

PRESS RELEASE  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SEPTEMBER 19, 1975

THE OPERA, "THE MASQUE OF CLOUDS," BY TOM JOHNSON AND ROBERT KUSHNER  
TO BE PRESENTED AT THE KITCHEN:

FRIDAY, SATURDAY, SUNDAY, OCTOBER 10, 11, 12

FRIDAY, SATURDAY, SUNDAY, OCTOBER 17, 18, 19

8:30PM AT 484 BROOME STREET, NYC TICKETS \$2.00

"THE MASQUE OF CLOUDS," a new opera by Tom Johnson and Robert Kushner, opens at the Kitchen. The three-act work begins the fifth season of New Music at the Kitchen and will be the first time that a fully staged operatic work has been presented here.

The role of the Clouds will be played by two coloraturas (Penny Kimball and Sylvia Lanka) and four dancers (Kathy Duncan, Joyce Morgenroth, Mary Overlie and Ellen Saltonstall). Also in the cast will be soprano Susan Gayle as Aurora, tenor William Barone as the Sun, mezzo Martha Novick as the Lake and baritone Ed Vincent as the Forest. The accompaniment is for flute, cello and piano.

"THE MASQUE OF CLOUDS" grew out of a shorter work created by Kushner in 1973, which was roughly based on Elizabethan masque traditions but involved no music. Kushner, who co-authored the libretto for this expanded operatic version and who is designing and staging the Kitchen production, began his career as a sculptor. Through working with fabric and soft materials, his interest moved to costumes, fashion shows and new forms of dance and theater. Kushner's fresh influence on New York's artistic community was first felt in 1972 when a massive audience appeared at a SoHo loft to see his edible costumes, billed as "Robert Kushner and Friends Eat Their Clothes." His "Persian Line" was presented at the Kitchen last winter. His fanciful "Hat Line" was shown by 25 models at the Clocktower last Spring. He is represented by the Holly Solomon Gallery and is a member of the Elaine Summers Dance Company.

Johnson, who wrote the music and co-authored the libretto for "The Masque of Clouds," is well known for his first opera, "The Four Note Opera." That one-act work, first staged at the Cubiculo in 1972, has been staged in Germany, the Netherlands, Japan and on CBS "Camera Three," as well as in numerous college productions in the United States. Johnson has also created a curious set of "Lectures With Audience Participation," and a book of drawings called "Imaginary Music," along with a variety of piano works, chamber music and theater pieces.

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## "THE MASQUE OF CLOUDS"

Structurally, the entire 80 minutes of music in "THE MASQUE OF CLOUDS" consists of 132 variations on the following theme:



The theme is never quite stated in this pure form, though it is heard in 10 different modes and a wide variety of tempos and moods. Much of the music involves word painting similar to that employed by Purcell and other masque composers. Reviewers wishing to examine the score may arrange to do so by calling the Kitchen, (212) 925-3615, Tuesdays through Saturdays, 1-6pm.

All performances begin at 8:30pm. Admission is \$2.00 (\$1.00 for Kitchen members). Please note that our entrance is 484 Broome Street, not 59 Wooster Street. Advance tickets will be available at the Kitchen two weeks in advance of the exact date of any performance.

For more information, please call the Kitchen.