



# The Kitchen

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## 40<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY

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For Immediate Release

### **The Kitchen presents *Pioneers of the Downtown Sound*, Friday and Saturday, September 9 and 10**

**Curated by Rhys Chatham, concerts will feature Tony Conrad, Pauline Oliveros,  
Joan La Barbara and Laurie Spiegel**

New York, NY, August 24, 2011— On **Friday and Saturday, September 9 and 10**, **The Kitchen** presents ***Pioneers of the Downtown Sound***, two nights of music to continue the celebration of the organization's 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary season. Legendary experimental musician and composer **Rhys Chatham** curates a shared program of music from his time as a performer and original music curator at The Kitchen during the 1970s. Returning with him to The Kitchen are avant-garde luminaries **Pauline Oliveros** and **Joan La Barbara** on Friday, September 9, and **Tony Conrad** and **Laurie Spiegel** on Saturday, September 10. Performances will take place each night at **8:00 PM** at The Kitchen (**512 West 19<sup>th</sup> Street**). Tickets are \$12.

In addition to some new works, these pioneering artists will perform the now canonical experimental compositions they debuted at The Kitchen during the 1970s and early 1980s, the incredibly fertile and experimental period that established New York City's "downtown sound." Each evening, while featuring a different program of composers and performers, will open with a solo trumpet performance by Chatham. Having recently developed a new style in extended trumpet techniques, Chatham's horn work deploys a vocabulary inherited from this influential period, merging rock-influenced Minimalism with a pure voice that is all his own.

On Friday, September 9, Oliveros will perform *Sounding Awake*, a multi-virtual-instrumental, and an improvisation using a Roland V Accordion. La Barbara will perform *Circular Song* (1975), which is inspired by circular breathing, and *Twelvesong* (1977), her first multi-track "sound painting." Additionally, she will perform *Solitary Journey* (2011), which is a structured improvisation based on extending and expanding her signature techniques (multiphonics, ululation, etc) and utilizing her personal real-time compositional methods.

The next night, Tony Conrad and Laurie Spiegel will take the stage. Conrad will present an original collaborative performance, and Spiegel will perform a new version of her well-known *A Harmonic Algorithm* (1981) as well as other works from her catalog.

#### **About the Artists**

**Rhys Chatham** is a classically trained composer from New York, now based in Paris. He founded The Kitchen's music program in Soho in 1971, and was its Music Director between 1971–73 and 1977–80. In the late 1960s, Morton Subotnick introduced Chatham to electronic music and composition. Chatham also studied composition with La Monte Young and played in Tony Conrad's 1970s group. These men, along with Terry Riley, are the founders of American minimalism.

Inspired by an early concert of the Ramones, Chatham composed his seminal work *Guitar Trio* in the 1970s—fusing the overtone-drenched minimalism of the early 60s with the relentless, elemental fury of the legendary punk rock band. This new type of urban music was a pioneering and influential amalgamation in which the textural intricacies of the avant-garde collided with the visceral punch of electric guitar-based punk. Raucous and ecstatic, this sound was instrumental in the downtown New York scene of the late 1970s and early 1980s and prefigured the No Wave movement. The music influenced countless other artists, including Glenn Branca and Sonic Youth.

Starting with *Guitar Trio* to *A Crimson Grail* (200 electric guitars) in 2009, Chatham has been working for over three decades to make use of armies of electric guitars in special tunings—merging the extended-time music of the sixties and seventies with serious hard rock. Parallel to these rock-influenced pieces, Chatham has been working with various brass configurations since 1982, and recently developed a completely new approach with collaborations, improvised and compositional pieces involving trumpet through performances and recordings that started in 2009.

**Tony Conrad** is considered one of the first Minimal composers/performers, associated in his early period with La Monte Young, John Cale, Henry Flynt and legendary NYC underground filmmaker Jack Smith. Since the early 1960s, he has utilized intense amplification, long duration and precise pitch to forge aggressively mesmerizing *Dream Music*. Conrad articulated the Big Bang of "minimalism" and played a pivotal role in the formation of the Velvet Underground. Conrad continues to exert a primal influence over succeeding generations with his ecstatic oscillations and hypnotic drones.

