

the village

VOICE

Musto's 15
Minutes at
the Warhol
Seance P40

Off the Walls

*"Brave New Worlds"
at Lincoln Center*BY VALERIE
GLADSTONE

After spending months in Utah's wilderness, I found the ancient person in myself," declares Washington, D.C., choreographer Maida Withers. Anxious to use the experience, she asked photographers, musicians, dancers, and poets to join her there for eight weeks to create a theater piece saturated with the local beauty and myths.

Jeaneth Webster, producer of Lincoln Center Out-of-Doors, went for it. "The amount of art outside of New York is staggering," she explains. "Looking at the amazing videos we were getting from Acadian Canada, the Watts district of Los Angeles, Monterrey, Mexico, and of course from Maida, I began to visualize America as a vibrant, rich, united continent with a whole new race." She'd found her theme.

Give thanks half the city is out burning up on the beaches; it means more space to see what else Webster's found for the astonishingly eclectic 26-year-old festival. "While Damrosch Park supposedly seats 4000, often 10,000 attend. People hang all over the walls," she reports.

How often do you get jazz master Sonny Rollins, the Dallas Black Dance Theatre, a tribute to Anna Sokolow on

her 85th birthday, the Senegalese ballet *Black Pearls*, Trinidadian steel drummers, seven world premieres including composer Neely Bruce's work for six theremins, Chinese folk opera, and special events for kids, all in one series? Opening August 13 with "Latin Divas," LCOOD runs through September 4 with 66 different events, every one free.

Webster has commissioned three dance pieces, including Withers's evocation of the sacred land of the Anasazi Indians, *Tukusmikivatz*. "Against video projections onto 16-foot buttes decorated with ancient paintings, my dancers will take you on a high-tech, multimedia journey into timeless legends," says the choreographer.

Composer Carman Moore, a Lincoln Center regular, went to Webster with a plea to commission "six really killer creative people." His concept, "New Moves in Collaboration," features three musician-choreographer teams. Only Shen Wei and Kung Chi Shing have worked together before;



Belly dancer Dunya

DANIEL FAIGERHO

they deal with the emotional experience of crossing out of China into Western life. Eric Johnson met Dunya—"the best belly dancer in the world," says Moore—via tape, as Nicholas Leichter met musician Christian Cherry. Moore explains his motive: "Choreographers hardly ever get to work with music made just for them, and they love it."

The Kathak Ensemble also does some mixing and matching. Says di-

rector Janaki Patrik, "I've been trying to combine Indian dance and tap; they both use percussive footwork." The resulting *Ka-Tap* juxtaposes foot moves and shows how well jazz accompanies traditional Indian styles; she pairs Ellington's "Come Sunday" with a Sanskrit prayer.

Webster pushed hard for the tribute to Watts. Under the supervision of the sculptor John Outterbridge, the Watts Towers will get rebuilt on the North Plaza by anyone interested in some hard labor and honoring the artists who lived in the Los Angeles district. Later the Lula Washington Dance Theatre takes the stage.

Ghostdance grew out of secret ceremonies that composer Pauline Oliveros attended last year in a cemetery near Monterrey, Mexico. "The people were honoring their ancestors," she explains. She found dancers in the excellent local companies and, with a commission from Lincoln Center, made this eerie piece. "We scheduled it for twilight in the wooded area of Damrosch Park," says Webster, "so it will be full daylight above the trees, and shadowy beneath. Pauline wants to get across how the worlds of the living and the dead intertwine." ♦