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DANCE REVIEW

Strapping On Schmooze Shoes

By JENNIFER DUNNING

Jane Goldberg knows her tap dance genres and history. But as demonstrated by "Belly Tap for World Peace!," performed Saturday night at the Blue Mountain Gallery in Chelsea, her solo tap and schmooze shows, as she calls them, have always been as much about humor, storytelling and political banter as dancing.

This time Ms. Goldberg is performing in a space ringed with paintings by Owen Gray of what looks like Paradise before Adam and Eve arrived. A little table holds photos of some of the tap stars and stylists she has performed with, souvenir anti-war T-shirts, a book by her early mentor Howard Zinn and a pomegranate.

Ms. Goldberg does not fit any conventional image of a dancer. Tap was in its early stages "a celebration of the female form," she says, reading from "Grandmother's Secrets: The Ancient Rituals and Healing Power

The program repeats the next two weekends, Friday through Sunday, at Blue Mountain Gallery, 530 West 25th Street, Chelsea, (212) 393-1182.

Belly Tap for World Peace!

Blue Mountain Gallery.

of Belly-Dancing," which she describes as her bible. "And I've got plenty of form to celebrate," she adds mischievously.

Feet chattering along in all manner of complex and basic rhythms and steps, many of which she identifies, Ms. Goldberg tells stories about her personal and professional life, frequently addressing her friend Audrey in the audience. Performing comes easily to her.

She finds rhymes for "daiquiri" and "perestroika" in her sung and danced "tapograms," whose subjects include Mikhail Gorbachev and Gregory Hines's father, Maurice. And she discloses that, just as her mother claimed, tap was actually started by a Jewish woman. That woman, Ms. Goldberg says, was Bat-sheva Goldberg, who tapped her foot waiting for God to appear and, seeing the possibilities, toured the world with an act called "The Wandering Shoes." Who knew?