

FAMILY\$DEATH@ART.COMedy (an unpronouncable title)
is an evening of new & used duets (broadly defined)
by David Gordon.

Before rehearsals began there were some questions:
Are two people doing the same movement a duet? or two solos?
Can three people working w/two people be a kind of duet?
Is one guy w/a chair a duet? W/a chair & a table - a trio?
(Does it depend on what the chair & the table are doing?)
Is one person talking & dancing a duet? or a solo w/music?
(assuming talking is a kind of music)
Does physically touching somebody matter?
Does how you touch them matter?
Does touching the audience matter?

In the middle of the third week of rehearsal:
We're working w/the music of Nancarrow, Nymen, Mertens & Cage.
We read short scenes from eight by ten pieces of white paper.
We're dancing w/the white paper & with each other.
Movement constructed & deconstructed to music and language.
(Duets of physical affection/lovemaking/argument/loss
& occasionally murder.)
A duet for any number of people.
An evening of theater/dance.
A dialogue.
We are also rehearsing FOR THE LOVE OF REHEARSAL, a twenty one minute dance
to six preludes for unaccompanied cello by Bach.
This piece was commissioned by White Oak Dance Project this year
for the Past/Forward tour.
They said we could do it too.

"David Gordon is a rare bird who understands not only the here and now, but
can make dances to Stravinsky and Beethoven that gives us in
modern dress the eternal verities. He has a funny bone and a
soul."

Francis Mason, WQXR

At the beginning of the third week of rehearsal we're working with the music of Nancarrow, Nyman, Mertens and Cage.

We use short scenes on eight by ten pieces of white paper.

We're dancing with the paper and with each other.

We're making duets for any number of people.

An evening of theater/dance. A dialogue.

Movement (constructed and deconstructed) to music and language.

One and one is two but what does two minus one look like?

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They said we could do it.

one:So, this is that argument -
where I say I can't deal with things the way they are.

two:No. I say I can't deal with things the way they are -
you say things could change.

one:And you say they could but they won't.

two:They won't.

one:And you say I always say that.

two:And you say I always tell you what you always say.

one:And you say you don't "always" do anything.

two:Yes, this is that argument.
When's the last time I said you "always anything?"
Now you say I say "you never can think of examples."

one:This is when you say I say "you know I can never think of examples" and
you always take advantage of that. You do.

two:Don't yell. This is a conversation.

one:This is no conversation. We don't converse.
It's an oration. It's a harangue. It's a filibuster.
It's what you do to counteract interaction.
Shout loud enough, talk fast enough, you win!
You don't have conversation, communication, negotiation.
You make war.

two:This is when you cry. You always cry.

one:You just said "always!"

two:You cry because you can never argue.

one:Not this time.

two:Not this time what?

one:This time I won't cry.

two:Oh? What will you do this time?

one: This time I'm going to kill you.

two:Very funny, be serious.

one:I am serious. I'm going to kill you.

one:Something smells in here. Do you smell it?

two:Nothing smells.

one:Why do you do that?

If you don't smell it don't tell me I don't smell it.

two:I'm sorry. What smells? What does it smell like?

one:Something like a cross between - I dunno - gas and roses.

two:It's my new hand cream. It was very cheap.

one:Oh.

two:And I farted.

one:Oh.

two:Why do you always need to comment on the obvious?

I farted. It smelled. We both know it. Sniff sniff sniff. Who farted? Me! I farted! Send in the firing squad.

one:What's wrong?

two:One of us sneezes and the other one says "bless you."

Why do I say bless you when somebody sneezes? And if I sneeze again you say "getting a cold?" One sneeze "bless you," two sneezes "getting a cold? Do you need vitamin C?" I do exactly the same thing. Even if I can manage not to say "getting a cold" I think - aha, he's getting a cold! I think the obvious. It's disgusting

one:Don't you ever enjoy knowing something? I mean I know you're always going to buy the cheapest damn hand cream. I know you don't like to spend money on hand cream and it's gonna smell a little vulgar. I could, in my head, say "what's that smell? Oh, it must be some new damn cheap hand cream. This one's worse than the last one. I wonder if it's a large tube."

I could do that all in my head. But I like - in fact I love the ritual. Sniff sniff what's that? My new hand cream. Very cheap.

two:There's only one thing wrong with that.

one:What?

two:Cheap hand cream comes in glass bottles. They weigh a ton.

one:I think brown. Big curly haired brown. What do you think?

two:Uh huh.

one:I'd like to call him companion. I'm saying him. I guess it could be her.
What do you think?

two:What?

one:The dog. You know - four legs, woof woof, dog. I want one.

two:You want a dog?

one:I told you. A dog. A domestic animal to welcome me home and jump all over me and lick my face.

two:If that's what's missing in your life go get take-out while I stay here like a good domestic animal and when ya get back I'll jump all over you and lick your face.

one:Am I talking to my friend? My lover? I seem to be talking to a shit headed hydra who belittles my obvious need for an affectionate non-threatening companion.

two:We have had two dogs. Dog #1 didn't last long enough to get a name. Whatever it didn't piss or shit on - it spit on.

one:He didn't spit - he drooled. He was nervous. I hope he got a nice home. He wanted to make good. He wanted your approval.

two:I don't approve of anything that shits in my shoe.
Ten years later came that damned pitiful, panting, snoring, fainting dog #2 who lasted for a year and a half and now it's ten years later again. Is this an itch?

one:She had a deviated septum. I loved that dog.

two:Not enough to walk her. I dealt with the inane coochy cooers hovering in the streets waiting to pounce on anything that breathes at either end of a leash. I carried little plastic baggies full of luke warm dog shit and finally it was my job to suggest giving her away. I don't want to talk about pets.

