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PICK UP PERFORMANCE COMPANY

February 18-23, 2003

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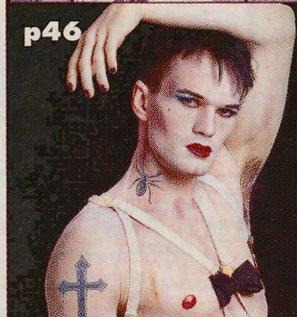
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presents

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PRIVATE LIVES OF DANCERS 2003

February 18 – 23, 2003

Choreography and fictionalized rehearsal dialogue by David Gordon

with

Tadej Brdnik, Tricia Brouk, Scott Cunningham,
María de Lourdes Dávila, David Gordon, Karen Graham,
and Valda Setterfield

Light: Jennifer Tipton

Music: Michael Gordon

Pianist: Alan Johnson

Assistant to the Choreographer: Karen Graham

Production Stage Manager: Ed Fitzgerald

Producer: Alyce Dissette

Leadership support for The Joyce Theater's 2002-2003 season has been received from the LuEsther T. Mertz Charitable Trust.

This Joyce presentation is made possible, in part, with public funds from the National Endowment for the Arts, Natural Heritage Trust, under the auspices of Thomas K. Duane, and the New York State Council on the Arts, a state agency, and with private funds from The Fan Fox and Leslie R. Samuels Foundation, Inc. to encourage the performance of New York City-based companies at The Joyce Theater.

Additional funding provided, in part, by the National Dance Project of the New England Foundation for the Arts, with lead funding from National Endowment for the Arts and Doris Duke Charitable Foundation. Support also provided by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and Altria Group, Inc.

The Joyce Theater wishes to express its appreciation to the Theatre Development fund for its support this season.

This production is supported, in part: with public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs Cultural Challenge Program, the National Endowment for the Arts, The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the Harkness Foundations for Dance, the Fan Fox & Leslie R. Samuels Foundation, the Howard Gilman Foundation, the Live Music for Dance Program of the Mary Flagler Cary Charitable Trust, administered by the American Music Center, and the NYC Danspace Project's 2001-2002 commissioning initiative with support from the Mertz Gilmore Foundation.

Private Lives of Dancers was also made possible, by the National Dance Project of the New England Foundation for the Arts, with lead funding from National Endowment for the Arts and Doris Duke Charitable Foundation. Support also provided by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and Altria Group, Inc.

AND thanks to the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, Dance Division, Madeline Nichols and Susan Kraft for their assistance on this project.

PRIVATE LIVES OF DANCERS 2003

Sound Score

EXCERPTS FROM:

Pick Up Performance Company Dancers/2003
Recorded in rehearsal

Ruth St. Denis & Ted Shawn /1958 /TV interview
courtesy of the Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival Archive

Gertrude Lawrence & Noel Coward /Tonight at 8:30
dressing room quarrel from "Red Peppers"

Merce Cunningham & Robert Raushenberg /1987 /TV interview
courtesy of the Cunningham Dance Foundation

Toni Lander & Bruce Marks /1966 /Radio interview with Walter Terry
*from the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts,
Dance Division and the WNYC Archives*

Eiko & Koma/ 1988/ interviewed by Deborah Jowitt
*commissioned by the Oral History Project, Dance Division,
The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts*

Arnie Zane/ 1987/ interviewed by Lesley Farlow
courtesy of The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts

Bill T. Jones/ 1993/ Interviewed by Lesley Farlow
Courtesy of The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts

*David would like to thank everyone who gave permission to use material
for the sound score including Eiko & Koma, Bill T. Jones and Bruce Marks.*

**THIS PIECE RUNS APPROXIMATELY 115 MINUTES
AND WILL BE PERFORMED WITHOUT INTERMISSION.**

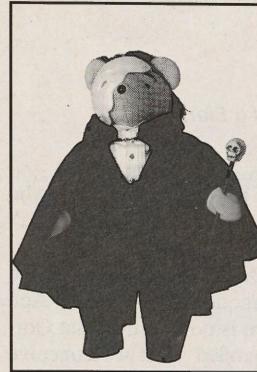
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David Gordon

by Suzanne Carbonneau

What do you call an artist who would title a work *Autobiography of a Liar*?
A postmodernist. (Ba dum.)

But seriously, folks... you would. And not a little to the vexation of the artist himself who declares the terms "postmodern choreography" to be "stakes driven into the heart of a work."

