Psychedelic art
Warhol creates optical rock

By Jack Bernfeld

To borrow a phrase, "It's the shape of rock to come." Andy Warhol's Expanding Plastic Invincible featuring The Velvet Underground with Nico performed their new "psychedelic rock" at the Institute of Contemporary Art Saturday. The biggest difference between this music and the stuff you get on "freakbeat" radio is that you have to see this to believe it.

Simultaneous movies

The performance started with a couple of movies, projected on the same screen at the same time; somehow it was coherent. After what seemed a sensible amount of time which allowed people to adjust to the strange environment. In addition to the films, a multi-faced mirrored globe spewed splotches of light about the hall in every direction), the Velvet Underground set up for their performance. It was instantaneously apparent that Nico was a striking, six-foot, thin, amazo-nlike woman, whose presence pervaded the hall as the projectors switched from a movie of a "flying in drag" to color and black and white closeups of her. Their first number, "All Tomorrow's Parties," which, incidentally, had been released by Verve Records, featured Nico singing, and the Underground, electric bass, electric guitar, electric piano, and percussion, providing the most driving backing I've ever heard. In addition, the Underground features a super-slick go-go group, who may, if they get exposure, do more for popular dancing than the Osbourn Checkers.

Optical effects

In addition to the personnel, the technical armament of Velvet Underground is something fantastic to behold. Besides the movie projectors and musical instruments, the dancers used two huge electric flashlights as torches which, when waved about in the darkness, produced a hypnotic effect. Other effects were produced by a geometric pattern of optical design (Op Art) which affected an interplay between the background, the dancers, and the music. The most startling of all was two huge gas-discharge lamps which would flash in syn-chronized time as the music reached its climax. The only aspect of the performance which could have been improved upon was the group's tendency to rely on the background material too long between numbers, but once the music started, all was forgiven.

By John Mostow

The string quartet is one of the most restricted and the most challenging of musical forms. First established by Haydn, the string quartet has remained to this day essentially the same. For a composer to inject originality and freshness into such a narrow form is not always easy.

Quartet problem

The MIT Department of Humanities is again presenting a series of concerts demonstrating the solutions various composers have found to the problems of handling two violins, one viola, and one cello in artistic combination. The first concert in the series, performed by the Drolc Quartet in Kresge Sunday, featured works by three modern composers.

Since the series is currently not intended to be merely didactic, care has been taken to choose top-notch artists. The Drolc Quartet (1927) is an example of atonal use of the string quartet. It employs the whole range of techniques used by modern string players—flageolette overtones, glissadé, different bowing methods. But while it emphasized the ultimate in technical diversity, it was not merely an academic exercise in string quartet writing. The Drolc Quartet played the work with fire and...