

# DANCEMAGAZINE

The most sophisticated concert I saw in this bunch was **David Gordon's** new work (Paula Cooper Gallery, December 14). Gordon was and is a member of Grand Union. In **their** improvised concerts his verbal head-trips always struck me as exercises in pure (not entirely benign) mischief. And although he still reminds me of a person compulsively punning, a whole evening of his work makes more sense.

"Chair" was introduced by a long, taped explanation about chance and grids, but it was mainly a dance—an intricate and relentless sequence of movements with a folding chair. He and **Valda Setterfield** (and two blue collapsible chairs) performed the sequence in out-of-kilter simultaneity. They repeated it, quietly getting stuck at random points along the way, then repeated it again, humming "Stars and Stripes Forever." The parts when the chairs collapsed were very much akin to the flavor of "Stars and Stripes Forever," which then blared out in its full brass-band absurdity. The performers were absolutely precise and deadpan—well, as deadpan as a superkid Gordon and a very elegant, surprisingly whimsical Setterfield could manage to be.

It was actually a concert about their personalities. Part II was called "One Act Play," and in the section of that called "The Meeting," Gordon and Setterfield, side by side, turned back and forth to an imaginary person and played out a conversation between somebody aggressive and somebody retiring. It could have been a conversation in one person's head, or between two people, or four, or among everybody and everybody else at a cocktail party. ("Where've you been?" "Hiding." "Hiding!" "Hiding," etc.)

Both "The Meeting" and the whole concert were restatements of an old theme: the overly sensitive but humorous personality surviving in a cold world. Has personal mythology returned to dance? □