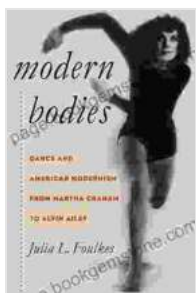


Dance and American Modernism: From Martha Graham to Alvin Ailey

The early 20th century was a time of great upheaval and change in the United States. The country was rapidly industrializing, and cities were growing at an unprecedented rate. These changes had a profound impact on American culture, including the way people thought about art and dance.



Modern Bodies: Dance and American Modernism from Martha Graham to Alvin Ailey (Cultural Studies of the United States) by Julia L. Foulkes

★★★★☆ 4.4 out of 5

Language : English
File size : 3035 KB
Text-to-Speech : Enabled
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Print length : 278 pages



At the beginning of the 20th century, ballet was the dominant form of dance in the United States. Ballet is a highly formalized and structured dance form that originated in Europe. However, some American dancers began to feel that ballet was too restrictive and artificial. They wanted to create a new, more expressive form of dance that was more reflective of the American experience.

This new form of dance, which became known as American modern dance, emerged in the early 20th century. American modern dance is characterized by its focus on individual expression, improvisation, and the use of everyday movement. Two of the most influential figures in the development of American modern dance were Martha Graham and Alvin Ailey.

Martha Graham

Martha Graham was born in 1894 in Allegheny, Pennsylvania. She began studying dance at the age of 19, and quickly developed a passion for the art form. In 1926, she founded her own dance company, the Martha Graham Dance Company.

Graham's work was groundbreaking in many ways. She rejected the traditional ballet aesthetic, and instead focused on creating dances that were expressive and emotional. She also experimented with new movement techniques, such as using the floor as a dance surface.

Graham's choreography was often inspired by mythology, literature, and history. She created dances about such diverse subjects as Joan of Arc, Clytemnestra, and Emily Dickinson. Her work was both challenging and rewarding, and it helped to establish American modern dance as a major art form.

Graham continued to choreograph and perform until her death in 1991. She left behind a legacy of over 150 dances, which continue to be performed by dance companies around the world.

Alvin Ailey

Alvin Ailey was born in Rogers, Texas in 1931. He began studying dance at the age of 17, and quickly developed a talent for the art form. In 1958, he founded his own dance company, the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater.

Ailey's work was influenced by both African-American and modern dance traditions. He created dances that celebrated the African-American experience, and he also choreographed works that explored social and political issues.

Ailey's choreography was often characterized by its energy, athleticism, and emotional depth. He created dances that were both visually stunning and emotionally resonant.

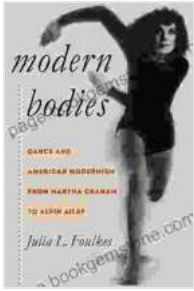
Ailey continued to choreograph and perform until his death in 1989. He left behind a legacy of over 70 dances, which continue to be performed by dance companies around the world.

Martha Graham and Alvin Ailey were two of the most influential figures in the development of American modern dance. Their work helped to establish American modern dance as a major art form, and their dances continue to be performed and enjoyed by audiences around the world.

American modern dance is a diverse and vibrant art form that continues to evolve and grow. It is a reflection of the American experience, and it continues to inspire new generations of dancers and choreographers.

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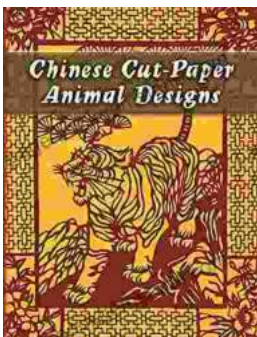


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