

THE KITCHEN

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AND DANCE

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Dance: Grethe Holby

By JENNIFER DUNNING

GRETHE HOLBY has a master's degree in architecture and she has danced with the major experimentalists, Laura Dean and Robert Wilson. It was no surprise, then, that the four abstract dances presented by Miss Holby on Saturday at the Kitchen were intelligently conceived and of some visual interest, despite their naive lighting. They were also strangely listless, the dancers — with a few exceptions, most notably Barbara Derecktor — resembling tentative automatons.

Miss Holby's new "Ode" worked best. A simple academic ballet phrase was elaborated on then reduced by a bloc of six women, dancing sometimes in unison and sometimes in counterpoint. Each might have been dancing alone on stage in a neatly ordered individual bit of choreography, one element in an unfolded paper cutting, with only that sense of shared or complementary activity and occasional crossed paths to establish the dancers as a group.

The processes by which the phrase developed were clear and "Ode" had a pleasingly architectonic look to it. It also had considerably more vitality than the other dances, perhaps because a paradoxical physical abandon is inherent in the rigorously controlled forms of ballet. Ted Kalmon provided a kind

of neo-Gregorian chant score for piano, voice and vibraphone.

"String Out," also new and set to a score by Mr. Kalmon, was a lighter-hearted, typically exhaustive physical workout for three women hurtling through nonstop pendulum swings of half-spins, scything leg extensions and teetering half-falls on geometric paths through the irregularly shaped stage space.

The evening's only moments of physical relatedness occurred here, with dancers sliding against one another's supine bodies and yanking each other up as they raced by. These were satisfying jolts, like rents in a "white" painting through which anarchic energy had seeped.

The program was completed by "Beta Hookup" and "Steady State, Turning Cycles."

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