Nevertheless, the artist in question, choreographer/writer/director David Gordon is identified in history books as a founder of what is now generally called postmodernism in dance. And whether or not you accept this description of his achievement, there is no question that Gordon's presence in the field has irrevocably and permanently expanded what we conceive dance to be. A member of the Judson Dance Theater and Grand Union, the choreographic and improvisatory collectives that revolutionized modern dance by stripping it of the Romanticism and Expressionism of its founders, Gordon has remained in the succeeding forty years one of the most consistently experimental and original artists working with movement. For despite critical acclaim and an assured place in history, Gordon has yet to show any signs of resting on his laurels. Today, he remains as defiantly maverick—and important—as he was when he shared stages in Greenwich Village in the 1960s with Yvonne Rainer, Trisha Brown, and Steve Paxton.

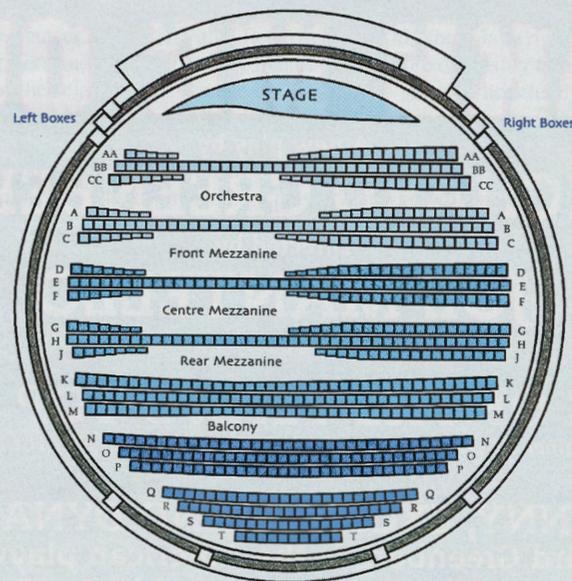
Gordon created *Autobiography of a Liar* in 1999, and, in addition to being a collection of personal and creative vignettes, the work is also a compendium of the concerns that he has been examining over the course of his career. The title is a joke, of course, but is, at the same time, immensely serious in its questioning of the idea of perception as unreliable, of memory as fallible, and of truth as ultimately unknowable. It is a theme he has returned to again and again. Yet, even as he is aware of his fool's errand, Gordon will go ahead and make the attempt at finding truth – or rather, competing truths – all the while openly (eagerly!) exposing the rickety and ultimately illusionary nature of the enterprise. The glue that invariably holds all of these contradictions together is Gordon's keen wit. Exhibit A: Gordon describes *Autobiography of a Liar* as "half remembered half truths about dances made another time in another life accommodating the talents of performers I was in love with and remade for the talents of performers I hope to be in love with now." And many such passages of Gordon's works have more in common with Abbott and Costello and their "Who's on first?" routine than they do anything choreographed by Martha Graham.



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Such verbal dexterity is matched by a physical language whose virtuosity is also concerned with punning, allusion, about-faces, and multiple meanings, and these twinned and twined disciplines are the hallmarks of his work. For Gordon, all language implies action. Interested in the ways that the interaction of words and movement increase the possibilities for complicating and layering meaning, he ricochets between the scrupulously literal and the fancifully symbolic meanings of both words and actions, and is most happy, it seems, when these things exist simultaneously.

This idea of revealing each work's philosophical and structural scaffolding is endemic to Gordon. Most of the work he has made since the 1970s has dealt with the idea of performance as an illusion that is created by real people. And like Penn and Teller who purposefully betray the cardinal rule of professional magicians by revealing to their audiences how their tricks are done, Gordon also exposes how his work is constructed by mixing autobiography and fiction, by moving back and forth between performer-as-performer and performer-as-person, by acknowledging the false authority of the creator, by foregrounding the artificiality and manipulation of the theater, by revealing process, by breaking the theatrical “fourth wall,” and by inserting matter-of-factness into the most magical theatrical moments. In fact, his works are backstage musicals taken to their ultimate conclusion. The incorporation of his family (his wife, the luminous dancer and actor Valda Setterfield, and his son, playwright and director Ain Gordon) as performers and co-creators only makes things more devilishly tricky as what is real and what is not in the relationships we see on stage come to seem hopelessly entangled. The Gordons's madcap and heartrending Obie-winning *The Family Business* (1994), for example, is about a plumbing concern but it's also about *this* family business and *this* family's *business*. (Gordon plays an old mustachioed woman who is really Gordon who is also his aunt, while Ain is a father *and* his son who aspires to be a playwright who will write the play that is actually being performed now, and Setterfield is the mother and...you get the picture.) Following who's who and what's what at any given moment of this work makes that infernally labyrinthine Abbott and Costello routine seem like a Dick and Jane reader.

