

# CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, SACRAMENTO SCHOOL OF MUSIC SENIOR RECITAL

# **Daniel Avanto, composition**

House of Leaves - Part 1 (2020)

- 1. This Is Not For You
- 2. Introduction
- 3. Muss es sein & I
- 4. II
- 5. III
- 6. IV
- 7. V
- 8. VI
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- 12. X

Daniel Avanto, piano

Tundra (2020)

for flute, English horn, French horns, trumpet, bass drum, violins, violas, cellos, and double basses

Trio No. 1 (2019)

Michel Buckman, tenor saxophone Madison Armstrong, clarinet & flute

This recital is presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Music in Theory & Composition.

Daniel Avanto is a student of Professor Chris Castro.



# **PROGRAM NOTES**

House of Leaves, Part 1 – This piece follows along with the first ten chapters of this convoluted book that is a prime example of ergodic literature. It is written in an intentionally complicated way to fit the narrative and experience of reading the actual book. For example, do you read citations when immediately when they appear in a document? Do you read the page in its entirety from top to bottom? Or do you simply glance over the citations? Either way, this overture poses the performer with the same choices, and there is no wrong way to interpret it. (For more information on the narrative of this multimedia piece, please see the following pages).

Tundra – A large frozen expanse under the aurora borealis and all its visibly chromatic glory. However, the wind still blows, and the cold is unrelenting.

Trio No. 1 – A Cluster starts the piece, starting a slow explosion of Shostakovich-ian harmony that calms back down at the end.

House of Leaves

This is not for you - 50 sec.

A bell of dense harmony sets the ominous tone of the piece, just as the opening line of the book sets the tone for the rest of this intensely complicated and disturbing story.

October 31, 1998 - 55 sec.

Johnny Truant, a tattoo artist in Los Angeles, has been having sleep problems and has taken to medication for help, but alas nothing has worked. Johnny talks about where it all started, a box of unpublished documents inside of a trunk left by the previous owner of the apartment he moved into some time ago. The previous owner, an older man only known as Zampanó, died under mysterious circumstances, and the police found no suspicious signs except for a large claw mark in the floor.

Muss es sein? I - 1 min. 34 sec.

Must it be?

The beginning of the unpublished documents by Zampanó titled "The Navidson Record". It appears to be an analysis of a documentary by—and about—a photographer named Will Navidson. A simple display of a strange doorway that leads to an impossible hallway that extends passed the physical limits of the house. That video is titled "The Five and a Half Minute Hallway". The next shots appear to be an unnamed cameraman panicking in a set of dark corridors, he is out of food and something is stalking him. This is "Exploration #4".

## II - 3 min. 20 sec.

Will Navidson and his family move into their new house on Ash Tree Lane. Will has decided to settle down from his life of adventures in photographic documentation of world events that commonly put his life was in danger. His wife, Karren, is cold and indifferent. His children, Chad and Daisy, are scared of this new chapter in their lives. Chat specifically feels an uneasy presence from the house.

Outside of the Navidson narrative, Jonny is working at organizing Zampanó's mess of documents, while also putting a narrative of his own life into the footnotes. He writes about when him and his friend, Lude, fabricated a story to impress some women. In a fit, Johnny edits The Navidson Record, contaminating the narrative and establishing that anything can be false information inside the narrative.

#### III - 3min.

Will Navidson has had a difficult life, he has abandonment issues that his twin brother, Tom, also suffers from. Zampanó writes that some speculate that the events to come are influenced by Navidson's traumatic past.

Meanwhile, shenanigans with Johnny and Lude.

#### $IV - 4 \min$ .

The Navidson family returns home from a trip to Seattle only to discover an extra closet in the upstairs hallway of the house. It is small, but still, it was not their when they moved in.

While Johnny is at work, he feels uneasy for no apparent reason, so he goes outside for some fresh air, when suddenly he senses - and smells - an evil presence behind him. The dark shadow lunges at him just as he turns to see it. He falls. There is nothing there, the smell is gone.

This prompts Navidson to measure the internal dimensions of the interior, and then the exterior. He quickly realizes that the inside of the house is a ¼" bigger on the inside than the outer parameters can allow. He rekindles his relationship with Tom, who visits to help square away the measurement impossibility, only to confirm it with professional equipment, only for the interior of the house to grow an additional 2'.

## V-3 min. 20 sec.

Zampanó writes about echos, first the mythological character, then the scientific definition—being reverberation of sound.

