries... I mean, "don't run out in front of moving cars." I mean, you know, "when you're driving on a bike, stay on the bike path," or, you know—

SC: Be in by ten or else you'll be grounded?

TU: No, no, no. That wasn't—

LU: No. When you say that word like 'boundaries' that's not a word that I was familiar with when I was growing up. Never really heard that until 2001. Boundaries. I think, you know, the things that I remember being exposed to in terms of growing up and stuff were more, you know, just learning different things that were important to my parents.

TU: Hospitality.

LU: Hospitality. Courteous, being polite, being open, being receptive. Always opening up your home. Always putting the guests first and trying to always be as much of a host as possible...

TORBEN ULRICH
thoughts, ways & musings

...when I came into all this as a young man, there was that urgent opening up in many directions. It wasn't like you were automatically forced to go into a certain field and isolate yourself there. And there was after the war that kind of opening up, and a tremendous curiosity about many fields, and also I think how these fields were related you know. And so in that sense I was very much a child of that postwar moment when peace broke out, if you will...

SC: Which I think you've done a very good job of. You're probably one of the best hosts I know and I've always said that.

LU: ...trying to find the right balances between school, tennis. We were fortunate enough in that we were able to do a couple things that were slightly out of the ordinary. For quite a few years, whenever there was P.E. in school they let me leave and go play tennis up at the tennis club instead of participating in school P.E. Things like that. You know, they were pretty open with the idea of traveling. I probably traveled an average of four to six school weeks a year, which was quite a lot, especially in the later years. So, I mean of course in some ways it was somewhat unconventional but it wasn't really until I came to America that I started hearing those words. I never heard those words when I was growing up. I never heard the words, you know, 'abnormal' or 'unconventional.' It was what seemed to be the energy around not just my dad but my mom, the household in general, going back generations. All the artists and that whole scene. And it seemed like I was just a product of a scene.

SC: It's interesting though, you say when you came to America you first started encountering words like 'abnormal'. You mean what, that you would run into people, and say "Oh, yeah, me and my dad, we do this, and me and my mom that," and they'd be like, "Huh?"

LU: Well, I mean I don't think I ever focused on the fact that I was different in Denmark because in Denmark I'm not even sure that the word "different" really resonated. That the idea of being different was even an option in Denmark, because everybody was different from each other, and everybody was different from any kind of stylized convention or anything like that. But I certainly got some taste of what you're asking about in September of 1979, when I went to Nick Bollettieri's tennis academy in Florida, and started kind of integrating into American teenager-ism. You know, that and being around a bunch of other 16 year old spoiled, neo-rich American teenagers who all had parents most of who sent their kids there just to ride the tennis – scratch 'ride' and say 'milk' – the tennis boom that was going on in America at that time in the wake of McEnroe and Connors and all that stuff. And that was when I realized that I'd been exposed to something very different than most of those kids that I was with at the time.

Then I went out to LA a year later in September, 1980, down to Newport Beach, and even though I'd finished school in Denmark, I decided that I should do another year or two of school here in America so I could get on the tennis team here. And so I started 11th grade at Corona Del Mar High School, and there I really realized how different my childhood years were. The situation in Copenhagen, the situation in Denmark, the whole thing. And so that was when I started feeling...different?... I think a lot of musicians have this tendency to sit and talk about, you know, alienation and all this type of stuff in their childhoods, and all the traumatic experiences and all that kind of shit. You know that I've talked many times about the fact I never had any specific traumatic experiences. But I think what happened when I went to Newport Beach in September of 1980, especially fueled by everything that was going on in England and Europe at the time like the New Wave Of British Heavy Metal that, you know, my head was in such a different place than all the rest of the people. And I couldn't help but feeling different. But not necessarily 'different' with kind of that classic American negative connotation to it.

SC: I know exactly what you're saying. You don't mean it like that. Right.

LU: I just, I didn't particularly mingle with anybody. But I wasn't even interested. I was interested in playing some tennis, and I was interested in sitting and reading Sounds and writing letters to Diamond Head, you know, Sean Harris's mom, Diamond Head's manager. That was, you know, kind of what I was into. And I was definitely a loner, but I felt that it was a choice, because there wasn't anybody there that I was interested in associating with. But I don't think that it was until that time that I really got my first enlightenment into how different the previous 16 years of my life had really been, or how unique they had really been.

SC: Did you ask questions about it? I mean did you guys have any of those classic father-son talks. "Hey, what happened? What did we do when I was a kid, or where did I go," or any of those sorts of *(shaking of heads around the table)* —no? It was just a continually organic process—

LU: I think part of the strength, part of the real positive thing of my early years was that there was a lot of freedom to experience a lot of things on my own, to seek a lot of answers on my own, to not have anything handed to me, to not have particular ways of thinking, ideologies or whatever, forced upon me. So I did a lot of soul-searching. I did a lot of sniffing around, I did a lot of kind of checking into things. Checking into things myself with a kind of a juvenile curiosity, and all that kind of stuff. And I found a lot of stuff myself.

TU: If I could also just say, for instance, that he was very strong at going to places

LU: YOU GUYS WANT A SLICE OF CHEESE? I DON'T THINK WE CAN EVER SAY NO TO A SLICE OF CHEESE.

on his own. Since he was maybe nine he'd go to concerts on his own, and come back on his own. Sometimes he'd fall asleep in the back of the bus. And then, you know, the conductor would call him or something, and say, "Okay, wake up. We're here, it's time." So you could say that he had that strength. But from a parent's point of view, you could say that it was also possible to do that (in Denmark). Let's say if he had grown up in this country, maybe he couldn't have done that on his own because it would have been too dangerous or something.

SC: Makes total sense to me. I know exactly what you're saying.

TU: Yeah. It's something that you could do in Denmark and maybe not over here. I don't know even if Myles and Layne could do that nowadays in Denmark. I don't know I'm not saying they cannot, but and I don't know if Lars would let them nowadays. But in those days Lars would go to go ride the bus, you know, the Line 21, and he'd go out to KB Hall, and be on his own. I thought he was very strong there. And I remember a time when there was a Kiss concert that conflicted with a school outing where they had to be away for a week. And he said that the only way that he wanted to go on this trip, you know, was if he could come back on Saturday for the Kiss concert or something, which was in a place, like, six hours away on the train, over in Jutland. And we said "okay, you know, you go there and you come back." And from his own money he paid to go to the train station, and then we paid maybe for the train. And then he came back, went to the Kiss concert, stayed the night, and then the next morning he took the train over there and back—

SC: And what he, 13, 14?

TU: Yeah, 14. And I mean that's strong, I think. You know, that's strong to say "I want to go on this trip but only if, you know, I can come back to that concert." That shows a kind of commitment to the music. You know. It shows Lars well, I think.

SC: Indeed. Going back Lars, let me ask you this. Growing up and looking at your dad, his philosophical explorations of time and space, boundaries, not-boundaries—do you take that on as a kid? I mean does it influence the way you think directly? Or do you consciously look at him and say, "My God, what is he talking about? I must know?" Or does it just kind of wash over you? I mean was it like, "oh, God, it's Dad again, where's my copy of 'Machine Head?' I gotta go and listen to it?" Do you know what I mean?

LU: No. Not at all. I mean I remember, you know, we would sit and I had a music room. He had a music room. There were two different rooms from where both of us slept, and sometimes, you know, I visited his room or got kind of dragged in there, and vice versa. And we'd sit and have talks about music or he'd sit there and try get me to count some fucking jazz drummer that was playing to some rhythm that only existed in his own head, you know? And I was sitting, talking about something quite different than that, and he would sit there and go that they thought that these guys I liked were square, and I'd sit there and say that I thought these fucking other guys were out of their minds, and just existing in their own worlds. And we'd sit and have—

SC: Typical father-son conversations.

LU: Yeah, but I can't remember ever having any kind of thing like that with philosophy. I remember sometimes, I have memories of, well, a little bit what I still feel to this day, you know, with just like "look dad, get to the fucking point!" type of thing y'know? But in his defense that, today he speaks in short sound bites compared to what I remember from 20, 30 years ago.

SC: Or maybe it is working the other way? Maybe your ears have adjusted to take it in.

