



7/9/09 :: Classical Music, Music Composition

ETHEL ... Not Your Mother's String Quartet

by Jennifer Melick ::



I've been kicking myself for having missed a number of music events in New York this spring featuring ETHEL, the New York-based amplified string quartet...

The latest self-kick came after hearing a stunning new CD called *John the Revelator*, Phil Kline's eerie and strangely uplifting modern-day mass, on which ETHEL performs with the all-male a cappella group Lionheart.

Even if you disregard the intervening fourteen movements, the opening and closing movements, adapted from two stark shaped-note hymns, "Northport" and "Wondrous Love," are spine-tingling. It turns out that on May 31 ETHEL and Lionheart played excerpts from John the Revelator at the Bang on a Can Marathon at the World Financial Center's Winter Garden. For free. (Double ouch.) To make things worse, I've been meaning to see Lionheart, too, ever since seeing them perform Palestrina in a Rob Kapilow "What Makes It Great?" episode. Besides, what's not to like about a group whose website has the words "chantboy" in it?