



Andrew Eccles/AT&T

David Gordon/Pick Up Co.

Dancers present impressions

By Micki Haller
Senior Editor

Reviewers across the country have raved about David Gordon/Pick Up Co., which will dance in Kimball Recital Hall Friday at 8 p.m.

kimball REVIEW

The group, known for creative ideas and simple natural movements, will perform "Words, Music, Wildlife and Weather," a dance inspired by the western United States. Alert audience members will recognize the Cornhusker Football Fight song, "Hail Varsity" and a list of famous Nebraskans.

The piece is part of a large dance called "United States." Each section was initially inspired by a specific region or city in the country. The dancers will also perform "Mozart, Memories and the First Frost," based on Minnesota.

The western section was commissioned by 27 patrons in 17 states, including the World On Stage UNL Performance Series at Kimball Hall. Commissioners not only gave money, but written material, music and visual art from their region.

"It's like a collage," said Cynthia Oliver, a dancer with the company.

"We're not trying to necessarily represent a region -- we're not trying to become that region," she said.

Instead, the dance is about impressions of a region.

"I don't know if David's been to each and every one of the places represented," she said. "It's not like a tour guide to the United States."

Instead, Gordon was able to gather impressions for each place without necessarily spending a lot of time there, she said.

She is often able to incorporate text with movement, sometimes with humorous results.

For instance, the New England section has the text to a Robert Frost poem spoken, Oliver said. The speaker may stutter or repeat himself, and the movement "stutters" or repeats also.

"I know there's a lot of humor in David's work," she said. "I think that's enjoyable for an audience."

"David has a good sense of timing," she added.

Getting a job with the company also involved a sense of timing, she said.

"To be honest, I was looking for a job," she said. Oliver was making the transition from modeling and com-

mercial dance to concert dance. She looked in the paper, she said, and found the job. Oliver has been with the company for 2 1/2 years.

Oliver said she likes being with a group interested in making Gordon's movement come to life, but she also has a little more freedom than in other groups.

"With David, there's a little more space and time for exploration," she said. "We have a lot of input. David encourages that often."

Most people stay with the company for a fairly long time, she said. She knew of one person who was in the group for seven years.

David Gordon and his wife, Valda Setterfield, also dance with 10 other dancers in the group.

"We're an ensemble of working artists," Oliver said.

Although David Gordon/Pick Up has been described as post-modern, Oliver said it's best to see the performance without any preconceived notions.

"To walk into the theater cold is good enough, unless they're dance aficionados," she said.

Tickets for the performance are \$13 and \$9, half-price for University of Nebraska-Lincoln students.

Debut album needs rock 'n' roll sound, human touch

By Matt Burton
Staff Reporter

Siren
All Is Forgiven
Polygram

Here's an idea: Make an album and don't tape it.

Polygram uses this gimmick hoping a consumer will buy the record. The result is "All is Forgiven," the debut album by Siren, another pop/heavy metal band.

"All is Forgiven" marks the in-

roduction of new recording technologies navigating the "primitive" need for reel-to-reel tape and replacing it with "superior" capabilities to process the sound directly onto disk.

album REVIEW

Consequently, the record has an extremely polished synthesizer/guitar-based sound that's blind to a fundamental rock 'n' roll approach. This

could be attributed to Haas and Massey, the apparent creative forces behind Siren and their musical backgrounds.

Haas and Massey concentrate on keyboards and guitars with too much synthesizer meshed with electric guitar, resulting in a modern, technical sound.

In the title cut, former Cheap Trick replacement Jon Brant lays down a heavy bass line that sounds similar to Living Colour's "Cult of Personality."

Between the bass lines are fast,

unoriginal and plastic guitar riffs. The song also features drum machine noises lacking a personal or human touch. The synthesizers and vocals combine to add a Gothic sound, tacky in a rock 'n' roll album.

"One Good Lover" is another futile attempt toward a rock 'n' roll song. Again, the overbearing synthesizer ultimately detracts from the guitar riffs. The synthesizer fades out for a moment to highlight Haas' cliché guitar solo that will disappoint even the most loyal headbangers.

Siren uses the ol' "Jimi Hendrix

wah-wah pedal" on "Good Kid." The opening note sounds vaguely like the intro to "Are You Experienced," but the similarities end there.

Overall, Siren appears to be a classic example of what is wrong with music today.

The group is caught up with technological breakthroughs and tries to rely on supposedly hot guitar licks. In the process, the members have made an album lacking fundamental rock 'n' roll abilities. In the end, all is forgotten.

'A Theft' breaks new ground in 109 pages

By Mark Lage
Senior Reporter

Saul Bellow
A Theft
Penguin Books

Saul Bellow's latest book, "A Theft," ventures into new territories for one of America's most celebrated authors, in both subject and form.

The novella of 109 pages is Bellow's longest story to feature a female protagonist, and his first book to be released as a paperback original.

Clara Velde, the heroine of the story, has a husband (her fourth), who does nothing all day but read paperbacks.

One day Clara becomes so exasperated with this practice that she grabs his book and hurls it out the window of their apartment building. This scene is detailed in the cover art, and the book being thrown out the window is "A Theft."

Clara, a high-fashion executive in

her forties, has the compactly and intricately constructed background of any Bellow character.

A strictly religious, Midwestern small town upbringing, a coming of age in New York, four rather uninteresting husbands and a lifetime male friend who has remained Clara's only real love are a few of the things that have made up her struggle.

Teddy Regler, important behind-the-scenes governmental thinker, is Clara's friend, and he gave her the emerald ring which she treasures above all else. The theft of this ring gives the story its title and main thread.

For a writer with a Nobel Prize for Literature, a Pulitzer Prize and three

National Book Awards, a paperback original (usually reserved for romances, Westerns and bad science fiction) is a puzzling move.

In attempting to widen his audience, Bellow is apparently running into the same kinds of problems that many of his characters have faced in his stories -- mainly, the incredible shrinking attention span of the average American.

One hundred pages is about as short as Bellow ever gets, and when he couldn't find any magazine that would take it, he decided to release it as a paperback.

Still, Bellow doesn't seem entirely comfortable with the idea, since "A Theft" takes a couple of

digs at itself. Besides being short and in paperback form, Bellow's style is as massively digressive as ever. Unlike many of his long novels, the digressions in this story stay away from the philosophical and theoretical and frequent Bellow stars like Marx, Freud and Spinoza are absent.

The subplots in "A Theft" are of a more intra- and interpersonal nature, as Clara thinks about her relationships with Teddy, her children, her confidante Laura Wong, her husbands and the baby-sitter who is indirectly responsible for the theft of the ring. Also important are Clara's reflections about the ring's importance as she attempts to get it back.

Clara Velde is the latest in a line of

convincingly created, vibrant characters who move intelligently and decisively through their difficulties, and who never cease trying to dig as deep within themselves as possible. At \$7 her story is an incredible bargain.

However, none of this is likely to gain Bellow many new readers, and there probably won't be much of a rush on this book in the near future.

Occasionally, though, someone will wander into a bookstore accustomed to paying big money for a good new book, see the new Bellow story in the paperbacks section, blink several times in disbelief, and then instinctively suck a copy of the book directly up the nose. Don't get in the way.

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