

# GLAMOUR

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## [women right now]

### Afro-aerobics



Bergh, far right, and scenes from her wild workout

▶ FINALLY, HELP FOR BOTH the jaded video jock and the easily intimidated couch potato: *Aerobics With Soul*, a sixty-minute workout by **Maria Bergh**, a Tanzanian-born dancer and certified aerobics instructor.

"I attended traditional aerobics classes to lose weight after the birth of my son," says Bergh. "But I was bored. The objective was simply to burn calories. I wanted more." So she developed her own African-influenced exercise program and opened a studio near Minneapolis. Bergh put her program on video in order to reach more Afri-

can-Americans—who she feels are put off by elitist health clubs—and to get the rest of America into African music and dance.

Bergh makes her video user-friendly. "All you have to do is listen to the music and go with it," she says. Nature lovers will appreciate the twenty-second "free dance" periods between exercises, featuring colorful scenes of East African people and wildlife. The exercisers represent a wide range of body types and ages. "I had many fights with my director about that," says Bergh, who feels that fitness experts still fail to accept dif-

ferent physiques.

Some moves will be familiar to anyone who's ever donned a Danskin; others are decidedly different. Exercisers imitate giraffe movements and count the two-beat in Swahili ("Moja, mbili, tatu, nne...").

Even the lambada can't match the *pata-pata* ("touch-touch") for sheer steaminess. "You're supposed to touch yourselves from head to toe," Bergh instructs in the video, "then touch your partner. In some countries this dance was banned because people kept going down, down, down and never coming up!" Doing the dance in her classes "is quite an experience for these Minnesota types," she laughs.

Bergh hopes to produce two more Afro-workout tapes for different levels of intensity. Until then, you may work up more of a sweat with Jane, but you can't beat *Aerobics With Soul* for entertainment value. (*Aerobics With Soul* is available for \$19.95 by calling 800-423-9685.)

—Laura Mosedale