LU: No, no, I was talking to Jørgen about this the other day. I mean, Torben speaks positively hurriedly now, or you know, really edits himself now compared to 20, 30 years ago, or compared to what I remember. And I also think that you only really hear what you're capable of hearing. And you know, I wouldn't say that this shit was forced down my back or anything like that. I think that, you know, a parent and a child have two relationships in a way. A parent and a child have a relationship that exists in the child's world, and a parent and a child have a relationship that exists more in the parent's world.

TORBEN ULRICH
thoughts, ways & musings

(On tennis – ED) I would say I was more interested in (rhythm, flow, coordination) than in any particular outcome, result, or, you know, competition aspect, or the winning-losing thing…more like sort of trying to abstain from that usual 'win-loss' type dichotomy.

…Even in Denmark, it was still very difficult to either understand, or accept, something like that. And I'm sure that if there had been more people in Denmark that had been, you know, at a certain level if you will, then I don't think that they would have continued with me…

(Describing a famous moment in tennis history when during an important point at the US Open, a butterfly hovered near Torben's racket – ED) It was a precious moment because I had remembered this: there's a Chinese philosopher called Chuang Tzu and he had, you know, this sort of a classical question that he poses, you know, at a certain point, where he's sort of dreaming of a butterfly. So he's musing about whether he is, you know, himself dreaming about a butterfly or if he's a butterfly dreaming of being this person. And so when I stopped, I stopped and I was thinking about that question of who are we in terms of, you know, are we some people having certain dreams or are we certain dreams that actually are playing a ball game or something. And at the same time this wonderful winged thing sort of lands in this field of those thoughts or something, you know, and stays there and makes you think those things. So it was a precious moment like that, you know?

SC: That's very, very true.

LU: So those are two different relationships that, you know, most of the time run parallel courses. And I think that I've spent an unusual amount of time in the parent world, and so very early on I got very used to spending time with a lot of adults—also, because of being an only child. And also because I was traveling. So, because I was traveling I wasn't around hoodrat friends. I spent a lot more time being an only child and being around adults a lot, so I got used to a lot of that stuff. And I think that as I got more used to it, I also felt kind that I was able to pick and choose what I could kind of, first of all fathom but also ignore.

TU: Ignore, yeah. No, yeah.

LU: Do you know what I mean?

SC: I know exactly. Did it often happen that you would see in your child, as we see in all our children, you see in Myles, something, maybe some advice or wisdom or an ideology or something that you really wished to God he would take on, but if he didn't—

TU: No, no.

SC: Or were you perfectly happy to just let his choices be expressed?

TU: Yeah. Yeah. I think that we were always for Lars finding his own way in terms of the sort of the basic or the existential choices. And then with his two, I call them strands, the athletic one and the musical one, we could see that maybe they could combine but maybe they couldn't. Lars mentioned this word segregation? That things were more segregated (in America when he moved), so that if I was trying to combine all these things and to see where they could fall when they were combined, I could also see that if you wanted to be a tennis player in 1980, you couldn't necessarily combine it with music. And also would he want to really go that way? Because it was one thing that I had followed in my father's path pretty much, but it was important for me that he (Lars) would not follow in my path if he really did not, you know, want to. So therefore it was crucial for us to say, "look, if you go over to Nick Bollettieri's Tennis Academy and spend the time there, and then see if that's, if this is really for you." And then if it is, to be really committed. And if it isn't then you know, because you have tried it. And so then when you're 22 or 23 or something you won't say, 'oh, maybe, why didn't I try that?' And so for us it was, that was the main thing.

(There is a break in the conversation for tea. When we return, tennis and how the family came to be in Corona Del Mar is the topic.)

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TU: … We had this good friendship with the family of Roy Emerson, who is an Australian tennis player who won Wimbledon and many Grand Slam titles and all that. And they had a son called Antony, that Lars had known since we were on that Australian trip that we talked about earlier. And so Antony went to school at Corona Del Mar there, and they thought maybe they would want Lars for that team. And that team at Corona Del Mar was a very good tennis team, maybe the leading team in the vicinity or up and down the coast or whatever it was. In the years prior to that, when I had been playing a lot of tournaments, if I played so much that there was no time for me to go back to Denmark, then I stayed over quite a lot in Berkeley. So we also had some very good friends in Berkeley. And so, at that time, you know, there was this question of whether we should be stationed around Berkeley, or if we should go down south…

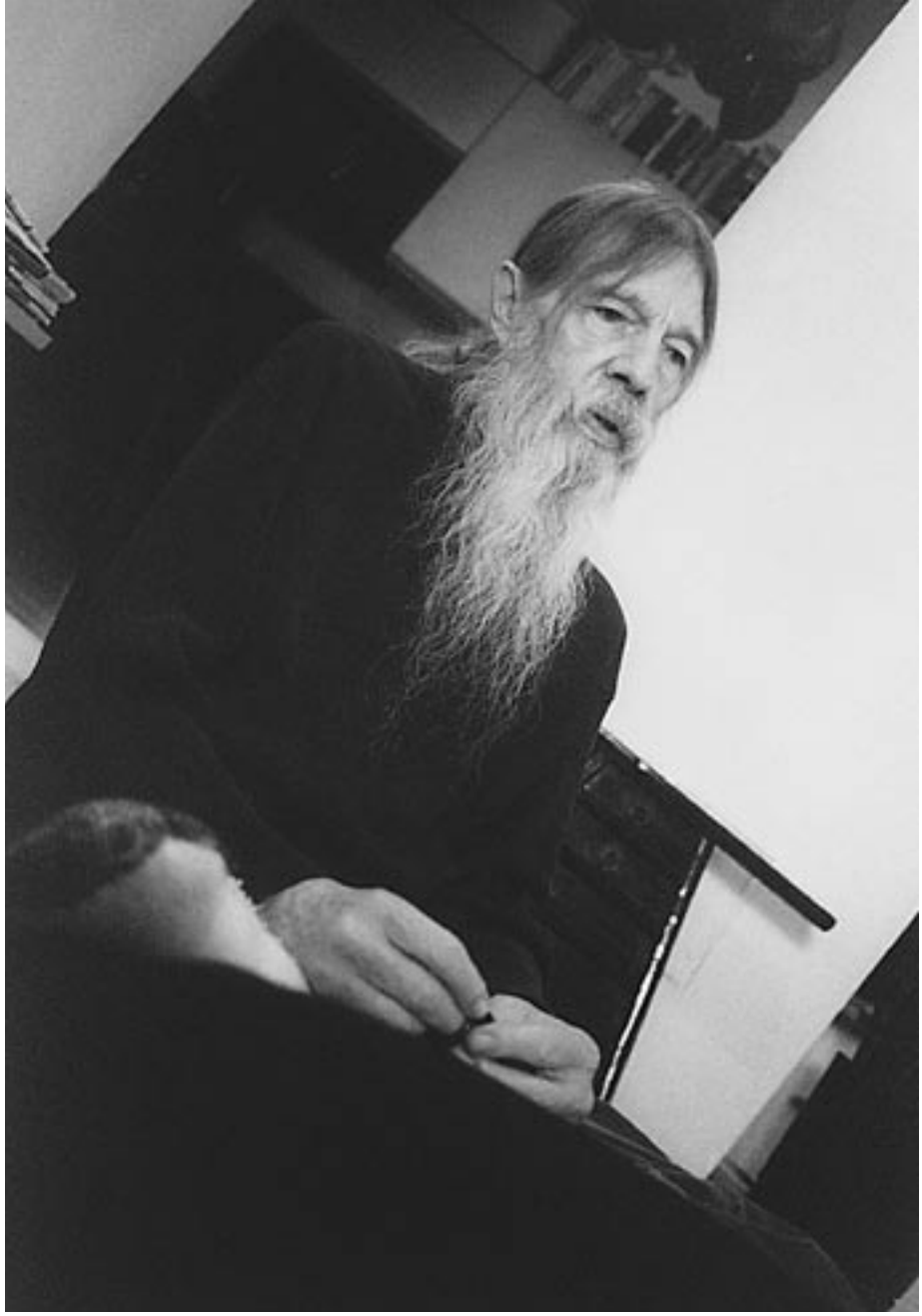
SC: Wow. So Lars nearly ended up in the Bay Area before he knew it?

