

LIVE FROM LINCOLN CENTER
July 19, 2001 8:00 p.m. on PBS
Lincoln Center Festival 2001

Webster's Dictionary defines the word *extraordinary* as "going beyond what is usual, regular, or customary." What a perfect description of the Lincoln Center Festival! Festival Director Nigel Redden scours the world for outstanding organizations in all the arts--music, dance, theater, circus, and film--and brings them to New York under the umbrella of the Lincoln Center Festival for a dizzying three weeks of performances. We'll sample some of the wonders of this year's Lincoln Center Festival on our next Live From Lincoln Center telecast on Thursday evening, July 19.

Our cameras and microphones will be deployed all over the Lincoln Center "campus," beginning with the bright yellow tent set up outdoors in Lincoln Center's Damrosch Park. Rising almost 60 feet into the air, with seating for more than 900 people, the tent is the setting for the United States debut of the adventurous French circus troupe, Cirque Plume.

Founded in 1983, Cirque Plume has garnered rave reviews from critics and public alike wherever the company has appeared. It will present one of its trademark productions, *Mélanges*, in its United State premiere. The work mixes and interweaves the colorful and surreal in several stories with song, music, circus, theater, and dance. Among other elements in *Mélanges* are: a flight through the air on a double bass; a musician who dreams he is Jimmy Hendrix; a scarecrow with hats; a modern dancer in search of her identity; a Dionysian acrobat; three baroque lady musicians; and a manager. The performance launches people into the air on ropes, doing somersaults on bikes, playing unusual music, and balancing on feathers. No wonder the illustrious Parisian newspaper, *Le Figaro*, wrote, "Cirque Plume has never ceased to amaze us... it is hilarious and poetic." During our Live From Lincoln Center telecast, we'll look in upon Cirque Plume and *Mélanges* on two separate occasions.

One of the mini-series of this year's Lincoln Center Festival is "Africa Out Loud," a celebration of African popular music. Within that context, in Lincoln Center's Avery Fisher Hall, will be a performance by Youssou N'Dour of Senegal, one of Africa's biggest international stars. He and his band, the Super Étoile, are acknowledged worldwide as Africa's most popular live band. *Rolling Stone* magazine has praised N'Dour as "a singer with a voice so extraordinary that the history of Africa seems locked inside it."

N'Dour, for more than 20 years, has shaped the popular music of Senegal, a music known as "mbalax" which blends traditional percussion, praise-singing, and Afro-Cuban music. *Set*, a 1996 recording by N'Dour, climbed into a *Billboard* magazine's list of the top world music albums of all time. *Set*, in fact,

sparked a social movement in Senegal, and in the words of N'Dour "became a rallying cry for good behavior in public, for getting things done without waiting for the government to do them." Along similar public service lines, N'Dour has also been active with Amnesty International, and last year he was named a goodwill ambassador for UNICEF and a UN Messenger of Peace. He has formed the Youth Network of Development in Senegal with an initial goal of building Internet-access centers and online communication throughout Africa. On our Lincoln Center Festival telecast we'll visit Youssou N'Dour and his band twice.

Closer to home, we'll look in on the New York premiere of *El Trilogy* as it is performed in the Concert Hall of the LaGuardia High School of Music and Art. *El Trilogy* is the culmination of a two-year collaboration between two innovative figures on the contemporary arts scene: the choreographer Trisha Brown and jazz trumpeter/composer Dave Douglas. The three sections of *El Trilogy* are titled "Five Part Weather Invention," "Rapture to Leon James," and "Groove and Countermove." The performers are the Trisha Brown Dance Company and Dave Douglas and his Ensemble, with sets and visual design by acclaimed visual artist Terry Winters and lighting designed by award-winner Jennifer Tipton.

Trisha Brown is a founding member of the famed Judson Dance Theater in the 1960s, and formed her own company in 1970. She has collaborated frequently with visual artists and contemporary composers, such as Robert Rauschenberg and Laurie Anderson. She is one of the most renowned choreographers of the post-modern period and has continued to experiment and create a distinctive body of work. *Time Out New York* wrote: "(Her) movement is a thrilling blend of athletic prowess as well as a captivating, undaunting fixation on detail."

For his part, Dave Douglas has long been interested in the integration of music with other disciplines: He has written music inspired by other musicians, by visual art, history, global politics, literature, and social issues. He has incorporated into the vocabulary of jazz such elements as folk, contemporary and pop music, free improvisation and electronics, creating in the process a new and unclassifiable sound.

Throughout the program, we'll pay periodic visits to another of the summertime delights of Lincoln Center life, Midsummer Night Swing, where nothing is predictable and everything is joyous fun. And to round out the 90 minutes, we'll be entertained by one of the great chanteuses of the cabaret world, Anne Hampton Calloway.

Do join us for a most unusual Live From Lincoln Center visit on Thursday evening, July 19. Again, I must advise you to check with your local PBS station as to the exact date and time of the telecast in your area. See you then!

