

HOUSE OPENS - PROJECT: ARCHIVEOGRAPHY LOGO



AUDIO - 1971 - OBERLIN COLLEGE RECORDING - SUE TEPLY - PIANO  
PROJECT - PHOTO ALBUM - LIVE ARCHIVEOGRAPHY SCRIPT PGS -  
AUDIO - 2013 - GORDON/CUNNINGHAM/GRAHAM/OLIVER/SETTERFIELD  
PROJECT - ARCHIVEOGRAPHY - PART TWO  
PROJECT - EVAN LESLIE - INTRODUCES PERFORMANCE

**1984** - in the NY Times review of - *A Plain Romance Explained* - performed at the Joyce Theater - the critic writes - Gordon plays on the ideas of creative process and rehearsal as dancer Keith Marshall explains his steps and relationship to an invisible partner. When the other dancers do the same, the joke wears thin. Tedium sets in.

*PROJECT - PLAIN ROMANCE EXPLAINED - TRIO - PLUS TEXT*



David can't help thinking - the joke wearing thin - and tedium - are his **perverse** choices of ingredients.

He wants a signal how sincerely he loves what he loves - and **perversely** laugh or groan - at his own sincerity.

He wants a present something that looks improvised - and is **perversely** rehearsed enough - to look improvised.

And then - present it 2 times in a row. Or 3 - **perversely** - like repetition and argument - and argument - and repetition - and repetition. He wants a do - and simultaneously - **perversely** undo - a climax.

In **1984** - he creates a duet - for Keith Marshall - with an active missing partner - which is therefore - **perversely** - a solo.

David must acknowledge - as he nears the end of this career - that it is the end of this career - and that **perversity** is - an **inciting noun** - and is - and was always - at work in his work.

David wants a eat his favorite Jewish rye bread - with caraway seeds - and - **perversely** - have it too.

*PROJECT - KEITH MARSHALL SOLO*

## PROJECT - VALDA SETTERFIELD - INTRODUCES HERSELF -

## AS VALDA SETTERFIELD - IN AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A LIAR - 1999

I am an actor called Valda Setterfield who has often, over the years - been called upon to play the part of a character called Valda Setterfield - in the theater and dance work of the artist David Gordon.

He persuaded me - when I first began to work with him - to bleach my hair white - which became a trademark - and to affect a British accent which was difficult at first - but - which I'm now quite good at. I was - at the time - amused by these shenanigans - but I now have mixed feelings - about being "shanghaied" into giving up my natural long red hair - at such an early age - and about having allowed him to use my real name.

Strangers hail me on the street. Hey Valda - they call out - I saw you the other night. You were so funny. Well - I'm not funny.

That 's not how I describe myself. I am serious and sincere - but he gives me funny things to say and I say them - like they're my own thoughts - and because I'm a good actor - the audience believes me. But believe me - any similarity - between the Valda you may have been looking at - some of you - all these years - or the Valda that you see here tonight - and the real Valda - me - is purely coincidental. Line?

*Of course he wrote ...*

Of course he wrote everything I'm saying right now. Audiences believe me but believe me - I don't talk like this.

Does anybody really talk like this? Oh, here he comes now. Don't let on we've spoken.

## PROJECT - LOLA PASHALINSKI - INTRODUCES HERSELF -

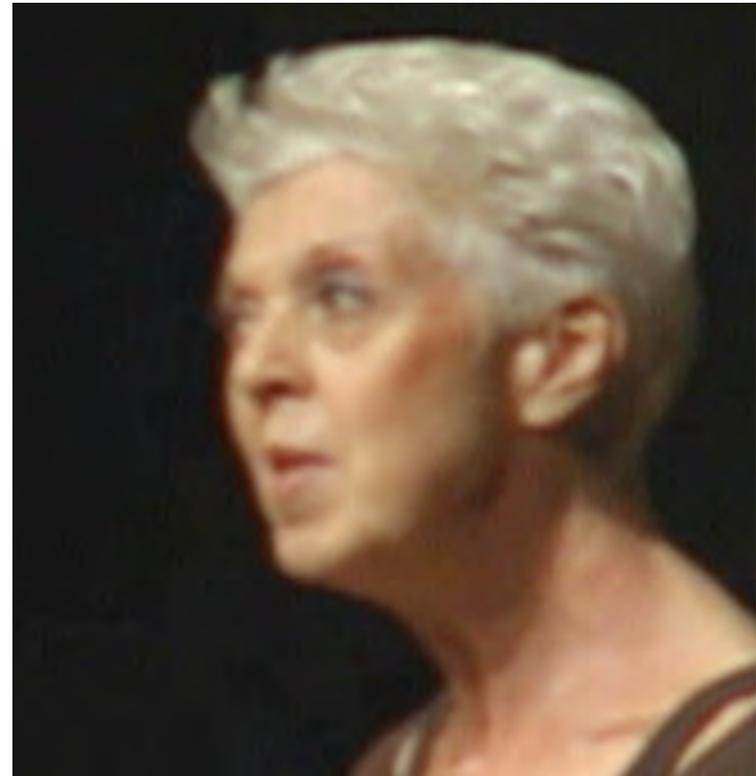
## AS DAVID GORDON - IN AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A LIAR - 1999

This evening's performance is *AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A LIAR* - and I'm the choreographer - David Gordon.

I'm going to talk to you as if you know what I know.

I can never imagine that anyone doesn't know what I know.

Or is unhappy to be not knowing. I love not knowing.