TU: Yeah, exactly. Yeah. And so he can take it on from there. But I just think that it's interesting then that in some sense, you know, he was scheduled to go on the tennis team, and than at that moment maybe he saw clearly that that was not his path. And that if he got more and more into the music at that time… I mean he (can) speak for himself—

SC: Did you ask him?

TU: Did I ask him?

SC: Directly at the time whether that was the case?



TU: No, because then he started to play more and more music and he took drum lessons, and he was obviously more and more involved in that. You know, in the fall season when we had moved there (Corona Del Mar), then it was the girls playing their school matches. And then in springtime came the boys' turn to play, and so all through the fall season he was still practicing with the team but maybe more and more also leaning into the music, and so by the time that spring season came around I think it was clear that that wasn't going to happen really. But you take it from there Lars.

LU: (Mumbles something inaudible).

SC: No, I mean, but again, just to clarify, it wasn't something where you just sat down and said, "hey, what's up?"

TU: No, because the idea was that we wanted for him to grow into that situation that seemed to be right for him, you know? And that was the idea of it.

SC: May I ask you as an extension of that question, when you've seen him go through hard times emotionally, and I'm talking in his young adult life, mid-adult life, whichever, do you carry the same philosophy of "he's learning, it's a good thing for him"? For example this last year, which was probably a harder year for him than he's had for a while, do you get on a plane and fly out and just say, "what do you need here?" Or does he come to you, or is it just not like that?

TU: Yeah, I think I would say first he knows that we're always there for him, because that I think parents feel they have that obligation all their lives. You know. And at the same time, he knows also that we are there to the point that we also want him to feel that we are also not pushing, you know, let's say for some answer or being nosy about some things. He knows that he can come to us any time, around the clock, right? That, of course, goes without saying. The door is always open, and also if all of a sudden he needed us to take the first plane and come down because he really needed us, then we would do that. But we wouldn't necessarily suggest that on our own, because we wouldn't want to crowd him. So, always as a parent you want to be really, as open as you can, and then, and also remember that continuous obligation, if you will, to give as much space as possible.

SC: Lars. Is there any particular advice that your dad has given you over the years that you've really—well, twofold question. What was the first bit of advice that really hit you? And secondly, what pieces of advice do you come back to when things are either at their shittiest or their toughest?

LU: "Always look on the bright side of life." Our relationship has never really been defined by sound bites or sentences like that. To me it's as much about what was not being said as was being said. It was as much about, like, you talk about boundaries but it was also as much about freedoms. Do you know what I mean? There was always as much from the opposite to a specific parallel, parameter, or whatever.

You know, a piece of advice? And I think that it's the only time that I can ever remember he actually beat me, was in Newport Beach where I had done some-

thing disrespectful. I was in a kind of a loose head space about the American immigration service and about a particular issue that had to do with being in America. And I remember he chased me around the townhouse down there. We started down on the ground level, and this is a place that was on two levels. So it started kinda here and then, you know, seven seconds later it ended somewhere else and I got fucking whacked. The emphasis is not on the physical element. The emphasis is more on showing some respect for the fucking INS because we're here as guests in this country, and don't take that lightly. And ever since that day, for some reason, I've always had a particularly responsible outlook and a pretty serious relationship with the INS, and have always tried to do, you know, uphold my end of it as respectfully as possible in terms of being a guest in this country. There haven't been many instances like that at all, but when they happen, they would resonate severely and sort of work.

(We pause for a moment. The conversation has swiftly taken on the memory of being raised with a degree of fame, how that shaped life and what it meant in 'lesson' terms.)

LU: You know, even though we were fairly well-off financially I wouldn't say that I remember it being a rich upbringing. It wasn't like being spoiled rich or anything like that. There were a lot of fortunate things that came in the wake of being who we were, and I got some early insights into some of those weird mindfuck things you get into, like for example when you're famous, people want to give you free shit, all that type of stuff. We weren't spoiled or richer or any kind of stuff like that, but yeah, I've always had I think a very respectful relationship with the concept of waste, with food, with energy. Especially growing up in a house that was very, very big. And you know, there was the oil crisis of 1973 where everybody sat around and didn't know if there was going to be enough money to pay the fuel bills, or whether there'd be enough fuel to even heat the houses. So you know, the only room in the house that had heat was the kitchen, because that was the one that we would hang out in (still one of Lars' favorite rooms – ED). And then, you know, there'd be a little bit of heat in the bedrooms. I remember going in to take a shower in the bathroom, freezing my fucking balls off, walking through the corridors and stuff like that freezing, because we didn't know what was on the other side of the oil crisis. So I always had this thing about, you know, every time I leave a room I turn the lights off, still to this day. It's the last thing I do before I go out of town. Like, the last thing I did yesterday before I left my house in Tiburon is I turned the heat off, made sure that the air conditioning and the heating was not blasting away in my empty house in San Francisco for the next three days while I'm sitting up here. To this day that resonates. And I still have things that resonate about food, about waste, about finishing things on my plate, teaching my kids the value of food. You know, if you ask for it, you eat it! And just about waste generally, and about respect for all those types of things. So I can't say that there are instances where any of that stuff, as much as say, the INS incident was kind of hammered home. It was just more about my upbringing and general respect of all that.

I think my father has always had an incredible, and sometimes to the point where I feel that it's too much, but an incredible ability to deal with people, to be nice to people, to give tolerance, to show reserve. I mean, it doesn't drive me nuts anymore because now I feel that I'm getting to be the same way.

SC: Which is quite true, actually. You are becoming a lot more (checks himself for fear of getting too psychoanalytical)—yeah. Anyway.

LU: And I think that, you know, when you're in your 20s, you're full of a lot of spunk and you move as fast as possible in any given situation. Then, suddenly you don't have time for that maybe, do you know what I mean? Two other things, and I'll let my dad finish the last one, is I think that back then there were a lot of conversations about music and stuff, whether it was The Tygers Of Pan Tang or Ornette Coleman. And I think that there's certainly some stuff that came out of those that I carried into Metallica with me. About some of the heavy metal stuff, especially some of the English metal stuff, about the kind of, I don't know, whatever words you wanna use, the kind of square, squareness of it. *Firkant*, I don't know the *(turns to Torben)*, *firkant*—?

TU: Yeah, no. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

LU: But the *firkant* is not the same as convention.

TU: No, no. No, no.

LU: You can't hardly translate it.

TU: I mean it is...where the corners are very stiff or something.

TORBEN ULRICH
thoughts, ways & musings

TU: ...The moment you rest in a state of satisfaction, that's also a kind of a little bit of, you know, of either a lessening of intensity or you becoming maybe self-satisfied or something like that... that sense you can never, never be fulfilled. But the never being fulfilled is a kind of fulfilling, you know?

There's kind of a satisfaction in knowing I'll never 'find it all out' you know, you can rest assured in that. And in that sense you rest assured, but it doesn't mean that you couldn't do some, if you, if there was more time, you know.

SC: That you'll rest assured, but it means you are not sure of rest.

TU: Right. Right. Absolutely. Yeah.

I guess if anything I'm really proud of the fact that, you know, a couple of years later he's still being prolific and active and not resting on his laurels...continuing to do all these incredible creative endeavors, between books and movies and art...I mean in some ways, it covers everything we just talked about for four hours! Lars Ulrich

LU: But anyway, so a lot of—

SC: Regimented.

TU: No. No. No, not regimented, not even close. No, it's more like sort of—almost like, I don't know if you could say that you hear something, but rhythmically that comes out, let's say more squarely than circular. You know, it's a little bit like...

SC: Angular, I guess.

TU: Yeah, or something that becomes a little bit more hammer-style, or mechanical.

SC: I know exactly what you're saying.

TU: Ta-dome, Ta-dome, ta-dome, ta-dome, rather than sort of flowing or something. That's what firkant is—

SC: Instead of rolling.

TU: Yeah. Yeah.

LU: So we used to have a lot of conversations about not getting stuck in that, not getting stuck in the early days in Metallica of making too much stuff that was too, you know, 'square.'

SC: That's a pretty big deal. I mean really, that's a very big deal. Because otherwise you could've become like any other heavy metal band.

LU: Yeah, and also, I mean talking about not just me and Metallica but some of the other entities in Metallica, about trying to bring in something that was a little more challenging, making sure to not get stuck in some of the 'squareness' of some of that heavy metal stuff. I think that covers a lot of the stuff that rubbed off. And I think *(turns to Torben)*, because you tell this story so well, and far better than I do, the only other thing that maybe has relevance in this is the famous faucet story. Just about patience and about the Mexican standoff Danish style or whatever.

