

**TRIBUTES TO CHARON**

*for percussion trio*

## PERFORMANCE NOTES

### PREMIERE

The second movement of *Tributes to Charon*, “Counterdance in the Spring,” was completed on March 29, 1939 and first performed on May 19 of that year by John Cage and ensemble at the Cornish School in Seattle, Washington. The opening movement, “Passage Through Darkness,” was completed on May 6, 1982 and the entire work was premiered by William Winant and ensemble at Mills College on May 10 of that year.

### *Percussion instrumentation.*

#### MOVEMENT I:

##### Player 1:

alarm clock (a.c.) with box that can be lowered over it (alternatively 2 bells, hit rapidly and alternately, can be used to simulate an alarm)  
suspended cymbal (s.c.)  
gong (g.)

##### Player 2:

alarm clock (a.c.) at different pitch from that of player 1, with box (see instructions for player 1)  
gong (g.)  
sleigh bells on a “dry” bell tree (s.b.)  
2 coils (c.)  
2 muted gongs (m.g.)

##### Player 3

2 drums (d.)  
small bell tree (s.b.t.)  
gong (g.)

#### MOVEMENT II:

##### Player 1:

2 tortoise shells (t.s.)  
inverted bowl (i.b.): a *large* Chinese brass flower bowl upside down and struck in the center of the dome. [A muted brakedrum is indicated instead on Cage’s copy of the score.]  
suspended gong (s.g.)  
2 drums (d.)

##### Player 2:

2 muted gongs (m.g.)  
cymbal (c.; c+ = stopped)  
suspended gong (s.g.)

##### Player 3:

2 drums (d.)  
Chinese block (C.b.)  
suspended gong (s.g.)

### *Performance of alarm clocks.*

Crescendi and decrescendi are produced by raising and lowering a box over each clock. Where there are rests between the notes or where notes are repeated, turn the clocks off and on. For example, at mm. 19 and 22 lift the box quickly for the *fortes* and cover the clocks quickly for the *pianos*, but at mm. 26–27 turn the clocks off and on to create the notated rhythm. If alarm clocks are not available, performers may substitute pairs of bells that are hit alternately and rapidly with a metal stick, in imitation of an alarm.

# TRIBUTES TO CHARON

## I. PASSAGE THROUGH DARKNESS

**Slow**

Percussion 1: alarm clock *f*

Percussion 2: alarm clock *f*, *p*, *f*

Percussion 3: drums *mp*

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Percussion 1: *p*, *f*, *mp*, a.c.

Percussion 2: gong *mf*, sleigh bells

Percussion 3: small bell tree *mf*, d.

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Percussion 1: s.c., a.c., *mf*, *f*

Percussion 2: g., s.b.t.

Percussion 3: s.b.t., d.