

Anastasi . Bradshaw . Cage

**Anastasi - Bradshaw - Cage
6/1 - 11/3 2001**

Redaktion:
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Grafisk design:
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Tryk:
Werks Offset

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ISBN 87-90690-05-2

Portrætfotografier af William Anastasi
og Dove Bradshaw: Tine Seligmann

Museet takker DHL A/S

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INDHOLD - CONTENTS

Forord	4	6 Foreword
John var her af Karl Aage Rasmussen	8	
Curriculum Vitae, Karl Aage Rasmussen	18	Curriculum Vitae, Karl Aage Rasmussen
	19	John was here by Karl Aage Rasmussen
JOHN CAGE illustrationer	30	JOHN CAGE illustrations
WILLIAM ANASTASI illustrationer	34	WILLIAM ANASTASI illustrations
DOVE BRADSHAW illustrationer	38	DOVE BRADSHAW illustrations
William Anastasi om John Cage – vi er ved at nå ingensteds Interview af Jacob Lillemose	42	
	50	William Anastasi on John Cage – we are beginning to get nowhere Interview by Jacob Lillemose
Dove Bradshaw – stadig i samtale med Cage Interview af Jacob Lillemose	57	
	64	Dove Bradshaw – Still Conversing with Cage Interview by Jacob Lillemose
Curriculum Vitae, William Anastasi	70	Curriculum Vitae, William Anastasi
Curriculum Vitae, Dove Bradshaw	71	Curriculum Vitae, Dove Bradshaw
Tak	72	Thanks

Karl Aage Rasmussen, født 1947, er siden 1988 professor i komposition ved Det Jyske Musikkonservatorium, hvor han selv er uddannet af bl.a. Per Nørgård. I 1978 dannede han NUMUS festivalen for ny samtidsmusik i Aarhus og har siden fungeret som den årlige festivals kunstneriske leder. I 1975 dannede han ensemblet The Elsinore Players, med hvilket han har turneret i talrige europæiske lande samt i Sydamerika og Sydkorea, og i 1986 tog han initiativ til musikteaterensemblet Dansk Klaverteater. Siden 1991 har han tillige været kunstnerisk leder af Esbjerg Ensemble og siden 1997 af ATHELAS Sinfonietta Copenhagen. Fra 2000 er han næstformand i Det kgl. Teaters bestyrelse. Rasmussen har deltaget i musiklivet i mange andre funktioner, bl.a. som medlem af Statens Musikråd, formand for fremskudsudvalget under Statens Kunstfond, mangeårig medarbejder ved Danmarks Radio og konsulent for Aarhus Festuge. Han har desuden en omfattende forfattervirksomhed. Essay-samlingen "Kan man høre Tiden" (Gyldendal 1998) blev en veritabel bestseller. I efteråret 2000 udkommer samlingen "Har verden en Klang". Hans musik – opført i mere end 30 lande – omfatter de fleste genrer. Centralt placeret er orkester- og kammermusik, samt fem større musikdramatiske værker – senest operaen "Titanics Undergang", førsteopført med scenografi af Per Kirkeby. En lang række værker er udgivet på CD af plademærker som Bridge, Da Capo, Paula, Stunt Records m.fl. I 1991 modtog han Carl Nielsen Prisen. Han er delvist bosat i Rom, Italien."

Karl Aage Rasmussen, born in 1947, has since 1988 been professor of composition at the Music Conservatory in Jutland where he himself studied with, among others, Per Nørgård. In 1978 Rasmussen founded the NUMUS annual festival of contemporary music in Aarhus and has acted as the festival's artistic director since the start. In 1975 he formed the ensemble The Elsinore Players with whom he has toured numerous European countries, as well as South America and South Korea. In 1986 he initiated the music theatre ensemble Dansk Klaverteater. Since 1991 he has also been artistic director of the Esbjerg Ensemble, and since 1997 of the ATHELAS Sinfonietta Copenhagen. From 2000 he has been vice-chairman of the board of the Royal Theatre. Rasmussen has participated in Danish music life in a number of ways, including as a member of the State Music Council (Statens Musikråd), as leader of the three-man committee of the State Arts Fund (Statens Kunstfond), as a correspondent for the Danish Broadcasting Corporation (Danmarks Radio) and as a consultant for the Aarhus Festuge festival. In addition he pursues an extensive writing career: his collection of essays 'Kan man høre tiden' (Gyldendal 1998) has become a bestseller, and towards the end of 2000 he is due to publish a new collection entitled 'Har verden en Klang'. Rasmussen's music, which has been performed in over thirty countries, covers most genres. Orchestral and chamber music occupies a central position, together with five major music-dramatic works, the most recent of which is the opera 'Titanics Undergang', first performed with scenography by Per Kirkeby. A large number of Rasmussen's works have been released on CD, on labels such as Bridge, Da Capo, Paula, and Stunt Records, among others. He was awarded the Carl Nielsen Prize in 1991. Karl Aage Rasmussen resides part of the time in Rome, Italy.

John was here

By Karl Aage Rasmussen

William Anastasi

Without title, June 14, 1986
Pencil on paper
30 x 22 inches (57 x 76 cm)
Collection of the artist



Is something in the process of coming to an end? Or is their no-one to fill their vacated places, Olivier Messiaen, Luigi Nono, Scelsi, Morton Feldman, Cage? – There comes a new for every one that has fallen, I learnt at school. But is it so in this case?

It is true of all of them that art and life were one, that creative motivation and the realities of life were inseparable. It might sound as if taken from some school text book, but it is a rare phenomenon in the arts at the end of the twentieth century. While artists spin ever more helplessly on the wheel of events, art and life have become incompatible bedfellows. Deep-rooted religious, political, mystic or spiritual motivation is a rarity, smothered by 'culture', – by competition, success, recognition, awards, glamour, hitlists, media coverage, ratings, market demands, the will to win and the fear of losing.

Cage's death, in the middle of August 1992, happened in a way that strangely accorded with his life. He reminded us incessantly that nothing is given beforehand, and that that which cannot be foreseen is more interesting and lively than that which can. His music – in particular that of his final years – lasts for a long time and ends abruptly; the musicians put down their instruments or the electronic sound generators are turned off. The physically and mentally vivacious 80-year old died of a stroke in the middle of a period of vital, almost furious activity, during which he wrote new music at a rate that put his copyists several months behind. Despite a lifelong attempt to keep his 'ego' separate from his art, Cage would not be able to deny that his personality had a major influence on his work. To call him one of the most influential artists of our time is perhaps not doing him justice; arguably he was *the* most influential since his thinking and his ideas reached out in all directions, to encompass the fine arts, poetry, performing arts, esthetics and philosophy. His delight in the unexpected was contagious; his discipline and ability to concentrate were legendary. But we must first examine what 'Cage' means to us today, without his being here in person, not least because his work was most important to him, although he was not so interested in its preservation, however. The miracle of his presence among us

presents us with an enigma: he was an artist more interested in life than in art! By using life as a yardstick Cage discovered that human activities always represented a simplification of the world. That towns are less complex than forests, that computers are children's toys compared with, for example, the weather, that all music is simpler than even a puddle of water. He saw art as a similar simplification of life, a view which led to the significant conclusion that that which merely happens is richer, more spacious and fuller than that which is meticulously planned in advance.

Cage – son of an inventor! – had the talent of being able to accept the most radical consequences of his ideas, in addition to having the power of persuasion worthy of any demagogue – though his must surely have been one of the gentlest dictatorships in history. Morton Feldman tells: "I went up once on the off-chance to see if John was at home, and on the stairs I met Richard Lippold, the sculptor, who lived next door to John. He looked at me and said: "I must get away from here as quickly as possible. John's persuasiveness is just too great!" Many have had a similar experience. How can one defend oneself against the persuasiveness of ideas as beautifully simple as Cage's? If he is right, then most of us are doing things wrong, and if he is not right, then what is the problem with his way of thinking? Surely not that it threatens our sense of security and childhood teaching in such a frightening way, that we instinctively shy away from the abyss that opens up in our understanding of ourselves?

But is it not far too late to escape? And is it even necessary, now that the great persuader is no longer with us and can no longer tighten his grip – light as a feather yet strong as iron – on us?

