

VOICE MAY 29, 1978

By Deborah Jowitt

In DAVID GORDON's ingenious *Not Necessarily Recognizable Objects*, everything—eventually—refers to something else or is something else turned inside out. Gordon and Valda Setterfield baby-jog around their studio in navy blue satin pants, royal blue shoes, white shirts; later, Setterfield and Stephanie Woodard do it. At some point, five dancers do it. Setterfield and Gordon perform a wonderful dance of tight, careful walking steps, their arms around each other, their bodies fitting together like spoons; later, Setterfield performs in a similar close formation with Woodard and Martha Roth. While Gordon and Setterfield do *their* spoon dance, we hear their taped voices arguing equably. She won't tell him what's wrong; by the end of the dialogue, he has become petulant over her secrecy, and without a break they reverse roles ("What's wrong?" she says worriedly) and they run through it all again.

This reversal of roles has already been set up by a scene in which Setterfield and Gordon position themselves in front of a script taped to the wall and read what's written. The dialogue is an argument about what they're supposed to say in this dialogue. "Now you say 'what?'" But it's all on the wall—even the parenthetical laughs and hugs. And, once finished, the two reverse roles.

What seem to be involuntary gestures and exclamations from the five dancers—a pointing finger, a clap on the brow, a line like, "oh, I forgot to . . ."—immediately enter the choreography. Wry Martha Roth stops and, while the others continue to thud back and forth past her, she wonders aloud whether it matters to anyone if she's part of this dance or not. Later after a mistake stalls ev-

the dancers to comment on him while he does it. He also says that he knows this will make us look at him all the more. Ain Gordon, Suzanne Joelson, and Bruce Hoover come out of the little light booth and join the dancers in a series of musing comments that send up just about every imaginable cliché of criticism and art appreciation. As Gordon shuffles about, they compare his projection to Nijinsky's; they mention his primitive power. "I don't care why he does what he does as long as he does what he does," Setterfield says earnestly. Finally, everyone does Gordon's solo in ungainly canon, incorporating his awed line to the audience: "I've just noticed that sometimes I look down, and sometimes I look up," and, like him, leaving by the door.

It was like the best sort of puzzle.

Performing Artservices Inc.
463 West Street
New York, New York 10014
212.989.4953