Zampanó's posthumous words begin to effect Johnny to his core. While at the Sky Bar with Lude, a simple side-thought about the dead old man's words leads to a disturbing monologue that makes little to no sense, only conveying that Johnny is, indeed, not okay. Lude cut's Johnny's thought short, pulling him back to reality.

Zampanó writes more about echos, referring to the mythological character, then discussing more the scientific definition—being reverberation of sound.

Johnny finds a moment of solace only for it to be destroyed by an involuntary vision of him twisting his boss's head completely off while the people around him watch in utter terror. He is pulled back into reality when his boss happily greets him, except he doesn't greet him, and he certainly isn't happy. A doorway leading to a hallway of impossible space appears in the Navidson family living room. The impossible space consists of a logic-defying labyrinth of ever-changing hallways, doorways, and empty rooms with ash grey walls. Navidson almost becomes lost while exploring one night. Upon finding his way out, Navidson is asked by his wife Karen to not venture into the hallway again. The Five and a Half Minute Hallway is filmed.

# VI - 2 min.

The navidson's pets, while playing, run down the impossible hallway, and are presumed to be lost to the void of corridors and darkness. Moments later, the animals are seen outside of the house, as it appears the hallway only exists to humans.

Johnny begins talking to a woman who is a customer of his tattoo shop.

"And so now, tin the shadow of unspoken events, I watch as Zampanó's courtyard darken. Everything whimsical has left. I try to study the light-going carefully. From my room. In the glass of my memory. In the moonstream of my imagination. The weeds, the windows, every bench. But the old man is not there, and the cats are all gone. Something else has taken their place. Something I am unable to see. Waiting. I'm afraid. It is hungry. It is immortal. Worse, it knows nothing of whim.

## VII - 6 min.

Holloway Roberts, a hunter and explorer, is introduced along with his team, they have been tasked with exploring the impossible labyrinth. Jed Leeder is introduced, the second member of Holloway's expedition team. He is an expert navigator specializing in wilderness survival. Kirby "Wax" Hook is introduced, the last member of Holloway's team. He is an expert climber who plans on making a solo ascent of mount Everest.

Holloway's team makes 3 expeditions into the hallway leaving a trail of fishing wire to lead them back to the entrance. **Exploration #1**—as the recording is titled—does not last too long, as the team runs out of fishing wire after around two miles of walking, ending in a vast space that is eventually called The Anteroom. **Exploration #2** lasts over 8 hours. Outside of the Anteroom, they find a space that is even bigger—The Great Hall—in which they eventually find a staircase with seemingly no bottom. Meanwhile Will Navidson takes his son to get ice cream to get the house off of his mind. **Exploration #3** lasts almost 20 hours. The Holloway team tries to descend the staircase, ultimately walking for seven hours to no avail. The Team departs once more for the ill-fated **Exploration #4**.

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Several <u>days</u> after the Holloway expedition departs for Exploration #4, a knocking is heard coming from the walls of the house.

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Billy Reston's backstory is presented, explaining why he is bound to a wheelchair.

• • • - - - • • •

Jhonny is perplexed by Zampanó breaking his academic tone by introducing vulgarity into his analysis.

IX - 8 min. 50 sec.

Hic labor ille domus et inextricabilis error —Virgil laboriosus exitus domus —Ascensius laboriosa ad entrandum —Nicholas Trevet

A Footnote for three Latin introductory quotes turns into a story of how Johnny sought the translation for the quotes, only to have a vision of himself getting hit by an out-of-control truck, thrown across the crowded Los Angeles street, and burned to death in an ignited fuel puddle. Except there was no fire, no fuel to ignite, no screaming bystanders, and no truck. The street was practically empty.

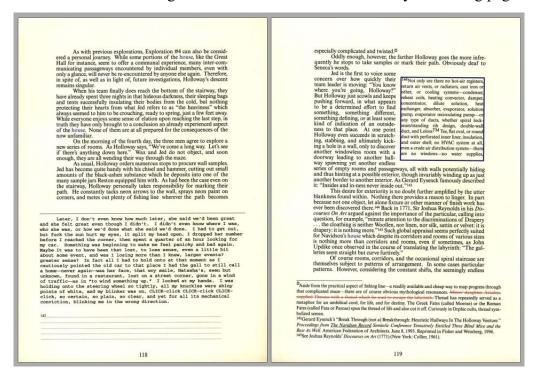
Another footnote introduces the idea of The Minotaur in a dynamically altered version of the classic story of Theseus in the Labyrinth from Greek Mythology. In this version, the story follows King Minos instead of Theseus, and the Minotaur is not actually a half-bull/half-human creature, but rather the deformed son of King Minos that he believed would bring shame to his heritage. The King locks away The Minotaur in a labyrinth so complicated that he would never escape, but without bars to suggest a prison. All the while spreading the story of the horrific monster to the world.

