

PREFACE

Although his music touched me deeply, I never knew John Fahey as a person. I made tentative plans to meet with him regarding my research, but those plans never came to fruition. I would like to think that he would have approved of what I have said about him and American culture, but I will never know. In some ways I think that this may be a good thing, since this research goes beyond both John Fahey the person and John Fahey the artist. Its essence lies in defining an aspect of American culture often overlooked. This definition cannot be confined to a rigid set of academic criteria, but rather needs to be explored for what it represents conceptually. The American culture that John Fahey represents is that of the individual, and John Fahey in many ways represents the potential for the individual in everyone.

Those who know of Fahey will undoubtedly miss some of what has been omitted from this research, particularly in the transcription sections. Admittedly, I had a much more ambitious set of examples to illustrate, but time and space only permitted what has been included here. The task of examining Fahey's music in the manner in which I have chosen has been difficult, and many of my own favorites have been left out. I believe that for the careful reader who is relatively unfamiliar with Fahey's music, there is much to be learned, and the transcriptions will be sufficient for substantiating the theories that have been laid out. For those who know Fahey well I can only encourage you to look past the individual examples, and find ways to cross reference the included transcriptions with those that have not been used. It is my belief that you will find that a great variety of Fahey's music is represented.

So much has been said about Fahey's disdain for adulation, but for those who have been changed by him know that his influence can have a powerful effect. For me, I learned

from John Fahey that my own experiences make me who I am, and collectively this is what ties us all together. Thank you, John Fahey.

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