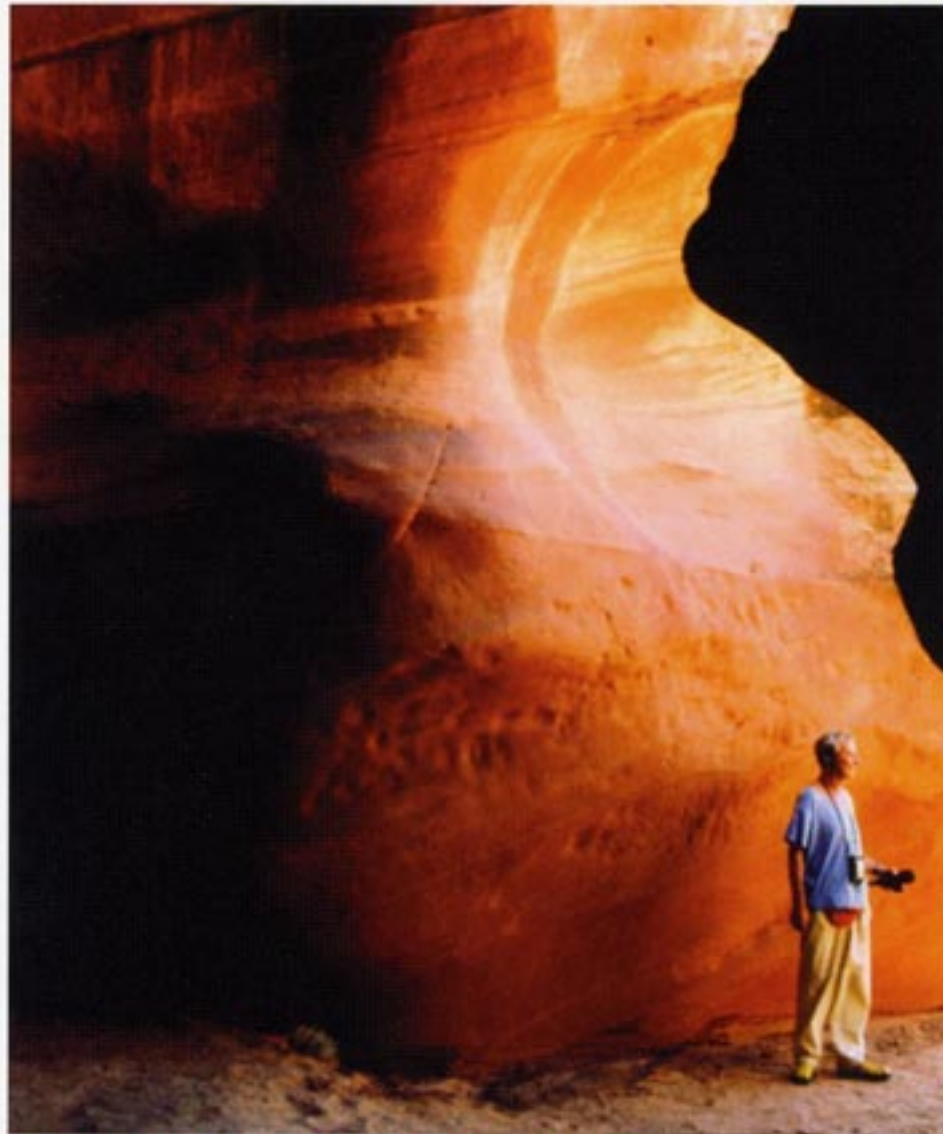


LUC FERRARI



FAR-WEST NEWS (1998-99)
Episodes 2 and 3

1 - 5

FAR-WEST NEWS Episode 2 (May 1999)

