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## GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

S	•	M	•	T	•	W	•	T	•	F	•	S
9		10		11		5		6		7		8

### CRITIC'S NOTEBOOK WAR REPORTING

David Gordon has always been postmodern dance's premier minimalist. So you could say he was almost showing off when, in 2004, he took on Shakespeare's "Henry V"—with its massed armies, its take-charge king, its pretty princess—and



made his own version, "Dancing Henry Five." Shakespeare's play runs four hours; Gordon's show lasts an hour. He uses only seven dancers, in black Bermudas. The set, as is usual with Gordon, you could buy in a hardware store: some folding chairs, a ladder. Valda Setterfield, a beloved dancer (and Gordon's wife), delivers the narration. This omits great hunks of Shakespeare's text and adds commentary by Gordon, criticizing the patriotic aspects of the original play and perhaps also England's exploitation of it, as almost a national anthem, during the Second World War. (See the 1944 Olivier film.) Still, there are tender moments: Falstaff's death and, on the eve of battle, the soldiers' fear, the horses' nervousness. "Dancing Henry Five" will be revived Oct. 6-9, at Montclair State University. Chartered buses will leave from Port Authority.

—Joan Acocella