

Press Launch Date: March 10, 2010

# John King

## *10 Mysteries*



www.tzadik.com



Tzadik TZA CD 8071  
UPC: 7 02397 80712 4

### TRACKS

- 1–9. 10 MYSTERIES  
for string quartet 2007 (32:27)
- i mvt 1 2:51
  - ii mvt 2 4:41
  - iii mvt 3 2:25
  - iv mvt 4 1:41
  - v mvt 5 3:38
  - vi mvt 6 3:05
  - vii mvt 7 3:57
  - viii mvt 8 3:49
  - ix mvt 9 6:21
10. RIVERS OF FIRE  
for string quartet and electronics 2008 (12:35)
- 11–12. WINDS OF BLOOD  
for string quartet and electronics 2009 (11:11)
- i version 1 5:06
  - ii version 2 6:05

All compositions by John King, BMI  
Executive Producer John Zorn  
Associate Producer Kazunori Sugiyama  
Recorded and Mixed by Jeff Cook at Second Story Sound, NYC  
Mastered by Scott Hull  
Cover tilework *Hermes and the Nine Sibyls* at Cathedral of Siena  
by Giovanni di Stefano

### DESCRIPTION

Featuring passionate and inspiring performances by the remarkable quartet Crucible with King himself on viola, this music jumps from moment to moment with lightening speed and an organic sense of form. John King has composed for orchestra, chamber ensembles, rock bands, dance, film and theater. He has written three operas to texts by Heiner Müller, Alain Robbe-Grillet and Stéphane Mallarmé, and worked closely with Merce Cunningham for more than 20 years. In his second CD for Tzadik he again embraces rock, jazz, blues and other popular styles in an energetic and colorful program for string quartet.



### MUSICIANS

Crucible:

Cornelius Dufallo,  
Mark Feldman, *violins*  
John King, *viola*  
Alex Waterman, *cello*



### DISTRIBUTION SOURCES

Physical distribution through E1 Entertainment  
Digital distribution through iTunes, Amazon.com, and more.  
Direct sales from www.tzadik.com

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### ABOUT THE MUSIC

Chance and improvisation are integral to these compositions. The symbols used in the scores are improvisation-directions (noise, drone, expand, evaporate, distill, silence, etc.) that are indications of types of music (or musical transformations) the players create. Their placement, order and content were determined using an I Ching-based symbol generator. Though the symbols look to be aligned simultaneously their durations are spontaneously decided upon by the players.

As for the live electronics, every element is chance determined: the durations of each sonic environment, the lengths of reverb or delay, which instrument is sampled when, the length of the sample that is looped randomly, its start-point, etc. These processes are happening while the players are reading the composed music and improvising. What I am seeking to discover is the unity of, rather than the distinctions between, determinate, indeterminate and improvised music.

*10 Mysteries* was one of my first compositions that used this combination of pre-determined (composed), spontaneous (improvised) and indeterminate (randomized) music—something I called “trilogic unity”—where the three different methods are incorporated into the work equally. These formal trajectories of energy overlap and intertwine, creating what for me is a structural polyphony.

*Rivers of Fire* and *Winds of Blood* are two contrasting pieces using a live electronics sound environment. In *Rivers of Fire* the electronics flow alongside the four instruments, arriving at structural points sometimes ahead of and sometimes behind the players. In *Winds of Blood* the electronics and the players are moving completely independently, using similar materials but combined and ordered using chance-based systems. This is why, for this latter piece, I wanted to show two different versions of the players’ and the electronics’ paths through these chance-based changing scenes.

I chose the name for this string quartet, *Crucible*, because that is how I view this ensemble, as the vessel within which I place my ideas, heat them and combine them, creating new alloys of music.

*John King*

### ABOUT JOHN KING

John King, composer, guitarist and violist, has received commissions from the Kronos Quartet, Red {an orchestra}, Ethel, the Albany Symphony, Bang On A Can All-Stars, Mannheim Ballet, New York City Ballet, Stuttgart Ballet, Ballets de Monte Carlo, as well as the Merce Cunningham Dance Co. His string quartets have also been performed by the Eclipse Quartet and the Mondriaan Quartet. Over the past several years, his quartet, *Crucible*, has premiered many of his compositions at *The Stone* and *The Kitchen*.

He has written 3 operas: *Herzstück/heartpiece*, based on the text of Heiner Müller, premiered at the 1999 Warsaw Autumn Festival and presented at the Kitchen NYC in 2000; *la belle captive* based on texts by Alain Robbe-Grillet, premiered at Teatro Colon/CETC in Buenos Aires in 2003, and toured to London’s ICA (Fronteras Festival) in 2004 and *The Kitchen* in 2005; and also his most recent opera, *Dice Thrown*, based on the Stéphane Mallarmé poem, an excerpt of which was performed by New York City Opera as part of its VOX series in May 2008. *Dice Thrown* is scheduled to be performed in its entirety at Cal Arts in April of 2010. King has 2 CD releases of music for string quartet; *AllSteel* (Tzadik) and *Ethel* (Cantaloupe). He was Music Curator at *The Kitchen* from 1999-2003 and is currently a co-director of the Music Committee at MCDC. He is also the recipient of the 2009 Alpert Award in the Arts for Music Composition.



[www.johnkingmusic.com](http://www.johnkingmusic.com)

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