September 17-24, 1998

From Page to the Grand Canyon

29 minutes, 45 seconds

6 - 11

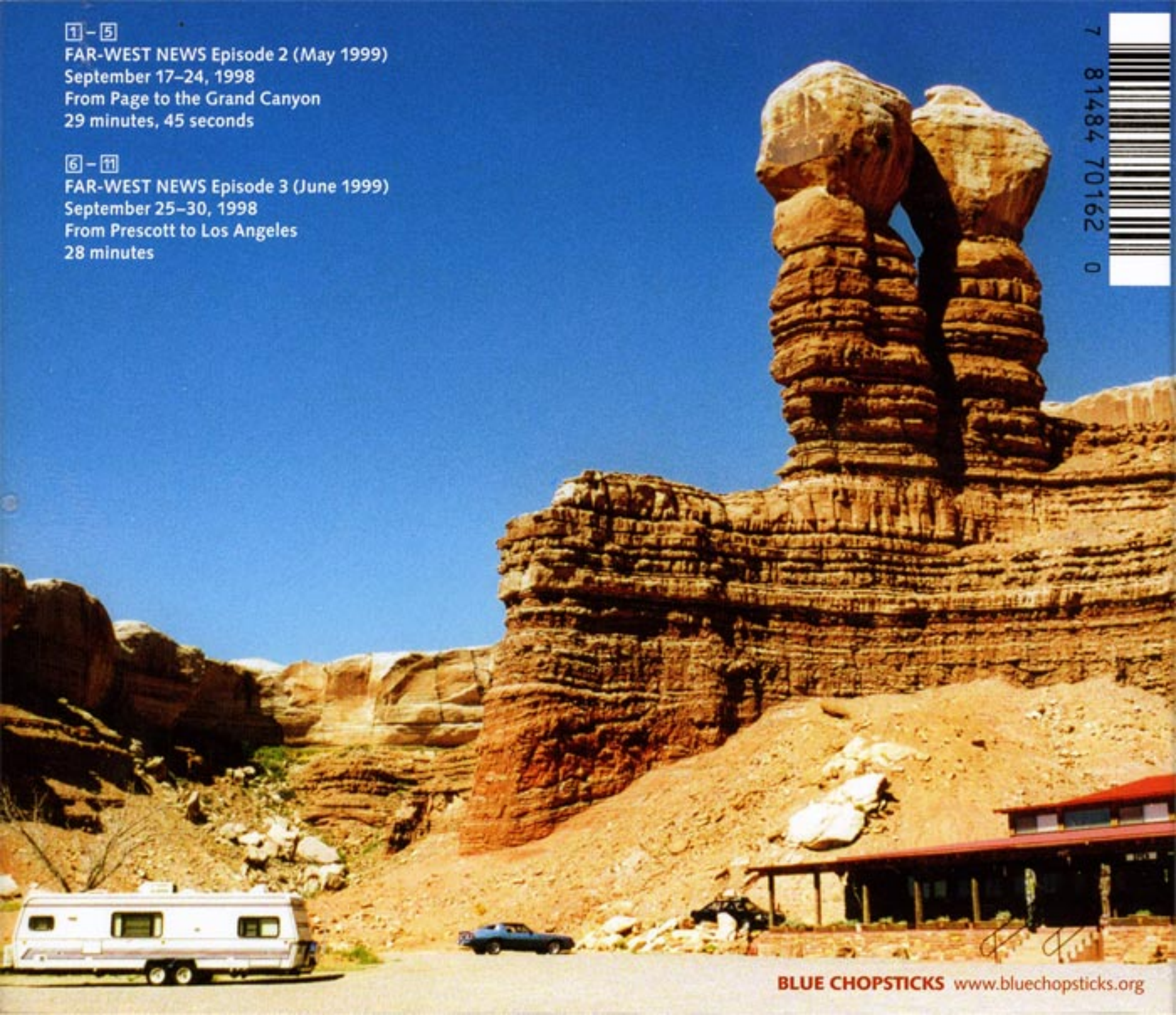
FAR-WEST NEWS Episode 3 (June 1999)