*CUE: SCOTT ENTERS AND SPEAKS ABOUT DAVID & ALYCE*

David Gordon constructs performance - from **1961 to 1966** (see Archiveography, Performing Artservices, 1960's) - and - from **1971 to 1980** something (see Archiveography, Bonnie Brooks, 1980's) -



before - he meets - and - begins - an administrative duel - or **DUET** -

← with - **inciting character - ALYCE DISSETTE** -

who says - after she watches his movement work -

**without** and with - music - and his movement work **without** and with - text -

and after she agrees to manage - **and does manage** -

and to produce - and **she produces** - the work of his Pick Up Performance Company -

she says to David - **you belong** - Alyce says - **in the theater**.

**THEATER** - dictionary definition - activity or profession of acting - producing - directing - or writing plays - in an area in which **something happens**.

Okay - David says - I like - "theatre is an area in which something happens".

Alyce contacts regional American theaters. David meets up with the 1<sup>st</sup> of the dramaturges.

**DRAMATURGE** - dictionary definition - literary editor of a theater consults with authors - and edits texts.

1<sup>st</sup> of the dramaturges says - to David - something about - the inciting incident.

**INCITE** - dictionary definition - encourage, urge or persuade.

**INCIDENT** - dictionary definition - a dangerous or exciting occurrence in a play - or something happening.

Okay - David says - I like "instance of something happening - in the area in which something happens" - in a play -

Okay - but - David says - but - how about in a movement piece? Or a dance if ya call your movement - dance?

How about the inciting incident - David says - in a dance? How about my favorite inciting dance incident - the DUET.

**DUET** - dictionary definition - composition or performance by 2 people.

Okay - text and movement - in a DUET - between 2 characters - but - what about - or how about - the inciting character?

**CHARACTER** - dictionary definition - person in a novel, play, or movie played by an actor.

Also a dancer - David says.

**Okay - so - David says - we gotta admit - life changing and career altering circumstances -  
are inspired by inciting incidents - and/or inciting characters - he says -  
and chance is the foolish name for fate -  
as the comic character with the fake Italian accent says -  
in 1 of the great Fred and Ginger movies - and -  
Fred and Ginger movies - David says - are extended text and movement DUETS - ain't they?**

**Okay - but - David says - what about an inciting object?  
Does he mean - for instance ↓ the metal folding chair?**



**THE CHAIRS - by Eugene Ionesco - translation by Michael Feingold  
Choreographed and directed by David Gordon - Next Wave at BAM Harvey - 2004**

PROJECT - IMAGES OF - THE CHAIRS - AT BARBICAN- ON ALL SCREENS



1974 - David choreographs and writes about the what of **families of inciting objects** - including the metal folding chair - the when of **families of inciting incidents** - which David claims - are the meat'n fish of his movement drama and comedy - the who of **families of inciting characters** - dead artists - and teachers he runs into - dancers'n actors he stumbles over - and falls for - and family members - including father Sam - mother Rose - wife Valda - son Ain - and - ↓ grandma Fannie.  
**Wanna hear a story?**



**1947 - inciting character - FANNIE WUNDERLICH** says - to 10 or 11 year old David - **ya wanna hear a story?**  
 It's a rhetorical question - as she shuts the kitchen door - turns on the radio - and - hands him a paira tweezers.  
**TWEEZERS** - dictionary definition - a pair of pincers - for plucking out hairs.

**When I was a girl - grandma Fannie says - I wanna be an actorizza.**

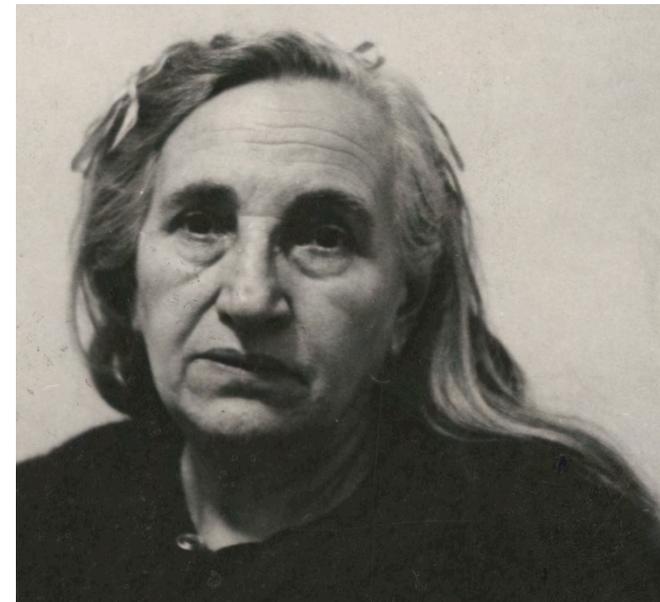
Her stories all begin - when I was a girl. Or 1 time dere was - In de old country.

Or in Russian Poland. Or in Polish Russia.

See dese hairs she says. Pokes at her stiff chin hairs. Pull 'em out.

So - I hear dey gonna make a show - on 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue - I don't tell nobody but I go -  
 da lady in de show - she gives me a paper - I should pick what I'm gonna read.  
 So I say ok - but I gotta go in de toilet. So I go - wid de paper to the door and I act  
 - like I read da paper. Who knows - ta act ya hafta read? I don't know howta read.

**1947** - Yiddish radio plays - in Fannie's apartment - across the hall from Rosie's.  
 WEVD - Seymour Rechtzeit sings - Oy, oy, oy, Belz, mayn shtetele Belz.



*RECORDING OF SEYMOUR RECHTZEIT SINGING BELZ*



### *PROJECT - PHOTOS OF FANNIE WUNDERLICH*

**1947** - When I was a girl - Fannie says.

In de old country - she says -

Mama - sheshouldrestinpeace -

and cousin Ida - sheshouldrestinpeace - and me -  
we live in a cellar made wid rock.