Because Gordon has used language in performance virtually from the beginning of his career, to call the work “choreography” misses what is essential to its nature. (Hence, Gordon's annoyance with the term. Up until recently, he preferred to call his work “work,” and to say that he “constructed” it.) In fact, most of the standard categories for differentiating performance cannot begin to suggest what it is that Gordon does. These characterizations exist only for the intellectual convenience of those who need familiar archetypes with which to try to come to terms with artistic achievement—even experimental achievement. But these constructs are inadequate, if not outright dishonest, as descriptions of his work. Gordon is not interested in conforming to ideas about what he should be doing, or to fit in with what other artists have done or are doing; rather, his interests lie in expanding ideas about what performance can be. And, after all these years, his impatience with the whole business is understandable.

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During the last decade, Gordon's work has been most often categorized as theater — although his original work is not any closer to the traditional notion of drama than it was dance. For if these works are "plays," they would have to be described as profoundly choreographed. In these works, everything moves—sets, props, performers. In fact, they are so thoroughly conceived from the standpoint of movement that, even with their fully fleshed-out texts, every moment is dancery. You'd be hard-pressed to pick out "dance" sections as they exist as interludes in traditional plays; rather, it's all dance, even if there's not a recognizable dance "step" in sight. Even the text, which is conceived from a rhythmic as well as a narrative standpoint, contributes to the sense of propulsive action. This is a singular achievement: no other movement artist has achieved this level of integration in the theater as writer, director, and choreographer.

With this theatrical work, Gordon has finally embraced the use of the term "choreography" to describe his movement contribution to these integrated performances. For the term is no longer a limitation, but a more apt description than "blocking" or "staging" of how it is that Gordon conceives these works, alongside his writing and directing. Gordon has also been in the spotlight recently as the director and writer of "PAST Forward" (2000), White Oak's hugely successful Judson Dance Theater revival program that was instigated by Mikhail Baryshnikov. And if this canonization of an American avant-garde revolutionary by a Russian ballet dancer conjures visions of the Disneyfication of the Impressionists, rest assured. Somehow, one knows that Gordon's work is undoubtedly too uncompromising, too witty, too prickly, too analytic, too complex—in other words, too damn smart—to succumb to mass marketing. And that, of course, has always been the mark of genius.

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WHO'S WHO IN THE COMPANY

DAVID GORDON (*Director/Writer/Choreographer*). Director: *He Who Gets Slapped*/Andreyev/workshop/Theatre for a New Audience 2002. Director: *The Roundheads and The Pointheads*/B.Brecht/The Actors Studio (member) 2002. Writer/Director: *Past/Forward*/White Oak Dance Project 2000. Writer/Choreographer: *Family\$Death@Art. Comedy*/Danspace commission 2000/Bessie. Writer/Choreographer: *Autobiography of a Liar*/Danspace Commission 1999. Director/Choreographer: *The First Picture Show* written w/A. Gordon/Mark Taper Forum Commission 1999. Awarded Pew Charitable Trust Grants in theater and in dance 1995/96. Director/Choreographer: *The Firebugs*/M.Frisch/Guthrie Theater 1995. Director/Choreographer: *Shlemiel the First*/I.B. Singer/A.R.T. & A.M.T.F. 1995/A.C.T. 1996/Geffen/Dramalogue awards/Choreo/Direction 1997. Writer/Director w/A.Gordon: *The Family Business*/1994/Obie. Writer/Director: *The Mysteries and What's So Funny?*/1992/Bessie/Obie/published/Grove Press. Television: PBS/Great Performances/PBS Alive TV/BBC/Channel 4/UK.

Guggenheim Fellow (1981/1987.) Panelist/Chair: N.E.A. Dance Program. Director: Pick Up Performance Co. (Founded 1971/inc 1978 not-for-profit org. Founding member/The Grand Union. Founding artist/Judson Church performances. Performed w/J.Waring, Y.Rainer. Upcoming projects: Choreographer/new work/Danspace/2004. Director/choreographer: *The Chairs*/E.Ionesco/Spoletto USA/BAM Harvey NextWave/UCLA 2004.

TADEJ BRDNIK (*Dancer*) began his dance career with Dioniz, Dance Forum Celje and Dance Theater Aldea in Slovenia. Since moving to NY in 1993, he has danced with Coyote Dancers, Battery Dance Company, Avila/Weeks Dance, White Oak Dance Project, Martha Graham Dance Company (including last month at The Joyce), Robert Wilson and Pick Up Performance Company among others. Mr. Brdnik has taught extensively in the United States, Slovenia and the UK. He is currently on the faculty at Martha Graham School of

WHO'S WHO IN THE COMPANY

Contemporary Dance. He is a recipient of Benetton Dance Award and a scholarship given by the Gregory Peck Foundation.