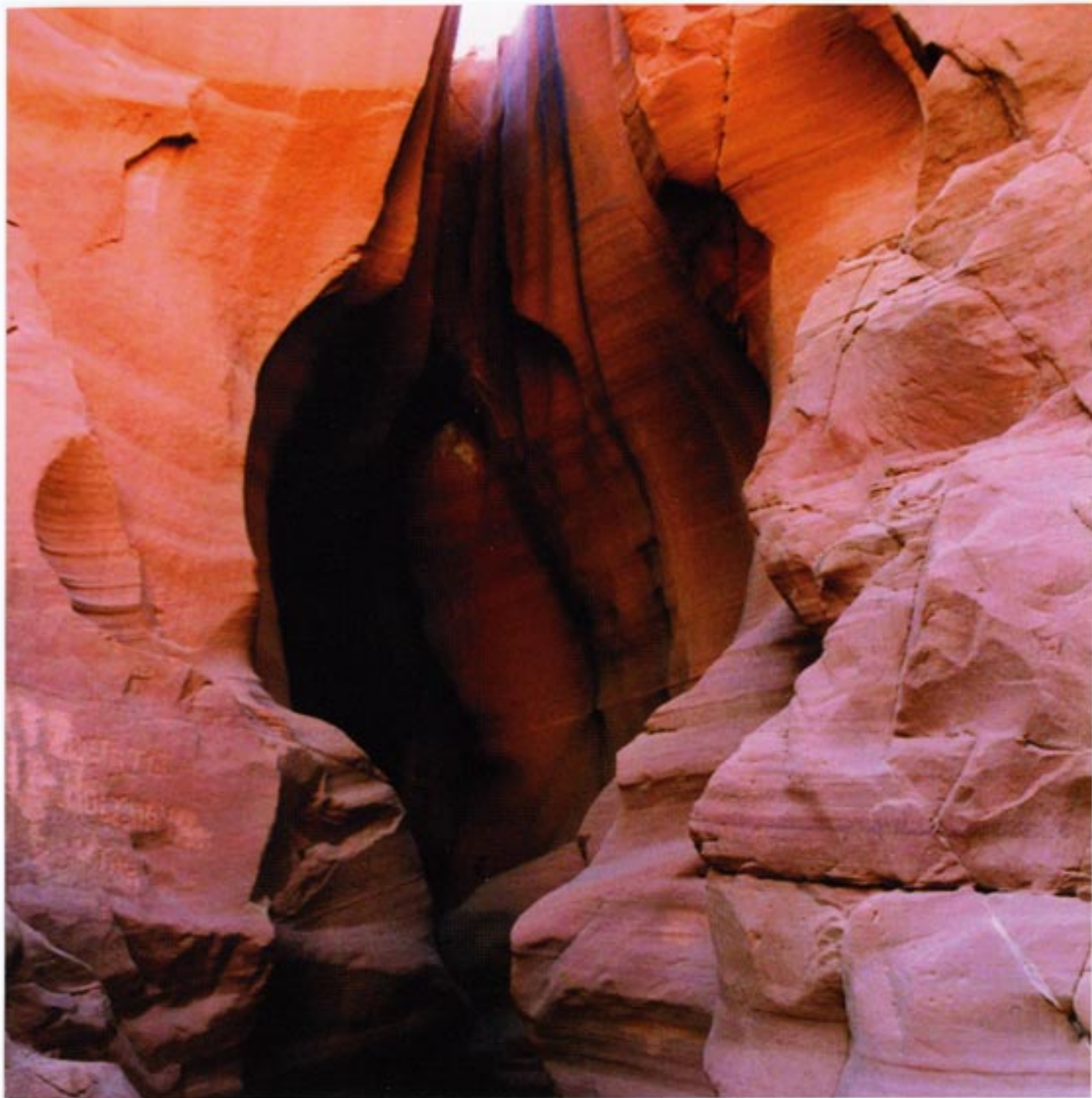
September 25-30, 1998

From Prescott to Los Angeles

28 minutes

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Far-West News

September 11, 1998–June 30, 1999

At first the idea went something like this: Composer, with a weird life full of instrumental and electroacoustic compositions, specialist in travel-microphone, is planning to make a random trip across the southwest USA.

