



# No Fixed Points: Dance in the Twentieth Century

*Nancy Reynolds, Malcolm McCormick*

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# No Fixed Points: Dance in the Twentieth Century

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**No Fixed Points: Dance in the Twentieth Century** Nancy Reynolds, Malcolm McCormick

This book chronicles 100 years of dramatic developments in ballet, modern and experimental dance for stage and screen in Europe and North America. The volume encompasses the history of theatrical dance from 1900 through to 2000. Beginning with turn-of-the-century dancer-choreographers like Loie Fuller, Isadora Duncan, Michel Fokine and a bit later Vaslav Nijinsky, and proceeding through the profusion of dance styles performed at the beginning of the 21st century, the book provides a view of dance in performance as it changed and grew in the 20th century. historical contexts, examine specific dance works and explore the contributions of outstanding choreographers, performers, visual artists, impresarios, composers, critics and other figures. They discuss the breakaway barefoot dance of the early 1900s and demonstrate its links with later forms and styles. With detail, illustrations and wide-ranging insights, this volume is a guide to the transformations in the dance scene of the 20th century.

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Synthesizing a century's worth of observation and opinion, Reynolds and McCormick chart the pendulum swing of styles and isolate individual contributions in a way that is both comprehensive in its coverage and assured in its handling of the smallest details. They highlight the significance of factors as large as government funding and as small as the depth of Baryshnikov's demi-plié. Where tastes differ, they generally present both sides, yet their tone, fluctuating from awestruck (Balanchine) to archly dismissive (Pina Bausch), makes clear that the authors—both former dancers—care too much about Nancy Reynolds, Malcolm McCormick. This book chronicles one hundred years of dramatic developments in ballet, modern, and experimental dance for stage and screen in Europe and North America. The volume is magisterial in scope, encompassing the history of theatrical dance from 1900 through 2000. Beginning with turn-of-the-century dancer-choreographers like Loie Fuller, Isadora Duncan, Michel Fokine, and a bit later Vaslav Nijinsky, and proceeding through the profusion of dance styles performed today, the book provides an unparalleled view of dance in performance as it changed and grew in the tw... The exception is *No Fixed Points: Dance in the Twentieth Century* (Yale University Press; \$50), a narrative account of Western dancing and choreography in the last century by Nancy Reynolds and Malcolm McCormick. Their incredible journey starts with Loie Fuller (whose New York debut in 1891 was a piece about a woman imperiled by a medical quack—won't somebody please reconstruct this?) and ends with Billy Elliot, but though it's encyclopedic in size and scope, this is a book to read, not just to consult. The writing is graceful and lucid, the critical stance open-minded but judicious, and the overall intelligence truly a marvel. Twyla Tharp's *The Creative Habit: Learn It and Use It for Life* (Simon & Schuster; \$25) isn't a dance book at all: It's a self-help book for the

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