

THE NEW YORK TIMES, SATURDAY, OCTOBER 24, 1981

## Dance: From the Sidewalks of Los Angeles

During her Thursday night demonstration at the Kitchen, Toni Basil remarked, "There's always dancing somewhere if you know where to look." These days, the Kitchen has been looking in city streets. Thus a few weeks ago it presented examples of "breaking," a dance form born on the New York sidewalks. Aided by films, videotapes and live performers, Miss Basil, a rock choreographer who is also something of a historian of pop dance, presented a survey of Los Angeles street dancing.

The dances, which bore names such as locking, vogue, punking, bugaloo and popping, tended to be fast and furious, with frantic footwork and aggressive arm thrusts. The dancers often seemed about to be torn apart in several directions. Yet they always seemed to love it.

Miss Basil, herself an irrepressible performer, was joined by three colleagues. The portly Fred Barry bounced about like a happy clown, and lanky Pete Solomon was an inventive virtuoso. Andrew Frank could follow a slinky movement with a defiant one, and Miss Basil's explanation that his kind of dances flourished in homosex-

ual clubs made his delight in physicality an implied "gay liberation" manifesto.

The evening as a whole could have been subtitled "From Street to Sound Stage" because, whatever their origins may have been, these dances from media-oriented Los Angeles soon found their way into revues and television shows. Thus, one dance sequence was part of a beer commercial. Another was an excerpt from "Saturday Night Live" in which ballet dancers and street dancers took turns doing precision routines to the cygnets'

variation from "Swan Lake." And most of the items that Miss Basil presented were performed with show-biz razzmatazz.

If much of what one saw was theatricalized street dancing, the very theatricalization of street forms in Los Angeles has enabled certain street dancers to have professional careers. And if one accepted their brassiness as part of their style, one could have a great time watching them rock-and-roll their way into a fine frenzy.

Jack Anderson

THE KITCHEN