David says - why do ya? Fannie says - we're Jews.

She holds a mirror'n says - pull da hairs already. Whattaya waiting?

Dis one here - don't be a scaredy cat.

David tweeze a stiff black chin hair. Fannie don't wince.

Dere's a hole - she says - high inna cellar - like a window.

I can see feet walking.

We put a rock ta close it but da rock falls on my bed.

But - dis 1 night - I go in da bed wid mama - she says - to get warm.

If I'm in my own bed - Godfabid - 1-2-3 - I'm dead. She laughs.

Fannie says v's instead a w's - vun - vindow - vawking - vawrm.

Pluck dis hair - she says - and de udder vun.

David plucks.

**Ya wanna hear a story?**



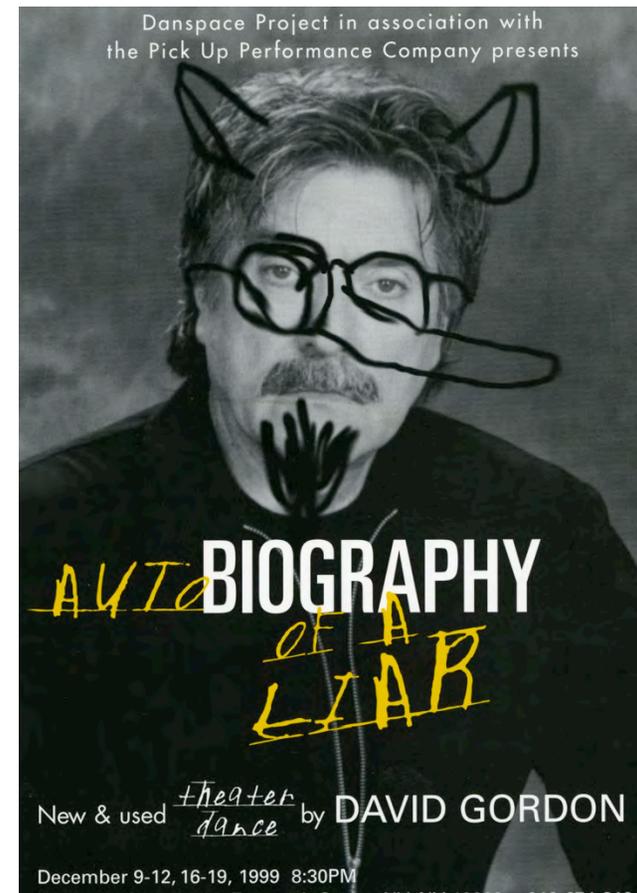
**1996, '97, '98** - David collaborates with son **Ain Gordon** - and with composer **Jeanine Tesori** - on a "play" with movement and music - which starts out titled - *Who's Anne First?* - and - ends up *The First Picture Show* - at American Conservatory Theater - in San Francisco - and - Mark Taper Forum - in Los Angeles - where it dies. Dead in the water - says Taper artistic director Gordon Davidson - so - David runs home to NY. After 3 years commuting to the west coast - he discovers he is also dead - inna NY water - till - **← inciting character - LAURIE UPRICHARD** - generously commissions new work - 3 years in a row - from David - at Danspace - so - **1999 - David Gordon constructs new work - *Autobiography of a Liar* ↘**

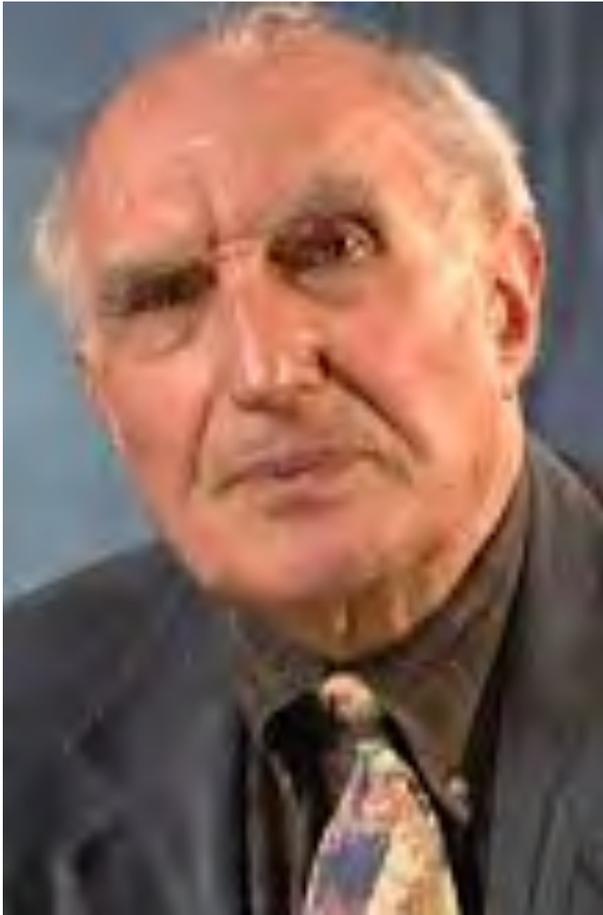
Perhaps - David thinks - now - *Autobiography of a Liar* - is - the 1<sup>st</sup> *Live Archiveography?*

\* Usually - some parts what he usually refers to as "used work" - usually appear - and reappear - in what he usually refers to as "new work" - performed by new - or other - company members - or other companies - in different contexts - sometimes in different countries - and/or - usually with no music - or different or other - music.

PROJECT - EXCERPTS OF PLAIN ROMANCE & MY FOLKS - TO JOHN FIELDS & TO KLEZMER

Ya wanna hear another story?