Conrad has worked in music composition, video, film and performance, and has taught video production and analysis in the Department of Media Study of the SUNY, Buffalo since 1976. During the last ten years, Conrad has focused on music and performing recent works in new music venues, museums and clubs in the US and internationally. He has composed more than a dozen works, primarily for solo amplified violin with amplified strings, using special tunings and scales. Conrad is also known as a pioneer of Structuralist filmmaking, particularly for *The Flicker* (1965).

**Joan La Barbara** is a composer/performer/sound artist, exploring the human voice as a multi-faceted instrument. Expanding the boundaries of compositions for multiple voices, chamber ensemble, musical theater, orchestra and interactive technology, she uses a signature blend of vocal techniques (multiphonics, circular singing, ululation and glottal clicks). She has premiered compositions written for her by Robert Ashley, David Behrman, John Cage, Charles Dodge, Morton Feldman, Philip Glass, Alvin Lucier, Steve Reich, Morton Subotnick and James Tenney. Her own work has been presented at The Whitney Museum of American Art, the ars electronica festival, Brisbane Biennial, Festival d'Automne à Paris and Berliner Festspielhaus, among others.

A co-founder of the performing composer collective Ne(x)tworks, she has produced 11 of her own recordings, including *ShamanSong* (New World) and *Voice is the Original Instrument* (Lovely Music); and works by Cage and Feldman. For *Journeys and Observable Events*, she placed Ne(x)tworks musicians and actors throughout the Greenwich House Music School, allowing the audience to explore and create their own sonic experiences. Upcoming premieres include *Storefront Diva*, composed for pianist Kathleen Supové. She is currently composing a new opera exploring the artistic process, the interior dialogue and sounds within the mind. For more information, go to [www.joanlabarbara.com](http://www.joanlabarbara.com).

**Pauline Oliveros** is one of America's most vital composers. *DeepListening*®, her lifetime practice is fundamental to her composing, improvisational performing and teaching. Her research includes a thirty-five year development of the Expanded Instrument System - a digital improvisation environment for acoustic instrument processing; numerous improvisation ensembles and continuous research on the

generation of creative work from listening. She defines *Deep Listening* as a practice intended for experiencing heightened and expanded awareness of the sound/silence continuum.

Oliveros serves as Distinguished Professor of Music at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Troy NY, Darius Milhaud Artist-in-residence at Mills College, Oakland, CA and executive director of Deep Listening Institute, Ltd in Kingston, NY. She is the recipient of the 2009 William Schuman Award from Columbia University. For more information, go to <http://www.paulineoliveros.us>.

**Laurie Spiegel** is a composer whose music draws on her classical training, pre-classical lute and folk banjo roots, but she is also a computer programmer, software designer and visual and video artist and often-published theorist. She is known worldwide for her pioneering work with several early electronic and computer music systems. Her focus with them has been largely on interactive software that use algorithmic logic as a supplement to human abilities, and on the aesthetics of musical structure and cognitive process.

Her best-known work includes her 1970s music from the GROOVE Hybrid System at Bell Labs, early work in the online transmission of digital music, and *Music Mouse - An Intelligent Instrument* for Mac, Amiga and Atari computers. Although she is often grouped with the Minimalists due to the modal, drone and rhythmic aspects of her early LP *The Expanding Universe*", her recent music is often considerably darker and more complex, as her later album *Unseen Worlds* shows.

She has lived and worked in Lower Manhattan since the 70s, and has taught at Cooper Union and NYU, where she founded the computer music studio in 1981. For more information, go to [retinary.org](http://retinary.org).

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### **ABOUT THE KITCHEN**

The Kitchen is one of New York City's oldest nonprofit performance and exhibition spaces, showing experimental work by innovative artists, both emerging and established. Programs range from dance, music, and theatrical performances to video and media arts exhibitions to literary events, film screenings, and artists' talks. Since its inception in 1971, The Kitchen has been a powerful force in shaping the cultural landscape of this country and has helped launch the careers of many artists who have gone on to worldwide prominence.

Box Office Information:  
212.255.5793 ext. 11  
Tue-Sat, 2-6pm

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