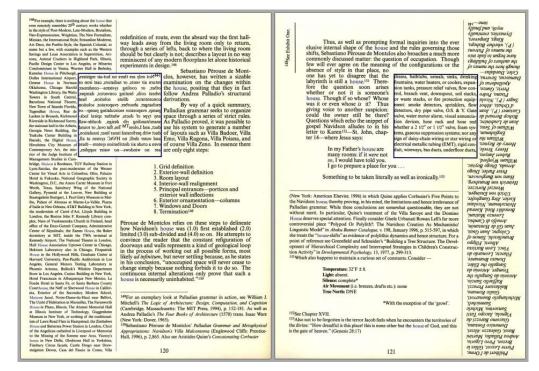
Eventually, King Minos begins to establish a loving relationship with his exiled son and begins devising a way to reestablish him into society. But before any of his plans come to fruition, the pompous and arrogant Theseus wanders into the labyrinth and kills the king's son. King Minos is forced by his past decisions to commend and praise Theseus for his bravery, while knowing that he has lost son.

The Holloway expedition, in the labyrinth, reaches the bottom of a stairwell that seems to only be as deep as they each believe it will be. They begin exploring the endless corridors and placing markers in an effort to avoid accidental backtracking.

In a desperate attempt to find *something* different, they team smashes a hole into a wall. To mirror this, a square appears in the middle of the right-side page, where a citation appears. On the left-side pages afterwards, the box appears on the opposite side of the page, to create a "hole" in the page. The text in these left-side box citations is a mirrored version of what appears in the previous right-side page.

I have attached some images to better illustrate these incredibly interesting pages.





The box citation contains objects that do NOT appear in the labyrinth.

The citation on the left side of the left pages lists buildings and locations that the labyrinth does NOT resemble.

The Upside-down citation on the right side of the right pages lists people who could NOT have designed and constructed the labyrinth.

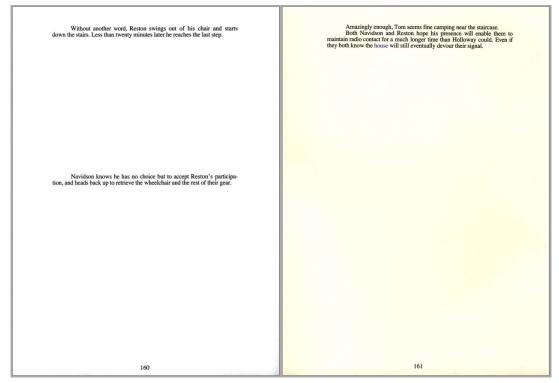
The narrative of the Holloway expedition continues with the team's mental degradation finally coming to an apex when Holloway opens fire on Jed and Wax with his hunting rifle. They are chased into the darkness of the labyrinth where they hide and begin knocking SOS into the walls in a desperate call for help.

