

Friday, July 13, 1979

Dance

Gordon pleasing audiences at MoMing

DAVID GORDON once did a dance in which he spoke earnestly to the audience about constructing a dance that would please audiences. He performed the movements while he was explaining, and, from all reports, it pleased audiences.

Gordon—who performs at 8:30 p.m. Saturday and Sunday at that oasis of vanguard seduction, MoMing, 1034 W. Barry Av.—mixes words, dance, everyday movement, and satire into some of the most respected combinations in New York experimental arts.

Arlene Croce, dance critic for the New Yorker, recently called him an avant-garde comedian. She also said Gordon was controlled, sophisticated, shaggy in texture, sensuous in movement, and brilliantly elliptical. Deborah Jowitt said in the Village Voice that “intellect and imagination pervade his works. Cunning and a respect for the uses of absurdity give them their distinctive cast. One leaves a performance of his spare—minimal, if you like that word—pieces feeling as if one’s brain has been tickled in a serious and seriously enjoyable way.”

ALL WEEK, Gordon and Valda Setterfield, a former Merce Cunningham dancer, have taught workshops at MoMing. This weekend they will perform segments from his recent “An Audience with the Pope,” and “Times Four.” Setterfield, who also happens to be Gordon’s wife, will do a 1972 solo, “One Part of Matter,” and he will do his Judson Dance Center classic from 1962, “Mannequin.”

Gordon was last at MoMing in 1975, when he was here as a founding member of Grand Union, a five-person collective that made its own kind of free-wheeling improvisational history. The union with Setterfield is said to be pretty grand, too.



Linda Winer

David Gordon: Mixing words and dance.