

minor, gives the impression of something half-remembered, so her pascings and repetitions seem like private musings. In the second section of the dance, "Two-Way Play," it's a small almost-march step which stands out and a little shoulder shimmy which seems inordinately sensuous because it's surrounded by otherwise austere, contained movement. The third section, "Mix," has a lot of prancy and off-centered twisty movement and loose hip wiggles; maybe the activities suggested by the loosened-up music of Steeley Dan and Stuff. In the newest work, *Native Dancer* (set to music by Bartók, played live by Evan Paris and Carol Buck), an old-time theatrical, maybe even vaudeville, trick is what holds our attention. A man takes a handstand and holds it for a minute or more, while violinist Paris, playing his instrument, circles the upside-down dancer and even kneels beside him.

I remember these moments because they're exceptions to Padow's cooled-down style. But I found the dances so chilly as to be a little bloodless; I felt distanced from them, as if they didn't have enough warmth to make it to where I was sitting.

The latest theatrical investigation of the collision between words and movement by **David Gordon/Pickup Co.** was titled *An Audience With the Pope (or This Is Where I Came In)*. It was performed in a loft at 451 Broadway, April 12-15, 19-22, and 26-29. It features a particularly delicious pseudo-scholarly text, read on tape with appropriate seriousness by David Vaughan in his mellow-voiced British accent. Early on, the text discusses, among other things, the theatrical predilections of a Renaissance pope who, it is claimed, was a commedia dell'arte player and practiced mime and sleight of hand. Late in the monologue, Vaughan discusses terms derived from the word "pope," such as popular and pot-pourri. If it all sounds plausible, it becomes less so when the discussion proceeds quietly to terms like popeye, popcorn, and, finally, poppycock.

As Vaughan reads, slides of him in white ecclesiastical garb are projected against the white wall which serves as backdrop to the performing space. While the lecture proceeds, Gordon himself enters, wearing a black smock top (rather like an altar boy's), black pants, and running shoes, and performs phrases containing walks, leg swings with hand to knee, studied falls. I always like the way Gordon utilizes everyday movement, the way his own body and his work acknowledge and use weight. He is joined, eventually, by Valda Setterfield, and as the two execute phrases drawn largely, perhaps wholly, from Gordon's solo, Setterfield mumbles about cardinals at papal elections and pickpockets in the crowds at papal audiences. A trio takes over and performs, among other things, an admirable suspended run motif, holding each step slightly at its peak. So Gordon illustrates how stylized, how fixed everyday gestures can be. In the perhaps overlong quartet that follows, the dancers continue to perform phrases based on Gordon's solo material. At the end, as all seven dancers assemble in the space, two women wipe their faces and blow their noses at the same time—even that everyday gesture is here set by intent.

The concluding septet is made up of the same material we've been seeing, but no two dancers do the same movement at the same time, and here it feels speedier, and as if it's being done with higher energy. After the relatively less complicated earlier sections, it seems a rich riot of movement.

The foreboding sounds of stringed instruments and traffic at the end of *An Audience With the Pope* served also as the introduction to *What Happened*, Gordon's delightful work in which several dancers describe their fragmented perceptions of a traffic accident while moving in set gestures. The concert began with *One Part of the Matter*, a solo for Setterfield in which she assumes various positions as she and Gordon discuss and analyze on tape what seem to be other, although similar, positions.

The **Rachel Harms Dance Company** presented two new works in the program they offered April 25 and 27 at the Theatre of the Riverside Church. More impressive of the two was Harms's solo, *de Kooning: Woman I*. Done in silence, the dance takes as its starting point artist Willem de Kooning's renderings of women. Harms, in a flesh-colored body suit, races onstage, flinging herself about, arms and legs akimbo. The only sound is that of her panting. Although she shows us her body at odd, broken angles, it is always apparent that the slim, pretty Harms projects a seductive voluptuousness. The dance is brief, but high-tensioned all the way through, and Harms captures in a stunning manner the neurotic, slashing energy, the violence, distortion, and fragmentation that characterize de Kooning's studies of women.

Harms seems intrigued by images drawn from painting and sculpture, and her other, older solo, *Horse*, looks drawn and abstracted from artists' views of that animal rather than the living thing itself. However, she did capture most beautifully the plodding run of a live horse.

At the beginning of *Royal Flush*, Harms's other new work, four women in flesh-colored unitards strut across the stage in profile. After exiting, one suddenly jumps back onstage and hunkers down and lumbers about in a furry suit with an enormous bald belly, a bored, bedraggled gorilla trying to entertain itself by picking at its tummy. Later, another woman returns in a little hat and cloak which suggest Robin Hood, and two others dance in filmy dresses. The music by Tielman Susato sounds medieval, and indeed the dance, with its subject matter, costuming, and episodic structure, reminds me of Pilobolus's investigations of medieval ways in *Monkhood's Farewell*. Just as Harms's dance starts to feel watered down and threatens to lose its way altogether, it ends.

The program was rounded out by two other group pieces. *Sloe Gin* is Harms's bizarre vision of five tipsy women. *On a Fair Wind Following* seems to be about sailing away to far-off lands, and its primary image is unusually strong. Five women sit on the floor one behind the other, raising and lowering one leg and extending it behind them. It looks like an image drawn from sculling—the instant the row of oars clears