

Live from Chelsea...and Santa Fe and Santa Monica

BY KATHERINE CREAG

If art is the radar of society, as electronic music inventor Eric Martin says, then on Saturday night Chelsea emerged on the screen.

"We're [artists] presenting society with the future," said Martin, director of Computer Research and Development at the California Institute of the Arts, who introduced a special show of electronic music at The Kitchen.

The teleconcert linked keyboard musician Morton Subotnick, co-director of composition at the California Institute of the Arts, with artists and performers in Santa Fe, N.M., and Santa Monica, Calif. Sunday night's teleconcert was the third of three inaugural events of the Electronic Cafe International at The Kitchen.

During the first part of the concert, originating at The Kitchen at 512 W. 19th St., Subotnick performed his "Angel Concerto" on computer-generated instruments with sensors

on his hands and a pedal at his right foot. This controlled the simultaneous performance in New York and Santa Monica.

Floyd Plays 'Is Art Is'

In the second performance of the first part, artist-composer David Rosenbloom at the Electronic Cafe in Santa Monica performed with pianist-composer-improviser J.B. Floyd in Chelsea, playing "Is Art Is." Rosenbloom created the piece, which was commissioned by the National Endowment for the Arts in 1974.

Violinist Steina Vasulka at Studio X in Santa Fe, controlling laser discs in Santa Monica and New York, provided "Violin Power" in the third performance.



Musician-composer Morton Subotnick with Santa Fean video collaborator

In part two of the teleconcert, Martin in Santa Monica, Subotnick in New York and Raven Zachary in Santa Fe discussed the implications of personal digital technology.

Part three rounded out the performance segment in an improvised piece, entitled, "Predictions, Confirmations and Disconfirmations" by Rosenbloom in Santa Monica and Floyd and trumpet player-composer-improviser Wada Leo Smith in New York. After the program, each musician answered questions from the audience in New York, Santa Monica and Santa Fe.

Floyd was asked what he thought about the quality of the performance. "Each performer is 3,000 miles away, so there is a second or so delay, so the feedback is delayed, but the connection blows your mind," he said.

When Smith was asked how it feels to perform with artists thousands of miles away, he said he did not know "how it feels. The flow mixes with the distance."

'Over the Edge'

Sherrie Rabinowitz, one of the founders and directors of the Electronic Cafe International in Santa Monica, called the idea of a

TeleConcert "phenomenal." "We're not bound by geography," she said. "It's not [however] a replacement for touching, feeling, smelling. We're extending the community. We're experiencing technology pushed out over the edge."

Lauren Amazeen, the executive producer at The Kitchen, said the TeleConcert was "taking on new experiences. It's a thrilling new era. It's a spiritual moment."

When The Kitchen was founded 23 years ago, the creators wanted to use the medium of video as an alternative to create an open network. "Now we can see a powerful beginning form," said Amazeen.

Amy X Neuberg, a singer who is in the Robert Ashley ensemble, which will be performing at The Kitchen, said she found the teleconcert fascinating, with its new artistic ideas in using Internet. "Some artists certainly use it [technology] as a crutch," Neuberg said. "They don't use basic artistic skills. In this case [the teleconcert], they didn't. It was new. I was intrigued by it." ☐