

# Overdetermination makes happy end

By BARRY JOHNSON  
of The Oregonian staff

It has become a commonplace among historians that historical events are overdetermined. They have many causes, each of which contributes to the sequence and character of the event. The David Gordon/Pick Up Company, which performed at Portland State University's Lincoln Hall Friday night, is overdetermined, too: a series of happy elements that lead inexorably toward a happy, witty, wise conclusion.

The company starts with David Gordon, a fixture on the contemporary dance scene since the early 1960s when he, Yvonne Rainer, Trisha Brown, Steve Paxton and others reinvented modern dance in New York City's Judson Dance Theater. Onstage now, Gordon is a magician, a cabalist, able by some alchemy to turn his sparest gestures, simplest movements, into fascinating happenings.

His appearances Friday, for stints of "The Seasons" and "My Folks," two of the three dances on the program, were like visits from Merlin.

His wife of over 25 years, Valda Setterfield, is another ingredient. Onstage she is wise, experienced, completely sure of herself, a perfect counterpoint to Gordon. Their duets in "Seasons" and "My Folks," stately and elegant and understated, combined magic and human wisdom, but wryly.

Next is a corps of dancers — light-hearted, athletic, well-trained — willing to trade a certain amount of virtuosic dancing for a whole that is much greater than any crowd-pleasing dance tricks.

And that leaves the dances themselves. Gordon constructs densely detailed dances: energetic but not flashy; funny and witty, but not (hilarious; full of gentle reminders, not intricate flourishes.

"Seasons" cycles around from summer. It contains dancerly elements — attitudes and positions, pir-

## DANCE REVIEW

### The David Gordon/Pick Up Company

**Where:** Lincoln Hall, P.S.U., 1620 S.W. Park Ave.

**When:** 8 p.m. Fri. and Sat.

**Tickets:** \$10, \$8 for students, seniors. (229-4440).

ouettes and partnering, that are connected to the everyday movements that Gordon incorporates in his dances. As the seasons turn, the dancers acquire more clothes, their steps become statelier, until a fine, circling Setterfield-Gordon duet provides a pivot at winter. The delicate Setterfield follows the stockier Gordon, in unison, step by step, around and around. It is elegant, funny, finally touching.

"Four Man Nine Lives" is a comic tour de force that features four of the men dancers, Dean Moss, Chuck Finlon, Robert Wood and Scott Cunningham. The four, dressed loosely and softly in stripes and plaid, crumpled felt hats on their heads, give a vaudeville-inspired, acrobatic, split-second paced rendition of an incredibly complicated dance. It all centers on a simple folding chair and is choreographed to some terrific Depression-era Western swing music.

Klezmer music, Yiddish jazz (Yiddish Western swing?), accompanies "My Folks." Gordon explores a variety of folk dance idioms, giving them comic turns and also managing to preserve their dignity. The miracles "Four Man Nine Lives" performs with a chair, "My Folks" achieves with diagonally striped cloth.

It's a very special, overdetermined evening of dance by one of the masters of contemporary dance, and it repeats Saturday night at 8 p.m.

# 'Prison for Children'

On Saturday children are in prison, and on Sunday they are a good deal worse off in Stepford.

"Prison for Children," at 9 p.m. Saturday on KOIN (6), is a routine but well enough done CBS movie about not-quite bad boys, and how they might be helped if the social system really tries. As with most such stories, the movie ignores the problem of sociopaths and psychopaths overwhelming the social agencies that try to help the young and focuses instead on flawed and troubled children. This movie would rather dwell on insecure little tykes who need a hug from John Ritter — who plays the enlightened director of a detention facility staffed almost completely by time-serving naptakers — then on tougher problems.

Raphael Sarge is the almost-grown boy who commits not very serious arson in a rage after his beloved brother, his only close family, dies. He also takes off with a horse that isn't quite paid for. Everybody in his Rockies ranch area knows he is a good deal less than Public Enemy No. 1, but a judge sends him to a minimum security correctional center anyway because there are no foster families or other suitable alternatives.

Ritter knows from day one that Sarge's character doesn't need anything like a reform school. In fact, his highest hope is that the experience of being locked up with his other charges doesn't turn the boy into a criminal. Sarge wears a face that proclaims innocence throughout the arrest and juvenile hearing, and the young actor



Beh  
the  
Peter

projects a wonderfully naive personality that movie what charm it has. Thomas of "Hill Street Blues" teaches while other clowdy gatherings.

This is a time-passing movie does not justify missing "Girls," but certainly beats

IT IS SOMETIMES hard to see "The Stepford Children" Sunday on KGW (8) is in minor league horror story sends the acting out of a fantasy. After all, the idea of children so that some less pleasing habits can be had has a certain appeal.

Don Murray is Steven I. former Stepfordian who after his first wife died. years later he just can't stay in New York, and obviously children are creepy and creepy friends. Nobody is ever looked like those two.

So Harding and dutiful Laura, played by an energetic Barbara Eden, pack up for Children David and Mary Batinkoff, Tammy Lauren they will hate Stepford. V

# Opera star Hines says st

By DAVID STABLER  
of The Oregonian staff

Jerome Hines, the longest reigning singer with New York's Metropolitan Opera Company, appeared before the City Club of Portland Friday — not as a performer but as an advocate for the arts.

His message, delivered in a deep, rolling voice, was that strong leaders are the key to survival of the arts.

"Fund people, not ideas," he said. "For every great idea, there are 1,000 people who have it, but only one or two who can carry it out."

Hines is in town rehearsing for Portland Opera's production of "Macbeth," which opens next week.

His 46-year career — including years at the Met — has taken opera houses around the world.

To illustrate his message, Hines talked about the state of the arts in New Jersey, where he lives and is an outspoken member of the Council on the Arts. He said that because Gov. Thomas H. Kean made New Jersey a center for the arts, the state's increased arts funding from \$10 million in five years to \$16.6 million in five years.

But the national picture is bleak, Hines said. When he started his career, there were 100 opera companies and about 200 opera singers in the country. Now, there were 150 companies and about 100 singers.

# 'Passion' a comic look at tragedy of the soul

By BOB HICKS  
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