

News of Music

Kitchen Plans 2 Fund-Raising Concerts

By JOHN ROCKWELL

LIKE many American cultural institutions these days, the Kitchen — New York's leading center for video art and experimental music — has a clouded future because of threatened budget cuts at the National Endowment for the Arts. But the Kitchen is persevering, not only with ambitious plans for its 1981-82 music season, but also with two nights of benefit concerts on June 14-15 at the Bond International Casino, in Times Square. The benefits will celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Kitchen.

The concerts at Bond's will feature a panoply of lower-Manhattan experimentalists and art-rockers. Artists include Glenn Branca, David Byrne, Douglas Dunn, Philip Glass, Leroy Jenkins, Meredith Monk, Laurie Anderson, Robert Ashley, Bush Tetras, the Lounge Lizards, Steve Reich and Devo, performing under the acronym VEDO. In addition, there will be performance-art interludes and video installations by the likes of Brian Eno and Nam June Paik. Tickets, available at the Bond's box office or at Ticketron outlets, cost \$15 in advance and \$25 for both nights, or \$18 each night at the door. The information number is 925-3615.

September Jamaican Festival

Music programs at the Kitchen over the years have reflected the predilections of the music directors. This season the music director has been George Lewis, a noted jazz trombonist and electronic-music experimenter. Mr. Lewis's programs were somewhat fewer in number than in previous years, and concentrated on jazz. For next season, Mr. Lewis said, there will

be a higher budget for concerts, more of them, and a greater variety.

His plans include a Jamaican festival in September, featuring some of the more progressive reggae bands from the New York area, an "alternative, nonacademic" computer music festival in February and a three-day overview of the manifold career of Muhal Richard Abrams in the spring. In addition, Mr. Lewis said, there will be more bills with several artists per night, more vanguard rock and more concerts away from the Kitchen itself.

Various Reasons Cited

According to Mary MacArthur, the Kitchen's director, the center had a budget of \$600,000 for the fiscal year ending June 30. Although some \$80,000 for the Kitchen has been recommended to the endowment by its expert panels for later this year, the sum may be frozen, depending on the extent of President Reagan's budget cuts.

Were the center to lose that \$80,000, Miss MacArthur said, the loss would be primarily to young artists with projects that are scheduled to take place at the Kitchen. In the meantime, however, she said that a "modest estimate" for the mid-June benefits would net the Kitchen \$60,000. "We're doing it partly to celebrate our anniversary and partly to combat inflation, pay better wages and improve our facilities," Miss MacArthur said. "But it's also insurance if the cuts really go through."

Avant-Gardists in Midtown for Benefit

By JOHN ROCKWELL

Benefit concerts, like the ones being held for the avant-garde Kitchen Center tomorrow and Monday nights at the Bond International Casino in Times Square, are often as interesting as statements about the group of artists involved as they are for any individual performance one might see.

The Kitchen benefits celebrate the 10th anniversary of the performing-arts and video center and are designed as a hedge against possible cuts in the budget of the National Endowment for the Arts. But more than that, the benefits serve as metaphors for the very manner in which downtown experimental artists in many mediums routinely work together, influencing one another's work in a way in which "uptown arts," sometimes weighed down by the complexity of their traditions, frequently do not.

Each of the two Kitchen concerts will run from 8 P.M. until at least 2 A.M., with more than 10 artists scheduled to perform each night. The official run-down for tomorrow — these affairs have a way of being a bit fluid, so there may be a few changes — includes Eric Bogosian, a playwright and performance artist; Glenn Branca, the vanguard art-rock; DNA, the "no wave" rock band; Douglas Dunn, the fine modern-dance choreographer and dancer; Fab Five Freddy and Friends, a "rap" group; Lisa Fox, a dancer; John Giorno, the poet; the Philip Glass Ensemble, which plays Mr. Glass's popular Minimalist music; Leroy Jenkins, the jazz violinist; Garrett List, a jazz and avant-garde composer and

former Kitchen music director; the Love of Life Orchestra, which specializes in a quirky kind of art-rock; John Lurie, a jazz-rock avant-gardist and leader of the Lounge Lizards; the Raybeats, a more danceable rock band; Red Decade, a rock band, and Zev, a percussionist.

And Vedo, an Anagram for Devo

Monday, there will be Maryanne Amacher, a Minimalist composer; Laurie Anderson, the compelling composer and performance artist; Robert Ashley, the veteran composer and performer, whose work remains as fresh as ever; the Bush Tetras, a well-regarded downtown rock band; Jim Carroll, a rock poet; Rhys Chatham, the rock composer and former Kitchen music director; the Laura Dean Musicians; the Feelies, a new-wave rock band; Julius Hemphill, the jazz musician; George Lewis, the jazz trombonist, composer and current Kitchen music director; the Bebe Miller Dancers; Meredith Monk, the choreographer, dancer, composer, singer and film maker; Steve Reich and Musicians, who like Mr. Glass's ensemble, specialize in the Minimalist music of their leader, and the Arnie Zane Dancers.

But that is not all. There will also be "special intermittent performances" by Dan Aykroyd, Mr. Bogosian and Mr. Giorno. And there will be video installations and screenings both nights by Mr. Ashley; Brian Eno; Robert Longo; Cindy Lubar and Christopher Knowles; Nam June Paik; Robert Wilson; Woody and Steina Vaulka, who founded

the Kitchen, and Vedo, an anagram for Devo, the conceptualist rock band.

What does this onslaught of names mean? Well, first of all, people who are not familiar with the downtown arts scene can rest assured that they represent a particularly distinguished assemblage of that scene's leading luminaries. Even if every performance is not to every taste, the curious — and the aficionados — can hope for a number of really striking experiences on either night.

A Community in a Real Sense

But more than that, this grouping attests to the links among the members of the downtown community, which unlike some applications of that word really is a community.

The large number of rock bands on the list, for example, might seem surprising to those who regard rock and art as antithetical. But in lower Manhattan, art influences rock, and rock influences art. The lines between what is personal statement and what is a possibly commercial reaching-out to a public have blurred beyond all hope of clarification — and that seems a healthy development for both art, which can sometimes appear cut off from society uptown, and rock, which can too easily pander to the lowest common denominator.

Bond's is at 1526 Broadway, at West 43rd Street. Tickets bought in advance cost \$15 for each evening at Bond's or at all Ticketron outlets. They are \$18 at the door. A combined ticket for both nights, at \$25, is available only in advance. The Kitchen's telephone number is 925-3615.