He is no longer among us, the anarchist with the gentle, Olympian laughter, the humanist who was not interested in 'music', but convinced us to listen to the world around us, the composer who took no great interest in what his predecessors had attained but became himself the idol of generations. And the confusion is slowly and stealthily beginning to spread. What exactly was it he wrote, heard, thought, did? 'No matter what I say, it will be misunderstood', he said at 75. Is he in fact one of the most misunderstood composers? Hardly, since defining him as a composer for a start says both too little and too much. Finding an appropriate designation for him, however, is like trying to capture a fountain with a saucer or like trying to repair a watch with gloves on. At the same time, it would be pointless to assert that he is not a composer at all. My only suggestion is to call him a 'composer in words' since in many cases his music was created with the help of texts, and the mind models behind his music are often depending on words. He has said and written more than any other of the great composers of the twentieth century, and his writings will, in my belief, provide a much firmer basis for interpreting and understanding his work than will his music. The com-

poser and philosopher of silence manifests himself in that spiritual terrain where silence reigns most supreme, namely when we read! In the latest works by Cage there were increasingly more words and fewer notes.

History is first and foremost represented through the recounting of original thoughts and actions. One of Cage's most persuasive ideas was his image of the human race as one single body and soul, a unit in which an arm cannot ignore a bad leg, and where 'competition' is meaningless – as if an eye could compete with a hand. Originality is therefore not a concern of the commercial market but a basic necessity – for why should the eye try to copy what the hand already does perfectly well?

Cage's originality is rooted in a point of view which seems self-evident: musical experiences happen in one place only, namely inside the ears and the head of the listener. Cage also held the view that sounds are interesting in themselves. That is all there is to it! Why in the world has there been such a huge fuss during a period of more than 40 years? 'I'm always amazed when people say, "Do you really mean that music is just sounds?"', says Cage – 'What is mysterious is how they can imagine that it is anything but sounds.'

Yes. And no. Western music tradition has taught us to believe that sounds are something more than themselves, that they are the messengers of emotions, thoughts and ideas. Sound is a means of transportation of messages from the mind of the composer to the mind of the listener. 'Communication' as it is referred to by some. Cage finds this 'postal service' from sender to receiver highly suspect. "Composers are people who tell other people what to do or think or feel. I am not like that", says Cage with a poker face. With this he embraces the ideas of an earlier mild and gentle anarchist, philosopher and fellow countryman Thoreau. Thoreau said that in the realm of ideas and the spiritual we are self-employed; no-one has the right to dictate to us, not even with the well-meant intention of providing musical experiences. Thoreau posed the question: "Is life worth living?" And he found confirmation in an esthetic view of life. Once again this is the story of Apollo and Dionysus: There are Dionysian forces which attempt to change our world and the conditions of our existence by creative transformation, but there is also an Apollonian consciousness, haunted by the question of whether life is worth living. Cage's optimistic outlook on life reveals him to be an Apollo, a true bringer of light who tells us to open our ears and eyes and experience life day after day, for it is good. Every day is a beautiful day! So far everything is clear and evident.

When Cage says that sound is just sound, is just sound, is just sound... his tone of voice is still mild, though the anarchist has now become a teacher, the taoist

has become a master of persuasion: sound is a question of physics, soundwaves moving through air, no doubt about that; but in our consciousness they are immediately translated into something else. We do not simply hear a voice, but spoken words. We do not simply hear sounds, but for example Beethoven. Music is something different, something more than sound. A forest is more than a collection of trees and bushes. An ear is more than just a hole in the side of the head. And something less than a living being. How could Cage's 'Happy New Ears' enjoy themselves unless they were attached to a head? Each living individual instinctively sorts and assimilates all sensory stimuli which enter the mind, including those sounds which have not been organised by any composer. This is because, among other things, there are already sounds within our consciousness (how else can it be explained that Beethoven's music improved after he became deaf?). That which is already present combines with incoming data – not in order to achieve, prove or explain anything, but because it cannot do otherwise.

Personally, I am often persuaded by Cage, that is, my mind is convinced but my ears resist, and have always done so. I have to admit that I often experience the way in which certain sounds at a certain distance in a certain order arouse my instincts in a particular manner – often without my being able to see any particular reason for it. A single phrase from an advertising jingle, two repeated notes in a samba, one step up and two down in a work by Stravinsky – they lodge in my inner ear, not as thoughts and emotions, but simply because there is a sort of family relationship between them and me. If I were to follow Cage's ideas, I would have to get used to listening in a different way, which would remove me from myself, which is un-Cagean. It would also entail becoming a musical orphan, for to think as Cage would mean to renounce Mozart, Beethoven, Brahms, Mahler, Berg and all the others as confidants in my musical world. And that I neither intend or wish to do – perhaps it is easier for an American.

One can get by with a less drastic approach, however; one can stand up against exploitation of workers and blind capitalism without accepting everything that Marx stood for. Cage can teach us all something important about life and sound, he offers no patent solutions, just the opportunity of new ideas and experiences. Charles Ives, the other great American loner of the twentieth century, once exclaimed with a certain degree of irritation: "I obviously hear in a way that is different from others. Have my ears been mounted on wrongly?" I remember a statement from one of the last interviews with Cage. He says: "I don't have an ear for music, and I don't hear music in my mind before I write it. And I never have. I can't remember a melody, I just don't have any of those things that are connected with solfege and with memory and with what you might call imagination. I have other qualities which are, I would say, more radical than those." The interviewer is slightly shocked: "But most people who would admit that never would have chosen

music as a course of life." And Cage replies: "But I didn't have the desire to overcome those absences in my faculties. I rather used them to the advantage of invention. Instead of hearing music in my head before I write it, I write it in such a way that I will hear music which I would not otherwise have heard."

Already by the 1940s, when he was composing in a fairly respectable Western manner, Cage lost interest in the old Western ideas of pitch, harmony, tension and release. His early works continue the American experimental tradition in the wake of Ives' Transcendentalism and Henry Cowell's interest in Oriental music traditions, non-tempered tonal systems and percussion instruments. Arnold Schönberg, Cage's teacher for a time, discovered quickly his pupil's lack of sensitivity for harmony and told him that without that sensitivity, he would feel as if he were hitting his head against a brick wall. To which the quick-witted Cage replied that if that was the case, he would dedicate his life to hitting his head against that wall!

With its sequences of tension and release, it is harmony which gives tonal music its forward momentum, defining musical time. Cage, however, has no need of such momentum since he does not experience musical time as a development, but – in Oriental manner – rather as a state of being. It appeared to him as self-evident that duration must be the most important aspect of music since silence, upon which all music is created, can only be experienced as duration, and naturally never as timbre, pitch, melody or harmony. In addition harmony binds the sounds, since it does not let each sound event exist in its own right, but forces them to link together with others. Cage could actually hear the sounds calling for help to be set free! Before the war he developed a clever musical mechanism in which the relationship between various durations is the governing principle. Predetermined non-symmetrical proportions determine the relationship between the length of phrases, sections and the overall form. In the series of works 'Constructions' from the beginning of the 1940s, he employs complex polyrhythmic patterns and jazz-like accents within a carefully worked out musical framework. His works from this period are scored for various groups of percussion instruments, often incorporating highly untraditional sound sources such as jamjars, flower pots, brake drums, and various pieces of electrical equipment producing a monotone 'hum'. Even a record player: since music is defined as duration, any record can be placed on the turntable and the pickup raised and lowered in accordance with the rhythmic requirements of a traditionally notated percussion part (as for example in *Credo in US* from 1942).

