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Gordon's 'United States' Is Season's Best

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The KiMo Theatre threw the dance event of the season Friday night and hardly anyone came. Luckily, there are plenty of seats available for tonight's performance of the David Gordon/Pick Up Company's magnificent "United States." The City of Albuquerque is one of 27 co-commissioners of "United States" from 17 states.

After giving the works finishing touches over the summer, Gordon will present the entire work over two evenings at the John F. Kennedy Performing Arts Center in Washington, D.C. in September.

In Albuquerque, Gordon's troupe performs "Words, Music, Wildlife and Weather" — his impressions of the whole wide West, including New Mexico — and "Mozart, Memories and the First Frost" — about Minnesota and New England. They're chock full of energy and imagination, with the dancers moving in

DANCE

THE DAVID GORDON/PICK UP COMPANY performs segments of its new work, "United States" at 8 tonight at the KiMo Theatre, Fifth and Central NW. Tickets cost \$12 and \$15 with discounts for students, seniors and teachers. Tickets are available at all Ticketmaster at Smith's and at the door.

ways that show emotional response to music or recitations.

The dance moves along briskly on the bare KiMo stage. The lights hang in the open space near the ceiling and the brick walls are exposed. Albuquerque's Bayou Seco, a Cajun and salsa band, gets a longer section than most. While its entire "Waltz Across Texas" plays,

the dancers saunter about in lirting steps with their arms folded across their chests.

Most of the final section concerns the weather. It's heralded by a bright pas de deux in which two men wind and unwind each other in a banner with the sun painted on one side and rain on the other as a march blares in the background. Later, as Gordon reads an account of the great Depression era dust storms, three men pretend to be buffeted about by another banner with a drawing of gusts of dirt.

And during a story about a mud slide endangering a California home, four dancers perform steps that illustrate the events in an abstract manner.

For Gordon's section on Minnesota and New England, he takes inspiration from the arts scenes in those areas.

This segment is purer dance. The performers move to Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 17 in G Major with readings from memoirs about piano lessons, attending a first dance and a tap dancer's stage mama.

From the evidence in this program, Gordon's creation is worth the hoopla that accompanies it.