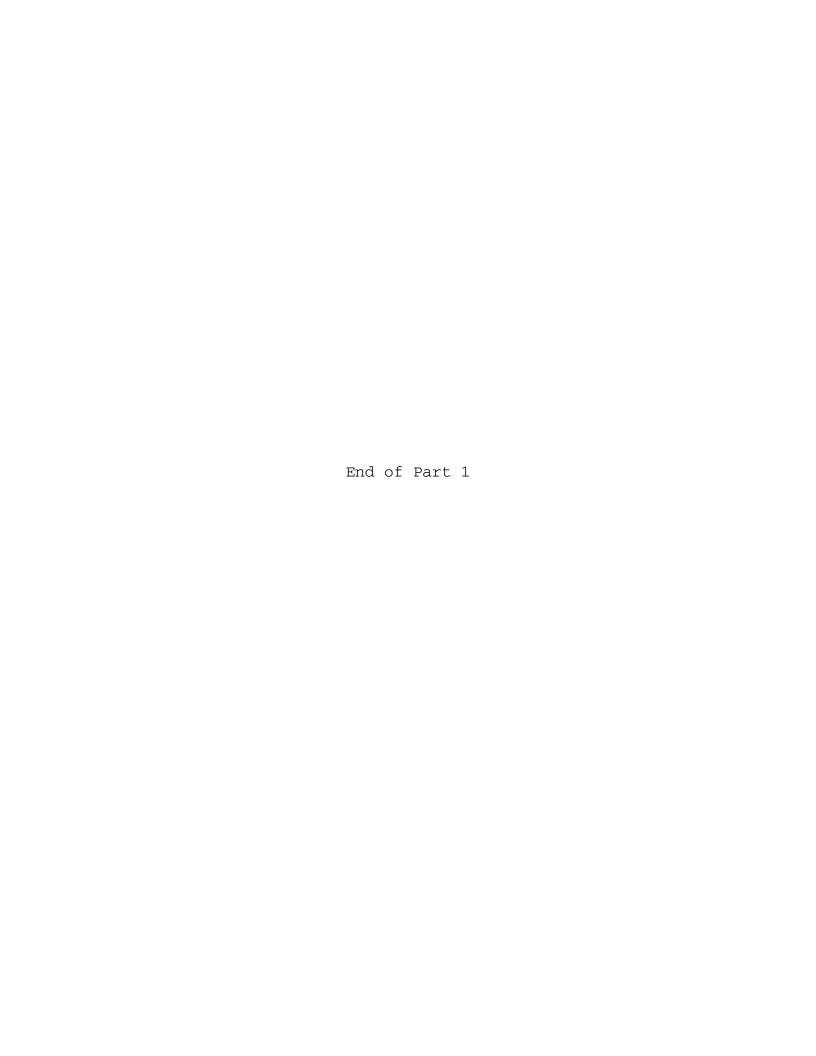
#### $X - 3 \min$

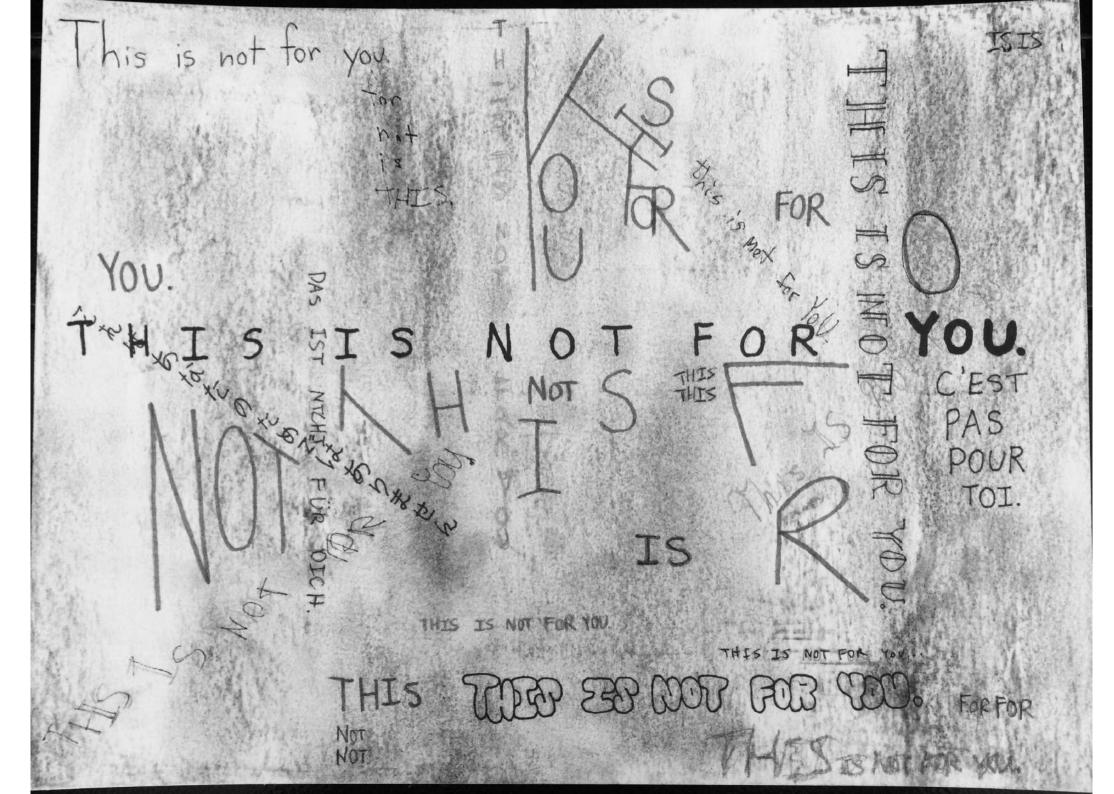
After hearing the SOS message coming from the walls of the house, Will, Tom and Billy decide to go in on a rescue mission. Instead of the journey down the staircase taking several days, it only takes Will and Billy twenty minutes, while tom stays at the top of the stairs establishing a radio basecamp.