Music without direction, sound which *is*, music which is justified by its existence alone and which is not – in a Western manner – preoccupied with development: this is what Cage was in search of. Being unconcerned with pitch and harmony,

percussion instruments were his natural choice of instrument, and gave him in 1938 the brilliantly simple idea of the one-man percussion ensemble: the 'prepared' piano. A whole range of non-tempered sounds of indefinite pitch was made possible with the help of just one piano and a few screws, bits of rubber and wood placed between the strings (-an idea Henry Cowell had toyed with some twenty years previously). And in a similarly prophetic fashion he experimented with electric sound: 'Imaginary Landscape' from 1939 is supposedly the very first piece of pure electronic music; two test records developed by a telephone company provided all the sound. And just two years later he began using radio receivers as sound sources, since it was of increasingly little importance to Cage whether he chose one particular sound in preference to another. As a young composer he had dutifully tried to express his personal feelings in his music. He realised that people did not understand what he was trying to say, and that he did not understand what others were trying to express in their music either. In one of his earliest piano pieces, 'The Perilous Night', he wanted to convey fear and terror, but at the performance the audience laughed out loud! He realised that the composer in the twentieth century no longer possessed the common musical language of past centuries, that his musical language was private and personal. And as always Cage followed the most radical consequence of this realisation: if the artist expresses his emotions and ideas in a totally personal language, then the world will become a Tower of Babel, or we will be reduced to a community of deaf and dumb. It was therefore necessary for Cage to find a better reason for writing music than the desire to 'communicate'.

The reason he found was typical of his temperament – he found it in Indian music, but could just as easily have discovered it in for example the music of medieval Europe: music which attempts to evoke the 'peace of mind' and the sensuous presence which opens our senses to what he since has referred to as 'divine influences'. Amidst the turmoil of the twentieth century Cage posed himself the question of whether it was possible to attain 'peace of mind'. As he himself said, 'If I can maintain a quiet mind in the worst of situations, I will be able to move freely in my own time.' This led him to adopt an ancient method from the Far East: the soul or consciousness is at rest when it has freed itself of all of its 'likes and dislikes' as Cage calls them. When the consciousness is freed of these ideas, all stimuli that reach it – whether from without via the senses or from within via dreams – will be experienced as divine influences.

Cage discovered that there is always something to listen to. In a so-called resonance-free chamber – a room like a jewellery box, lined with sound-absorbent materials, allowing no external sound to enter, he clearly heard two sounds, one low and one high. He asked the sound technician what these were and was told

that the high sound was his nervous system and the low one his blood circulation. This experience gave Cage the inspiration and courage to write the famously notorious piano piece '4 Minutes 33 Seconds'. A pianist enters the stage, sits down at the piano and plays nothing for the specified length of time (...there are even three movements). A simple, almost pedagogical demonstration of the fact that there is always sound, though this time there is not the slightest sound from the piano. – Pedagogical, yes, but also extremely provocative. Cage made the equally provocative – yet irresistible – comment that it was his most important work since it was always available and never the same! True enough! Anyone can at any time sit down and listen to this piece, no need even of a pianist or a record player. Just a pair of ears. And a head, of course...

In a perception of life in which the division between art and life is eradicated, there is little meaning to be attributed to what we refer to as 'works'. If we can learn to appreciate all that we see, hear, smell and feel, we have no need of works of art, nor the ambition of 'Great European Art' to bring order to chaos or to improve upon Creation. What Cage refers to as art is a means of 'waking up to life itself, here and now'. And here he strikes a nerve. In a modern world immersed in the past and mesmerised by the future, 'waking up to here and now' is not what we are best at. It is no exaggeration to say that we have a modern problem in being present in the 'here and now' – our inclination is towards that which we do not yet possess, or towards that which we once possessed but no longer have.

What Cage calls 'music' is quite simply that which happens when we turn our attention to what we hear when experiencing the world around us wide awake, here and now. To experience sound we have no need of either the future of the past as measured by the clock, just curiosity, alertness and a will to forget ourselves.

The last of these is central in Cage's perception of life. Modern man's afflictions are largely rooted in our preoccupation with 'self', he says. The 'self', or ego, is a shelter for emotions and thoughts, and by focusing on these we focus on the ego and isolate it from the rest of Creation. We imagine that our sympathies and antipathies, our likes and dislikes, are of unique importance, defining and justifying our personalities. But at the same time these emotions make us predictable, a sort of 'Pavlovian dog': if you rub somebody the wrong way they say 'ouch' and if you rub them the right way they say 'ahh', as Cage might say. We know what we like and that is why we listen, in order to see if there is something that we like. As soon as we are rubbed the wrong way we say: "I don't like it". This might be because something is too loud or too ugly, too much this or too



◀ **New River Watercolors**
(Water color on paper), 1988

36 x 15 inches (91.5 x 38 cm)

Collection of William Anastasi

Photo: Torben Thesander

Changes and Disappearances ▶
(drypoint, engraving and
photo etching), 1979-82

Colored ink on paper

11 x 22 inches (28 x 56 cm)

Collection of William Anastasi and

Dove Bradshaw

Photo: Torben Thesander

Without Title, 1950 ▶

Two handwritten pages of the I Ching

charts of numbers

page 1: 8 x 5.5 inches (20.5 x 14 cm)

page 2: 8.5 x 6 inches (21.5 x 15 cm)

Collection of William Anastasi

and Dove Bradshaw

Photo: Torben Thesander

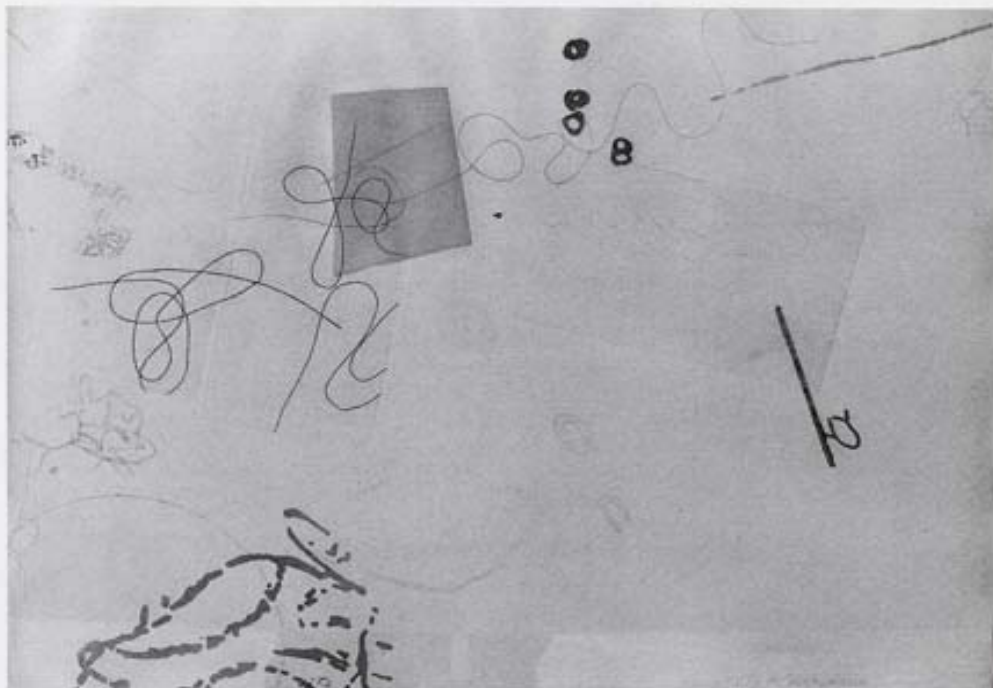
Deka 82 (etching), 1987 ▶▶

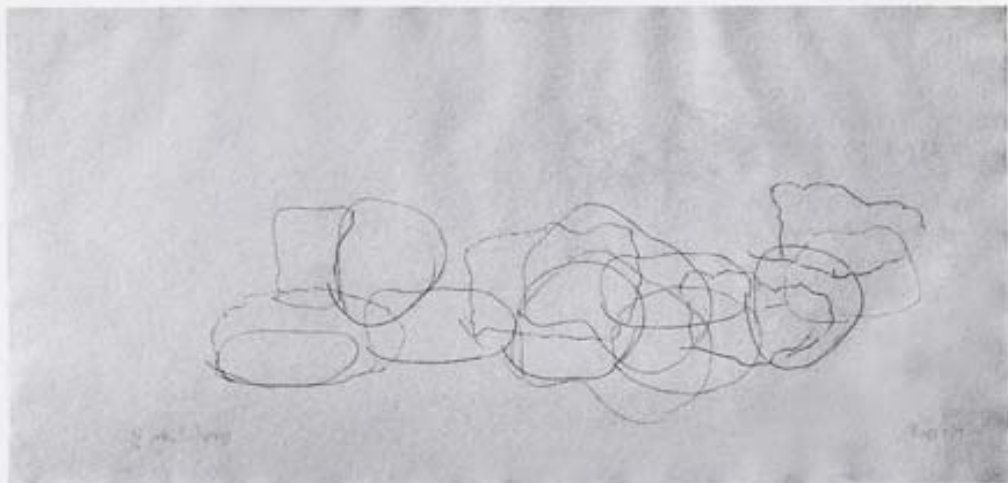
Colored ink on Kozo Kizuki paper

19.5 x 16 inches (49.5 x 41 cm)

