

# THE KITCHEN

CENTER FOR  
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AND DANCE

Village Voice  
December 17, 1979

## A New Music Medley

By Tom Johnson

Maryanne Amacher presented a tough evening of her *Neurophonic Exercises*. It was tough sitting on the floor for three hours. It was tough trying to concentrate on some of the subtle soft sounds she works with. It was tough trying to comprehend "cochlear withdrawal" and some of the other acoustical phenomena which she works with, and which she explained. But there were many rewards as the composer sat at her mixer, carefully fading unique sustained sounds in and out through a variety of carefully placed loudspeakers. The sound sources were specially recorded tapes made with a variety of natural sounds along with a few effects produced on strings or on electronic devices. Some of the tapes had been recorded at Walden Pond, and others were made in other indoor and outdoor acoustical environments that have interested her in recent years. My attention flagged much of the time, as it must in a concert so long and so subtle. But whenever I could really give myself to the sound, the sound would give something back to me. Some of the delicate high melodies we were hearing were apparently neurological phenomena produced by our own ears, rather than measurable acoustical facts. And toward the end of the evening, when Amacher began mixing in a live microphone located at the Battery, I was completely transported into the Hudson River night.

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Amacher: a gift of "cochlear withdrawal"

DONNA GRAY