TU: Okay. Sure. I think it's kind of interesting in terms of what Lars was talking about, how parents see their children and then how the children see their parents. And so the first thing I would say was that when Lars was born at the hospital, and then when I first saw him, because I was not allowed to be there even though my sister and her husband, a big doctor, were working there. So when I got to over there he was already lying in his little crib. And I looked at him and he looked up at me, and his eyes were completely focused on me, completely. And if I moved a little he was just following me completely, and very, utterly, sort of serenely if you will. And it was a very moving moment, you know, because it was maybe just a few minutes after he had been born, and it's very quiet, and we really had that contact there. We just looked at each other like just, like, having that moment of "okay, here we go" kind of thing, badoh, bom, bom, bom, bom, bom-bom-bom!

SC: That 'moment' is very cool isn't it.

TU: Yeah, yeah, yeah. And so this next story, I think, is almost the other way around. We were upstairs in Rågeleje, that summer place, and...*(to Lars)* what do you think? Were you two or something like that?

LU: Oh, two.

TU: Two and something, huh?

LU: You don't think it was more than that?

TU: I'm not, yeah. I don't know.

LU: I thought it was a little more.

TU: Yeah, maybe a little more. But whatever, at two, maybe two or three, we're upstairs, and let's say it's going towards 12:30 in the afternoon and it's time for lunch. And we've been up there and playing together and stuff like that, and he had opened the faucet (in the bathroom). And so we are almost going out the door to run downstairs and then I say, "You forgot to close off the faucet." And he said no. You know. And I said, "If you open the faucet, you are the one who has to close it, you know? Because otherwise that's also, speaking of waste, a waste of water and all, and it cannot run like that while we are going down for lunch." So he sort of doesn't answer but tries to press himself out the door. And then I block the door, and he tries to press (through). And then he goes after me and tries to get me sort of to go away. And I'm saying, "No, we're not going before you close that faucet over there." He didn't want to do it. And so then he started to come at me, you know, like, and kicking and getting at me, and he's, you know, and he's going like this, "AAAAAAAA!" He's going absolutely crazy! And I said, okay, like "We're not going down until you close that faucet." He didn't want to do that. He was screaming and you have no idea, I mean he was just screaming and not wanting to do it. And so it took a long time, and I mean maybe 30 minutes or 40 minutes or something. But he was completely berserk...

SC: *(Laughing)* Completely berserk!

TU: Yes. And in some sense he had to get all that stuff out, just go until he was completely exhausted. And then he was sort of almost so exhausted that he couldn't get out of that.

SC: Yeah, I understand, overtired.

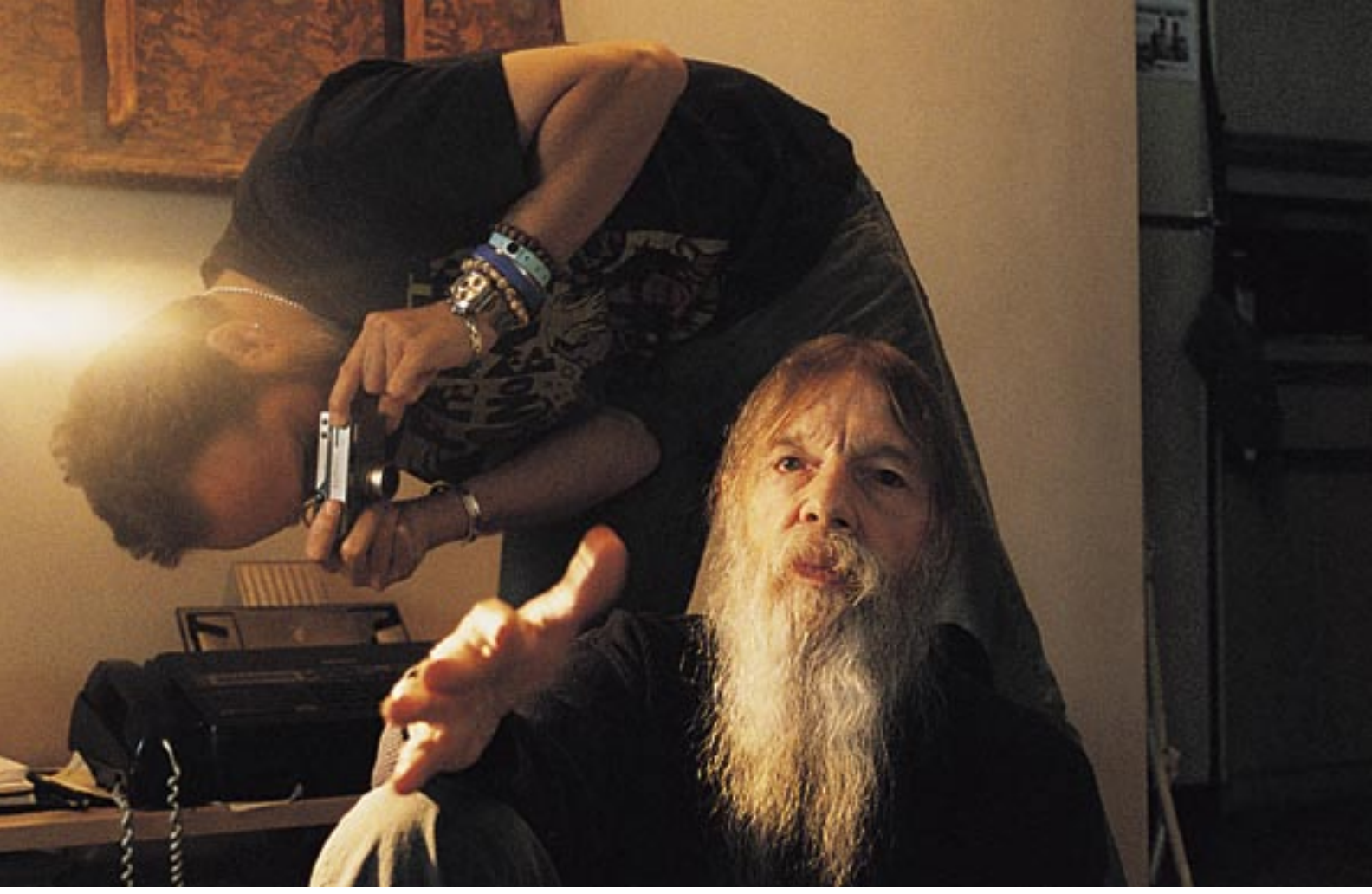
TU: And so there's a moment of calm there. And then where he looked at me, almost, you know, like that time, you know, the first time (in the hospital). A slightly different look maybe, but still sort of completely sort of relaxed. He just went over and he closed the faucet, and then we went for lunch. And, you know, for years and years and years, I tell you, we had no problems like that. If I said something then, "Okay." He knew. Lars can maybe give a little commentary?

LU: I don't remember.

TU: Yeah, okay. Yeah, yeah, right. Okay. That's good too. That's a good commentary. That's the best commentary!

LU: I don't recall this—

TU: Yeah. Yeah, okay. Yeah, right.



LU: I was two or three years old.

TU: Okay. Yeah, right.

SC: Sounds like a two or three-year-old.

TU: Yeah, right, right, right, right. But it was just an incredible unfolding of energy, you know. And from that time onwards I'm never surprised when I see all that energy that he has. I always felt that a lot of the drumming at that time when Lars came up was quite sort of, quite sedate in some sense, or you know, by sedate I mean in terms of not being sort of absolutely all over the place. Whereas let's say an Elvin Jones or some of these jazz players, they were going all over the place, whereas let's say Charlie Watts was sitting there, "tadum, tika." And then, let's say Bonham maybe was one that was not like that, or Bill Ward, I've always thought that Lars had that kind of energy from way back. I mean, when we talk like this, you know, it's not easy to maybe to imagine without having seen it at that age. But in some sense, I feel like I could see that energy that day.

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(At this point I start to get concerned about how much time we might have – ED)

SC: There's a few more things to touch on, because I know that we're probably running into some time concerns.

LU: No, not at all. I don't think we're running into anything. The rest-stop that we were going to go eat at is open until 1 am. And I think what we could do is we could take a snack.

