"My current Terrain Instruments achieve sound-collecting very directly from nature. These primarily wood and metal structures, with names like Whistlers, Treesways, and Windslicer, which I build outdoors, respond to environmental conditions—necessarily coloring the sound by their own physical configurations and materials. They are used in both radio and for on-site performances via satellite.

My interest in nature is as source for art. While the Terrain Instruments gather sound passively, I am also involved in directly accessing voltages from nature. The tree itself is also, to me, a kind of terrain instrument. I have used Birch trees, as their root systems are often quite near the ground surface. I am experimenting with the building of mental response and imagery for radio, based directly in the physical presence of nature, in sound. The Terrain Instruments exist, like sculpture, in space, but mirror sound which is less familiar and less intuitive than that of a violin or piano. My own approach to "composition" incorporates both decision and chance. Current work employs use of microprocessors, and the listener/viewer of my radio-performances is asked to use new ways of perceiving a traditional artistic source, the natural environment."

Eleanor Heartney: "Brush, who orchestrates the sounds of the natural world, creates art which has no substance. Nevertheless, his basic assumption is that art must replenish itself with the findings of other disciplines and that its place is out in the world, away from the cloistered museums. Brush has turned to the science of microelectronics in his search for technology sufficient to transmit the flutter of a falling snowflake or the cellular gurgle of a living plant. With these sensors he creates terrain instruments out of trees, lake beds or sections of open air whose natural vibrations can be fed into a microprocessor and redirected to speakers elsewhere. Some sensors merely amplify existing sounds, others convert non-aural vibrations into sound. These then comprise a kind of natural music whose individual components can be separated and recomposed by the microprocessor."

Leif Brush: "The natural vibrational dynamics used in my work are manifested simultaneously in a number of ways involving real time, audio taping, digital delay, or any combination, and are referenced to the static WWV national time system clock. Some radio-performances—via-satellite are conceived to be presented in outdoor spaces, while others are constructed specifically for auditoria or other indoor spaces. The 1982 Telecon structs Spacework I, in the Hudson River Museum, considered two distinct audiences, those in the Museum auditorium and those listening to the stereo broadcast in the United States. The 1983 Telecon structs Spacework II was an integral part of "Devices: An Exhibition of Technological Art" at Stevens Point, Wisconsin and also "New Music America: Washington '83," and was heard on public radio stations in the United States. A twenty minute documentary videotape accompanied these performances on site.

Heartney: "Brush hopes to make more use of satellite transmissions in the future. He foresees the possibility of a universal orchestra which would draw on sound transmitted from various points around the world. He would also like his natural music to be available to individuals (via Direct Broadcast Satellite) who could pipe it directly into speakers set up around their living rooms.

Despite the unconventional nature of Brush’s almost totally non-visual art (there are plans to convert aural information into visual images), it is closely tied to traditional notions of the link between art and nature. He is a populist and probably the most revolutionary aspect of his work is his future transfer of control of his art from the artist to its audience."

Brush: "This potential exists because a telephone keypad is available in most personal living spaces, and, with computer queuing, instructions can be interactive during a broadcast-performance.

Hoped-for modifications will allow me to add the capability of multiplexing and demultiplexing the transmission of at least 200 "unheard" but assembled sound parts. They are reduced, as I have constructed them in time from multi-satellite inputs, to two satellite channel outputs. Upon receipt at a corollary research microprocessor, these distinct 200 parts may be reconstructed in living rooms, forests, or traded with other times and spaces. These transporting techniques were used in the Hudson River Museum radio work and performance."

Eleanor Heartney is a free-lance writer previously residing in Minneapolis but now lives in New York.

Leif Brush is an investigative sound artist, with a visual arts background, currently living in Duluth, Minnesota—about 150 miles from a satellite uplink in St. Paul.