TRICIA BROUK (*Dancer*) is originally from Arnold, Missouri. She has a B.F.A. in dance from Stephens College and is the director/owner of 11th Street Fitness. Tricia assisted the late Christopher Gillis at The Paul Taylor School and at SUNY Purchase. She is a member of the Lucinda Childs Dance Company, Big Dance Theater and was also a principal with the Doris Humphrey Repertory Dance Company. She has worked with Robert Wilson, Meg Harper, Margie Gillis, Kate Johnson, Andre Gingras, Eun Me Ahn, and Ben Munisteri Dance projects.

SCOTT CUNNINGHAM (*Dancer*) is from Needham, MA. He has been performing with David Gordon since 1986 in a variety of projects, plays, musicals and television.

He has taught dance at UW/Madison and Long Island University and shown his choreography at Judson Church, Dancespace and on the Family Matters Series at Dance Theater Workshop. His choreography can be seen in the Disney film *Tuck Everlasting*. Many thanks to Emily, Niall, Delia, Gertie, family and friends.

MARÍA DE LOURDES DÁVILA (*Dancer*) is from Puerto Rico, where she danced with Ballets de San Juan. She was a soloist with the Joyce Trisler Danscompany from 1989 to 1992, when she joined the Lucinda Childs Dance Company. She has danced the works of Ralph Lemon, Pilobolus, and Janis Brenner and most recently Garry Reigenborn, Richard Colton and Amy Spencer, Amy O'Brien and Sabrina Peck. María earned her Ph.D. at Harvard University and has published a book, *The Image Arrives on a Verbal Shore: Forms of Visual Language in the Works of Julio Cortázar*. She teaches at NYU and is married to baritone Peter Stewart.

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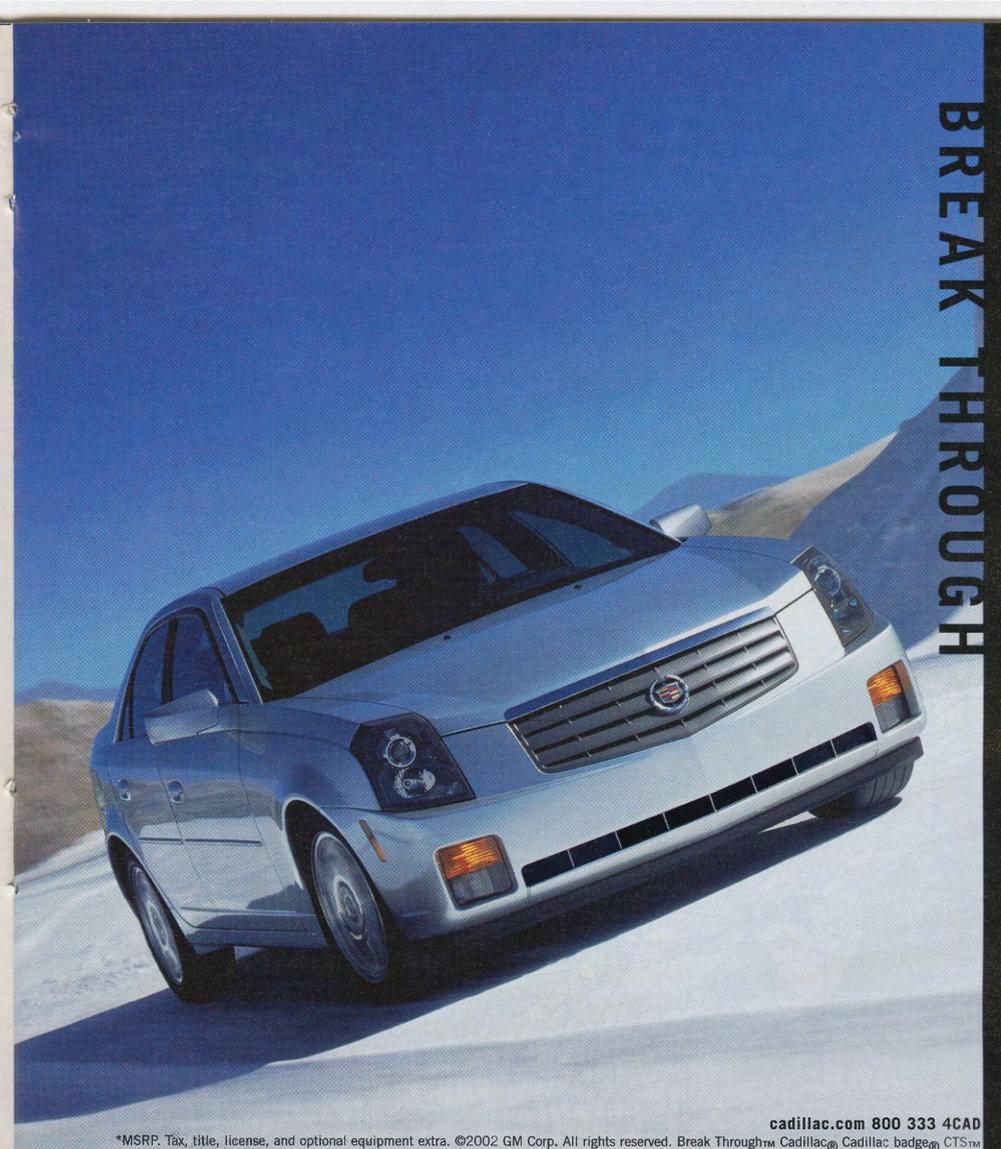
KAREN GRAHAM (*Dancer*) moved to New York in 1984 and has been performing in, and more recently choreographing dances since then. She joined the Pick Up Performance Company in 1986 and has been a part of numerous dance and theatre projects as performer and assistant to David Gordon. She has also worked with Randy Warshaw, Allyson Green, Cynthia Oliver and White Oak Dance Project. Her choreography has been presented by Movement Research at Judson Church, University Settlement and several times at Danspace Project, most recently in April of this year when she presented *The Thief*.

