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ENTERTAINMENT/THE ARTS

Dance

Half Missed the Best Half

By Jean Battey Lewis

By the time the intermission rolled around at the program of avant-garde music and dance last night at Wolf Trap Farm Park, half the audience had left. Those who did missed one of the wittiest, liveliest, far-out dance performances I have seen.

Before the intermission, six musicians calling their group Musica Elettronica Viva created remarkable improvisations, atonal and nonrhythmic, but structured and brilliantly controlled by a common impulse. Probably unfortunately, a few

dancers from Grand Union hopped around at the back of the stage in an uninspired example of minimal art.

Perhaps their low key antics distracted from the fine work of the virtuoso composers-performers that make up Mev—Frederic Rzewski, Richard Teitelbaum, Gregory Reeve, Jon Gibson, Garrett List and Anthony Braxton.

When the Grand Union dancers took over after intermission they brought a rich mixture of fantasy, parody, games and reality. They mixed deadpan, amusing dialogue, grotesque

dancing, loose-limbed tap routines, natural athletic movements—running, jumping and jiggling—and non-dance action—zipping into a sleeping bag, piling up on the floor, moving spotlights around.

The action moved crazily from reality to nonreality. At one moment two girls gaze tenderly at a pillow stuffed into a hat as if it were a baby—the next moment they laugh at it for what it is.

Grand Union, originally formed by Yvonne Rainer (who was not part of last night's group), is a movable

collection of individuals who interact yet keep their identities. Last night's group included Trisha Brown, Douglas Dunn, Nancy Lewis, Barbara Dilley, Steve Paxton and David Gordon, who has a keen eye for ridiculous theatrics.

Years ago Gordon did a hilarious, eye-batting take-off here to Judy Garland's singing "Over the Rainbow." Last night with the smallest of gestures he touched his shoulder, his hip, his neck, his ear, and suggested all the narcissistic pop singers who ever lived. It was just one delight in an evening full of them.