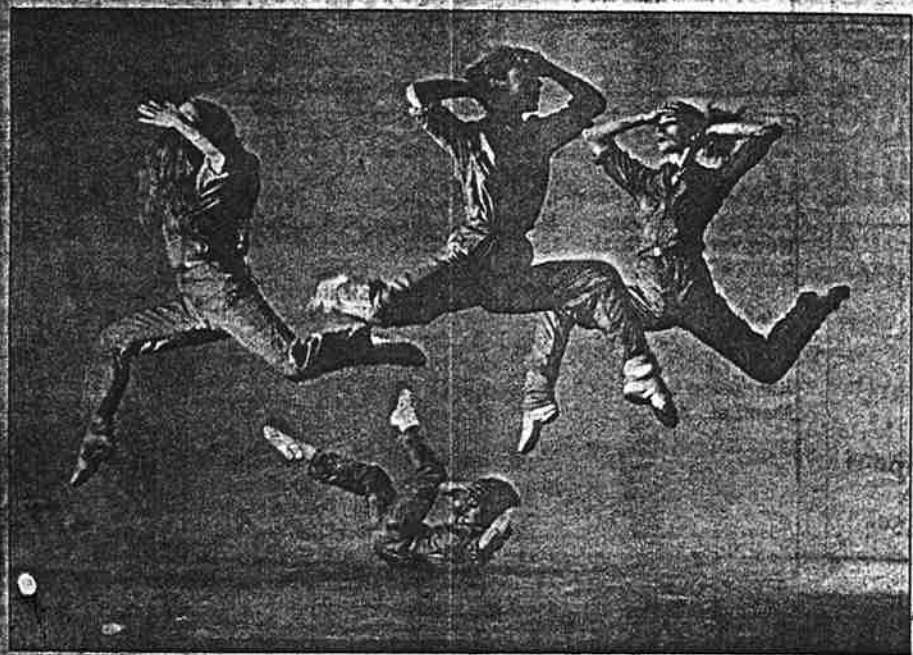


THE KITCHEN

DANCE

Open the Door on Four Worlds



LOIS GREENFIELD

A real ground-covering piece: DeGroat's (GRAVY)

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By Deborah Jowitz

ANDREW DEGROAT AND DANCERS. At the Kitchen (April 1 to 5). *dutch circumstances (DUST)* and *(GRAVY) a medicine of spaces*.

KENNETH KING AND DANCERS. At P.S. 122 (April 9 to 12). *The Phi Project*, with music by William Tudor.

SIMONE FORTI. At the Performing Garage (March 30 to April 15). *Jackdaw Songs*.

DANA REITZ. At the Performing Garage (April 20 to May 6). *Steps (II)* and *Single Score*.

An April spent tracking dance through dark, closed-down streets or through streets so bright and loud and disreputable that you have to be buzzed into the performance, up flights of worn stairs, down again to sit on loading docks and sense spring in the high moon and the wraith of breeze that manages to edge around the World Trade Center and sneak uptown.

That's what it seems like now. And, in memory, each of the concerts seen then becomes less a piece of art to be pondered than a very small country that you visited briefly but couldn't stay in quite long enough to learn the language. For instance, Andrew DeGroat is the boss of a coalition of gentle, reticent, occasionally whimsical people, if you were to see them from a hilltop once they all got going together, you might imagine them to be a herd of restless, intelligent animals. They're given to walking and running and galloping around, veering here, swerving there, each on a private path that takes others paths into consideration. Occasionally they herd in one direction or stop dead as if to sniff the breeze. Often, one of them will come very close to the audience. In *dutch circumstances (DUST)*, they play a game of running up to someone else, grabbing this person around the waist and, uummph, lifting him/her a minuscule distance off the floor for a second. It looks improvised. Some people get lifted while they're lifting another; two meet and, whoops, both want to lift and neither plans on being lifted.

But their restraint is as evident in they play as in their dancing. DeGroat's pieces have a not unattractive pallor; some of the movement looks like mild, sketched-out ballet. This is truer of *(GRAVY)* a medicine of spaces than of *dutch circumstance*. The latter is a real ground-covering piece, accompanied by Nicholas Frieze's bright and lovely *sans y toucher*, which rings with the voices of French kindergarten children. For *GRAVY*, Julius Eastman conducts his singing thicket of 10 cellos, which he calls *the holy presence of joan d' arc*, and the dancers perch in it and stretch a leg out here, an arm out there, kneel, make fancy, almost pretty little forays of steps to a new place.

They're all allowed to speak DeGroat with their own accents. Angie Smit's feet arch fastidiously even when others are flexing, while long-haired, soft Kathy Ray doesn't look as if she's ever had a ballet class; tall Jon Harriott looks even taller next to little Viviane Serry, who, along with dapper, bespectacled Harry Shepherd, is one of the neatest dancers in the crowd. And Mare Goates and Gail Donnenfeld and dark-haired DeGroat (a worried faun): all construe this clear, yet muted dancing in their own ways.