VALDA SETTERFIELD (*Dancer*), a British-born dancer and actor, has worked with JoAnne Akalaitis, Woody Allen, Mikhail Baryshnikov, Caryl Churchill, Merce Cunningham, Graciela Daniele, Richard Foreman, Maria Irene Fornes, Brian DePalma, Ain Gordon, David Gordon, Ivo van Hove, Don Mischer, Marie Rambert, Yvonne Rainer, Donald Saddler, Michael Sexton, James Waring, Robert Wilson and Mark Wing-Davey. She received an Obie for *The Family Business* and a Bessie for Outstanding Achievement. She has been a member of the Pick Up Performance Company since its inception.

JENNIFER TIPTON (*Lighting*) is well known for her work in theater, dance and opera. Her work in opera includes Glyndebourne's *Euryanthe* and the English National Opera's *War and Peace*. Her recent work in dance includes Paul Taylor's *Promethean Fire* and Trisha Brown's *The Geometry of Crying*. In theater her recent work includes *Mourning Becomes Electra* at Seattle's ACT, *Twelfth Night* at the Yale School of Drama, Wallace Shawn's *The Designated Mourner* in Vienna and *To You, the Birdie* for the Wooster Group. Ms. Tipton also teaches lighting at the Yale School of Drama. She is the recipient of the Dorothy and Lillian Gish Prize in 2001 and the Jerome Robbins Prize in 2003.

MICHAEL GORDON (*Composer*) was raised in Nicaragua in an Eastern European community on the outskirts of Managua. He is co-founder of Bang on a Can. His music, which combines the intensity and power of rock music and his formal composition studies at Yale, is attracting an enthusiastic international following. *Decasia* was recently premiered in Basel, Switzerland with a symphony orchestra playing from a pyramid type scaffolding structure engulfed by the visual imagery of filmmaker Bill Morrison and Ridge Theater. Morrison's film version of *Decasia* was shown at the 2002 Sundance Festival. Audiences literally erupted after recent performances of Gordon's orchestral work, *Sunshine of Your Love*, by the Ensemble Modern Orchestra with John Adams conducting. His new string quartet for Kronos, Potassium, has received nearly 50 performances in 12 countries. Gordon's music has been presented at BAM, Lincoln Center, the Kennedy Center, the Royal Albert Hall, the Bonn Oper, the Sydney 2000 Olympic Arts Festival and the Rotterdam, Edinburgh, St. Petersburg, Huddersfield and Settembre music festivals. His CDs include *Decasia* (Cantaloupe), *Weather* (Nonesuch) and *Trance* (Decca).