Collection of William Anastasi

Photo: Torben Thesander





◀ (R)/2 (Where R=Ryoanji),

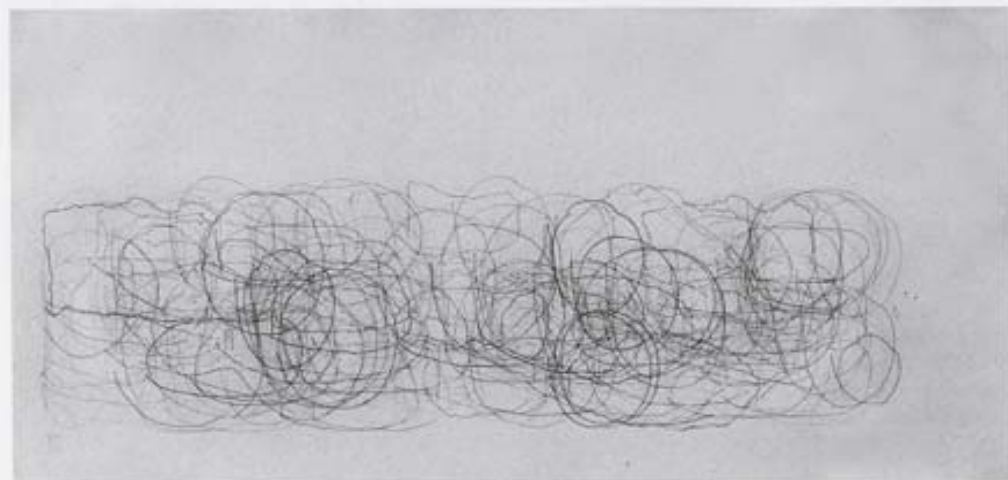
8/83, (drawing), 1983
10 x 19 inches (25,5 x 48 cm)
Collection of Dove Bradshaw

Photo: Torben Thesander

The Missing Stone, 1989 ▶

Edition number 2 of 25
Color spitbite and sugar
lift aquatint etching
on smoked paper
54 x 41 inches (137 x 104 cm)
Collection of William Anastasi
and Dove Bradshaw

Photo: Torben Thesander



◀ R 2/16, 8/84 (drawing), 1984

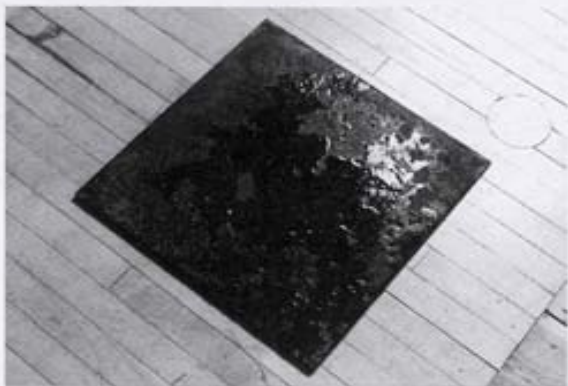
Pencil on paper
10 x 19 inches (25.5 x 48 cm)
Collection of Dove Bradshaw

Photo: Torben Thesander





◀ **Untitled (unsighted drawing)**, 1977
Graphite on paper
45 x 35 inches (114.5 x 89 cm)
Collection of John Cage
Photo: Dove Bradshaw



◀ **Sink**, 1963
hot rolled steel, water
20 x 20 x 0.5 inches
(51 x 51 x 1.3 cm)
Collection of John Cage
Photo: Dove Bradshaw

Free Will, 1968 ▶
Black and white video
camera and monitor
32 x 42 x 36 inches
(81 x 107 x 91.5 cm)
Collection of the artist
Photo: Arnold Rosenberg

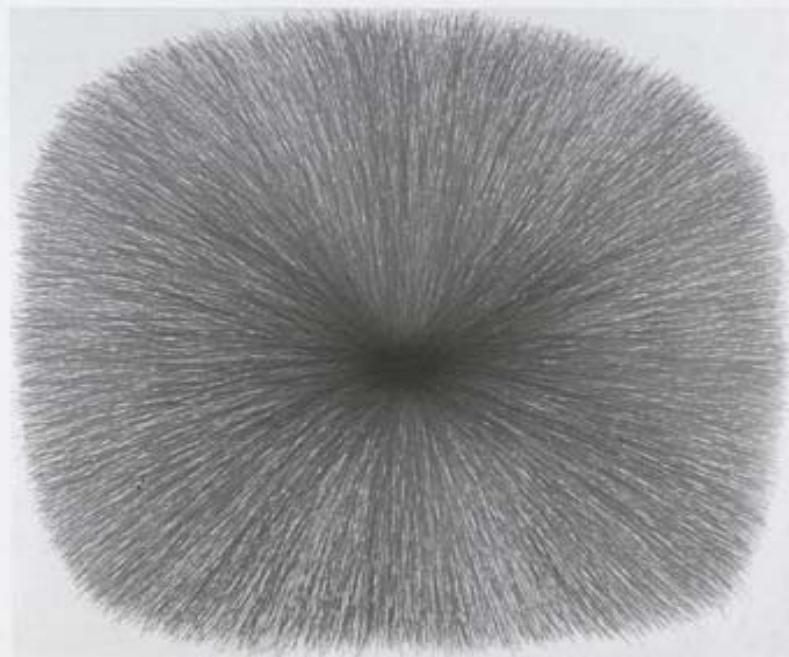




Fiends, 1982 ▶
Polaroid negatives
each
3.75 x 3.25 inches
(9.5 x 8 cm)
Collection of
John Cage
Photo: Torben Thesander



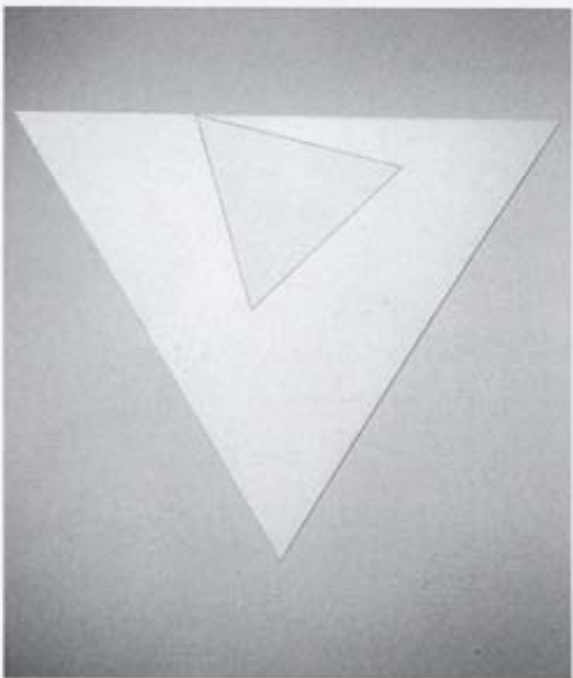
Brio, 1998 ▶
Graphite on paper
60 x 67 inches
(152.5 x 170 cm)
Collection of the
artist
Photo: Karl Peterson



