

**TONSPUR 82: Bernhard Loibner/Tom Sherman**  
**aka Nerve Theory**  
***Electric Cars and Electric Guitars***  
**2019**

Listen

Electric cars and electric guitars.

Electric cars are automobiles, vehicles governed by computers.

Soon electric cars will drive themselves.

They will appear to be autonomous.

Electric guitars are musical instruments.

Electric guitars are for playing, for making music.

Like electric cars, they can take us places.

Electric cars and electric guitars.

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Traffic on the street or road is still noisy, a rumble and din.

But that will begin to fade as electric vehicles are introduced  
to reduce carbon dioxide emissions

and let computers take over the streets and roads.

People will no longer be responsible for driving their cars.

They may sleep on their way to work

or play their guitars when they are going places.

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At first electric cars will be driven by people.

Then the people will let the cars drive for them.

They will turn over the keys to computers and  
machines will learn to drive safely and efficiently.

The people being driven around by computers  
can sit back and relax and do other things.

Blind people will be able to drive.

People too old or too young will be able to drive.

People too old or too young will be able to go places  
without breaking the law.

The rules of the road will be enforced by computers.

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Electric cars will be quiet but deadly to pedestrians and cyclists.

People walking or riding bicycles will be run over by electric cars  
because people will not hear them coming until it is too late.

Electric cars will have to be smart enough

to warn people on the street that they are coming.

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Watch out and get out of the way when electric cars  
decide to cross your path.  
Electric cars will accelerate and decelerate with  
transmissions that have no gears.  
They will not indicate that they are speeding up  
or slowing down.  
They will not sound dangerous.

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There is a subconscious pleasure  
in driving a responsive vehicle.

The artificial intelligence humming underneath a network  
of autonomous vehicles pushes us to look inward  
for a sense of velocity and progress in our journeys.

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From the cabins of our vehicles  
we invent the geometry of our mobility.  
The cityscape swirls around us through windows and mirrors.  
We no longer have to worry about hitting someone  
or cracking up.

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When we are walking we know which way our feet are pointing.  
Heel to toe, our body's gait unfolds in our walk.  
When we drive or are driven  
our feet are fixed on the floor.  
It is time to dance in our autonomous electric cars.

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Artificial intelligence is the system governing vehicular traffic.  
AI takes driving beyond subconsciousness.  
We will no longer wonder where we have gone  
while asleep at the wheel.  
We will dream about coming and going places in our transported brains.  
From point A to point B via straight lines and curves,  
stopping and starting in circles and squares  
and ending in vanishing points on the autobahn.

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Electric cars and electric guitars.  
Autonomous vehicles go wherever they are told.  
Internal combustion had quite a throaty run.  
A mobile phone ad on TV made me think about texting.  
Texting is the transmission of data about our bodies  
Completely free and disembodied...  
Texting is the connection of disconnected, disembodied bodies.

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The problem is we cannot transmit our actual  
flesh and blood bodies with radio waves  
or quantum entanglement  
or any supernatural scheme we can seize upon.  
We are stuck on this planet as animals  
Imprisoned in our skin and bones.  
We wrap our bodies in metal cars  
and speed around in our illusions of immaterialism.  
Eventually our cars will have to fly.  
Flying cars will be governed by artificial intelligence  
and gravity.

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Electric cars, like petroleum-powered vehicles before them,  
are little houses on wheels, mobile homes.  
These rolling houses contain the sound of their drivers  
and passengers who mix their music  
with those on the street  
by rolling down their windows  
or stopping and opening their doors.  
Passenger vehicles, controlled autonomously by computers, AI,  
are vehicles for delivering and mixing sound inside out  
as an act of transportation,  
as a means of getting somewhere, concretely.  
Transportation thus simulates teleportation.

(Text by Tom Sherman)