← **HARVEY LICHTENSTEIN** - inciting character - meets with David - to talk about **1983** BAM project - *The Photographer* - based on the life of **Eadweard Muybridge** - to be directed by **JoAnne Akalaitis** - with music by **Philip Glass** - and - Harvey asks David to choreograph. David - peeved at not being asked - for lotsa years - to show work at BAM - says no thanks. Harvey - passionate about dance - is patient - persistent'n persuasive. After a coupla drinks - David is charmed and says - yes. Finds out later - Paul Taylor is asked 1<sup>st</sup> - Taylor says no. Okay. \* **David decides to re-use - from 1972's *The Matter* - the Muybridge solo score. Original 98 action photographs - cut outta sequence - with minimal handwritten instructions - are performed nude in 1972 - by Valda Setterfield - and - IN SILENCE.**

*PROJECT - MUYBRIDGE SCORE PAGES - PLUS PBS SOLO EXCERPTS - ETC.*

*IS MUYBRIDGE POSITIONS - BEGIN IN SILENCE - PERFORMED BY KAREN & SCOTT -*

**1971** - Original Muybridge score is snail mailed - to Valda's Detroit hotel. She's on tour - with Merce Cunningham.

**1983** - Original Muybridge score is exhibited at Paula Cooper Gallery in Soho - and bought by Museum of Modern Art. But not before David makes a copy.

**2016 - Live Archiveography** - 1<sup>st</sup> time David uses Bolero by **Maurice Ravel** for Muybridge solo.

*KAREN & SCOTT EXIT TO OPENING PERCUSSIVE BEAT OF RAVEL'S BOLERO - AS VALDA ENTERS - PREPARES TO DANCE 2016 VERSION OF MUYBRIDGE.*

*PROJECT - DAVID GORDON ORIGINAL NOTATED SCORE - AND VALDA SETTERFIELD NOTATED SCORE - ↓*



1  
torso forward  
don't let legs feet  
too high



2  
rt forearm more  
parallel.



3.  
hard on hip



4  
don't let elbows  
stick out - let arms  
align to



5.

10 COUNTS EACH POSE. WHATEVER YOU HAVE TO DO TO DO THEM IS OK. SIMPLE + DIRECT. ASSUME EACH WHOLE POSE AT ONCE IF POSSIBLE. TRY AND PAY ATTENTION TO DETAILS INCLUDING FACIAL EXPRESSIONS. IGNORE THE FEW PROPS THAT APPEAR. HAVE A GOOD TIME. LOVE.



11  
The matter  
R. front



12  
It was based  
on a series  
of photographs  
by Edward  
Muybridge



3.  
'in total'  
drawn



4  
'scotch-taped  
them to some  
pieces of yellow  
typing paper



5.  
'+wailed them  
to use'

1983 -

1<sup>st</sup> time - David works with **Santo Loquasto**. David asks Santo about "stage water"? Muybridge women toss water from pitchers - David says. There's no water like real water - says designer Santo - so - Valda rises - wet - from a pool of water - in a diaphanous dress - and no underwear.



David adds Muybridge photos - for Valda - and sets moves - on the actors and dancers - in Victorian dresses - and suits - and hats - for the 20 minutes of **Philip Glass** music - in the 3<sup>rd</sup> section - of **The Photographer** - played by the Glass Ensemble.



Adds staccato moves - invented'n performed by **Blondell Cummings** - to climactic Glass music caught for still moments - by her alone - or in groups.



David Gordon/Pick-up Co. *The Photographer*. Valda Setterfield (centre). Photo: Tom Caravaglia



**1983 - *The Photographer* - is the 1<sup>st</sup> time David works with - inciting character - actor -**  
↳ **LOLA PASHALINSKI** - dancing for her life - in pounds a Victorian gown.

David - works with Lola - again - as his mother Rose - singing - in *The Mysteries* - in **1990** - and - again in - *Autobiography of a Liar* - in **1999** - as narrator - story teller - David Gordon.



**1983 - *The Photographer* - is the 1<sup>st</sup> time David works with - inciting character -**  
**JENNIFER TIPTON. →**  
Tipton's light grows bright and brighter - till final climactic notes of Glass music bring down the curtain.

**LIFE CHANGING - David says. He wants a work - always - he says - with Jennifer.**

**1984** - BAM opera house stage experience - serves David well - when he makes a 1st ballet - at American Ballet Theater - for the Metropolitan Opera House stage.

1960's - Inciting characters - ↓ - **YVONNE RAINER** and **TRISHA BROWN**

In **1966** - David gets boos and a bad review - for *Walks and Digressions*  
 - his 3<sup>rd</sup> solo performed at Judson Church -  
 and he refers to that response -  
 now - as an **inciting incident** -

but - he stops making any new dances  
 for the next 5 years -

and - starts to perform - instead -  
 with **inciting character Yvonne Rainer** →

He pays attention  
 to how Yvonne makes her dances  
 and - learns howta be -

in a dance company - **one more kinda family.**



And - in the Rainer company -  
 he gets ta dance -  
 along side **Steve Paxton** →

who he also refers to - now - in retrospect -  
 as an **inciting character.**



And he learns howta improvise  
 from **inciting character Trisha Brown** →  
 who agrees to work with the Rainer company -  
 as it morphs - into the **Grand Union** -  
 and - yes - the morph is another **inciting incident** -  
**and another family.**