4 Trespass I,
1966
Surface removal
17 x 4 inches
(43 x 10 cm)
Collection of
John Cage
Photo: William Anastasi

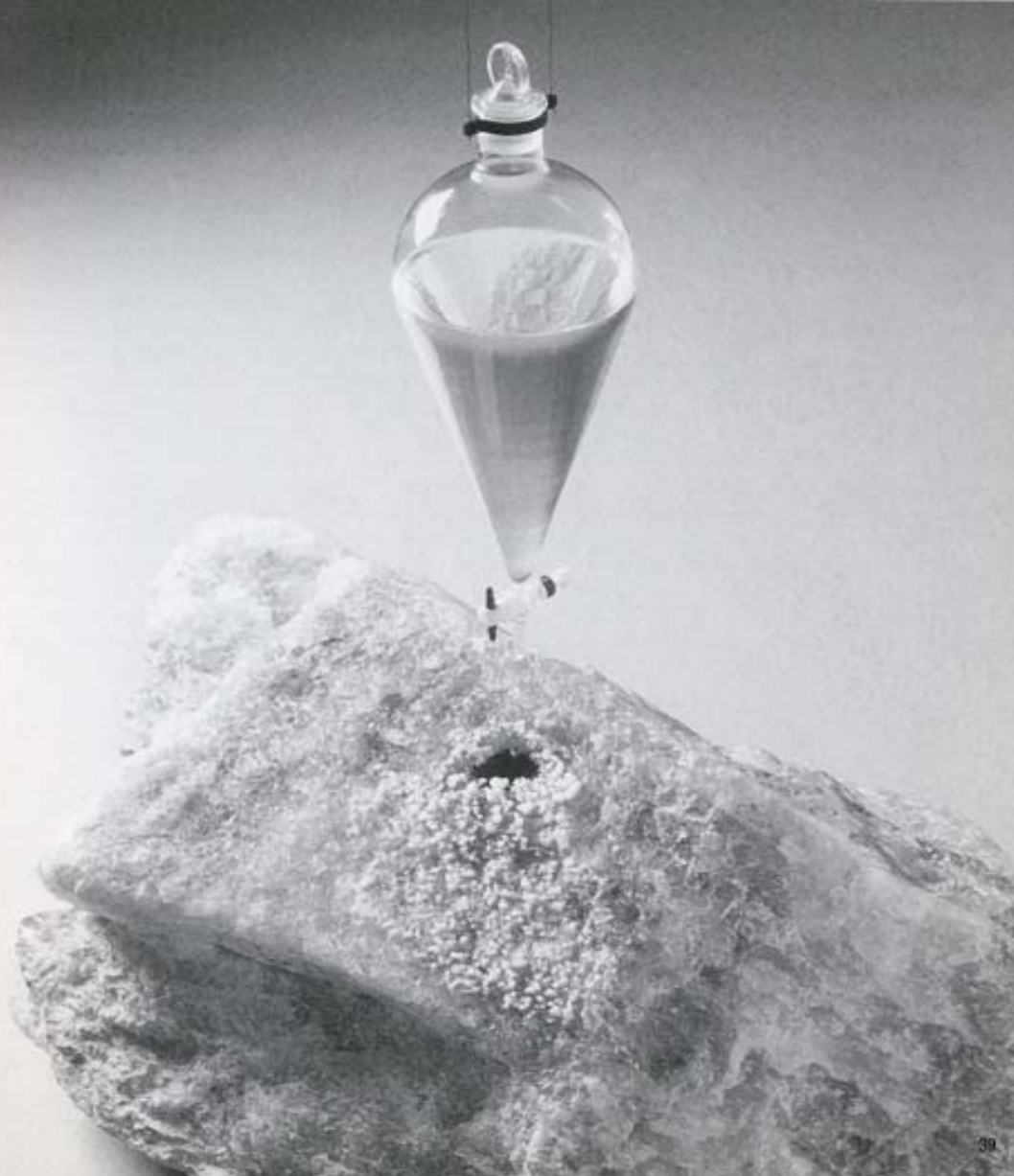


◀ **Untitled**, 1969
Silver, liver of sulfur
1.5 x 3 x 1.5 inches
(3.8 x 7.6 x 3.8 cm)
Collection of the artist
Photo: Dove Bradshaw



◀ **White Enough**, 2000
Titanium dioxide, zinc white,
graphite, medium on linen
18.3 x 21.3 inches
(46.5 x 54 cm)
Collection of the artist
Photo: Torben Thesander

Negative Ions III, 1996/98 ▶
Untrimmed rock salt, glass
dropping funnel, water, salt
16 x 39 x 24 inches
(40.5 x 99 x 61 cm)
Collection of the artist
Photo: John Bassler





◀ **Indeterminacy XVIII**

Activated July 18, 1997
Vermont marble, pyrite
24 x 37 x 30 inches
(61 x 94 x 76 cm)
Collection of Fields Sculpture Park
Ghent, New York

Photo: Dove Bradshaw

2/0, 1971 ▶

Glass, acetone
2.5 x 5 x 2.5 inches
(6.5 x 13 x 6.5 cm)
Collection of the artist

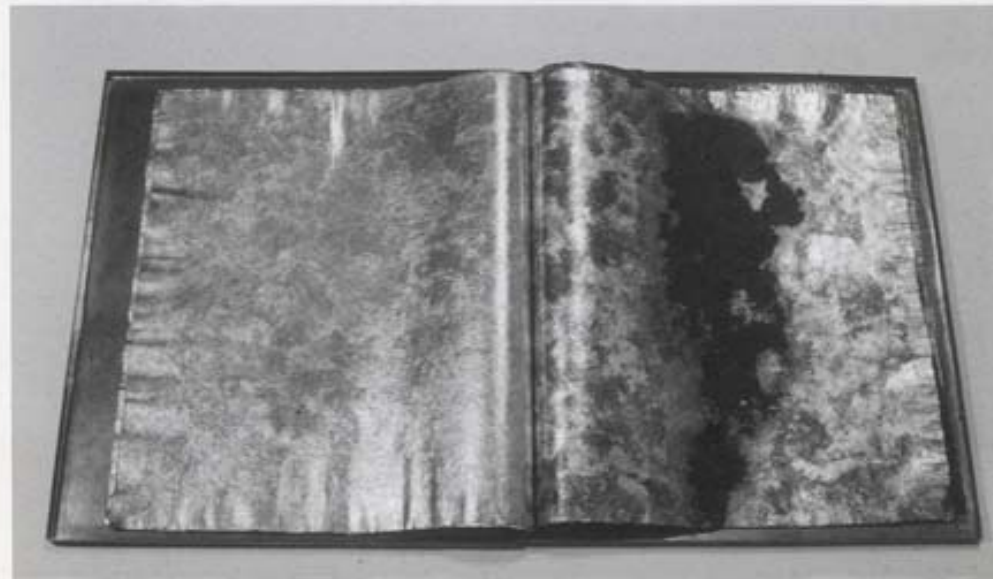
Photo: John Deasler



Contingency (book), 1995-97 ▼

Fourth opening,
Silver, beeswax, varnish on linen paper
bound with steel clips
Paper: 26.3 x 42.75 inches (66.8 x 108.6 cm)
Box (cold rolled steel): 27 x 46.5 inches (68.6 x 118.1 cm)
Collection of the artist

Photo: Karl Peterson



William Anastasi

on John Cage - we are beginning to get nowhere
Interview by Jacob Lillemose

William Anastasi (b.1933) is probably the artist who was closest to John Cage the last 15 years of the composer's life. Beside the fact that he and Cage played chess together almost every day during that period, their work was strongly connected by their common involvement with Marcel Duchamp, James Joyce, all kinds of music and meditation. Like Cage, Anastasi sought to escape the control of intentionality and personal taste by instead allowing chance to be one of the guiding principles of his artistic production. Where Cage without paying attention to harmonics used chance operations to write his scores, Anastasi, as a visual artist, did a large number of so called blind drawings either blindfolded or with his eyes closed. Anastasi was already influenced by Cage's musical ideas in what he titled *Sound Objects* (1963-64), a series of sculptures which combined utilitarian objects with speakers, which "remembered" the sounds the objects had made before they had been recruited into the service of art. But that the inspiration was mutual seems clear, considering the fact that Cage had hung three large blind drawings of Anastasi's in a prominent spot in his loft. In this way Anastasi's close friendship with Cage has not only given him a unique insight into Cage's way of thinking, but as a founding figure of conceptual art Anastasi has also been a significant artistic consort in the development of Cage's late work.



When were you introduced to Cage's ideas about music and art?

