



David Gordon's Pick Up Company performs at Garden Theatre photo by Callie Shell

## Gordon performance pedestrian

David Gordon's Pick Up Company opened last evening at the Garden Theatre as part of Spoleto Festival USA. The informality in the presentation takes one by surprise. In this case, Gordon has picked up a total of seven theatrically-trained individuals.

The evening was divided into two sections—"T.V. Reel" and "Changing Horses." In order to understand how Gordon's repetitions and variations operate, one has to visualize his movement style. He has said of himself that he is not a technically trained dancer—and that he is lazy. "My leg never went up very high, and turning still makes me vomit." His movement would best be described as pedestrian—the audience has the desire to join in with the toe-tapping music of Miller's Reel. There is very much a flavor of square dancing. What would seem to be improvisation is dispelled by the intricate hand meetings—entwines and embraces that occur so specifically and deliberately.

It is surprising how material that is so similar can be varied in so many ways. Perhaps it is the variation in

types and talents that are interpreting Gordon's work.

Valda Setterfield is one of the main reasons—Gordon's work survives the multiple repetitions in steps. Her voice and stage presence captures the audience and she becomes the central figure at all times. Her style of movement gave the evening the only flavor of true dance.

Gordon concentrates on words and silence—his movement works best to dialogue, even though the performers comment entirely without facial expression, there is a wonderful wit and irony that is brought forth in the evening's script. When music is added and the ensemble is called upon to display their terpsichorean talents, we realize that the choreography is designed for the present ensemble and although there are attempts at *Pilobolus*-like lifts and tableaux—with the exception of Valda Setterfield these are not trained dancers' bodies and this becomes a weakness. This does not overshadow the objectives of David Gordon's compositions. His works are not theatrical or spectacular—but Gordon's dances are filled with humor, irony and social comment.

It is an evening to acquaint one's self with a talented group that is in the process of developing a highly innovative approach to theatre movement!

**Dance  
Review**  
by Robert Ivey