

John Cale's great credit, both inside and outside the Velvet Underground, was to have found the inoculation dosage that would addict the music industry to SOUND without alienating one world from the other. But outside the "official" VU there was also an uncut version of the virus, incubated behind the slum walls of the 1960s Lower East Side, and maintained live in the liquid nitrogen of these insolently recorded reel-to-reel audiotapes, recorded and produced by Tony Conrad and now available in the Table of the Elements CD series, "New York in the 1960s."

"The recordings in this three-disc series come from another underground, a deep vein of labor and experimentation that parallels Cale's time with the Velvets. It is jubilantly private music, made alone and with like-minded spirits – Tony Conrad, Sterling Morrison, original Velvets percussionist Angus MacLise – far from the hot light of the Velvets' public notoriety and the rough politics of Cale's relationship with Reed. And it is important music, an illuminating, heretofore unknown chapter in Cale's creative advance.

What is truly extraordinary about the sixteen performances spread across these three volumes is their explosive foresight. The florid distortion of Cale's guitar pieces and the tandem bull-elephant hum of his viola and Conrad's violin prefigure the aggressive majesty and expressive dissonance of punk rock, No Wave and the Transfigured Guitar movement led by Glenn Branca, Rhys Chatham and Sonic Youth. In his pulsing keyboard essays, Cale marries the grace and science of minimalism to the mainstream throb of rock & roll, a full decade ahead of Brian Eno and the Berlin-era David Bowie. When Cale tests the barriers of possibility in his tools – the guts of an abandoned piano, the jammed keys on an organ, the pause control of a Wollensak tape recorder – he generates a synthetic music that connects Edgard Varèse, Henry Cowell and Karlheinz Stockhausen with contemporary electronica and turntablism.

These recordings have been virtually unheard since they were made more than three decades ago. But their prescience is undeniable. So is their power and purity. Working in the shadows of both pop and art, building on discoveries and inventions from his life before and with the Velvets, Cale committed to tape a highly personal and exhilarating vision of the future of music. It now sounds like fact." – David Fricke, from the liner notes

*"John Cale is rock's international traveler. His work is a trans-continental drift of moons and maps, seas and seachange, envoys and ennui...his eye has spanned the globe and his mind ranged as far from rock's parochial trails as it's possible to get...his world is bounded only by the limits of his imagination."* – THE WIRE

*"This music is the intimate expression of a committed seeker, a strange magic finally heard in its humble seductive essence."* – David Fricke, ROLLING STONE

Three discs produced from archival recordings by Tony Conrad, Buffalo NY, 2000  
Featuring Tony Conrad, Terry Jennings, Angus MacLise and Sterling Morrison

# NEW YORK IN THE 1960s



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SUN BLINDNESS MUSIC



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DREAM INTERPRETATION:  
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