

● **MARY JANE LEACH: Celestial Fires** An austere but beautiful group of pieces, both choral and instrumental, which demonstrate a strong interest in the properties of sound (harmonics, beat frequencies, interference tones, etc.), but never sacrifice musicality for the pursuit of theoretical concepts. One of Leach's obvious strengths is her musical knowledge. Her opening piece, "Bruckstuck," works with a ten-measure section from the "Adagio" of Bruckner's Eighth Symphony, and several other pieces use a madrigal by Monteverdi, a 17th century composer of vocal music, as a source of "pitch and syllables." Several other selections, including one for flute and voice and another for six taped bassoon parts, are more abstract, but still have an underlying sense of magic and mystery. Unlike some of her more purely intellectual contemporaries, Leach is not merely messing around with the properties of sound; she's exploring (and connecting with) the aesthetic and even spiritual power of sound. (Experimental Intermedia, 224 Centre St., NYC 10013) — Bill Tilland

OPTION