SC: Great, excellent, okay. Don't you?

TU: Absolutely. I mean I don't know how much more there is, you know. And—

SC: There's a few more areas to cover. We'll see where it goes.

TU: Whatever you guys like.

(Lars is taking more photos of Torben.)

LU: It's art. It's art.

SC: How was it?

LU: I don't know. I'll let you know when it's developed.

SC: So let me ask you Lars. Looking at...it's OK, I'll wait, take pictures.

LU: Go ahead. I'm good, man. You're overthinking it. C'mon, ask some questions!

SC: Have you ever felt intimidated by your dad with regards to his own public levels of recognition and achievement?

LU: No.

SC: You've never felt that?

LU: No.

SC: Okay. And what about when he gets into his beliefs, you've never felt intimidated sometimes when he goes into more philosophical edges of his beliefs –

LU: Never. And in some way it's interesting, because one thing that comes out a lot in the 'Some Kind of Monster' sequence is—

SC: Which has nothing to do with my question. I just want to make that clear.

LU: I believe in the freedom to take the question wherever I want to take it. Especially on the other side of a stern no! *(Laughs)* But I think one of the interesting things that came out of that 'Some Kind of Monster' stuff in those couple sequences was (affects grave toned voice) "Oh my God! The relationship you had with your father! Oh, it must be so difficult, and that kind of, that tension and that energy, and oh, my God!" (Lars is referring primarily to the scene where Torben is asked for his views on a new song and in the process says the word "delete" – ED) You know, a lot of people, especially once you got into more mainstream interviews would ask this stuff like, "oh, the tension with your father. Your relationship. How is your relationship with your father? Is it okay? Does it always have that kind of underlying tension to it?" And I would sit and go like, wow, that's such a different way of milking that scene for context, you know?

SC: Well, that scene was definitely edited, I think, to give that it edge. And I thought were it not for the very, very specific two or three seconds of additional frames (involving Torben almost falling/hugging into Lars and laughing after saying the word 'delete' in the studio – ED), I think that would've been what carried through.

LU: And so coming back to answer your question, I don't think there's ever been that kind of intimidation or anything. I think in most times, in most rational head spaces, I've always looked at it as a resource and as a place of mining of—

SC: By "it," you mean the relationship?

LU: Or his mind or his way of looking at the world or his, you know, philosophies or something like that as a great well of potential, of learning and stuff like that. I think most of the time I run into asking myself when I'm ready to calm down enough to fully receive all the wisdom and all the stuff that's there. But I look at it as a very positive thing. And I think that as I get older, I get closer to being sure it'll pass on. But I can't say that at any point have I been either intimidated by it or scared or (pauses to think)—sometimes I can get irritated by the righteousness of it. I can get irritated by the fact that I don't see it first. Sometimes with the longwindedness of it, especially in certain moments when I've got a lot of restless energy or whatever, but I can't say that I've ever felt intimidated or any other kind of negative thing like that.

SC: Okay. I mean that pretty much answers the question.

TU: Okay. Let me, if I may, just add a little thing about what I would call the context of those things in the 'Monster' film. What you see there, I think, is something which was a repetition of something that had gone on again and again over the years, when new music was in the works. We have had those sorts of conversations for many years. So if I said something like that—and this is my point, you know, it was simply "Here's how I see it." It was never, ever meant to change whatever they wanted to do with it, you know. But on the other hand it was to let Lars know how I heard sometimes. I'm glad there was the stuff where we were

LU: I THINK MY FATHER HAS ALWAYS HAD AN INCREDIBLE, AND SOMETIMES TO THE POINT WHERE I FEEL THAT IT'S TOO MUCH, BUT AN INCREDIBLE ABILITY TO DEAL WITH PEOPLE, TO BE NICE TO PEOPLE, TO GIVE TOLERANCE, TO SHOW RESERVE. I MEAN, IT DOESN'T DRIVE ME NUTS ANYMORE BECAUSE NOW I FEEL THAT I'M GETTING TO BE THE SAME WAY.

sort of playing on the sofa afterwards or something, to show that—

SC: There was a warmth and a history to it.

TU: Yeah, yeah, what you said there. And that's what I mean by the context of things.

SC: So, couple of, again, more straightforward questions for each of you about each other, starting with Lars. When have you been the most proud of your dad?

LU: I would say, you know, it's almost by isolating an incident that you assume that there was not pride in anything other than that—

SC: No, not at all. I'm not doing that.

LU: I would say that I think that it's a continuous thing that rolls along quite effortlessly without there having to be something that's elevated.

SC: Okay, that's an interesting perspective.

LU: No, I mean I think that you know, the movie that we made a couple, five years ago ('Before The Wall'), I think that was a great, proud, moment. I think it was great that we made this movie that he wanted to make. To this day, I don't think anybody else in the whole world gets it. And it's still such a great thing to just be able to have done that.

That was in 2000, right? But I don't know. I mean things to isolate? I don't know, I guess maybe to me there's a little bit of corniness in that.

SC: It's not about being heavy, I mean maybe just taking it on for fun—

LU: No, no, no, and I'm not saying that it should be. I'm just, in terms of being truthful for me. I mean look, 'when he won the third round at Wimbledon in 1966, I was feeling that in my crib,' y'know? I just, it isn't about that or like that for me. I think that I love the honesty, I'm always proud when he's just being honest, when he never lets himself or anybody else off the hook easy, that he always challenges whatever's thrown at him at any given time. I think both of these two books right here (covers shown on page 17 – ED) are very good... I guess if anything I'm really proud of the fact that, you know, a couple of years later he's still being prolific and active and not resting on his laurels, and also continuing to do all these incredible creative endeavors, between books and movies and art...I mean in some ways, it covers everything we just talked about for four hours! And then go back to point of origin in the '40s, of all that different stuff that we've talked about. I love the fact that, I'm proud of the fact, even though it's not something that maybe Danish people would throw around that much.

TU: It's also a question of what is meant by that. Because it (can) almost be like someone does something that you score points off or something, you know. And at the same time maybe, in this discussion, we cannot, I cannot, run away from that word "pride," you know, he's my "pride." You see what I mean? It's like a lioness and her tribe. So "pride" becomes almost synonymous there with children, right, or—

LU: You guys want a slice of cheese? I don't think we can ever say no to a slice of cheese.

TU: I can say no, but you guys say yes.

LU: Because we're not gonna eat dinner for a couple hours.

SC: You're right. We must.

TU: So to me, it's almost like pride is what you have to empty yourself of in order to sort of become responsible or something.

TORBEN ULRICH
thoughts, ways & musings

When I was young I was never sleepy, (often in the '50s, Torben would have to check into hospital to get an IV simply because he had stayed awake too long and was suffering from exhaustion – ED) you know, and since I was interested in so many things I didn't want to drink myself into a stupor or something. But I wanted to stay up all night, because staying awake was a great adventure, if you will. (n.b. It's very important to note Torben was staying awake without drugs – ED) And I think Lars also has a lot of energy like that, wherever that comes from...

Whereas the other way is a little bit more like, you know, someone has done something, scored some points or done something great, and then it's that "reflected upon me glory" kind of thing. So I think Lars says it well, that in Denmark certainly there's a kind of a hesitation around that word.

SC: Right. OK, moving topics, let me ask you to each discuss each other's journeys. You've each taken these journeys in life that are pretty complex.

LU: Yeah, when I was going to the priest in 19-, oh, what was it, seventh grade, eighth grade? It was probably '78? You know, the year that we were being confirmed, we had to go to a priest for, I think a priest to be able to get confirmed in, what, April or something? So one three-hour block from this—

SC: Sorry. Priest?

LU: Go to see a religious—

SC: Ah-ha! I mean you can understand, for a moment there I thought you were talking about THE Priest!

LU: ...going to religious studies. That was outside of the school. You went to a church, and you studied with a priest, for three hours every Thursday. It was part of the school year, the whole class went to a church. And so it was in preparation for this confirmation thing. I remember at some point in that year, we sat down, and he asked everyone of us what we saw ourselves doing. What we wanted to do and what we saw ourselves doing when we got old. And it traveled around through the 16, 18 kids, and "I'm gonna do this" and you know, it ranged from the, you know, "I'm gonna be a doctor" to "I'm gonna be a fucking accountant" to "I'm gonna be a football player," you know, "astronaut, firefighter," whatever. And I just remember, I sat frantically, almost panicky, trying to think what it was that I wanted to be when they got to me?