one:I think I'm ready to take care of my own pet.

two:I don't get it. Control of an animal. Downdown, heelheel, baddog, baddog.
You have to
say
everything
twice. I
don't get
it. "I want

to own an
animal."
"Let's go
buy an
animal."
"I'll tell
it when and
where to
take a
crap. I'll
make it eat
little dry
liver
pebbles and
it will
love me
forever. My
pet is my
best
friend."
Well, no
animal is
my best
friend.
You're my
best
friend. I
can't argue
with a pet.

one:I really passed out. I couldn't keep my eyes open. How did it end?

two:What?

one:The movie. You know what. The movie.

two:Oh. There was a fade to black with small white letters that said "THE
END."

one:You're very funny. I couldn't help it. I got sleepy.
Tell me - how did it end? Did they get married?

two:Yes. They got married and went to the video store to rent a movie and she
insisted on renting a movie he absolutely did not want to see - with
subtitles - and he turned it on and she fell instantly into a coma and
he tried to get a divorce but the court wouldn't give him one because
she was in a coma!

one:You know, it's seven thirty. We're going to be late.

two:I'm ready.

one:Oh.

two:What?

one:Nothing.Is that what you're wearing?

two:Yes.Why?

one:I just wondered.

two:Wondered what? It's a quarter to eight.

one:It's twenty three minutes to eight.

two:I have no time to change now.

one:Okay.

two:I didn't know we were dressing up.

one:We're not dressing up.

two:Then what?

one:I just thought you might want to put on something else.

two:Something else? What else?

Is there's something specific you want me to wear?

Why don't you just tell me?

one:Oh, it's not important. You look fine.

Don't make such a fuss.

We're going to be late. It's five to eight.

DIALOGUE #1/CHINESE FOOD

one:I know I didn't say Chinese. I said Asian.

two:You said Chinese so I bought Chinese. If you said Asian I would have asked you which Asian.

one:You did ask me which Asian. Then you said "how about Chinese? Then I said "if that's what you want."

two:You know, the guy who married us said we would fight about two things.

one:He said three.

1.FOR THE LOVE OF REHEARSAL (2000)music: J.S.Bach
 (Tadej Brdnik. Plus Scott Cunningham. Plus Tricia Brouk.
 Plus Christopher Morgan. Plus Karen Graham.)

2.FAMILY\$DEATH@ART.COMedy (2001)
 Dialogue #1/Chinese food
 (Krista, Scott, Karen, Chris, Tricia, Tadej)
 Dance/Scene #1/Fast walkmusic: Wim Mertens
 (Valda, David)
 Dialogue #2/That argument
 (Karen, Scott, Krista, Chris)
 Dance/Scene #2/One woman,two men music: Conlan Nancarrow
 (Karen, Scott, Tadej)
 Dance/Scene #3/Three women,three men music: Wim Mertens
 (Karen, Tricia, Krista, Tadej, Scott, Chris)
 Dialogue #3/Video coma
 (Valda, Krista, David, Scott)
 Dance/Scene #4/One woman,one man music: Conlan Nancarrow
 (Krista, Scott)
 Dialogue #4/Something smells
 (Krista, Scott, David, Valda, Karen, Tadej, Trisha, Chris)
 Dance/Scene #5/First square dance music: Conlan Nancarrow
 (Karen, Tricia, Krista, Scott, Chris, Tadej)
 Dance/Scene #6/CLOSE-UP (1979)music: Michael Nyman
 (Valda, David)
 Dance/Scenes #7&8/Two men,two women,two men
 music: John Cage, Wim Mertens
 (Karen, Trisha, Tadej, Chris)
 Dialogue #5/Brown dog
 (Scott, Tricia, Chris, Krista, Karen, Tadej)
 Dance/Scene #9/Last square dance music: Conlan Nancarrow
 (Karen, Tricia, Krista, Scott, Chris, Tadej)
 Dialogue #6/It's 7:30
 (Karen, Scott)
 Dance/Scene #10/Long walkmusic: Michael Nyman
 (Valda, David)

 Versions of "It's 7:30", "That argument" and "Brown dog" were used in 1991 at
 a DTW benefit
 and in 1992 for PUNCH AND JUDY GET DIVORCED (KTCA/ALIVE TV) and in 1996 for a
 live musical version commissioned by American Music Theater Festival.
 CLOSE-UP (part of THE MATTER (1979)) was one third of a 1982 half hour
 television program called 10 MINUTE TV (broadcast by KTCA/ALIVE TV and
 BBC/CHANNEL FOUR.) It has been entirely remade for these performances
 keeping only the thirty second opening sequence and an obsession with
 the appearance and meaning of half an embrace.

Thanks to Afua for being a beautiful dancer.

Thanks to Maria for being a beautiful dancer and we wish she hadn't got hurt.

Thanks to Trica and Krista and Chris for being beautiful dancers and for being first time Pick-Ups and remembering what I do and doing it better.

Thanks to Tadej for being a beautiful dancer two years ago and for coming back to be that again this year.

Thanks to Scott for being a beautiful dancer and for coming back and being truly funny and asking impossible questions.

Thanks to Karen for being a beautiful dancer and for coming back and coming back and being an assistant and a dancer which is impossible.

Thanks to Valda for being a beautiful dancer and for coming back and coming back and coming back and being impossible and being indispensable.

Thanks to Ed for being a beautiful all around stage manager and for coming back and back.

Thanks to Laurie for being a beautiful all around presenter and for asking us all to come back this year.