The trip took place in September 1998. Day after day, the highway unfolds; recordings are dated, places indicated, in an atmosphere of car (rented); day after day, sound encounters are made, people are passed, life's fabric is woven.

Back home, after listening, a three-part composition takes shape, each part built in the same way out of different events.

What to say about it?

It's not a report or a soundscape, not a Hörspiel or an electronic work, not a portrait or a recorded reality exhibit, not a transgression of reality or an Impressionist account, not a so on or so forth. It's a composition. At first I thought it was manifest, a soft, derisory manifesto. I also thought that my "radiophonic" compositions were a new way of writing a biographical book. Then I called it a sound poem around a real voyage since it may very well be that poetry is playing life like an accordion, and that composition in some cases, especially in mine, and increasingly in my life, is a perverted game with truth.

What more can be said? That the subtitle could be "sound poem after nature."

And what else?

Far-West News Episode 2

I wanted to see Page and not die. Page is not Venice even if it's on the waterfront. I didn't realize that Page was a city. Things do not always happen as they should.

For example, the boat we get on makes such a low-pitched noise that the digital recording loses all its bits; the water does not echo sounds like it does on a Swiss lake; I record over another recording and, furious, I accuse myself of being an amateur. I do another recording of the one that was lost, and it's much better. I feel like a professional.

Several times, we take the wrong road and miss the sites we are looking for. I have to remind myself that I'm here for the sounds and that they are not necessarily in the most beautiful spots. Sometimes they don't coincide at all.

We visit some friends, microphone in hand. They're always surprised, and so am I. Even though it's been the same for years. I like it. My microphone, I mean. Always the same one.

In Monument Valley I left my shirt in a Navajo friend's jeep, and we're too far away when I realize it. Brunhild lost her cap somewhere around Mexican Hat, and I forgot my camera at Springdale mayor Philip Bimstein's place. I went back to get it in the middle of the night. Both were there and we had one last drink.

At the Grand Canyon, sitting on a boulder, the microphone on the ground, I eat a sandwich and drink a Coke. I don't worry about what will come out of it musically. It's a grand moment!

Far-West News Episode 3

Prescott looks a bit like a European city. There's a street life and there are even people walking around, some with piercings. The contacts here are easier than in Paris, where a look in the eye is taken as a sign of aggression. All around there is desert; not the slightest sign of the ocean on the horizon.

We see more and more of Monica on TV and she keeps getting fatter and fatter. I find myself thinking that if I were her I wouldn't wear shorts, and the next day there she is in shorts. Clinton looks drawn and tired. I guess we're in for some air strikes soon.

I've become used to the desert; a car every hour suits me fine.

When we reach Los Angeles I'm scared stiff. There are cars all over the place. We turn off at the beginning of Wilshire Boulevard. The hotel is at the other end, but at least we're heading in the right direction. An hour later we're still driving. From certain characteristic signs, it is clear that we're back in civilization. There are buildings, houses that are not on wheels, even men wearing suits, elegant women wearing makeup, and a piano bar with post-modern music. Friends take us for some wild nights in LA.

I continue my recordings.

I'll be going to the end of the voyage.

Luc Ferrari
Paris, July 4th, 1999

Sound recordings: Luc Ferrari, Brunhild Meyer
Voice-over: Brunhild Meyer, Dan Warburton,
Gerard Pape, Stéphane Kim
Composed, realized, edited, and mixed by Luc
Ferrari in his studio "Atelier post-billig"
Photography: Brunhild Meyer

Far-West News is a co-production of NPS
Hilversum/Piet Hein van de Poel and
Atelier post-billig/Luc Ferrari.

Far-West News Episode 1 appears on
France Culture/Signature SIG 11014 CD.

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