**1955 - Artist and teacher in Brooklyn College -  
 ↩ inciting character - AD REINHARDT.**

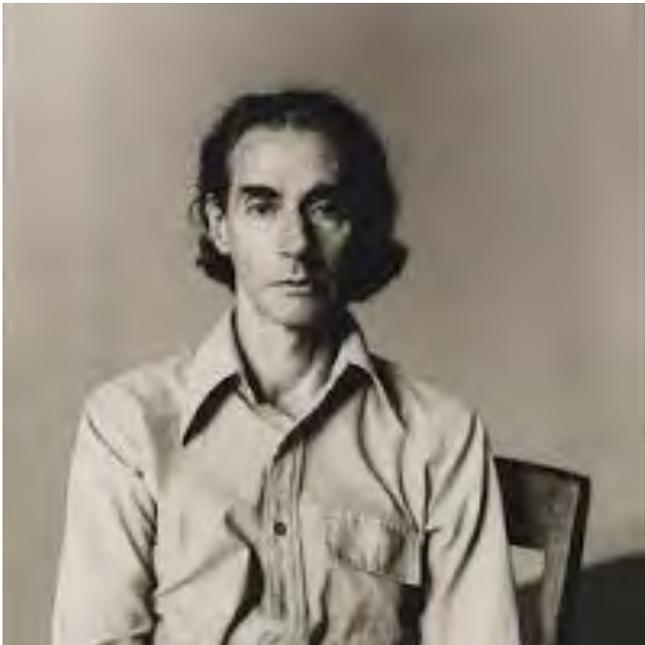
He arrives at class - at the last minute -  
 dressed always in black - like Italian widows.  
 Wears black jackets - and black skinny ties -  
 and dark gray workshirts.

His "black" paintings are extra mysterious -  
 to the newly diagnosed - color blind David.

Reinhardt's final exam - a life changing - inciting event -  
 begins with 3 questions -

**What is Art? What is is? What is what?**

*BREAK FOR 10 MINUTE AUDIENCE TALK BACK*



**1957 - Choreographer and collagist -  
 Inciting character - JAMES WARING**

says David Gordon is a dancer when they meet -  
 and asks David to dance in his company - with -  
 real dancers Toby Armour and Aileen Passloff -  
 and Freddie Herko - and Vincent De Paul Warren -  
 and - introduces him to dances of Balanchine -  
 and Cunningham - Merle Marsicano - Katie Litz  
 and Busby Berkely - and to music of Stravinsky -  
 Feldman - Cage - and paintings of Johns -  
 Rauschenberg and Twombly - and  
 collage of Schwitters and Ray Johnson.

**It's Jimmy Waring - also inna 50's -  
 who introduces David to -  
 Laurel and Hardy films ↓ for the 1<sup>st</sup> time.**



In 1937 - David is half a year old -

when Stan and Ollie dance - in - *Way Out West*.

*PROJECT - WAY OUT WEST - DANCE*

And Jimmy introduces David to foreign films -

showing at the Thalia theater - on the upper west side -

for instance - Jean Cocteau - and Ernst Lubitsch - and Fritz Lang.

And - in a room - in a building - near Union Square -

David joins Jimmy -

and a coupla dozen movie mavens -

members of the Theodore Huff Society -

to see rare old talkies -

and rare old silent films - and -

Jimmy teaches David to say "films" - instead a "movies".

**Reminder: what David sees as a kid - are technicolor musical movies - in local movie houses.**

In 1948 - David is 12 when Fred Astaire and Judy Garland "walk up the avenue" side by side - in MGM's *Easter Parade*.

In 1958 - David is 22 when Gwen Verdon and Bob Fosse dance "who's got the pain" in *Damn Yankees!*

In 1975 - David is 39 when he constructs a new duet - *Times Four*.

David insists - **perversely** - *Times Four* is a blood relative of - Laurel and Hardy -

and the movie duets of his childhood - and every vaudeville kinda duet anybody ever danced.

*CUE - KAREN & VALDA BEGIN 2016 MINI VERSION OF TIMES FOUR*



The Soho Weekly News May 12, 1977



David Gordon and Valda Setterfield

## Disciplined Upstarts

**40 minutes of minimal movement phrases - performed 4 times each - to 4 fronts - with no sound - except footfall - and with post modern addition - or subtraction - of no music - and with sweat pants - and a lotta repetition.**

Valda loves *Times Four* - she loves performing it.

A Japanese friend advises Valda and David not to blink - when they face front.

David has a hard time - no room for error. It drives him nuts.

*Times Four* buys Valda'n David legitimate presentation at Whitney Museum - Berkeley Museum - and European festivals.



**2015 -**

David sees contact sheets -  
of *Times Four* photographs -  
he never sees before -  
or he thinks he never sees before -  
or he never sees in **1976** - or if he does -  
he never sees 'em for 40 years -



but he sees 'em in **2015** -  
and he says look at this - to Valda -  
he says for her to look -  
at the precision of positioning -  
of the tilts of heads - and torsos -  
of Valda and David -



and he says to Valda - I don't know -  
I don't know how they did it without a mirror -  
they didn't have a mirror inna studio -  
and she says no they didn't - they still don't -  
do you want the 1<sup>st</sup> shower? Or can I go 1<sup>st</sup>?

I'd like to go 1<sup>st</sup> - Valda says - so I can get to the farmer's market before rehearsal.  
It's Wednesday and the trout man is there.

I'd like to get 2 fresh trout for supper.

I'll also get a couple of umeboshi rice cakes - at Ennju - on 17<sup>th</sup> street - to have with the trout.  
Don't worry - Valda says - I'll be back in time to warm up for rehearsal.



