

**Composition: Electronic Media I**  
**Oct. 3, 2005**  
**John Zorn on the Creative Process**

Excerpted from an interview in *Bomb Magazine* at <http://www.bombsite.com/zorn/zorn.html>.

jz We've made a lot of sacrifices to live the life that we live.

mg Exactly.

jz And people don't appreciate that. They think we're out here balling, you know? It's not that way. It's hard work, and you get isolated. And you get distracted by the normal human need for companionship and love and understanding and appreciation. Those are distractions from doing the work, I feel. That's why I can't read magazines or newspapers, I don't look at TV. I try to focus on what's important, which is really the work itself. Making sure that you do the best possible thing in the purest possible way with the most imagination and technique and honesty that you can pull together.

mg I want to ask you something about doubt.

jz We live with it every single microsecond of every day. I'm constantly in doubt about what I'm doing, I'm constantly tortured, and that's why I say happiness is irrelevant. Happiness is for children and yuppies. I'm not striving for happiness, I'm trying to get some work done. And sometimes the best work is done under doubt. Constant rethinking, and reevaluating what you're doing, working and working until you feel it's finished. And that's an interesting point too, that you've got to know when to stop. Sometimes there's a magical moment when everything comes together.