TU: Yeah. Good.

LU: I remember by the time he got to me and called out "Lars," I still didn't have an answer. What I said to him was "I'm not sure what I want to be or what I'm gonna be, but I know that it's gonna be something that is not rooted in one place or in one situation." I think I might have used a desk reference, that it's not gonna be something that takes place behind a desk. You know what I mean?

SC: Oh yes.

LU: And I think that, what, 27 years later, we could say that is kinda what happened, right?

SC: Cool. And when you look at your father's journey, the journey you hear he's taken...

LU: I don't know it's, again, it's what I know, it's what I've lived. It's what—I mean it sounds so terribly corny—what's in my blood. I don't know. I hear the word "abnormal" and "you guys are so different" so much that I almost like play along with it...

SC: But you said "abnormal—"

LU: ...let me finish. But it's only in some way because I feel that it's point of origin is always from outside. It never came from inside. So if nobody had ever bestowed that upon us, or upon our ears through the last 20 years, I would never-ever-ever use those words or go into that way of thinking, when I think of the journeys our family's taken we've been talking about. But I guess I am proud that we've always played to the tune of our own drummers, right? And that we've always kind of done our own thing, and that it's been a very rich experience in that it has been so multi-faceted, or it's touched upon so many different experiences.

SC: Yeah, so I mean how do you reflect on it? That your father *did* open a jazz club in the 50s, and you *did* grow up in a jazz club, and so on. Maybe you've never sat back and thought about it.

LU: It's kind of cool though, isn't it?

SC: I'm asking you. I know what I think.

LU: I don't know, I guess it's kind of cool.

SC: That's the question. Do you ever sit back and think, "wow, this is pretty fucking cool?"

LU: Once in a while, but only at these moments! I mean it's only every two or three years when somebody asks me about it in an interview. Then you're pushed, you know, into moments of reflection to a point of this kind of deep analysis. Other than that, it's not—

SC: It's not that deep. I'm just asking you for a reaction.

LU: No, but it's not something that is particularly part of my daily kind of thing. Yeah, I think it's cool.

SC: Nobody sits there and thinks every day about what their dad does, but when someone does ask you about yours, your instant reaction is, "it's cool."

LU: Of course. It's cool. But also what I like about it is that so much of it has rubbed off on me. So in some way I feel that I'm fortunate enough to continue that path, or it's been on that path that's been paved.

SC: And let me ask you this, I mean inevitable as it probably is with parents and kids, do you feel the obligation to continue paving that path yourself? And do you see the path you pave—

Having seen Lars and the band blossom within [their] field, I think, you know, it's been incredible to see that come forth... To me, the strength of this band is in their physicality. That they have this sort of 'muscularity' which is also in tune... I think the whole space resonates when they're really playing, because they have the kind of muscularity that can make it sound like that. Torben Ulrich

LU: No, I—

SC: ...by the next paver. You know what I mean?

LU: I think the only responsibility as far as I'm concerned, is to make sure that at least my kids have an understanding of where they come from and what's been before them. And then I think once again that they can make up their own decisions of what they want to do with that and where they want to go. If they want to continue on that path, if they want to alter that path, or tread their own path or, you know, whatever version of that. But you know, it's important for me. The kids are going back to Denmark again in July. You know, it's important that I continue to pass on what has been before, and that they, within the realities of practical elements, get exposure to the Danishness in them, and the Danishness that is in their blood and in their ancestors. And that they get exposure to what 'scenes' their ancestors were part of, and where they got their experiences.

SC: Do you feel that they are now part of a "scene" in your life that was very similar to the scene you were part of in your dad's life?

LU: Well, I think that by the mainstream way of looking at the world, it seems that these kids are certainly part of something that's not conventional. Both are being exposed to things that are not necessarily conventional. I wouldn't say that that's on purpose, but it seems that we're heading in that direction once again, which feels good.

SC: Okay. So of course now, Torben, I have to ask you the same when you look at Lars's journey. You've touched on how you left him to basically make those decisions, and find those passions or not-passions for himself. But expand on that, and expand further on how you feel right now, you look at his journey thus far.

TU: Yeah, I mean I'm thinking about it. I mean I have difficulties with sort of 'objectifying' that to the point. Of course—

SC: But I'm just looking for a reaction.

TU: Of course for me, you know, first being a parent if you will and a father, but also a father who has spent many, many years listening to music and been in the field of music. And then, let's say, having seen Lars and the band blossom if you will within that field, then I think, you know, it's been in some sense incredible to see that come forth. And also, by this point, you're always maybe a little concerned. Today in the newspaper there's this Seattle mountain climber, and they're saying he's done this incredible stuff, 14 incredible mountains, it's a feat. And then they asked his wife what she thought of the latest feat. And she said, "I was just concerned that I had not heard from him." And that's a little bit like how I feel. OK, he's scaled these incredible places, but I'm also at the same time concerned that will he come down safely or something. You see what I mean? Or that he is not lost or something. Because it can easily happen, you know. And then you also say, "wow, where's the next height?" Or is there a next height? I think that to me, the strength of this band is also in their physicality. That they have this sort of 'muscularity' which is also in tune. I thought one of the qualities of The Beatles was that they had sort of a knack for playing in tune, you know? And I mean even just on the level of instruments being in tune or something. You know, some people have a knack for that. Some great people can be sort of a little bit 'sharp' all the time or something, you know, because that's how they hear it. But I feel that when Metallica is playing, that they have a kind of 'in-tune-ness' relative to some other bands. I think the whole space resonates when they're really playing, because they have that kind of muscularity that can make it sound like that. One thing is to set that sound into motion, and another thing is to have a kind of a physicality maybe to make it further than that. And so where can they go with it? It's a very interesting question.

SC: Lars, do you have a comment on this? I mean do you think that when you decided to hook up with James Hetfield, that you knew that you were finding someone who was always going to offer you a counterpoint, and thus force you guys to push a boundary?

LU: It's way too deep. Way too deep. I found somebody who was interested in playing Diamond Head covers with me!

TU: You know that I thought Lars brought a kind of a physicality to this band, and then when they got Robert, you know, that was further. It's a very physical band when they are really playing, and Lars, it seems to me, can sort of hold that, you know. And hold that and take it on, not just for five minutes but for, let's say, a longer concert or days or something like that. And in some sense they've added something even more to that through Robert. Which is not a critique of Jason at all. I just mean that if it had to be at that time, then I thought that (Robert) was particularly, you know, helpful now and in some sense timely. And so what I mean is... maybe you think I'm sort of a little bit like Lars in turning that question because I'm also not getting into that point... but I am saying that I think it's very, very challenging to go from here for them, you know. But I also think that in terms of, you know, a Mars Volta who are playing out here *(gestures to*

show another place in music), then there's really still room for Metallica to forge a path. There's still room for them, but it certainly is not easy, you know. And so that's a little bit of how I see some of that.

SC: Okay. I think we should take a break for just a second here.

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SC: So we should talk about the collaboration a few years ago with the film ('Before The Wall') that you both came to musically and creatively. First of all, when you hit that ball, Lars, and it was triggered (electronically), was it important for you to understand how it was going to be used and how the sounds are going to be manipulated? I mean you made a comment early on that, you said that you were proud of your dad making a film that perhaps only he understands. Did you relate to any of it?

LU: Well, we've always thought of that as a shared experience. I don't think you have to understand 100 percent of the content that exists in somebody else's head. It's about trust and it's about sharing an experience with somebody who's guiding it.

SC: Right. That's a very good point.

LU: He had a vision, and I thought it would be fun to follow along with that vision and to be part of that experience. And I think I get it, or got it, more than most people, and you know, it was a fun thing. Look, most of us when we get these crazy visions in our head sometimes we punt a little bit of quiet, calm confidence, maybe let off the aura or the vibe that we actually have a complete understanding of where we're going and what we're doing, and I think that a lot of times that we don't. And I'm just saying that there could be the possibility that he hadn't actually got a 100 percent idea of what he was doing at the time, but maybe instead this quiet confidence and knowledge in the fact that wherever it's going to end up, it's going to not be shit...

SC: I know exactly what you're saying.

