

# THE KITCHEN

CENTER FOR  
VIDEO, MUSIC,  
DANCE AND  
PERFORMANCE

Wednesday, September 29, 1982 THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR

## 18 ARTS/ENTERTAINMENT

N.Y.'s Kitchen opens  
new season of...er  
progressive music

By David Sterritt

New York

With a rousing show of progressive country and western, bebop, the Kitchen has opened the new season of its Contemporary Music Series.

The stars were John Cale and Bob Neuwirth, backed by a woodwind player named Ruskin Germino. Cale, a one-time classical musician and Leonard Bernstein scholar at the Tanglewood Music Center, is best known as a former leader (along with Lou Reed) of the towering Velvet Underground rock group. Neuwirth is a lower-profile performer who has ambled through several arts, over the years. Both have the kind of fry-anything brashness that goes over well at the unpredictable Kitchen Center for Video, Music, and Dance.

In fact, there were several moments during the show when the musicians might have been playing different songs at the same time. At the beginning, for example, Neuwirth crooned earnest lyrics into a microphone while Cale coaxed odd harmonies and off-center rhythms from his electric viola. The two of them inhabiting dissimilar worlds which, nonetheless, intersected and cooperated when least expected.

In the meantime, Germino shuffled around the rear of the stage, tootling riffs that sounded like saxophone translations of Jack Kerouac. In all, it was pleasant enough, and certainly kept you on your toes.

After a while Cale and Neuwirth each took a turn at some solo tunes, including Cale's melodramatic rendering of the classic "Heartbreak Hotel" much stripped down from the version on his album "Guts." They finished with a grand collaboration called "Convergence" that featured Cale banging away at the piano while Neuwirth delivered a rambling monologue about his hostility toward California, both accompanied by Germino on bassoon. Some passages were very funny, and Cale made up in energy what he lacked in technique — which made for a great deal of energy, indeed.

In the spirit of the Kitchen, where all manner of fashion may be seen on any given evening, each musician dressed in his own style. Neuwirth wore a casual shirt and pants get-up that underscored his stance as a kind of Mort Sahl stand-up intellectual. Germino wore a splendidly baggy suit. Cale, the former member of the group, sported a black tuxedo. While playing his viola, he slid his bowtie rakishly over his shoulder. He wore no socks.

Though the show contained nothing as enticing as Cale's most memorable work in the past on Velvet Underground records, it had enough vigor and imagination to make one curious about Cale's latest album, "New Music for a New Society," due soon on the Ze Records label.

Meanwhile, the Kitchen music series is gathering momentum. Coming up in October are a song cycle called "Jungle Geisha/Squat Sings" and a large work by Elliott Sharp called "Crowds and Powers: What Happens When Instruments Find Their Way Into the Wrong Hands?"

In early November, Rudolph Grey will present his "Flaming Angels" for 40 instrumentalists and tape. And on Halloween night a special concert will follow a screening of two videotapes about New Orleans musicians. The videotapes themselves can be seen any day between Oct. 2 and 30 at the Kitchen's video viewing room.