THE SOHO WEEKLY NEWS

Thursday, March 4, 1976

31

C O N C E P T S I N P E R F O R M A N C E



**Followable Dancing**

WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 1976

NOON to 5 PM

PERFORMANCES: FOUR EVENINGS, FOUR DAYS

D A V I D G O R D O N

with Valda Setterfield

T I M E S F O U R (1975/76)  
(work in progress)

Movement constructed by David Gordon

Performed by Valda Setterfield and David Gordon

In my work an activity cannot exist without its echoes and each echo must stand alone as a complete action. The repetition of any given act clarifies it, determines its necessity and changes it from an arbitrary or capricious act to an inevitable one.

David Gordon was a member of the James Waring Dance Company from 1958 to 1962. At that time he became affiliated with the Judson Dance Theatre as a choreographer, then in 1966-70 with Yvonne Rainer as a dancer. He has also performed with the Rio Grande Union. In 1974 he formed his own company.

Times Four was first performed at Dance Today in December of 1975 in Tokyo, Japan.

Special thanks to Michèle Remy and Yvonne Rainer

In *Times Four* (work in progress) a brief traveling phrase is executed in unison in all four primary directions and then another is begun. So each time they return to front, you know that a new step is coming. But they slip into it so sly that it's there before you know it and then you're grateful for the chance to see it three more times. Being on the side, I saw them do each phrase next to each other; then with their backs to me, Setterfield behind Gordon; then adjacent again; then facing me. What a luxury! There was great generosity in this progression, and patience too. A patience bordering on serenity . . . inscrutable faces (I'm sure they look just like that waiting on the cashier's line at the Grand Union).

The phrases consist of functional

↑ Wendy Perron review - Soho Weekly News - 1976  
← program copy - Whitney Museum - 1976

*PROJECT - INTRODUCTION OF 1974 CHAIR - PASHALINSKI AS GORDON*

25 years ago I made a piece called *Chair*.  
*Chair* - was inspired by Valda Setterfield.  
 Not by her beauty - or her dancing -  
 which is plenty inspiring.  
 No.  
 By her being in a car -  
 and getting hit by a train.

*PROJECT - TEXT -*

**June, 1974** - Valda Setterfield is picked up by car - by a beach house owner - to look at a possible summer rental. David Gordon Amtraks to Washington DC - to guest perform with Trisha Brown and dancers - at the Kennedy Center. 12 year old Ain Gordon is picked up - by family friend Norma Fire - to spend the day. Norma later says - Valda calls from Riverhead Long Island hospital - and says - Norma says - I won't be home today - would you mind - putting the lamb chops - back in the freezer? Valda does not remember the lamb chop phone call. Valda goes partially through the windshield - Norma says - and is found - she says - dazed and bloody - and cut - with shards of glass - when the car is hit by the Long Island Railroad train - she says - and dragged until it crashes - into a telephone pole - and Norma can't get holda David - till after Trisha's Kennedy Center performance. 1<sup>st</sup> Amtrak train - to Penn Station - is 5 in the morning.



**July 2014** - 40 years later - David reads - aloud - what he's writing - about the accident - to Valda - who says - she remembers David says - he stays awake and dressed all night and watches the Late Show on TV.  
 ← Greer Garson and Laurence Olivier - in MGM's **1940** - *Pride and Prejudice* - till he gets a cab to the station - to catch the 1<sup>st</sup> train - to get to Valda. David calls Ain and Norma - from Penn Station - and - gets a Long Island Railroad train - to Riverhead - and a taxi - to the hospital - and says he's Valda Setterfield's husband - and where is she? He kneels at her bedside'n takes her hand - and she smiles - he says - and says - is Ain okay? Are you okay?

She says - you must be hungry - she says - after such a long trip.

There's fresh strawberries in that closet - she points.

Would you mind taking the strawberries home?

Valda remembers the strawberries - and the off duty nurse -  
who stays with her - and pours warm water on her belly.

And gently massages till she can pee.

To avoid the catheter - Valda says - the nurse says.

Oh - and your white shawl collared cardigan - I borrowed -  
is in the closet too - Valda says.

David opens the metal door - of the narrow hospital closet.

He sees the bloody white sweater.

He sees the smashed boxes - of squashed strawberries.

Valda says - we stopped at a roadside stand.

Strawberries looked so good - she says.

Do you see the strawberries? David says yes.

He turns nodding yes.

Valda has such a lotta stitches in her face. David starts to cry.

**Don't worry - Valda Setterfield says - I'll be okay - she says -  
better get me vitamin E for the scars.**

After 4 or 5 days at home - at 54 Charles Street -  
Valda thinks - as I get better - in a way I get worse.

I can't sit up - or get outta bed - without help.

David's hands - behind my neck - pull me to a sitting position.

He climbs off - to pull me gently to standing.

Sudden or loud noises frighten me.

I'm terrified when I realize - there are long and frequent periods -  
of not knowing where I am - or how I got here. Or there.

Or wherever it is I am.

I find a paperback I don't think I read.

It looks interesting to me. I open it.

My signature - Valda Setterfield - is inside the cover.

It must be my book.



*PROJECT - PASHALINSKI AS GORDON*

*Chair* - was inspired by Valda Setterfield - deciding she wasn't learning dance steps as easily - and leaving the Cunningham company after 10 years - and by her thinking now she 'll never dance again - and sobbing in that desperate way she does - which racks her whole body - which she hardly ever does - which makes it all the more terrible. She's been dancing all her life she says. Who will I be if I'm not dancing? I hold her in my arms. My shirt is wet with her tears.

*PROJECT - TEXT -*

She is almost 40. What will she do if she can't dance? If she's not a dancer?

*PROJECT - PASHALINSKI AS GORDON -*

What is a muse? The inspiring goddess" says the dictionary. No mention of "the inspiring interruption. Not now. Or the inspiring way your mother puts a sentence together or - the inspiring circumstance. Valda is scared and unhappy. I have to do something - so I sit her down - and teach her to fall sideways off a chair.

