

The Kitchen Center for Video and Music

# press release

## JON ZORN: JAI-ALAI

Sept 9, 8:30pm

\$4.00 / \$3.00 members / TDF Music

The Kitchen, 484 Broome Street

Reservations: 925-3615

On September 9, The Kitchen's Contemporary Music Series will present JAI-ALAI, an opera by New York City composer John Zorn. In presenting the work for voices, instruments and 'prompter,' saxophonist/clarinetist John Zorn will be joined by Coby Batty (voice), Polly Bradfield (violin), Eugene Chadbourne (guitars and personal effects), Shelley Hirsch (voice), Wayne Horvitz (piano), Mark Miller (percussion), Charles Noyes (percussion) and Bob Ostertag (Serge electronics).

'Jai-Alai' is a Basque term meaning 'merry festival.' The term also applies to a fast ball game played in a 3-walled court (fronton) divided into 15 numbered areas, by 2 players or by several teams of players. Players attempt to hit a ball (pelota) with a wicker basket (cesta) against the front wall so that their opponents will not be able to return it, thereby losing a point.

JAI-ALAI (an opera) was complete in May 1980 and was premiered at Studio Henry that month. By a process of crossfades and meldings, the players move from one of a set of twelve relationship systems to another by use of sound cues. These twelve systems are divided into three areas--Processes, Lists and Content--and act as separate equations coordinated by a larger equation--Universal Field. In this way, the music is in a constant state of flux, with new cues being called often before the old ones have been fully realized. There are five instrumental parts and three vocal parts, processed by a ninth synthesizer player. The prompter's role will be performed by Leslie Daluba.

JOHN ZORN was born in New York City and educated in St. Louis, where he studied composition, film and philosophy. In the early '70s, he worked extensively with improvisation and the inter-relation of visual and aural composition, leading to the founding of the Theatre of Musical Optics in 1975. Since 1974, he has traveled widely, presenting solo saxophone concerts as well as group work. In New York City since 1976, he has performed at Anthology Film Archives, the Collective for Living Cinema, Artists Space, Soundscape, with Richard Foreman's Ontological-Hysteric Theatre and at other venues. His compositions include a series of pieces based on sports: Lacrosse (1977), Hockey (1978), Fencing (1978), Archery (1979), Pool (1979), Tennis (1979-80) and, most recently, Jai-Alai (1980). In addition to several recordings, much of his work has been accomplished with Eugene Chadbourne and Polly Bradfield, with whom he has been working since 1977.