
TV

Anyone who remembers the windows David Gordon used to design for Azuma and a few other favored stores around New York knows that he has an extraordinary gift for placing a few cunningly chosen objects within a circumscribed space in such a way that they will make the maximum effect in relation to that space and to each other. In the pieces Gordon has "constructed" (he won't use the word "choreographed") for his Pick-Up Company, he has revealed a similar gift in respect of movement and words—the same elegance and economy of design, the same wit and irony. All these qualities make him a natural video artist. Recently in his studio Gordon showed three video pieces based on works from his repertory, under the general rubric *Ten Minute TV*—each of the pieces is confined within that time limit.

The most successful, I think, is *Dorothy and Eileen*, in which Valda Setterfield and Margaret Hoeffel talk (ad lib) about their mothers while they perform a series of movement tasks. In the video version, they are also seen sitting at a kitchen table, eating and drinking while they talk. Setterfield is not only a remarkable dancer but a great raconteuse (both of these talents, I think, have a lot to do with her sense of timing and rhythm), and one listens entranced to these reminiscences. With the growing intimacy of the two speakers, the camera moves in closer and closer; at the end they tell each other their mothers' names, and as they do so, they hold hands.

In *Close Up*, Setterfield and Gordon are seen in a series of embraces, from which one of the partners extricates him/herself, at the same time subtracting, as it were, the emotional content from the poses, which are also illustrated in still shots, in which this content seems rather more intense. The third piece, *What Happened*, is the most complex in terms of video technique. It's a kind of choreographic rebus, in which spoken words are illustrated by movements, and this may not be very clear. But the use of such devices as chroma-key and computerized or keyed-in images is brilliantly accomplished. Gordon's collaborator in these videotapes is Edward Steinberg; their work deserves to be widely seen.

DAVID VAUGHAN