*PROJECT - TEXT -*

**What happens - David thinks - if Valda hasta learn - to do something she never did before - so she won't have anything to compare it to? What if she hasta try to learn something new - and technically hard for her to do - so her sturdy British resilience will kick in?**

*PROJECT - PASHALINSKI AS GORDON -*

The first rehearsal of *Chair* actually uses a wooden bench in the borrowed Cunningham studio.

*INTERRUPTION -*

I'm Merce. I have no idea he 's using my studio.

*PROJECT - TEXT -*

Cunningham is on tour. Valda has a key to the Westbeth studio.

David walks with Valda - from Charles Street and 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue - to Westbeth - slowly. Traffic is bewildering to her.

At Abingdon Square Park she rests on a wooden bench.

There's also a wooden bench - at Westbeth.

David suggests they do - he loves me, loves me not - from Giselle.

Valda mimes petal plucking - as they move along the bench - until David falls off - and Valda laughs.

David is thrilled to make Valda laugh.

They go to the studio again - and use the bench each time - as a starting point.

The Cunninghams return.

Lucinda Childs generously lends her new studio on lower Broadway.

There's no wooden bench.

LIVE ARCHIVEOGRAPHY - PART TWO

*PROJECT - PASHASLINKI AS GORDON -*

We also borrow Lucinda Child' s studio where we find royal blue metal folding chairs.

*INTERRUPTION -*

I'm Lucinda. I buy the chairs from Buffalo Roadhouse, a restaurant in the village, at the end of the eating outside season. He asks to use them. I think why not?

*PROJECT - PASHALINSKI AS GORDON*

I buy the next seasons castoffs from the same place. Also blue.

*PROJECT - TEXT -*

David has no idea - no plan - howta make the chair be what Valda needs.

*PROJECT - DAVID - PERFORMING NINE LIVES CHAIR SOLO*

*PROJECT - TEXT -*

He begins to invent - demonstrate -  
coax and coach.

Folds and carries the chair -  
steps up on - in - and over the chair.  
Sits and locomotes in the chair -  
falls off - step offs - jumps off -  
the Buffalo Roadhouse blue metal folding chair.

David asks Valda - to stand on a chair -  
fall vertically back -  
slide chair forward -  
out from under -  
her standing foot -  
out from under -  
her off balance body  
**and she does it.**



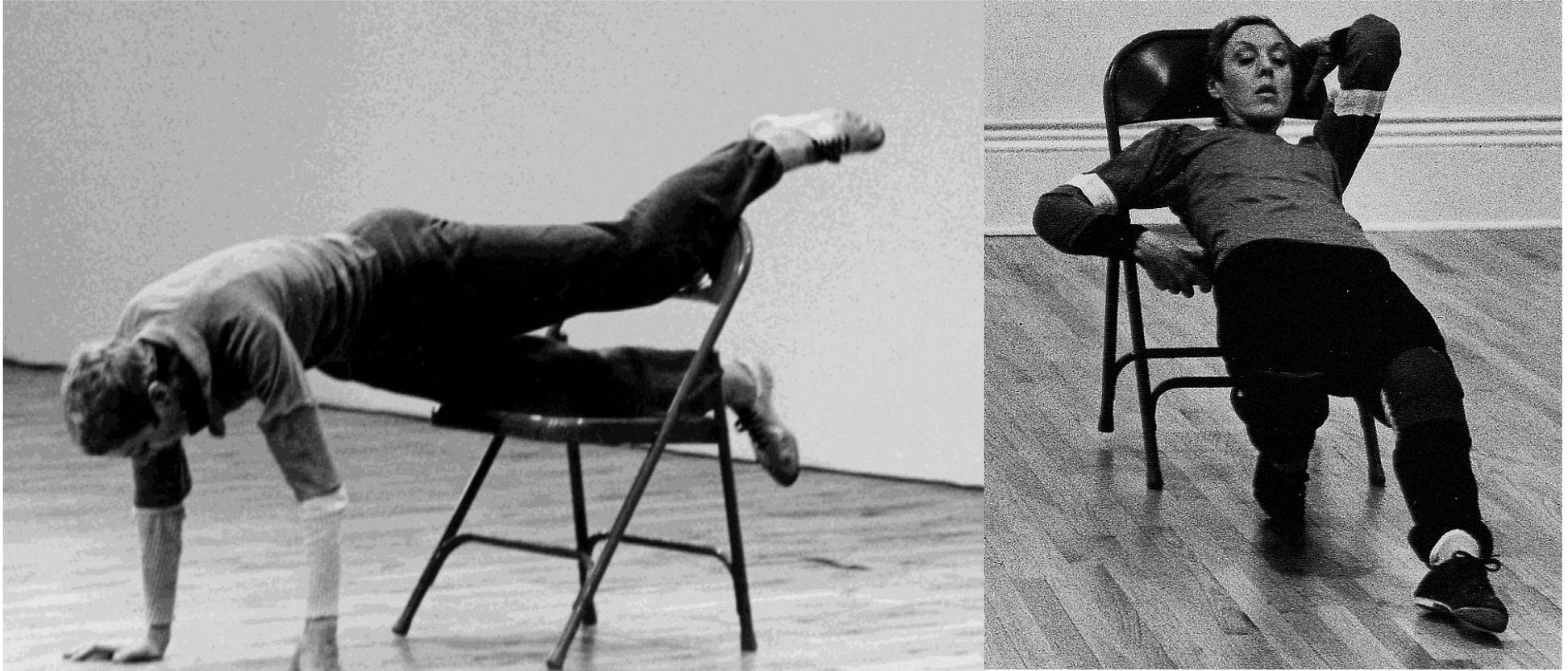
*PROJECT - PASHALINSKI AS GORDON*

Stand on the chair. Fall back pushing the chair out from under herself. Put the metal folding chair on. It's a dress. It's a percussive instrument. It's a partner. Uh oh. Huge black and blue marks.

