

Gordon & Co. challenge audience

By Jo Gregory

By GAYLE CRUM

Special to The Capital Times

It was vexatious, difficult, opaque. It was riveting and vivid.

It was David Gordon and the Pick Up Co. in three works at the Wisconsin Union Theater Monday night, in a program that almost seemed to hurl a challenge at the audience.

It was a challenge well worth trying to meet.

Gordon, who at age 50 has been working in dance about 25 years, is known as a choreographer to whom repertory is anathema. He doesn't like to look back; he and his company perform what he's creating now, not what he created five years ago. This can make things hard for the first-time viewer who is, in effect, diving into a body of work in progress. But it's obvious that this company will never throw the audience a standard curtain-raiser merely to win affection. Like what you see or not, you have to admire that kind of integrity.

The work itself incorporates elements of modern dance and modern ballet with "natural" movement, set against a background of non-linear sound. The focus shifts. The texture is complex, sometimes abrasive. Movement is truncated, diverted, isolated. Pieces of the puzzle are proffered. Sometimes the meaning is clear; often, it is not.

In two of the works on last night's

On Stage

program, "The Seasons" and "Untitled, A Sneak Preview," a powerful narrative opened the work. But in "The Seasons," which was the first work on the program, the brief, witty voice-over expounding on the qualities of each season — and the narrator's response to the passage of seasons — served only as a taking-off point. Soon after the white-clad dancers began a series of slow-motion claspings and uncouplings to the gritty opening chords of the Lovin' Spoonful's "Summer in the City," it became apparent that the work was not going to be as simple and transparent as it appeared in the beginning. Before anyone could settle in and get comfortable, the music began to bleed into other music and non-musical sound until snatches of

melody rubbed as uncomfortably against each other as the dancers often did. The overall effect was ambiguity, despite the very specific representation of seasonal change.


In "Transparent Means for Travelling Light," a John Cage score provided the underpinning for a work as ambiguous as the title. The piece opened with a flourish as a male dancer, with his back to the audience, rose hydraulically out of the orchestra pit in perfect synch with the rising of the stage curtain. In keeping with the score, the movement that followed was abrupt, sometimes violent, often funny. In the end, a triumphant and faintly ridiculous couple (Gordon and his wife, Valda Setterfield) stood in an awkward pas-de-deux while all the trappings of a fully dressed stage descended from the top and sides to surround them.

The images linger.

Lansing Dulles is speaker at meeting of the Madison Club at the Loraine Hotel. She is accompanied by Mrs. James G. Dulles, club chairman. Others at the table are Mrs. Marvin J. Dulles, Mrs. Frederick Jefferson, Donald N. McDowell, professor of V. Irwin, Mrs. Helen Colby and Mrs. C.D. Zdanowicz. L. Isberner resigns as classifying manager of Madison Newspapers Inc. to accept an advertising position in San Francisco.

ars ago

ew "Alicia Ashman Pedersen" on Campus Drive is scheduled this morning ... Alan J. George H. Handy, Karl J. Sawyer, Stuart Updike, William Enright are appointed to Wisconsin High Blood Pressure Advisory Council by state and Social Services Secretary Percy ... The West High football team defeats Beloit, 41-7 at Mansfield Stadium in the Big Eight Conference championship and the No. 1 ranking site with a perfect record. Pat has two touchdowns for the and Don Treiber, Matt, Tim Stracka and Tim Ellis have one. Mark Disrud kicks after touchdown.




Psychic Endeavors

Readings by Jan

Share Jan's Gift...
for yourself or a friend.

by appointment
(608) 274-0444



SENIOR CITIZEN DISCOUNT