

# THE KITCHEN

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## 'Original Lou and Walter Story' Staged at Kitchen

By ROBERT PALMER

Jill Kroesen's appearances in various SoHo events in the last few years have found her singing, dancing and acting. And in "The Original Lou and Walter Story," her current mixed-media show at the Kitchen, she reveals talents in playwriting and choreography as well. But "The Original Lou and Walter Story," which runs through tonight, is not so much a mixed-media piece in the contemporary manner as it is an old-fashioned musical comedy. As such, it deserves to survive its present three-night run, perhaps in an Off Broadway theater.

With its cast of 11 and its simple but handsome set design by Jared Bark,

"The Original Lou and Walter Story" is an ambitious undertaking, but it works. Basically, Miss Kroesen has created an imaginary society, consisting of a group of farmers, a Share If ("I only share if I get a piece") and his wife, some women who live on the outskirts of town and are talked about, but not seen, and Lee You, a stranger who shows up one day and begins teaching the farmers to tap dance.

The idea of creating a simple, closed society and then disrupting it is basic to much fantasy literature, of course; it is effective here because Miss Kroesen has imagined so lavishly and set out

her imaginings in such seductive detail.

During the course of events, Miss Kroesen sings quite a few original songs, accompanied by Regina Beck, the Share If's wife, on piano. They are simple ditties, ideal for humming after the show, but Miss Kroesen performs them in a kind of languid drawl that makes them sound dolorous or bluesy.

The effect is stark and emotional, in contrast to the lightness of most of the rest of the play. But both the songs and Miss Kroesen's script are fantastic and reminiscent of contemporary realities at the same time, so that while much of the evening is funny, the lingering effect is more provocative.

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