ALAN JOHNSON (*Pianist*) first collaborated as music director and pianist with David Gordon in *The Mysteries and What's So Funny?* in 1991, followed by *Punch and Judy Get Divorced* in 1996. As conductor, he has led numerous opera and music theater premieres by composers Philip Glass, Tina Davidson, John Duffy, Leroy Jenkins, Michael John LaChiusa, John Moran, Polly Pen, Dan Moses Schreier, and Michael Torke, among others. He has given performances as pianist and accompanist at venues including the Walker Art Center, Diverseworks, Dia Center for the Arts, Alice Tully Hall, and The Kitchen. Alan received an Obie award in 1998 for Sustained Excellence in Music Direction. He holds degrees in music from the University of Illinois and the University of Miami in Florida. Upcoming: *The Sound of a Voice*, a new theater



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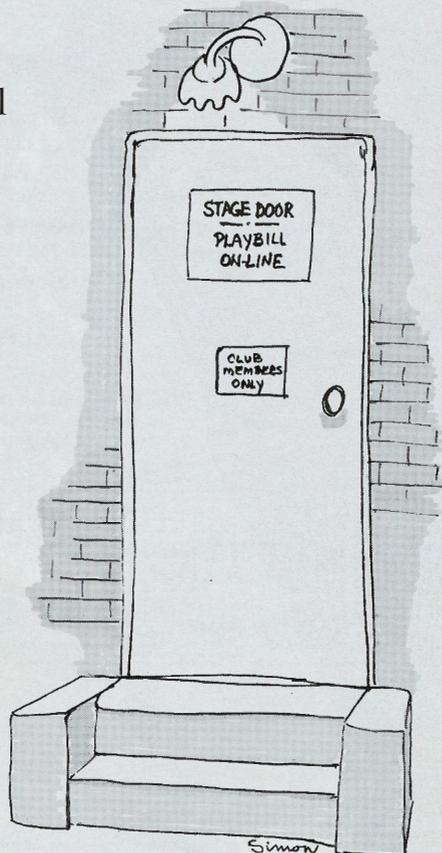
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opera by Philip Glass and David Henry Hwang at American Repertory Theater.

ED FITZGERALD (*Production Stage Manager*) has been a stage manager for over 25 years, on Broadway, Off-Broadway (most recently for Jonathan Larson's *tick, tick...BOOM!*, and frequently for Manhattan Theatre Club) and in major regional theatres. He has been associated with David Gordon since 1992, doing *The Mysteries and What's So Funny?* (national tour), *The Family Business*, *Shlemiel The First*, the Jacob's Pillow retrospective, *Punch and Judy Get Divorced*, *Illustrated Radio Shows*, *The First Picture Show*, *Autobiography of a Liar* and *FAMILY\$DEATH @ART.COMEDY*.

ALYCE DISSETTE (*Producer*) has been working with David Gordon in various capacities for 17 years. She took on the role of producer for the Pick Up Performance Co. to work with David Gordon and Ain Gordon in early 2002. In recent years she has worked with artists including Art Spiegelman David Del Tredici, Nona Hendryx, Dana Reitz, James Turrell, Robert Wilson and Philip Glass and she continues to produce the work of John Kelly. Ms. Dissette was executive producer of the PBS national series "Alive from Off Center" (a.k.a. "Alive TV") from 1990-1993, where her programs merging experimental film and the performing arts won numerous awards and citations including a Cable Ace Award in 1994 for her co-production with "MTV: Music Television." Following "Alive TV," she administered the first year of the computer generated art competition, *New Voices, New Visions* sponsored by Paul Allen's Interval Research Corp. and *Wired* magazine presented by the Lincoln Center Video Festival; and she has produced a number of web sites including James Turrell's Roden Crater, *Extremetaste.com*, and a poetry/spoken word web site gallery with over 20 wordsmiths with an on-line poetry contest sponsored in by Hugo Boss/Proctor & Gamble.

Information in "Who's Who in the Cast" is provided by the production. Where opinions are expressed, they are those of the players, not necessarily those of PLAYBILL Magazine.

Pick Up Performance Company, Inc. is a not-for-profit production company founded in 1978 that develops and produces the contemporary theatre and dance work of David Gordon and Ain Gordon nationally and internationally.

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The Joyce Theater Foundation, a non-profit organization, has proudly served the dance community and its audiences since 1982. The Joyce Theater is named in honor of Joyce Mertz, beloved daughter of LuEsther T. Mertz. It was LuEsther's clear, undaunted vision and abundant generosity that made it imaginable and ultimately possible to build the theater. The purchase and award-winning renovation of the vacant Elgin Theater filled a desperate need for a new kind of dance space in New York. One of the only theaters built by dancers for dance, The Joyce has provided an intimate, elegant and affordable New York home for more than 230 domestic and international companies. Through its Subsidized Rental Program, The Joyce has served scores of dance companies seeking to perform in New York City. As a major dance presenter since 1985, the Foundation has presented more than 150 established and emerging companies. The Joyce has also commissioned more than 75 new dances over the last decade. In 1996, the Foundation created Joyce SoHo, a dance center providing highly subsidized rehearsal and performance space to hundreds of dance artists. The Joyce also serves New York City public school students and teachers in its Dance Education Program and a large adult audience through the Dance Humanities Series and other outreach activities. The Joyce Theater now features an annual performance season of approximately 47 weeks, playing to more than 135,000 people.

