

# ART COM

# WINTER / SPRING '82

SAN FRANCISCO

## Wild, Animated Performance at 80 LANGTON STREET (Fi-Fi approves)

Jana Haimsohn is a wild, animated, New York based performer. Her voice does things voices are not supposed to do. She walks, she talks, she crawls on her belly like a reptile. Her performance is a mixture of tone poems, tribal moves, ear shattering screams and an array of sounds that defy description. Several members of the audience spent a good deal of the performance with their hands over or near thier ears in constant terror of still another unexpected glass shattering scream. It was a delight, a combination of beat poetry, bop structuralism, tribal click language, jazz, huffs, and puffs, Elmer Fudd doing opera and a million other combinations and permutations.

The performance itself was divided into several smaller parts. In the first Jana's primitive jewelry jangled as she played clay and skin drums. She did a series of glissandos that sounded synthetically produced. The program continued with a series of tone poems of the structuralist school. Lines like "sunrise really rub our embryonic eyes" were twisted and turned with stuttering, pulling the words as if they were made of putty. The themes were earthy, gutsy, and emotional but not cute. She says, "I've been vacuuming the void all my life" and I believe her. Her diction is New York inspired and I am reminded of a '60's black poetry record "The Last Poets" who no doubt inspired Patti Smith and a whole generation of look white but sound black artists of the '50's and so on.

The high point of the perfor-



Jana Haimson in  
performance at  
80 LANGTON  
ST, 1982.

mance for me was an incredible piece which Artaud would have given his seal of approval. The piece consisted of a series of repeated spastically, hypnotic moves. She twisted and twitched like an orgasmic monkey on an invisible string. Her hair flew in all directions as she huffed, puffed, spoke in tongues and gave a series of wild cries. She could have been doing a trance ritual in Bali. It was a very powerful piece.

At the end of the ritual, mellow jazz pianist Mal Waldron came out and began to play. In a while Jana joined him for a more traditional but still quite enjoyable collaboration. Her work is very hard to categorise. It was monkey, bop, jazz, folkloric opera with a heavy accent on the sensuous. It was an unusual and worthwhile evening. See her if you get the chance.

—F.F. Peradam