

## **John Cage: IMAGINARY LANDSCAPE No. 1-3.**

“Percussion Music is Revolution.”  
(John Cage)

„Cage was always interested in the use of electronic means, and in the early 1940s took every opportunity to utilize those available to him (record-players, radios, record-player pick up arms, measuring devices, etc.) as sources of sound. It was thanks to these endeavours that the *Imaginary Landscapes* series came into being, in which, as well as percussion instruments, equipment supplying different electronically amplified or electronically produced sound had a role.” (András Wilhelm)

### **Imaginary Landscape No. 1 (1939)**

The Imaginary Landscape No. 1 was written to be subsequently broadcast or heard as a recording. It is in effect a piece of proto-musique concrète, though naturally, since at that date there was no tape, the instruments were records of constant and variable frequencies (then available chiefly for audio research), cymbal and string piano (Henry Cowell’s manually muted grand piano). The original performance took place in two separate studios, the sounds being picked up by two microphones and mixed in the control booth. It has been used as dance accompaniment by Bonnie Bird (Imaginary Landscape) and by Marian Van Tuyl (Horror Dream).

“For performers today use of these sound sources presents no small problem, since technological changes have resulted in the means envisaged and used by Cage becoming almost museum artefacts. (...) However, all solutions which – by means of contemporary technology – attempt to reproduce Cage’s original ideas violate and in a certain sense falsify the piece.”  
(András Wilhelm)

### **Imaginary Landscape No. 2 (March) (1942)**

The rhythmic structure is 3, 4, 2, 3, 5. The percussion instruments (tin cans, conch shell, ratchet, bass drum, buzzers, water gong, metal wastebasket, lion's roar) are combined with an amplified coil of wire.

### **Imaginary Landscape No. 3 (1942)**

The rhythmic structure is 12 times 12 (3, 2, 4, 3). The percussion instruments, tin cans and a muted gong, are combined with electronic and mechanical devices including audio frequency oscillators, variable speed turntables for the playing of frequency recordings and generator whines, and a buzzer. An amplified coil of wire and a marimbula amplified by means of a contact microphone are also used.

*John Cage*