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The Joyce Theater has launched an historic effort to ensure a stable future for New York's home for dance. Funds contributed to the endowment campaign will allow the Theater to strengthen its support of the dance community and commission new work. The Joyce honors the following individuals, corporations, and foundations for their visionary support of our mission of advancing the vibrant and extraordinary art of dance.

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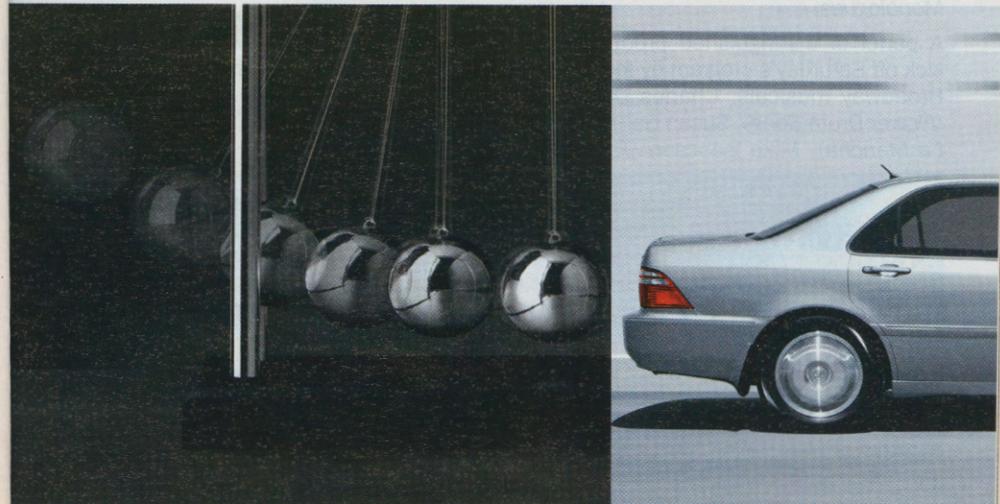
The Joyce Theater would like to extend its thanks to those who generously support the Theater's work on behalf of the dance community. As a non-profit organization, The Joyce Theater depends on the support of individuals, foundations, corporations, and government agencies so it can continue to provide an affordable, state-of-the-art home for dance artists and audiences in New York City. Please pick up materials on the benefits of becoming a Joyce contributor in the lobby of the Theater. For further information on making a donation or bequest to The Joyce Theater, please call Marie-Louise Stegall (212) 691-9740. Thank you for your support.

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BY BEN PESNER

Your Name Above the Title

What, exactly, does a theatrical producer do—and how do you get to be one? There is no exact answer, but to get your name above the title it helps to be a skilled businessperson with artistic sensibilities. Or the other way around.

So, where will tomorrow's Bialystock & Bloom come from? For the past 21 years the Commercial Theatre Institute (CTI) has helped new producers learn how to shepherd productions through opening night and beyond.

Each spring CTI offers an intensive workshop called Producing for the Commercial Theatre. This year the seminar takes place during the weekend of April 25–27 in midtown Manhattan. Open to anyone interested in producing for Broadway, Off Broadway, or elsewhere, the three-day program spotlights various models for production, with panelists presenting their current and recent productions as case studies.

The weekend begins on Friday morning with attorney Nan Bases' in-depth analysis of the legal framework for theatrical productions. Then follow presentations by a pair of theatrical general managers. Abbie Strassler will discuss budgets and labor contracts using Broadway's *Movin' Out* as a model; Nina Essman will do the same for the Off Broadway hit *The Vagina Monologues*.

A panel of distinguished producers will kick off Saturday's program by focusing on Broadway musicals: Charles Dillingham (*Flower Drum Song*), Susan Gallin (*Man of La Mancha*), Mike Isaacson (*Thoroughly*

Modern Millie), Margo Lion (*Hairspray*), and Jeffrey Seller (*La Bohème*). Then comes a mini-symposium on developing and producing plays on Broadway and off. Panelists will include Robyn Goodman (*Metamorphoses*), Mark Johannes (*My Old Lady*), Harriet Leve (*Necessary Targets*), Roy Miller (*I'm Not Rappaport*), and Ric Wanetik (*Jolson and Company*).

