

# THE TRIBECA TRIB

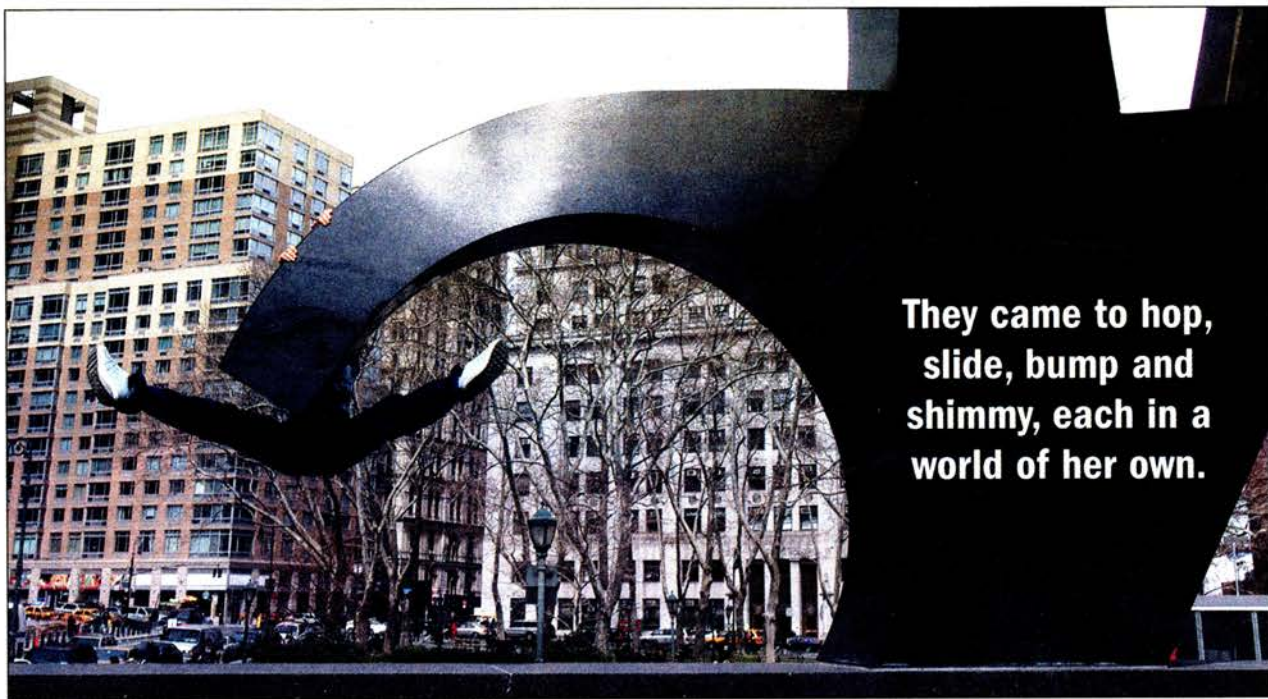
THE TRIBECA TRIB ■ MAY 2008

ARTS, ETC.

45

PHOTOS BY  
CARL GLASSMAN

With Israeli pop playing in her ear, Ophra Wolf takes her dance to exuberant heights with *Triumph of the Human Spirit*, the sculptural centerpiece of Foley Square.



They came to hop, slide, bump and shimmy, each in a world of her own.

## EARBUD BOOGIE

They trickled into Foley Square slowly, in ones and twos, blending easily with the lunchtime traffic of lawyers, court workers and tourists enjoying the early spring day. Arriving in their meeting place, they recognized each other by the earphones they were wearing, and eagerly discussed the operation they were about to undertake.

Each of the participants had responded to an email soliciting volunteers for a "mobile clubbing" event. Equipped with portable music players, they

When the group had grown to about a dozen people, organizer Megan Metcalf gave the signal.

"All right! You ready?" she shouted, as the dancers inserted their earbuds and pressed play. "Let's go!"

Hopping, sliding, bumping and shimmying, listening to everything from hip-hop and psychedelia to Israeli pop, they spread out around the massive sculpture at the southern end of the park, lost in their rhythmic worlds.

The sight of a group of men and women dancing exuberantly, oblivious to the urban hubbub around them, caused many passersby to stop and watch. Some took pictures, and a brave few even joined in.

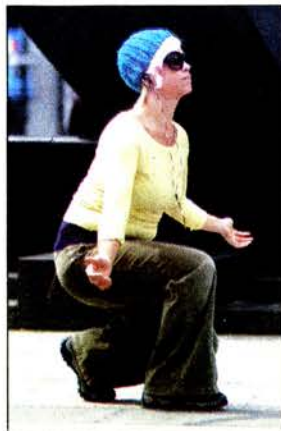
The event was a new addition to the New Dance Alliance's annual Performance Mix Festival, but organizer Megan Metcalf has worked on other projects based on the joyful movements of untrained dancers.

"I don't like to generate the material myself," Metcalf said. "Who am I to say that this move is better than that move? When I watch people dancing I think their moves are gorgeous, and they're way more creative than anything I could ever come up with."

Karen Bernard, who heads the New Dance Alliance,



For an hour last month, dancers expressed themselves every which way around Foley Square's sculptural monument.



Rebecca "Bex" Burton joins in.

were about to turn the square into their own public dance floor.

said the event was an excuse to do in public what already is her passion. "I just love dancing to my iPod, but if you start doing that and walking around, people think you're nuts!"

Ophra Wolf, a professional dancer who took part in the dance, said the event in Foley Square was a way to experience her city in a new way. "There's a beautiful wind today. I feel it in my hair, I feel it on my skin, and there are all these amazing buildings," she said. "You just connect to a lot of things. It's nice."

When the hour was up, the exhilarated dancers hugged one another and returned to their days, smiling. "Everyone agreed we have to do this again," Metcalf said. "We're talking about making it a regular thing."