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Entertainment Today

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## ON THE TOWN

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BY L E E G R A H A M

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**A musical** about the Depression, based on Nelson Algren's *A Walk on the Wild Side*, set in freight cars and brothels, seems highly improbable. But for the production at the Back Alley writer-composer Will Holt, with strong assists from directors Allan Miller and Patricia Birch (she also choreographed) and an exceptional cast, has fashioned one helluva show with a marvelous score which seems to be a clever combination of country, ragtime, blues and honky-tonk.

It isn't a totally happy stride, but *Walk on the Wild Side* is so rich in potential that, with a little reworking and judicious cutting, this small-scale musical could be turned into a big-scale hit. ■

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