Sunday morning's focus is on marketing, beginning with a session conducted by League President Jed Bernstein. Presentations by press agent Keith Sherman, advertising exec James Russek, and marketing consultant Hugh Hysell will follow. Finally, *Rent* producer Kevin McCollum will discuss touring productions.

"Interest in the process of theatrical production has grown over the past two decades," says CTI founder and coordinator Frederic B. Vogel. "So has the diversity of productions, and producing styles. Thanks to CTI alums and other enthusiastic panelists who have donated their time and expertise, we've given more than 4,000 promising producers a head start on the road to theatrical success."

CTI is a project of the League of American Theatres and Producers and Theatre Development Fund. The registration fee is \$315, or \$285 before March 15.

For more information on the CTI Three-Day Intensive Program write to Frederic B. Vogel, Commercial Theatre Institute, 1776 Broadway, Suite 1400, New York, NY 10019. Telephone (212) 586-1109; fax (212) 262-1672.



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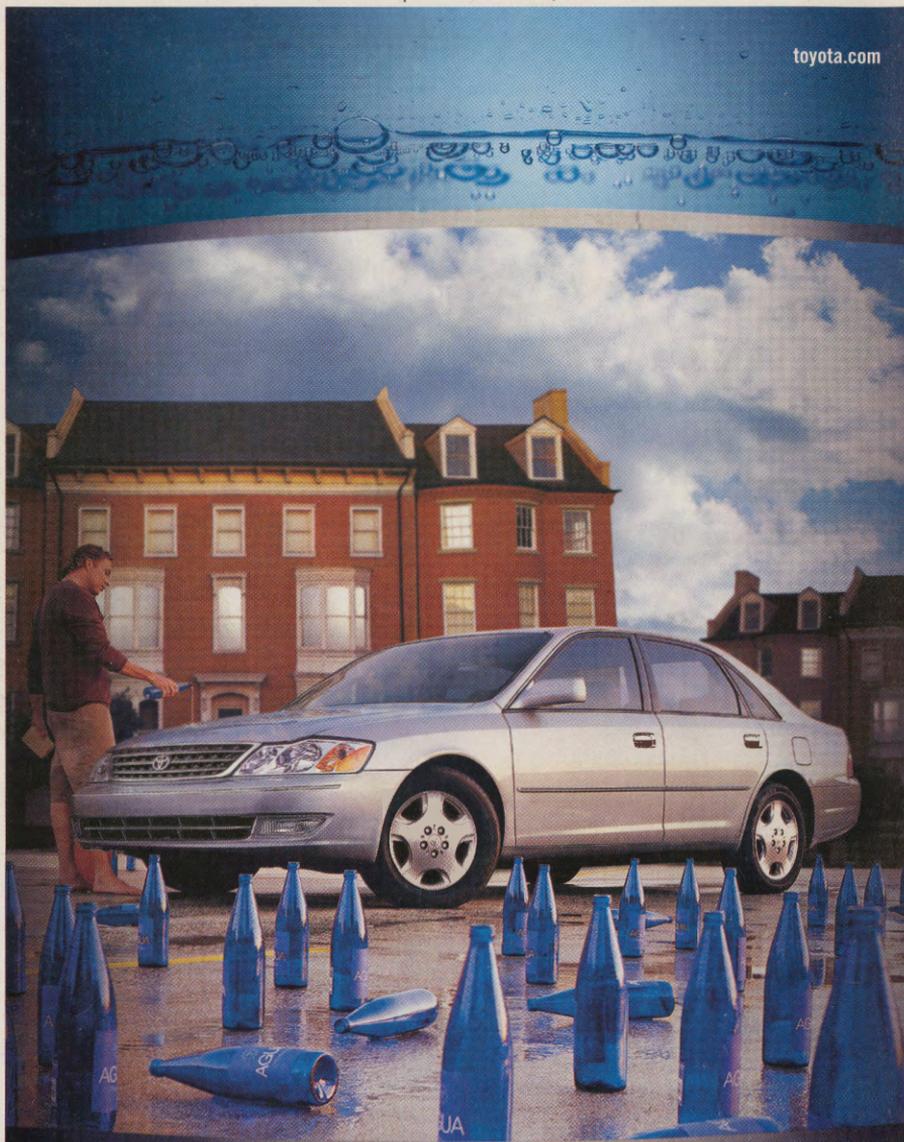
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