After several days of searching the lower levels of the labyrinth, the team finds Jed and Wax in an empty room, but thankfully alive. After getting them to their feet, they begin to escort them two injured men to the stairs when Holloway appears and opens fire on the four of them, killing Jed. Holloway vanishes and the three make their way to the bottom of the stairs.

The positioning of the text on the pages of this chapter is dependent on where characters are in the labyrinth. For example, when Navidson descends the staircase, the text describing it is positioned at the middle of the page. When he reaches the bottom, the text is at the bottom. Meanwhile, text about Tom at the top of the stairs is always positioned at the top of the page.







TOO MANY THINGS ? How the best in the state of the state of seins and the sent must be saint must be s 11195 50 55 nut muss as said injuss ulturain? injustings be? comure as be? Most now stands as a part of this country's cultural experience and yet in spite of the fact that hundreds of thousands of people have seen it, the form continues to remain an enigma. Some insist it must be true, others believe it is a trick on par with the Orson Welles radio romp The War of the Worlds. Others could care less, admitting The Navidson Record. that either way, is a prelly good tale

The NAVIDSON record actually contains Two films the one Navidson MADE, which everyone remembers, and the one he SET OUT TO MAKE, which very few people ever detect. DIPI say she was in call trick SLES also A SLOT Karen Sie WIN XIVE

how in sure you're wondering something. is it just coincidence that this cold water predicament of mine also appears in this chapter? not at all. DELIAL Zawpano only wrote "heater." the word "water" back there— I willed that

Now Here's An Admission, eli?

Hey, not fair, you cry. Mey, key, fuck you, I say 6000, and mad right news

Clearly a nerve's been fait somewhere & I don't how why or by what

I'm - I sure don't believe it's because of some crubmy made - up story or a lowsy "BLURBS, (water) heater. BLURBS,

Can't follow the feeling.

If only any of it were to

mean we'de all be so lucky to wind up a penching bag and still find our crates full of Birds of Paradise.

No such luck with this crate.

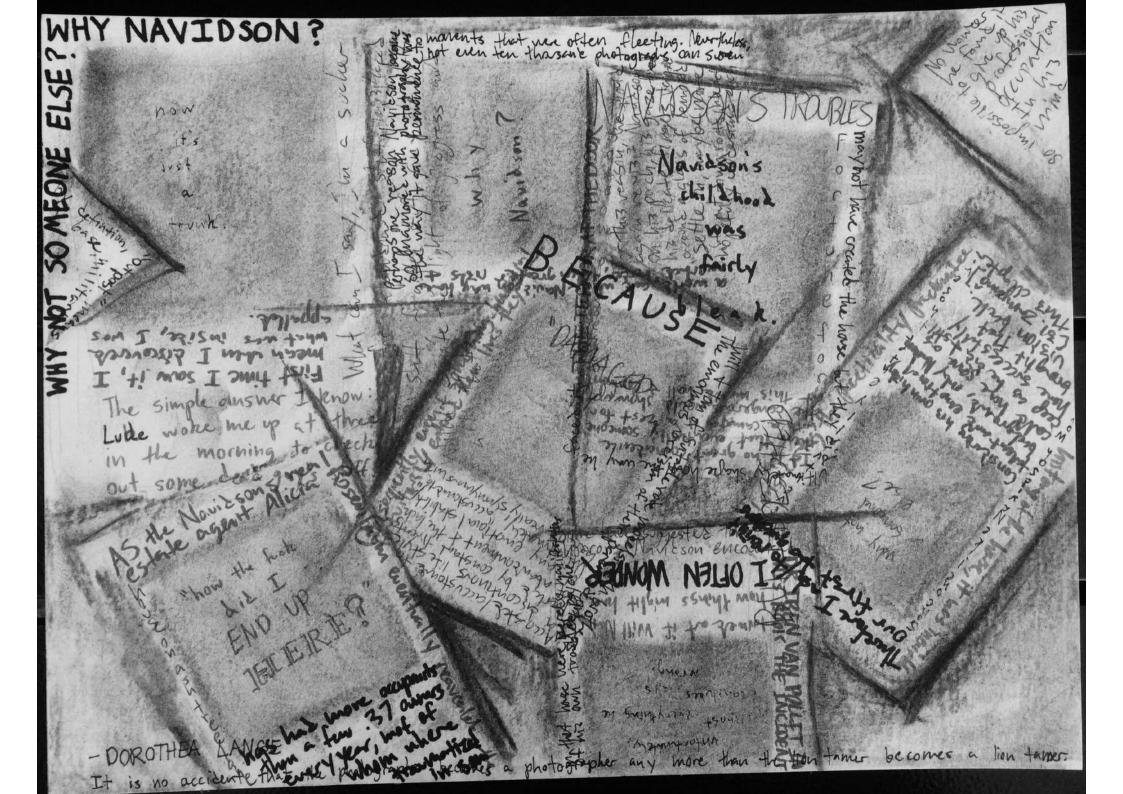
Let the cold water run. It's gotta warm up eventually