I think it was probably from the liner notes on his records. I knew his music before I knew him personally. So I'm sure I was already somewhat influenced by him when we first met in 1965. I had done a piece two years earlier called *Microphone* (63), which had to be influenced by *4"33'* (52). I can't swear that I had heard about the piece though, but the idea behind it was certainly in the air. *Microphone* is a recording of a tape recorder recording nothing more than the sound of its

own mechanism in a quiet environment. I had learned from an electronic engineer that the speed of a tape machine is determined by the slightly inconsistent signal of cycles that come from the wall outlet and that even a state-of-the-art tape recorder would not be

able to transpose those cycles into a perfectly consistent tape speed. This meant that the recording would not be just a mirror of the actual mechanism's sound, but that these two would go in and out of phase. And it was this phase discrepancy that I, and then John responded to.

Microphone also makes me think of Robert Morris' *Box with the Sound of its Own Making* (61).

For all I know my *Sounds Objects* may have been influenced by that piece, because we had lofts in the same building and were in regular contact. In a similar way my wall-to-floor work, *Beethoven's Fifth Symphony* (65), might have been a factor connected to his felt pieces of the early '70s. *Microphone* is an example of a certain attitude found in my work. I am in the futile business of trying to make final statements all the time. I particularly admire Duchamp for having made so many. But I might be the complete opposite of Duchamp in some ways. I suspect that my work may be motivated by some primal insecurity, a deep belief that I have nothing to say and I haven't said anything yet. Jasper Johns, with whom I have talked both before and I guess even more after John left us, once strongly implied to me that his confidence left him at times and I responded "mine never arrived." It brings to mind Max Ernst's remark that his saving grace as an artist was that he never found himself and that he believed that any artist who thinks he's found himself is really lost.

What was your relation to music when you met Cage?

I fell seriously in love with classical and baroque music in 1951 when I had polio and was in the house for the better part of a year. I became very involved with listening to the phonograph, which is different from John, who said he "didn't use recordings." This is interesting, because he was one of the first to let electronics be the medium. Yet, sometimes at our house he would ask to hear something on record. So he was somewhat mixed about it. At times he would make fun of my having at that time these 10,000 or so recordings and at other times he would seem to bring up proudly to someone that I had one of the most important collections of recorded music in the country.

We had a interesting exchange once. It was in the middle of a conversation about music with Merce Cunningham, Dove Bradshaw, John and myself. Something inspired him to suddenly ask me: "Why would you want to hear the same performance of anything a second time after you have heard it once?" I was tempted to answer, "Why would anyone want to become drunk after having been drunk once?" I wisely resisted that temptation and instead said, "Well, among other reasons I find that I'm not the same person every day." Then one of us started to talk about something not connected with that, when John suddenly put his hand up and interrupted, which was new to my experience, and said "Wait a minute! I have had that. I have experienced that." As though I had said

something so original, which I certainly had not. But it must have struck something in his own thinking which had not been there at that moment, as though he had forgotten it, as though he was somehow reminded that, of course, he too was a different person every day. We then found ourselves getting into a kind of art-philosophy discussion that was different from any we had previously had.

I think your love for music shows in much of your work, especially the blind drawings, in the sense that they contain and offer the spectator an abstract experience which resembles the experience characteristic of most compositional music.

Well, I guess it's because time is involved and you either get it or you don't. Although there are so many levels to "get it." At least since the '50s my method of looking at abstract painting has been to try to listen with my eyes as it were. Even if it is not abstract, if there is a figure in there, I am still verging on listening to it with my eyes. I guess after Kandinsky, Mondrian and Malevich if a painting is purely abstract you have the option of relating to it the way you relate to most music. This is only natural, because music is for the most part not a representational, but an abstract medium.

As we talked about earlier, one of Cage's major concerns was the critique of art as a possession, which in his case meant the record. It seems to me that you are doing something similar in the visual arts.

I don't have what you might call any long term emotional attachment to my artworks. And John for instance did not believe in insuring his priceless collection of art, which is of course perfectly consistent with his idea about art. He said, with a smile, that if anything happened to a piece the artist would just make another one.

Does Cage's wish to integrate life and art live on in your work?

I agree with John that the space between life and art should ideally be obliterated. Regarding our avant-garde this can be traced back to Alfred Jarry. André Breton said that starting with Jarry the differentiation long considered necessary between life and art had been obliterated once and for all.

Do you think Cage wanted to realize the Duchampian idea of not being an artist?

Well, he did think of himself as a composer, no question about that. For instance we played chess the day he exceeded Beethoven's opus numbers and he was pleased by this and said so. He wasn't like Duchamp, who said he was a breather and that every word he told you was stupid and false. Duchamp's notes are a rhapsody of obfuscations, while John's addenda will carefully tell how things were done. There is a code, but it is not a secret code. He tells you he's tracing stones and chance is telling him how many to use and where to put them. He is in effect saying, "Everybody can become an artist. See how easy it is." So on some unconscious level he was carving out something quite other from the man he clearly loved. Duchamp was full of mystery, a hoaxer, which John was not. I

think Duchamp was thoroughly sure of himself and John, as centered as he clearly was, did not have that kind of self-certitude.

Do you think that what Cage saw in Duchamp was a way to get away from the European music tradition?

Actually, I think he was into that trajectory before he met Duchamp. In almost all pieces of contemporary music you hear constant references and sometimes even quotes from earlier pieces. This is not true of most of John's music. This no doubt has to do with his use of chance operations. I once told him that and he just agreed with a mild and almost condescending smile, as if to remind me that his whole way of listening to music couldn't be further from mine. He was listening to the sounds, and if it happened to sound like some other piece it didn't matter so long as it worked, especially if he detected some new thinking in it. Influences were not something he would pay too much attention to. An example of this attitude showed up in connection with my decision to make drawings with the tires of my car without knowing that Rauschenberg and John had already done this. I mentioned it to John and he said: "That's interesting, what did you use to make the marks? We tried all sorts of paints and things and we were never really happy with the results." I told him that I had driven the car around the fourth basement space of a public garage, tracking the greasy dirt that had settled there. He responded, "Oh, I like that much better. I wish we had thought of that." Of course he was essentially trying to encourage me, to perhaps make me feel better about being five years "late." But perhaps the best example of this attitude occurred when John first started to make prints. Since Duchamp's *3 Standard Stoppages* (1913-14) was John's favorite, he decided simply to drop a string on a surface like Duchamp, but instead of dropping it one meter he dropped it standing on a ladder. Certainly in a similar way my wall on the wall piece was inevitable after Duchamp's readymades. Tearing down a wall would be the next logical response. Once you've recognized the wall's integrity, you had better attack it before you get attached to it. If you read Duchamp's notes carefully, you'll discover that he thought of just about everything. By saying that he was not an artist Duchamp freed himself wonderfully. It's like Kafka's statement about the impossibility of not writing. Both men's art seems to go beyond art. Certainly most of John's work seems to go beyond art.

Is that necessity that Kafka talks about something you find in Cage's approach to art?

I don't know if John read Kafka. He only quoted him once, and that was even misattributed. He quoted Rilke as having said, "psychology never again"-- that was actually Kafka. I would guess that Kafka's neurosis would have been an obstacle. But John once did ask me to copy out for him a short text of Kafka's that I had shared with him. It's from his aphorisms: "You do not need to leave

Cage did not enjoy what he knew of Jarry. When I broached the subject, Cage said the following: "I have an allergy, you might call it, against the kind of expression that was Jarry's, but it is clear that Duchamp did not. But I agree with the view that everyone was influenced by Jarry. I myself think that Duchamp and Joyce having used Jarry is far more interesting than anything Jarry himself did." I never learned exactly how much of Jarry Cage had read, but he admitted that he had read some. In 1989, at his suggestion, I loaned him my copy of the English translation of *The Supermale*. I had noted on the blank pages numerous passages which correspond with parts of Duchamp's notes and with sections of *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake*. After a few days Cage returned the book, saying that it was a novel and he couldn't read novels. A short time after this he volunteered that my interest in the subject had brought him back to Jarry. Cage gave no titles and never indicated his "allergy" had left him. I believe if he had read more of Jarry, *Faustroll* in particular, his feelings might have changed. After all, in addition to his love for Joyce and Duchamp, who he agreed were influenced by Jarry, he repeatedly commented that he followed Antonin Artaud's philosophy of theater. Artaud was, in fact, such a disciple of the writer that he named his theater "Théâtre Alfred Jarry."

