

The New York Times

Dara Friedman

'Dancer'

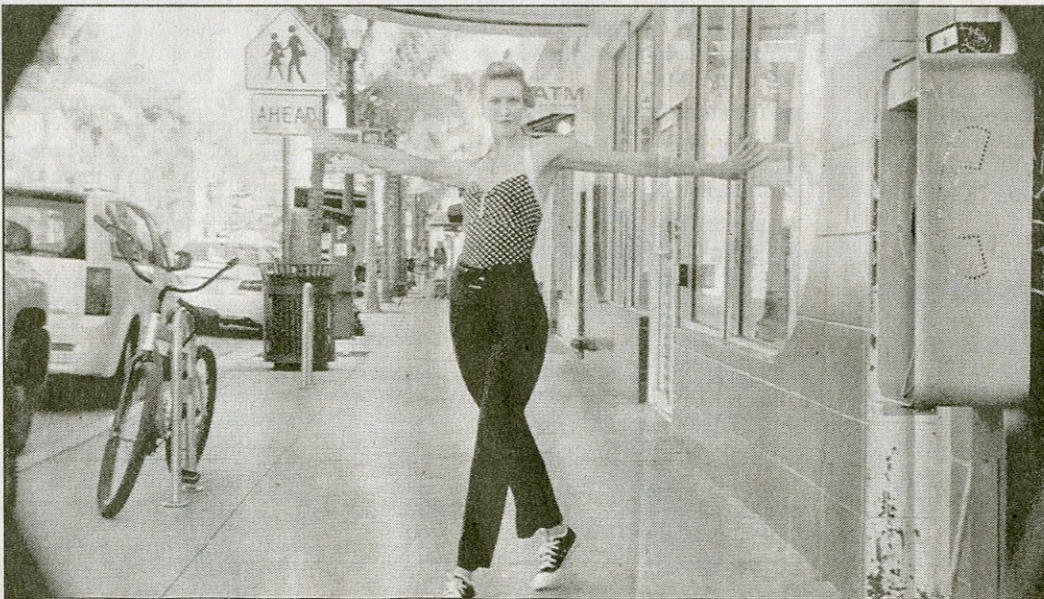
Gavin Brown's Enterprise
620 Greenwich Street, near Leroy
Street, West Village
Through Saturday

"Dancer," Dara Friedman's mesmerizing, loose-limbed 25-minute ode to the seemingly extensive, fabulously multicultural dance talent of Miami, extends her longstanding interest in performance, urban space and structuralist film. Unfolding predominantly in fluid tracking shots, it captures some 60 performers in about 40 segments as they dance, singly or in pairs, during the day or at night, along the city's sidewalks, in its parks and parking garages, and occasionally on its beaches.

Flamenco, ballet, modern, break, pole, belly, musical-theater and ballroom dancing are robustly represented, as are skateboarding and voguing. The use of grainy, no-fuss black-and-white underscores the improvisational air, as does the way the dubbed music is not always completely in sync with the dancers' movements. Sometimes the sounds of their breathing, as well as of passing traffic, increase the impression of being there, in the flow. And occasionally Ms. Friedman dramatizes a dance style by changing the camera speed.

Co-produced by the Miami Art Museum and Gavin Brown's Enterprise, "Dancer" was presented on an immense screen outside the New World Center in Miami on Nov. 30, the night before Art Basel Miami Beach opened. At Mr. Brown's gallery it covers a very large wall in a space carpeted in black, which highlights its silvery lights and darks. Inspired by Pina Bausch (1940-2009), whose penchant for constant motion it echoes, Ms. Friedman's tribute to the human body as an expressive instrument also recalls the evocative title of Edwin Denby's 1965 collection of dance criticism, "Dancers Buildings and People in the Streets."

ROBERTA SMITH



COURTESY OF THE ARTIST, GAVIN BROWN'S ENTERPRISE, NEW YORK AND MIAMI ART MUSEUM, MIAMI

Dara Friedman's film "Dancer" is a 25-minute ode to the multicultural dance talent of Miami.