Jane Goldberg Taps With Hoofers

By JENNIFER DUNNING

Years after the golden days of tap in the 1920's, 30's and early 40's, the days of streetcorner competitions and the Hoofers Club in Harlem, a dancer named Jane Goldberg was bitten by the tap bug. During the last few years, she has absorbed a good deal of that vernacular form from teachers like Charles Cook, Bert Gibson and Jazz Richardson.

Friday at the Experimental Intermedia Foundation loft in SoHo, Miss Goldberg presented "It's About Time," an evening of tap. Her enthusiasm is infectious. This was one of the happiest get-togethers of many a season.

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The three men were on hand to reminisce, clown and deliver some exhilarating dance. There was a "funny step" competition, time step demonstrations and, with Miss Goldberg, evocations of great hoofers like Pete Nugent, Bill Robinson and Baby Laurence. Mr. Cook, a slyly elegant exponent of the art, contributed a delicate number he described as Creole "gumbo or something," and his touching "Let's Be Buddies" number with Miss Goldberg was a compendium of tap rhythms and sounds that proved the subtle variety of a dance form that is not often given its due.

If the real joy of the evening was the rare chance to see these three very different hoofers in action, Miss Goldberg and Andrea Levine contributed some flavorful tapping of their own. A split-second-timed tap and drum duet for Miss Levine and Chris Braun was a high point of the program, as was a final "shim shammy shim" with the dancers, Ernest Brown, a surprise guest artist, and a throng of Miss Goldberg's tap students.

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Mr. Brown and Sandman Sims were among several intent hoofers in the audience. It is one of the great mysteries—and tragedies—of cultural life in this city that there is no permanent home or at least deserved acclaim and encouragement for these great exponents of one of our richest and most idiomatic art forms. There are two more performances tonight. Break down the doors if you have to.