I pile coats on the floor to soften the falls and remove one at a time as she gets better at it.

*PROJECT TEXT-*

He piles coats - next to the chair - so she don't bruise her hip falling sideways on the floor and Valda relaxes - into the fall. He removes 1 coat at a time till there are none. They do chair moves over'n over - in'n outta sync - till Valda can remember - yesterday's rehearsal - and accumulate movement - and - David adds singing - *Stars and Stripes Forever* - and - Valda hasta learn to breathe - simultaneously - for singing and dancing - **and she does it.**

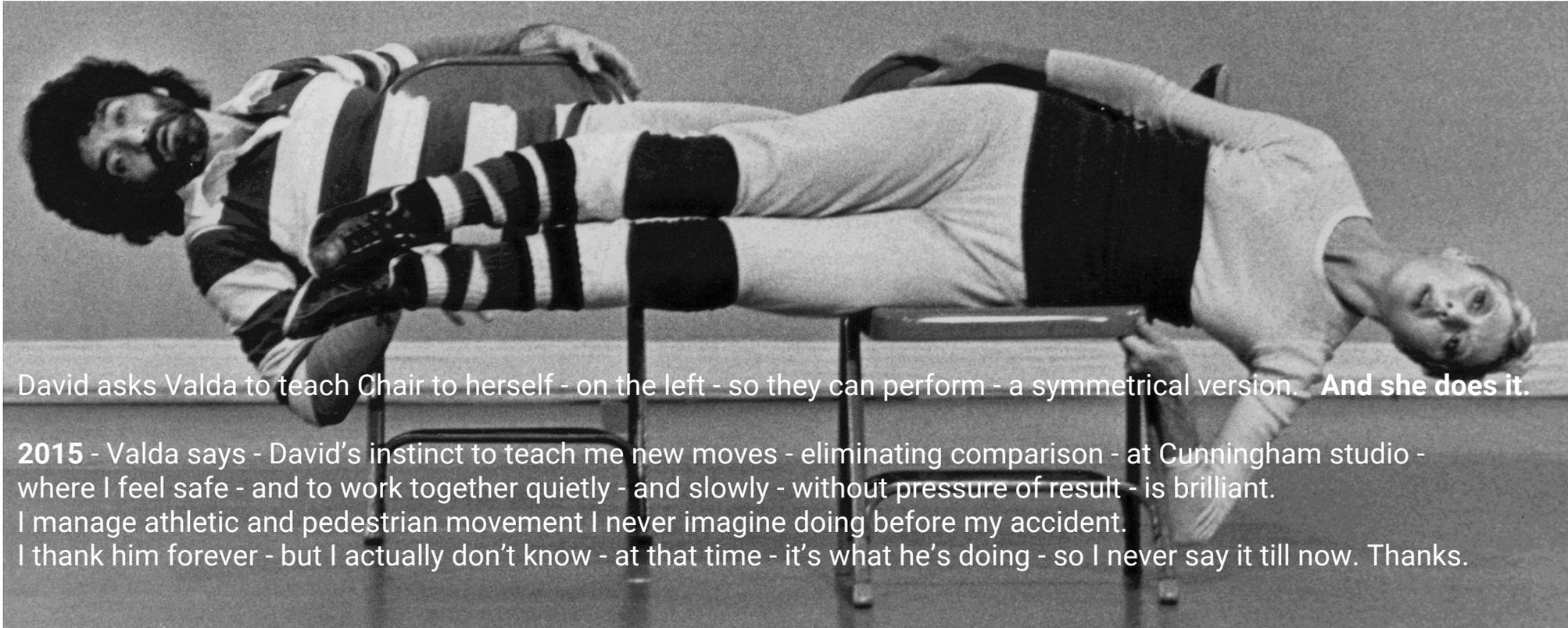
*PROJECT - PASHALINSKI AS GORDON*

Sounds like I thought about this and knew how to do it. No. I'm inspired by Valda's mid-life crisis - to make something - she never did before. It isn't ballet or Cunningham so she can't think she isn't doing it as well as she used to.

**DEC. 14, 1974 - CHAIR, alternatives 1 through 5 ↓ @ PAULA COOPER SOHO GALLERY**

*JOHNNY MERCER LYRIC - FROM FRED ASTAIRE 1955 FILM - DADDY LONG LEGS*

When an irresistible force such as you - meets an old immovable object like me -  
you can bet just as sure as you live - something's gotta give - something's gotta give - something's gotta give.



David asks Valda to teach *Chair* to herself - on the left - so they can perform - a symmetrical version. **And she does it.**

**2015** - Valda says - David's instinct to teach me new moves - eliminating comparison - at Cunningham studio - where I feel safe - and to work together quietly - and slowly - without pressure of result - is brilliant.

I manage athletic and pedestrian movement I never imagine doing before my accident.

I thank him forever - but I actually don't know - at that time - it's what he's doing - so I never say it till now. Thanks.



Nothing stops 'em. Valda grows confident - and happy to be dancing - or whatever it is they are doing with those chairs.

**They have denim drawstring carrier bags made - and - travel to performance venues - with chairs in bags - like berserk musicians.**

*PROJECT - BARYSHNIKOV - PERFORMING CHAIR EXCERPT - FROM PAST FORWARD*

*PROJECT - PICK UP PERFORMANCE COMPANY BOWS*