

Working for George Balanchine: Diaries of Ballet Productions

George Balanchine was one of the most influential choreographers of the 20th century. His work has had a profound impact on the world of ballet, and his legacy continues to inspire dancers and choreographers alike.



Working For George Balanchine: Diaries of Ballet Productions by Michael Ward

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Balanchine was a demanding taskmaster, but he was also a brilliant artist who had a deep understanding of the human body and the art of dance. His dancers were often pushed to their limits, but they also knew that they were working with a master who could help them achieve their full potential.

The diaries of ballet productions offer a fascinating glimpse into the working relationship between Balanchine and his dancers. These diaries were kept by dancers who worked with Balanchine at the New York City Ballet, and they provide a unique firsthand account of the creative process.

The diaries reveal that Balanchine was a perfectionist who was never satisfied with his work. He would often make changes to his ballets even after they had been premiered, and he was always looking for ways to improve his choreography.

Balanchine was also a demanding teacher. He expected his dancers to be technically proficient, and he was not afraid to push them to their limits. However, he was also a compassionate man who cared deeply for his dancers and wanted them to succeed.

The diaries of ballet productions provide a valuable insight into the working methods of one of the greatest choreographers of all time. They offer a glimpse into the creative process and the challenges that dancers face when working with a master such as Balanchine.

The Creative Process

Balanchine's creative process was often a collaborative one. He would often work with his dancers to develop new ideas and movements. He was also open to suggestions from his dancers, and he was always willing to experiment with new ideas.

The diaries of ballet productions reveal that Balanchine was constantly experimenting with new ways to move the body. He was fascinated by the human body and its potential for movement, and he was always looking for new ways to express himself through dance.

Balanchine's dancers were often given the opportunity to improvise and explore new movements. He encouraged them to experiment and to find their own unique way of expressing themselves through dance. This

freedom of expression allowed Balanchine's dancers to develop their own unique style, which became known as the Balanchine technique.

The Balanchine technique is characterized by its emphasis on line, form, and precision. Balanchine's dancers are known for their long, lean bodies and their ability to execute complex movements with ease and grace. The Balanchine technique has become one of the most influential styles of ballet in the world, and it continues to be taught and performed by dancers all over the globe.

The Challenges of Working with Balanchine

Working with Balanchine was not always easy. He was a demanding taskmaster who expected his dancers to be technically proficient and to work long hours. He was also known for his temper, and he could be harsh with his dancers when he was frustrated.

However, despite the challenges, many dancers found that working with Balanchine was an incredibly rewarding experience. They were inspired by his genius and his passion for dance, and they were willing to work hard to meet his expectations.

The diaries of ballet productions reveal that Balanchine's dancers often faced a number of challenges when working with him. They had to be able to withstand long hours of rehearsal and to cope with his demanding nature. They also had to be able to adapt to his constantly changing ideas and to work with him to develop new movements.

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The Legacy of George Balanchine

George Balanchine's legacy continues to inspire dancers and choreographers alike. His work has had a profound impact on the world of ballet, and his influence can be seen in the work of countless other choreographers.

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Balanchine's legacy is a testament to his genius and his passion for dance. His work continues to inspire and challenge dancers and choreographers alike, and his influence will continue to be felt for generations to come.

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