

# The New York Times

Review/**Dance**

## Immortality And Horror With AIDS

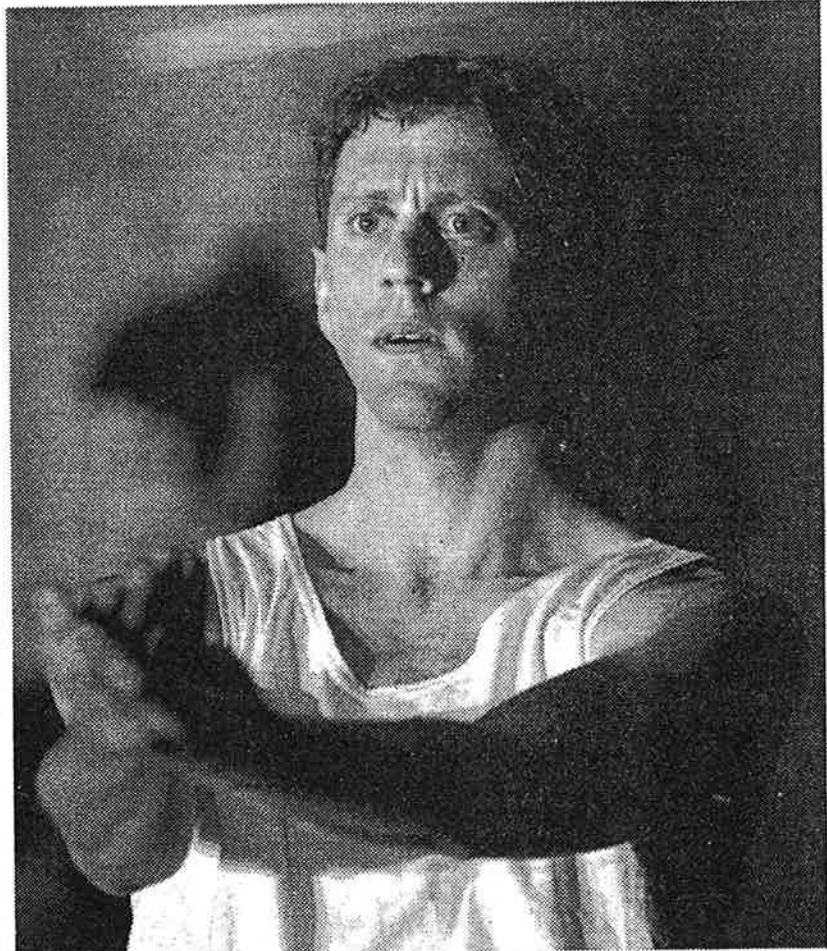
By JENNIFER DUNNING

Neil Greenberg's new "Not-About-AIDS-Dance," presented on Thursday night at the Kitchen, manages to convey, without sentimentality, not only the horror of death, illness and disappointment but also the meaningful ways in which life does doggedly continue.

But Mr. Greenberg is not into uplift. By integrating dance, snatches of music and sentences projected on the back wall of the stage, he has simply created a spare replication of a life. In the process, he has also created an important, moving and very beautiful work about the experience of living in the age of AIDS.

Mr. Greenberg was putting together a dance that would draw on performers' unspoken thoughts when six friends died within two months, one of them his brother Jon. He incorporated those deaths, the sudden death of the mother of one of his dancers and a devastating professional disappointment experienced by another dancer in the same time span. The work makes clear that some of the deaths were from AIDS. Mr. Greenberg also lets his audience know, by means of the projected text, that he has had the AIDS virus since 1987, though he wonders endearingly why he is sharing that information.

His brother's final coma is quietly depicted. Standing before the audience, Mr. Greenberg simply shuts his eyes, raises his arms and moves a finger, slowly plucking at air. This image of approaching death is at first shocking, then full of love and benediction. There are teasing reflections



Johan Elbers

Neil Greenberg performing in his "Not-About-AIDS-Dance."

on his dancers' everyday lives and the "mysterious experience" of life itself.

"Not-About-AIDS-Dance" simultaneously charts the course of real-life events and of the piece itself, weaving in quotations from previous dances by Mr. Greenberg. The piece also suggests that to be human is to be more than the sum of one's sadness. "This dance is clearly my latest im-

mortality project," a projection reads toward the end. "I wonder if it will work." It is hard to imagine anything but a nod to that speculation.

"Not-About-AIDS-Dance" was performed by Mr. Greenberg, Ellen Barnaby, Christopher Batenhorst, Justine Lynch and Jo McKendry. Michael Stiller created the impressive lighting.

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