

BLUME 022

James Tenney
Postal Pieces

It took until the 1990s for works of the composer James Tenney (1934-2006) to begin their journey from a state of near total neglect. Yet, despite having been among the most radical and influential members of his generation, when compared to that of many of his peers, his legacy still remains largely overlooked by the last 30 years of critical reappraisal, and thus unfairly obscure to most listeners. As such, its place in the cultural landscape helps to illuminate the complex dynamics of critical reflection, taste, and power in the arts.

Trained in composition by Carl Ruggles, John Cage, Harry Partch, and Edgard Varèse – remaining close to all of them, and later performing in both Cage and Partch's ensembles – as well as studying acoustics, information theory, and tape music composition with Lejaren Hiller, Tenney is credited as having contributed one of the earliest applications of gestalt theory and cognitive science to music in 1961, before helping to pioneer the field of computer music at Bell Labs, during the following years.

JAMES TENNEY Postal Pieces

Label

BLUME

Format

LP

Catalog Number

BLUME 022LP

UPC

769791986459



Store Price

\$20.79

Release Date

08/30/24

Territory

NORTH AMERICAN EXCLUSIVE

Genre

FILE UNDER - T - CLASSICAL**BLUME**

DESCRIPTION

Since its founding back in 2014, Blume has carved a unique place in cultural landscape, issuing free-standing works, spanning the historical and contemporary, that represent singular gestures of creativity within the field of experimental sound. Joining their broad efforts in building networks of context and understanding, Blume returns with the first ever vinyl release to attend to **James Tenney's** legendary *Postal Pieces*. This marks the first ever appearance of five of the suite's works – "Maximusic, for Max Neuhaus" (1965), "Having Never Written a Note for Percussion, for John Bergamo" (1971), "FFor Percussion Perhaps, or... [Night], for Harold Budd" (1971), "Cellogram, for Joel Krosnick" (1971), and "Beast, for Buell Neidlinger" (1971) – on vinyl, drawing upon recordings made in 2003, by the Amsterdam based ensemble, **The Barton Workshop**, under the direction of **James Fulkerson**. Among the most important and highly regarded efforts in Tenney's canon of compositions, as well as within the history of 20th Century music, these five pieces represent a crucial bridge between **Fluxus**-oriented conceptualism, minimalism, and the microtonal complexities that would emerge in their wakes. A student of composition under **Carl Ruggles**, **John Cage**, **Harry Partch**, and **Edgard Varèse**, as well as acoustics, information theory, and tape music composition under **Lejaren Hiller**, James Tenney carved a wide path within the contexts of experimental and avant-garde music during the second half of the 20th Century. A suite of eleven compositions, *The Postal Pieces*, stands among Tenney's well known and celebrated compositions, and illuminates the dualities embraced by the composer, notably his use of sound to develop consciousness in and of others, and his willingness to draw on elements and observations of everyday life; citing his strong dislike of writing letters as being the primary inspiration for their inception. The suite is composed around three themes: Tenney's concept of swell form (utilizing repetition and progressing through a structurally symmetrical arch), intonation, and the desire to produce "meditative perceptual states." A hugely important addition to Blume's ever-expanding efforts in context building and networks of creative practice, James Tenney's *Post Pieces* is issued in a highly limited vinyl edition of 300 copies, which includes an exact replica of the original postcard graphic scores, and features newly commissioned liner notes by **Bradford Bailey**.

TRACKLISTING

- A1. Maximusic (7:18)
- A2. Having Never Written a Note for Percussion (13:54)
- B1. For Percussion Perhaps, Or... (Night) (11:20)
- B2. Cellogram (5:08)
- B3. Beast (7:08)

HIGHLIGHTS

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Also available:

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