

Arts & Leisure

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THIS WEEK

At 51, He Still Likes to 'Dip In'

SAN FRANCISCO

Middle age has softened the gangly 6-foot-4-inch frame of the writer and choreographer Joe Goode. But even 24 years in California have not completely eradicated the lilt of his Virginia speech.

"I love the music of language," Mr. Goode, 51, said in his second-floor studio in this city's Mission neighborhood. "I love the poetic arc of a phrase and the way you can hang it onto the poetic arc of movement."

Mr. Goode no longer dances on a regular basis, but his dancing will be a highlight of his company's performances at the Joyce Theater in Manhattan, from Tuesday through Friday, at 8 each night.

Ever since he started making works for his six-member Joe Goode Performance Company in 1986, Mr. Goode has mixed the spoken word with dance. Sometimes the two modes of expression flow together; other times they rub against each other, creating friction and tension.

In Mr. Goode's theatrical universe, the aspirations of ordinary people get dashed by everyday living and individual fallibility. But instead of despairing, they pick themselves up and keep going. Mr. Goode's characters are at once ridiculous and vulnerable, and



Robert Bryant

Joe Goode and Elizabeth Burritt in his "Doris in a Dustbowl" in 1989; they reprise it this week.

he views them with both humor and melancholy. Jennifer Dunning, writing in The New York Times, called his 1998 work "Deeply There (Stories of a Neighborhood)," in which a group of befuddled friends and family members gather around a dying man's bed, "fresh, touching and wickedly funny."

Mr. Goode said he liked to "dip in and out of performing." This week he will reprise his portrayal of Rock Hudson in his 1989 piece "Doris in a Dustbowl"; Elizabeth Burritt, a longtime company member and "my muse," as Mr. Goode put it, will again take on the role of Doris Day. Mr. Goode will also play a wistful Pinocchio in excerpts from his 1995 work "Take Place."

"It's great fun for me these days to not be in the work," he said, "and then it's fun for me to be in again."

RITA FELCIANO