

A Village Seen In Movement

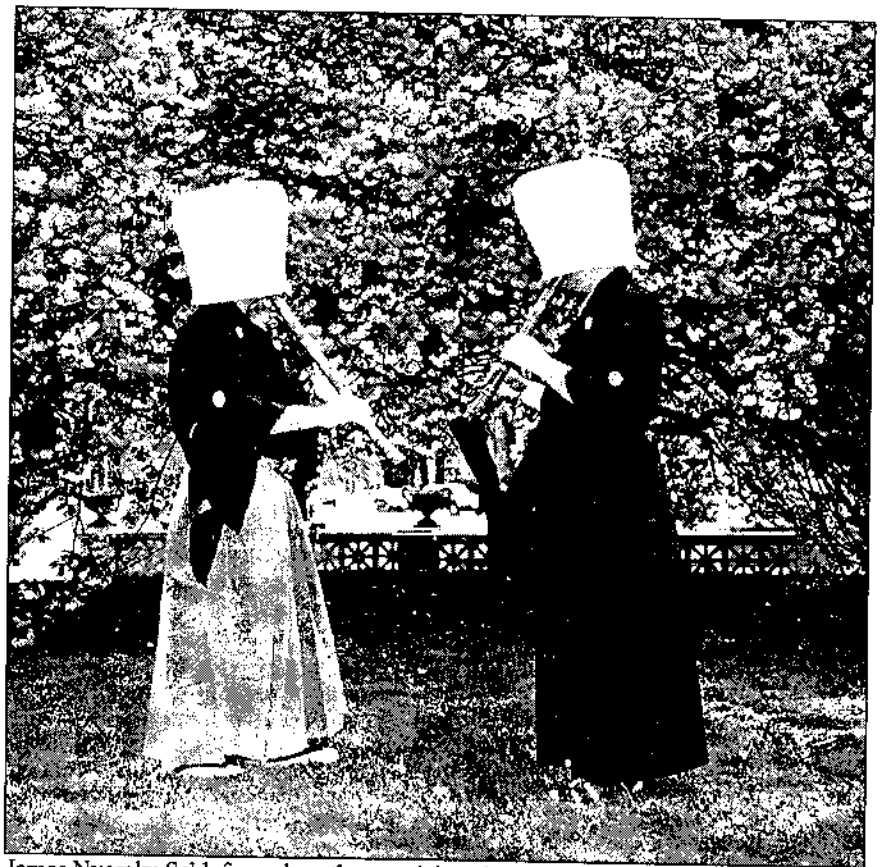
By Aimee Fitzpatrick Martin

If you pass by Agawam Park in Southampton Village next week, you're likely to see an unusual sight.

Oh, the young mothers who chase after their frolicking children will still be there. And so will the artists who set up their easels to paint the park's lush landscape. Kids will still fly kites on the expansive lawn; lovers will enjoy lingering kisses by the monument; local workers will enjoy lunchtime al fresco; and visitors will still throw breadcrumbs to the hungry ducks.

But you may also see some new denizens joining the park's daily tableau—a kimono-clad musician playing a two-foot-long Japanese bamboo flute while wearing a huge basket over his head, and two lithe and limber dancers leaping through the grass.

Don't bother pinching yourself. These head-turning visitors are part



James Nyoraku Schlefer and another musician play the shakuhachi while wearing basket head coverings, similar to those worn by Buddhist monks centuries ago.

A new dance commissioned by the Parrish Art Museum.

of the kick-off of the Parrish Art Museum's "An All American Summer" series of public events planned over the next three months.

According to Cara Conklin, the Parrish's curator of education, the museum has commissioned *Dancing in the Streets*, a New York-based arts organization known for its "site specific" performances in public spaces, to create an original dance and music work inspired by the Southampton locale. Open rehearsals begin in Agawam Park on Monday, June 14 and culminate in a free outdoor performance in the park on Saturday, June 19 from 5 to 6 p.m.

The June 19 event will feature a live performance of traditional Japanese and contemporary music for shakuhachi (a Japanese bamboo flute used in Zen meditation for more than 1,000 years) and koto (the Japanese zither) followed by the world premiere of an original dance work.

Dancing in the Streets has selected

(Continued on Page B7)



(Continued from Page B1)

musician/composer James Nyoraku Schlefer, called "a master of the shakuhachi" by *The New York Times*, as one of the performers for a week-long residency program in Southampton. The other featured performer is dancer/choreographer Rebecca Stenn, a Juilliard-trained dancer who combines strong lyricism with a fast-paced and kinetic dance style.

"The Parrish wanted to offer a level of programming that engages a larger audience during the summer months," said Ms. Conklin. "Since the visual arts are part of the museum's mission, we identified dance as an area of expansion for the museum."

Ms. Conklin said the museum did informal research last year to determine ways to complement the kinds of programming offered by other area cultural organizations. "An All American Summer" is the end result, with such new initiatives as free outdoor movies, screenings of independent films, outdoor evening concerts, lectures, an end-of-season dance party—and next week's "Dancing in the Streets" event.

As a site-specific performance that draws attention to the natural setting of Agawam Park, the event, Ms. Conklin believes, will enhance the way one sees the Village of Southampton. "Dance is somewhat unexpected in a public space like a park. The idea is that the uniqueness of the experience will cause people to remember the park—and Southampton—in a different way in the future," Ms. Conklin explained.

True to the spirit of this kind of per-

"During our rehearsals, people can see how the process of choreography unfolds and finally takes shape over the course of the week," she continued. "Creating a dance is very different from writing a book or making a movie. It's unpredictable and the choreographer has to be open to the direction it goes." Rehearsals in Agawam Park are open to the public and will take place on Monday, June 14, Wednesday, June 16, and Thursday, June 17 from 3 to 4 p.m.

Ms. Stenn is the artistic director of the PerksDanceMusicTheatre, a small New York City-based dance company. She was a member of MOMIX, a company of dancer-illusionists from 1989 to 1996, and is a founding member of Pilobolus Too, the Pilobolus Dance Company's duet touring company. This is her first collaboration with *Dancing in the Streets*.

Having already visited Agawam Park, Ms. Stenn said the venue's waterside setting, openness of space and venerable monument will provide an interesting backdrop for her dance-in-the-making.

The choreographed work, which she has entitled "The Morning," will feature Ms. Stenn and her partner Trebien Pollard dancing a duet to an original shakuhachi composition by Mr. Schlefer. Ms. Stenn described the dance as "ethereal and unlike anything we've ever done in the past. The music is meditative and haunting and is sending us in that direction."

Mr. Schlefer said during a phone interview from his office in New York that his 18-minute original shakuhachi composition, entitled "Couple Dance,"