LU: ...And the same way that when we write or whenever any of us do anything (creative), that's something that I aspire to a lot. It's what I respond to in music and painting. Especially with painting and stuff like that, it's always much more interesting if there doesn't seem to be an obvious destination or an obvious end point. There's a journey part of most creative endeavor. And so you can either say "this is what I'm doing, this is what I hope I'm doing, this is what I think I'm doing." Or "I'm just gonna jump out and know that I'm gonna land safely but I don't know where I'm gonna land." And in any honest creative collaborations, there's only really one element that's necessary for that kind of journey, and that's the word 'trust.' As long as there's trust between the collaborators and the people taking that trip together, then, you know, how can it not end up okay! And so I think that when my father had the vision of this film, even though he maybe didn't exactly know where it was going, there was enough trust and, I think, willingness to go along for that ride. Part of the excitement was that it was something that was certainly not anything that I'd ever experienced. And so that was a lot of fun, and it was a lot of fun on two levels. Like I said, number one, because it was an experience that was shared, and number two because it was an experience that was completely foreign and unique to me at the time.

SC: Right. And then did you make the sounds or manipulate the sounds that you thought fitted what you saw? Or were you directed?

LU: I think a little bit of both. I was directed. I was trying to be spontaneous. I was trying to be abstract. I was trying to be, you know, as 'in the moment' as possible and shoot from the hip and not over-think. I think that in some way the film was such an exercise in thinking and thought, about almost mathematical-like equations and of all these kind of grids, and all the type of stuff that was incredibly thought out. So I thought that the music part of it should be the opposite.

SC: I don't want to get into too much of a comparison, but for many years in your work with Metallica, you fought hard to control every element of your sound, and to strive for that very perfection. Was this a bridge for you, for letting go of that?

TU: It was much looser here, wasn't it?

LU: Well, I don't think that just because one is there it precludes the other. Just because, you know, Metallica made certain kind of records for many years, it didn't mean that there wasn't other areas musically that were spontaneous. We chose to make records that particular way, but it doesn't mean that (spontaneity) didn't exist in other areas, in jams and when we were rehearsing at 4:00 in the morning in Jason Newsted's hotel room, in sound checks, in pretty much every other element. It was just that we had kind of charted a course with these Metallica records that we stuck with for some time, but I don't think that in any way precluded that (spontaneity) existed in all the other musical endeavors that we threw ourselves out in. But like I said before, the almost mathematical approach that my father had to the formulas, and to

that stuff that was being laid out in a very mathematical way in the film, meant to me that the film really needed the complete opposite to that in the musical department.

SC: Okay. Right. And Torben, from your perspective?

TU: From my perspective and listening to Lars, I could say what I said before—it sometimes reminded me of how he played the drums, you know, before he started to play 'one-two-three-four, one-two-three-four'...so I'm very grateful, let's say, for that music that he made there. I really think that it holds up. And I would really like for readers of *So What!* to hear Lars in that context. If one could maybe (just) hear it, so that the visual things would not distract from being able to hear—you see what I mean? I think one difficulty when people see this film, is that they don't quite know what to make of it when they see it. And in some sense you could say that that is the idea.

SC: You mean to purposely disorientate, or to challenge people's conceptions, to challenge people's thoughts?

TU: No. What the point is, I'm thinking is that this was maybe a very old idea that I carried for a long time, and I felt that Lars was the one that most intimately knew what this was about in some sense, you know, you could say with the kind of rhythms of the ball being played against the wall, and all that. But was also trying to sort of make an irony or a mockery of an instruction film, you know? So that people thought it was instructional, and that was exactly what I did not want it to be. This film is about you trying to find out what it is you want to do in some sense. Either you want to say "I'm not interested in this film" which is fine, or "I don't get any help from this film," or, "I want to play tennis" or something. Maybe you ask "Why is he showing me this fucking stick?" Or something. And also, on the other hand I feel that some of that stuff is some of the stuff that I've been doing myself for years in order to do what I do. So if you are interested in what I do, that means you find out for yourself what you want to. So, it could never be an instructional film even if the film is sometimes trying to be sort of a mockery of itself on the visual side, but not necessarily a mockery of itself on the hearing side.

So that's why I felt that Lars would be the one that would hold all of that together in a kind of a thing which would almost save it from itself or something! And at the same time, I also felt that if we slowed it down, then Lars also would come in and kind of, you know, and pick it up. You know, we want to slow it down in order to have more knowledge to pick it up, if you will. And in between these stretches of his drumming, there also breathing spaces and stuff like that. So I feel that it has what I like, the breathing of his music, on that. It doesn't go nonstop, which is a side of Lars you don't hear so easily in the Metallica music. So that's why I say that it's not so easy maybe for someone who knows all Metallica records and subscribes to *So What!* to be able to imagine what this tape sounds like, again irrespective of what it looks like, you see the difference between what it looks like and what it sounds like?

SC: You're talking purely as an aural thing.

TU: Yes. So I'm very grateful for that, you know, for the sound thing. And I think that to me, it really, it holds it together.

SC: I mean does it give you (Lars) the, I don't know if courage is the right word, inspiration maybe, to pursue this sort of head space further?

TORBEN ULRICH
thoughts, ways & musings

...It seems to me I'm working very slowly, I'm slow in the sense that, let's say if I'm working in one medium if you will, then maybe I'm sort of inspired also to think how this is translated or transferred into one of these other areas that I'm also interested in, you know. I'm saying, "okay, let's try to articulate this maybe in writing," and then maybe I feel, "okay, how is the same question sort of translated into maybe a film or into some kind of a tonal realm, you know, into music?" I'm interested in, if I have a question, or I'm trying to articulate a certain question, then I'm trying to say, can I maybe compose something in a certain field? But then after several years or something, then I like to come back to it. I wonder if whatever I was doing at the time, can I get sort of deeper into that and sort of by decomposing what was already composed, sort of take that up anew, and give it both a kind of a repetition and a fresh look...

LU: You know, in the right circumstance, sure. I can't say that it's anything that... I'm sitting here right now going, you know, as I'm listening to him, "Fuck, I've gotta do part two of this!" To me, it's another step in that all-over-ness that seems to just be part of who I am, the curiosity, all that type of stuff. But I would be certainly open to something like that again.

TU: And what you should know is this. A certain Danish radio station asked if we could play together over in Denmark, you know, a month ago or something. And that maybe Lars would join our band there.

SC: Wow.

TU: And Lars immediately said that, yeah, that would be fun. And also because the drummer there Claus Bøje (in Torben's jazz group over in Copenhagen, a long-time group of musicians who have worked and played together over the years – ED), when Lars was a little boy he wanted to grow up and be a drummer, and an ice hockey player, like Claus Bøje. So that's, I mean that you also should know. And it will be little bit like, you know, let's say the Grateful Dead

UNTITLED, TORBEN ULRICH

with two drummers or something. I'd love to hear Lars and Claus play together, it'd be really fun. Not easy maybe, but fun, you know. And quite precious.

SC: Torben, are you satisfied with the results of the explorations you've made so far?

TU: No.

SC: Well OK, can we go back to India?

TU: Okay.

SC: It fascinates me. We won't stay there for long, but let's use it as a reference point.

TU: Sure.

SC: The art that you were creating then, versus the art you're creating now, how much more has the art you're creating now benefited from the spiritual and Buddhist exploration?

TU: …IN SOME SENSE I WOULD BE A LITTLE SCARED IF I FELT I HAD AN ANSWER TO THESE QUESTIONS BECAUSE I DON'T EXPECT ONE FROM THEM. IT'S SORT OF LIKE THE QUESTION PERPETUATES ITSELF…

TU: The time in India was very important because we stayed and stayed and stayed, we were there for, four, five months, you know, at that stage, and traveled. And also this was, let's say, pre-Beatles/Ravi Shankar, all of that (illustrating how 'open' India was in terms of such cultural exploration at the time as this was before The Beatles made such discovery 'famous' – ED). It was very 'free'. Let's say you came into town and said, "Oh, we are very interested in hearing some classical Indian music." The people that then played were 'open' to us, you know, it wasn't like we had to go through 600 hoops or through the agent or the PR people, because there was nothing like that.

SC: It was a very innocent and free exchange of information, right?