Ironically, John Cage had more similarities with Jarry than did either Joyce or Duchamp. His sexual orientation was much closer to Jarry's than to that of the other two, although he was as soft-spoken on the subject as Jarry was blaring. And Cage, like Jarry, was an avowed anarchist. Here, too, the difference was more in the manner of expression and emphasis than in the bottom line commitment. But perhaps the most significant parallel between the two reveals itself when we look at their respective interest in chance. We know that Cage studied with the Zen teacher Daisetz Suzuki, and that as a result he started to use chance operations around 1950. Jarry was equally involved with chance. His 'Pataphysics [a science of imaginary solutions, ed.], an alternate hypothesis for the workings of the universe, assign an important role to *l'accident*."

So my view is that the aversion comes from the reality you might say, that John and Jarry were not 180 degrees away, but 360 -- which means in one way, very far and in another way, very close, back to back as it were. Through his love of Joyce and Duchamp I can picture John looking over his shoulder and there would be Jarry -- of course in the excellent company of Schoenberg, Suzuki, Thoreau, Chuang-Tzu and an awesome host of others.

1) Quoted from Barbara Wright and Ralph Gladstone translation *Alfred Jarry: The Supermale*, New Direction Publishing Cooperation, New York 1964.

2) William Anastasi: *Duchamp on the Jarry Road*, in *Artforum* 30, No. 1, September 1991.

3) William Anastasi: *Jarry, Joyce, Duchamp and Cage*, on www.toutfait.com, #2 May 2000.

Is it a question of getting rid of your own intentions in order to let the intentions of nature rule? I remember you curated a show called imitating nature in her manner of operation (91).

The name of the exhibition actually was the names of the artists -- Cage, Anastasi, Tom Marioni, Rauschenberg, Tobey and myself. The remark about imitation came from Ananda K. Coomaraswamy [(1877-1947) -- an Indian critic whose subjects were art history and social thought, stated that this imitation was the responsibility of the artist, ed.] who Cage was fond of quoting. The exhibition was centered around this issue of control. There is another beautiful quote of Cage's about control, when he talked about the composer Pierre Boulez. He said Boulez "has the mind of an expert and with that kind of mind you can only deal with the past....you cannot be an expert of the unknown.

So this idea of imitating nature in her manner of operation is a way of making art without intentions?

At least you subvert some of your intentions. You have the possibility of getting away from your limited ideas, your likes and dislikes, and not only all that, your knowledge as well. You find yourself in a wider world. So things can surprise you -- allow for possibilities that wouldn't have been available otherwise. As Cage stated: "If I understand something I have no further use for it." The not knowing keeps you alert, fresh.

What is your relation to your works once you have finished them?

"They are children that grow up and have a life of their own," as Cage once said. There are certainly stages where I like a specific work better than at other stages, but I try not to let my likes and dislikes interfere. I often fail, though.

Talking about his scores Cage said that 'space on paper equals time', which I think is an adequate description of what is happening in your paintings and sculptures. The pictorial and sculptural space changes and creates a visualized time? Time and space collapse. These works of course can be seen as a visualization of time, but more precisely they are an experience of it.

Now we touch upon a theme that is common to Bill's and Cage's work as well, which is time. But while they work within a conceptualized and closed time frame you seem to open up towards a more infinite sense of time.

I am working with continuous real time, whereas they work with a time which has a beginning and an end. Anastasi works with time increments in much of his unsighted work. Because John was a composer the performance of his work has a fixed time as well.

*He could compose a piece that lasted from now to eternity, which I guess was what he really did in 4*33' ...*

Actually 4*33' is a fixed work, but by extrapolation the idea is large. My involvement in real time came from watching things happen, from simple minded obser-

ventions. Of course these observations are not put to a scientific use. I'm not interested in changing one thing into another as in alchemy, but the phenomenon of change itself as non-hierarchical and purposeless. And time becomes a determinant factor of this change, for example in the piece where water dripped onto rocksalt and bored a hole. Since 1996 I have been doing similar work in stone which, of course, involves an extended length of time.

The time of the viewer, the work and the world become indistinguishable.

At the exhibition at the Sandra Gering Gallery of the rocksalt it was noticed that the work seemed to create an atmosphere in which people slowed down. It was almost the antithesis of the way of taking in art in that kind of environment. People waited until the water dropped -- about 20 seconds separated the drops -- and then they found themselves waiting for another and another. The bored hole eventually filled up and overflowed and the salt recrystallized leaving daily tide marks on a concrete floor.

Cage dismissed memory as a means of cognition, because he found it was too related to taste and habit, but in your work I sense that memory plays an important role as an awareness that time's constantly passing and that we live in a continuous flow of past, present and future.

It's involved in the present, which is unrepeatable. Memory is a factor however. *This involvement with the present seems to be what Cage aims at when he wants to hear every sound for itself, isolated and without any presuppositions or references.*

I believe that's a Zen idea, that everything in the universe is in itself a center without interfering or obstructing the view of any other thing. It's like our exchange about the monochrome, the fact that one refines one's view to a point where it makes one more intensely aware of other things. And that's tied to another aspect of indeterminacy -- the intensity -- which interests me. Life is intense because it ends and the work has intensity for me because it is going to change.

It becomes, as Cage said in his Lecture on Something (59), a "something as a celebration of the nothing which supports it."

It involves acceptance, accepting that we are going to be gone.

WILLIAM ANASTASI

Born in Philadelphia 1933.
Lives and works in New York.

Selected Solo Exhibitions:

- 2001 *A Retrospective*, Nikolaj, Copenhagen Contemporary Art Center, Copenhagen
- 2000 *Art Agents*, Hamburg
- 1999 Gary Tatintsian Gallery, New York
- 1998 Stalke Gallery, Copenhagen
- 1997 *William Anastasi: The Painting of the Word Jew*, Sandra Gering Gallery, New York
- 1996 Stalke Gallery, Copenhagen
- 1996 Anders Tomberg Gallery, Lund, Sweden
- 1995 *William Anastasi: A Retrospective (1960-95)*, Moore College of Art and design, Philadelphia
- 1993 *Drawing Sounds: An installation in Honor of John Cage*, Philadelphia Museum of Art
- 1991 *Sink, Trespass, Issue, Incision*, Sandra Gering Gallery, New York
- 1981 *Coincidents*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York
- 1979 *Re-visions: Perspectives and Proposals in Film and Video*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York
- Coincidents*, Kunstmuseum Düsseldorf
- Max Hetzler, Stuttgart
- 1977 P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center, New York
- 1970 *Continuum, 1968*, Dwan Gallery, New York
- Steel Rods, 1968*, Dwan Gallery, New York
- 1967 *Six Sites, 1966*, Dwan Gallery, New York
- 1966 *Sound Objects*, Dwan Gallery, New York

Selected Group Exhibitions:

- 2000 Gary Tatintsian Gallery with Alexander Rodehenko *Topology*, White Box Gallery, Weiner, Lava
- This is What it is*, Bard College, Annandale on Hudson, New York
- Destruction Creation*, Ulou Gallery, New York
- End Papers, Drawings, 1690-1900 1990-2000*, The Newberger Museum of Art, Purchase, New York
- 1999 *Art of this Century*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York
- "... vor mehr als einem halben Jahrhundert", Landes Museum, Linz, Germany
- 1995 *Sound Sculpture: Music for the Eyes*, Ludwig Museum, Koblenz, Germany
- 1993 Centre d'Art et de Culture Georges Pompidou, Paris
- Rolywholyover A Circus*, The Guggenheim Museum, New York
- Philadelphia Museum of Art
- Mito Art Tower, Mito, Japan
- 1991 *William Anastasi, Dove Bradshaw, John Cage, Tom Marioni, Robert Rauchenberg, Mark Tobey*, Sandra Gering Gallery, New York
- 1988 *Concept Art*, Cologne, Stuttgart, Copenhagen
- 1984 Stalke Gallery, Copenhagen
- 1982 *William Anastasi, Dove Bradshaw, John Cage*, The American Center, Paris
- 1981 *Whitney Biennial*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York
- 1980 *Film as Installation*, Clocktower, New York
- Für Augen und Ohren*, Akademie Der Kunst, Berlin
- Couples*, P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center, New York
- Leo Castelli, New York
- 1978 Paula Cooper, New York