"It's funny," Navidson tells us at the outset. I just want to create a record of how Karen and I bought a small house in the country and moved into it with own children. Sort of see how everythingsturns out. No guntire, no familie, not flies. Justillets of toothpaste, gardening and people stuff." cappies

> SIME MALL HERALINE discreet

HARAK, INJU

HOOVE?"



In early June of 1990, the Navidsons completely dilerating flew to Seattle for a wedding. When they retirmed, something in the house hed changela. COULD DENY THERE HAD INTRUSION, BUT IT WAS \* NO ONE KNEW HOW TO OF I DION'T. COURSE LOOKED lenolum, even as its DON'T LOOK.



When Hillary, THE GREY COATED SIRERIAN HUSKY, appears @ ONY THE TABBY CATEVANTSHES completely, and no recutions is made BOUT WHAT HAPPENED TO LITA His asuppositione remains a mystery. away TNATUM BMUD ENT S'OHW KOOL WON

His face loses color, something even close to panic suffuses his system: Suddenly he sees what fortune has plopped on his plate and how famous and rich it could make him, and he wants it. He wants ALL OF II, immediately, no matter less. She never refers to Holloway as anything but and the house is encoled as "the patient" love of the wore value aneuts of Unidson, are specially considering its just out is. Ferrein paces back and forth in the light regarded to the second second contraction of the second second contraction of the second secon placement in the seguince, sums to reveal in a you-verbal un some of As they quickly discover, the void above them is The anxiety Kareys than Navidson's, illuminate a carling at least Cifteen hundred feet away, they discover am a homeon, is they man least outrace weiting of a Alirtation with Hilloway has provoked in him. house Exploration#2 ends up leaving one 3 mg All of which Wax abily her the powlarie and the BECOMES pretty I RRELEVANT -s HOLLOWAY soon spends most of his hours leading and the state of t his team down allows the talks lightless hallway "I got some vertigo," Jet confesses.

Holy fuch, what was that all about? lace and fire?" "word-hant?" who the hell is thinking up this shift In fact, these ships the only thing that gets me It Mirkows by Ihiller the background, e ever-present s of the radios There are stouchable wind. silences. In other work 17 Though this chapter as originally typed, theres Holloway t of these amendment team start to didn't think it fair to e radio contact. the seventh day The redio remains there is still ho buzz of sta fut or participate in it

Having already discussed in Chapter V how echoes serve as an effective menns to evaluate physical emotional, and thematic distances present in the Navisson Record, it is now necessary to remark upon their descriptive bauplan Hollow pust scowls and teceps pushing to overse In essence ediples one comment 171 mines affort 1. gere committee larger spaces. However, lymoder (1) 11 15 consider how distances within the POISE of at least some kind of indication Novidson House Notices on House are recipied & Success on scrally Something CA moderess of completion is to become the comment of completion is to be sented. something OTSIDENESS & that place, some CHY-toothode text S S S NO Covitosian, pura such states the first west, only to discover marks e included] design and and the state specimenty in another emiliar In other more with with interligible EMPTY KOLLEY ASSAGEWAYS a labyminth. a posite Ext. TOR, had a windy laiding and the withing ANOTHER TATEKTOR WARREN BORDER This desire for exteriority is no Ecdoubt further amplified by the within. [12] - German for "building plan! - Ed.] [143 - Gerord Eysences Bresh through (not a) Breakthrough: Heurstie Hallway's in the Hollowey Venture."