TU: Yeah yeah. And also because, let's say if we stayed with the Maharani of Jaipur or something, and we said we'd really like to check this or that out, he would just go like that *(snaps fingers)* and arrange it, you know. So we were very fortunate when we went to India, and in Pakistan too, because we had the time to sort of delve into it and come back tomorrow. And it's still ongoing, you know. I listen to a lot of Indian music still. And then of course at that time I would say that I was doing a lot of, also hatha yoga and stuff like that, which also at that time I was really interested in.

SC: Did you just find that in India or did you find it in Denmark first?

TU: Oh, I probably found it in Denmark.

SC: Really? I'm not being funny. Who brings yoga to Denmark in the early '50s?

TU: Well, I saw it in a book. And then we went out to India and met with many of these yogi, you know, and it was quite interesting. And it was also, it was in the south of India in Kerala at that time that I had this interview with an old Hindu sage, if you will, or yogi or mystic or something. And he was sort of lying on this couch kind of thing, and it was like, "Okay, you can have ten minutes with this gentleman."

SC: Curiously Roman in his posture, right?

TU: It was very like that, but he was very nice. And he saying, like, "Young man. What is always needed if you want to pursue these things, is you need to have sort of the SPARK!" (Clapping loudly to illustrate the yogi – ED.) And he really said that word, "spark," very loudly "SPARK!" And I wondered where did that spark come from? So what he meant was that the spark would come from the teacher (snapping fingers repeatedly – ED). And then that spark would set you on your path, get you going or something, like the way a candle first has to be lit before it burns itself. I still can hear that very vividly, and to me what he said there was very important, because I could see that as I was running around and looking in all these directions, what I really needed was that spark. So that was in '58 or something. And when you talk about spark, sometimes it doesn't happen maybe right away. So let's say that was in '58, you know, maybe it took another two decades before that really became really activated or something.

SC: So it took 20 years for the fuse in '58 to get out.

TU: Yeah, yeah, but of course I mean I'd been interested in all this stuff since '45 and earlier. I was interested in Greek philosophy before even I went to Sweden, you know. So

...I would hesitate to even talk about ultimate satisfaction. You know, I don't know. Maybe those two words are not in my vocabulary... in that sense, you could say I'm always on that losing streak!!! Torben Ulrich

that would have been in, let's say, in 1940 or something, when I was 12 and 13. I went down to the library and read Socrates and Plato.

SC: I guess one question for you Lars, is have you ever investigated meditation or any of these disciplines?

LU: No.

SC: No? No desire really to—is there a latent wish? I mean to give an example, when your dad tells me about some of his meditations, there's a tiny little bit of me that wishes I could do that too—you know what I mean? Do you ever wish that you could?

LU: Yeah, I would say that I'm open to it in some way, I hope maybe that my life gets to a point where there's enough calm to pursue some of these things. I don't see it on the imminent horizon but I think that at some point that it could be. I kind of strive for—and maybe I'm just being ignorant and fooling myself, but it would be nice to get to a point of calmness at some point down the road. But I think even though at 41 I feel I've lived a lot, I also think that in the potential context of what could 'be,' there's still a ways to go. And so it's something that I think I'm open to explore at some point, but it doesn't feel imminent.

SC: This is interesting, because whilst you talk about 'calm' there's also this 'forward gear' you have that ploughs relentlessly forward whatever the circumstance and which seems to both help and protect you...

TU: But it's important also for you to know when you talk about these things, that at the same time as you have that kind of a calm, you also have to have that kind of a fire to it *(finger snap)*.

SC: It's an interesting paradox.

TU: But then I feel that the paradox is also that you have to be both very open, and also you have to be able to have a sort of intensity of awareness too, so that you're not sucked into some kind of conventionality that can sort of suck you in, you know.

SC: I know what you're driving at.

TU: And then you become just sort of member of some kind of church. And then you sort of show up on Sunday or whenever it's supposed to be, and become a member that takes on that kind of doctrine. So I think you have to be very, very careful that you don't sort of fall into that kind of thing. You can remain open to its possibilities, but also you must be open to how many pitfalls that are along that road, you know. If you are, let's say, inspired by the traditions from India rooted in Hindu or Sikh or Buddhist practices, you must also still remember where you come from. That way you're not just taking over the style of clothing but you're more trying to articulate it so that it becomes part of your own being.

LU: There's one thing you should talk to him about. In the wake of 'Some Kind of Monster,' there's this newfound little Torben Ulrich Appreciation Society, and all the heavy metal Gandalf websites, and so on. And you know, USA Today named him one of the 100 Coolest People in America. They didn't fucking mention me or anybody else!

SC: Really?

LU: Yeah. And so you should talk to him about that.

SC: Sure. I mean we can definitely go there! Well, why don't you ask him yourself?

TU: But what, I mean, what can I say?

SC: Have you ever asked him Lars?

LU: Way too modest.

SC: That's not... what are you talking about? I mean, he's your dad, just ask him, "Dad, how the fuck's it feel like to have people call you the heavy metal Gandalf?" OK. I'm going to ask for Lars. How does it feel? I mean, is it almost ridiculous?

TU: I guess so. I mean I don't know. I mean it's just there, you know. It's fine, or not.

SC: Taking into account the spin in the editing, which I felt was designed to suggest that either Lars had some enormous deep rooted issues which he'd never talked to you about, or that he was about to fall in a heap (on King Mountain) and dissolve into the dust. And then this whole second thing with the whole "delete" thing in the studio. But the fact is that in context of your lives, it's just a tiny microcosm of a lifetime of communication, but in the context of the film it was like a huge, resonant judgment. I mean Torben, you have the reputation of being this mystery man, this soothsayer-like figure now.

TU: Yeah, but there were also, I mean there were also some serious issues in this stuff, within all these problems and all these frictions and all of that stuff there were some serious issues of where is this band going right now (referring to the era covered by '...Monster' – ED) in terms of its music. And you see, and many of those things they in some sense veered away from when they came out with the "St. Anger" album, you know. They had in fact, it seems to me, deleted what was going on at that time in that, with that stuff that we heard that night. I had thought a little bit that it was almost like they were being drawn away from their path, and I couldn't maybe hear their course. And then I thought later on when the "St. Anger" album came that they had almost taken a

corrective to that, you know, and continued on their course. So they almost self-corrected their course, if you will.

SC: Do you follow this Lars?

LU: Yeah, I mean—yeah. I follow it.

TU: But you also you don't have to, I mean it's not like, you know—

LU: But I also don't think I have to either agree with or disagree with it, or follow it. I mean when I think back to those times, you know, we were just experimenting to see if there was anything tangible on the horizon that we could get something out of, and so it was a very experimental time. It wasn't a time of definitions, it was a time before things got into specificities and definitions and so on, we just needed to kind of fuck around a little bit and see if there was anything that came out that was inspiring.

TU: Yeah.

SC: And Torben, did you sniff the energy being different between, let's say like Lars searching for one thing and James not really being ready to search for it?

TU: Yeah. Yeah. But also, it was pretty much there (for all to see). It didn't have to be sniffed out, if you would. It just seemed to me that the music that we heard, you know, on those tapes, had a quite clear smell of that kind of non-togetherness, or confusion or something like that, you know. And also it's what so many bands had experienced maybe many, many years earlier. So it's not so strange that it would come to that, you know. And in some sense I think it bodes well (for the future) how they came out of that.

SC: Right. Hang on, he's got one final picture he's taking, and then—

TU: So, okay.

SC: A light-hearted finish here.

TU: Okay.

SC: So I'll give Lars the last word. In the top 100 people in USA Today? It is actually true that you were not included, right?

LU: I told you, yes.

SC: And what do you think of that?

LU: A disgrace!

SC: Let it be noted that with some tired giggling and chuckling, that is where we end.

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(FOOTNOTE – we all went out and had a rather nice late-night dinner. As we sat eating, I reflected upon the courage of both father and son to sit down and engage in such a conversation. Remember, this is father and son not only freely talking, but doing so for six hours in an interview scenario. In fact, if that doesn't define their relationship, I don't know what does. Thanks to Lars and Torben for being brave, bold and trusting enough to share this significant time with us.)

There is much more to read and learn about Torben Ulrich, thus we wholeheartedly encourage you to visit the following websites for further information on everything discussed in this issue.

www.torbenulrich.com

www.beforethewall.com