- 1977 *Projects for the Seventies*, P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center, New York, Lisbon, Warsaw, Ankara, Tel Aviv, Bucharest, Madrid, Reykjavik, Ottawa
- 1972 Paula Cooper Gallery, New York
- 1970 Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville, Paris, Musée Cantonal des Beaux-Arts, Lausanne
- 1969 E.A.T., Leo Castelli Gallery, New York

Selected Bibliography:

- 2001 *William Anastasi, A Retrospective*, Thomas McEvilley, Bent Fausing, Nikolaj, Copenhagen Contemporary Art Center
- 1999 Oxford Encyclopedia of Art, Oxford, England
- 1996 *Merce Cunningham, Fifty Years*, Aperture Foundation, New York
- Ralph Rucoff, Scene of the Crime*, MIT Press, Cambridge, MA
- 1995 *Barry Schwabsky "William Anastasi"*, Sandra Gering Gallery, Artforum, May
- 1993 *William Anastasi, me Innerman monophone*, Anders Tomberg Gallery, Lund
- 1975 Brian O'Doherty, "Inside The White Cube: Notes on the Gallery Space" Artforum, March

DOVE BRADSHAW

Born in New York. 1949.
Lives and works in New York.

Selected Solo Exhibitions:

- 2001 *Waterstones, 1996*, Stark Gallery, New York
- 2001 *Elements*, Stalke Gallery, Copenhagen
- 2000 *Waterstones, 1996*, Larry Becker Contemporary Art, Philadelphia.
- 1999 *Guilty Marks*, Stalke Gallery, Copenhagen
- 1999 *Negative Ions and 2/0*, The Mattress Factory Museum, Pittsburgh
- 1998 *Dove Bradshaw /Jan Henie*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles
- 1998 *Irrational Numbers*, Sandra Gering and Linda Kirkland, New York
- 1997 *S Paintings and Indeterminacy Stones*, Babara Krakow, Boston.
- 1996 *Contingency*, Stalke Gallery, Copenhagen, Denmark
- 1995 *Indeterminacy*, Sandra Gering, New York
- 1995 *Indeterminacy and Contingency*, Pier Center, Orkney, Great Britain
- 1993 *Contingency*, Sandra Gering, New York
- 1991 *Plain Air, 1969*, P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center, New York
- 1990 *Plain Air, 1969*, The Mattress Factory, Pittsburgh
- 1988 *Paintings on Vellum*, Utica College, Syracuse University, Utica, New York
- 1984 *Works, 1969-1984*, Utica College, Syracuse University, Utica, New York
- 1983 *Drawings*, Ware Hill, Bronx, New York
- 1979 *Drawings*, The Graham Gallery, New York

Selected Group Exhibitions

- 2000 *Ethereal and Material*, The Delaware Center for the Contemporary Arts, Wilmington, Delaware
- 2000 *Century of Innocence: The History of the White Monochrome*, Roseum Center For Contemporary Art, Malmö, Sweden
- 2000 *Hindsight/Foresight: Art for the New Millenium*, Bayly Art Museum, University of Virginia, Charlottesville
- 2000 *Recent Acquisishous*, The Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia
- 1999 *Nature/Process*, University of California at San Diego
- 1998 Stalke Gallery, Copenhagen, Denmark
- 1997 *Charles Carpenter Collection*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Carnegie Museum, Pittsburgh
- 1996 *New Art on Paper*, The Philadelphia Museum, Philadelphia
- 1993 *Rolywholyover A Circus*, The Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art, The Menil Collection, Houston, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, The Philadelphia Museum of Art, Mito Art Tower, Mito, Japan
- 1992 *Work from the Permanent Collection*, The Art Institute of Chicago
- 1991 *Carnegie International* (Exhibited by John Cage as part of his presentation), Pittsburgh
- New York Diary: Almost Twenty Five Different Things to See*, P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center, New York
- William Anastasi, Dove Bradshaw, John Cage, Tom Marioni, Robert Rauchenberg, Mark Tobey*, Sandra Gering Gallery, New York

- 1990 *Drawings of the Eighties Part II*, Museum of Modern Art, New York
- 1984 *Merce Cunningham Dance Company*, Castelli Gallery New York
- 1982 *Anastasi Bradshaw Cage*, The American Center, Paris
- 1979 *Sound*, P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center, New York
- 1978 *Couples*, P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center, New York

Selected Bibliography

- 1999 Ken Johnson, "Dove Bradshaw", The New York Times, June 19.
- McEVILLEY, "Sculpture in the Age of Doubt", Allworth Press, New York
- 1999 Colette Chattopadhyay, *Sculpture Magazine*, "Dove Bradshaw at LA MOCA", January-February, 1999 Washington, DC. pp. 59-61
- 1998 Claire Lieberman, "Stone: Mystery or Malaise", *Sculpture Magazine*, February, 1998, p. 30
- 1996 *New Art on Paper*, The Philadelphia Museum of Art.
- "*Odyssey of a Collector: A Memoir by Charles Carpenter*", Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh.
- "*Merce Cunningham, Fifty Years*", Aperture Foundation, New York
- 1993 John Cage, "Rolywholyover A Circus", MOCA, Los Angeles, Rizzoli, New York
- 1991 "Carnegie International", Carnegie Museum, Pittsburgh

TAK

Museet vil gerne udtrykke den hjerteligste tak til en række personer og institutioner for medvirken til realiseringen af denne udstilling, og i særlig grad for et forbilledligt samarbejde: **Dove Bradshaw**, der med sine store viden og et eminent overblik har medvirket til udvælgelse og ophængning af værkerne. **Sam Jedig** og **Kim Bendixen**, Stalke Galleri, der for flere år siden kontaktede museet med ideen om det udstillings samarbejde, der nu er en realitet. **Elisabeth Delin Hansen**, Nikolaj Udstillingsbygning, for mange gode samtaler undervejs i forberedelsesforløbet. **Karl Aage Rasmussen** for at give tilladelse til at hans personlige og meget indsigtsfulde essay om John Cage nu indgår i dette katalog med engelsk oversættelse. **Andrew Smith** for at påtage sig oversættelsesopgaven. **Jacob Lillemose**, for at have forfattet de to interviews med Dove Bradshaw og William Anastasi. **Maria Mackinney** for oversættelsen af dette forord. **Klaus Schöning** for den generøsitet, hvormed han gennem mange år har vejledt museet i spørgsmål om den mangefacetterede eksperimenterende lydkunst, og som tillige har deltaget i os i sin store viden om John Cage. WDR for udlån af Studio Akustische Kunst's radioproduktioner med John Cage, og for tilladelse til at værkerne indgår i denne udstilling. **Caroline Seehusen** for den grafiske udførelse af katalog, invitation og udstillingsplakat.

THANKS

The Museum would like to express warm thanks to the following individuals and institutions for contributing to this exhibition and particularly for excellent co-operation: **Dove Bradshaw**, who has assisted in curating the exhibition with great insight and enthusiasm; **Sam Jedig** and **Kim Bendixen** from Stalke Galleri, who contacted the Museum several years ago with the idea which has now finally been realized; **Elisabeth Delin Hansen** from Nikolaj Copenhagen Contemporary Art Centre for many good conversations during the course of the preparations; **Karl Aage Rasmussen** for granting permission to print his personal and knowledgeable essay on John Cage and **Andrew Smith** for the English translation; **Jacob Lillemose** for the two interviews with Dove Bradshaw and William Anastasi; **Maria Mackinney** for the translation of this foreword; **Klaus Schöning** for the generosity with which he has shared his knowledge on John Cage, and the complexity of experimental acoustic art; Westdeutscher Rundfunk for the loan of Studio Akustische Kunst's radio productions of John Cage and for permission to let the works be included in this exhibition; **Caroline Seehusen** for the graphic design of the catalogue, invitations and exhibition poster.