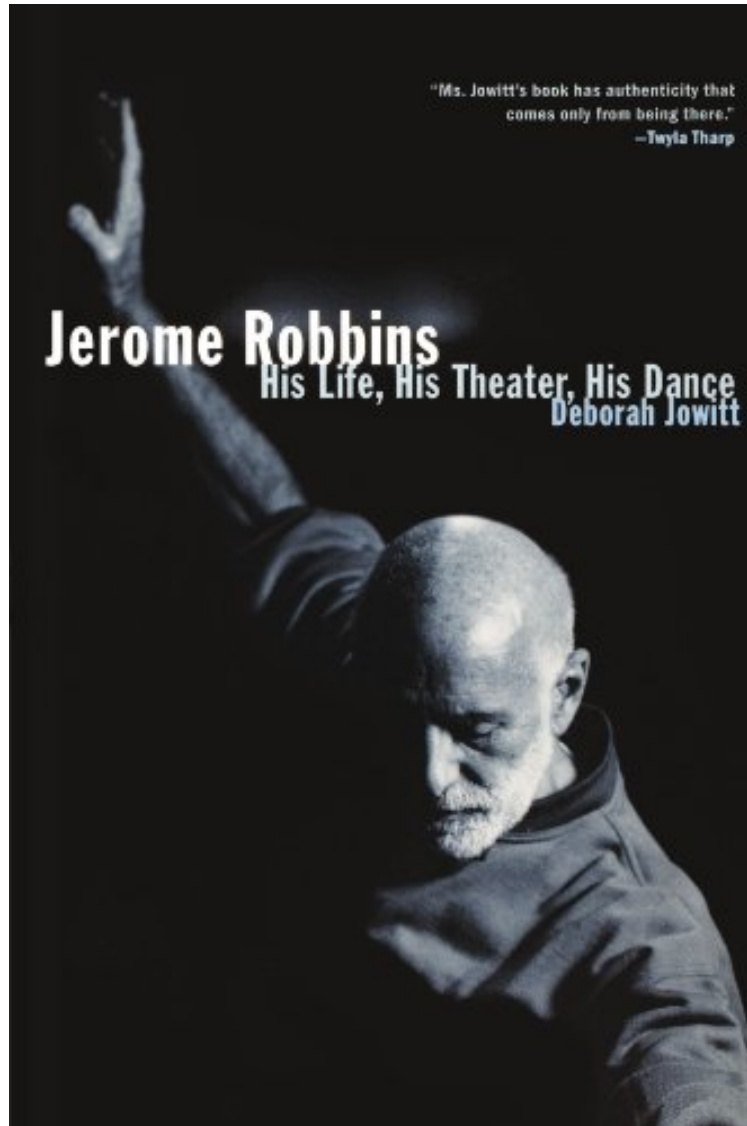


Jerome Robbins: His Life, His Theater, His Dance

Deborah Jowitt

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Deborah Jowitt : Jerome Robbins: His Life, His Theater, His Dance before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Jerome Robbins: His Life, His Theater, His Dance:

3 of 4 people found the following review helpful. A PRIMER OF GENIUSBy Ex LibrisAny valid bio of Robbins would have to result in a narrative of the development of dance and musical theatre in America, since the 1940s. While

Jowitt gives us the, often sad, milestones in this man's life, her major thrust throughout this long and always exciting book is on his work. She delves into virtually every creation of his, including his generally poorly received occasional forays into non-musical theatre. Detailed attention is given to both concept, creation and execution of his prolific endeavors. Her in depth analysis of each of his works, often quite technical, VIVIDLY recall many great performances of these masterpieces. While not necessarily for those with a casual interest in dance, the facts of his life, as well as the cavalcade of his shows and ballets, makes for a read that is always more than just factual. Interestingly, Jowitt seems never to editorialize on Robbins' work. But then again, why attempt to laud a universally acclaimed genius ?0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy S. ZumwaltGreat book and in really good condition.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great!By Ricardo HoferFabulously detailed, scholarly and exhaustive biography. In addition, it is a masterly survey of 20th century modern dance in the US.

In this authoritative biography, Deborah Jowitt explores the life, works, and creative processes of the complex genius Jerome Robbins (1918-1998), who redefined the role of dance in musical theater and is also considered America's greatest native-born ballet choreographer. This meticulously researched and elegantly written story of a life's work is illuminated by photographs, enlivened by anecdotes, and grounded in insights into ballets and musical comedies that have been seen and loved all over the world.

From Publishers Weekly Jerome Robbins's story is as distinctively American as his choreography. Born Jerome Wilson Rabinowitz in New York City to Russian-Jewish immigrant parents, Robbins (1918-1998) became a Broadway chorus boy in 1938 before joining Ballet Theatre and New York City Ballet, ultimately dancing lead roles. Robbins also became one of the 20th century's most highly regarded choreographers, including for the 1957 Broadway hit *West Side Story*. Other Broadway successes include *On the Town*, *The King and I* and *Peter Pan*, and significant ballets such as *Fancy Free*, *The Cage* and *Dances at a Gathering*. With precision, lucidity and insight, *Village Voice* dance critic Jowitt (*Time and the Dancing Image*) chronicles Robbins's extensive career, as well as his struggles with bisexuality, ambivalence about his Jewish heritage, and his decision to name names before the House Committee on Un-American Activities in the 1950s. Given unrestricted access to Robbins's personal and professional papers, Jowitt adds a new vulnerability and humanity to the legend: Robbins was infamous for his perfectionism, insecurity and temper. "I... still have terrible pangs of terror when I feel my career, work, veneer of accomplishments would be taken away," wrote the man who worked alongside Bernstein and Balanchine, "that I panicked crumbled returned to that primitive state of terror the facade of Jerry Robbins would be cracked open, and everyone would finally see Jerome Wilson Rabinowitz." Both critically sophisticated and compulsively readable, this is a must for theater and dance devotees. Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From Booklist *Starred * Director and choreographer Robbins was a complicated man--social and solitary, inspired and neurotic, brilliant and cruel. A giant in the worlds of theater and dance, he worked on many of the most successful Broadway shows of the 1950s and '60s, including *The Pajama Game*, *The King and I*, *Gypsy*, and *West Side Story*, the last of which he conceived, nurtured, directed, and choreographed. While he won himself a place at the top of the American theater, he regularly created dances for American Ballet Theatre and the New York City Ballet. The emotional cost to him was enormous. Stories abound of his terrifying tantrums and monstrous tongue-lashings. In recounting his life and work, longtime *Village Voice* dance critic Jowitt neither praises Robbins nor buries him. Instead, in a well-researched, well-written biography, she spreads Robbins' life before us: his relatively late start as a dancer, his rapid rise, his follies and foibles and moments of triumph. She doesn't sugarcoat her subject. Robbins named names to the House Un-American Activities Committee, after all, thereby helping to destroy the careers of people who had helped him earlier. Yet she doesn't demonize him. Jack Helbig Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved "This is the definitive biography." -- *The Houston Chronicle* "To read Ms. Jowitt's extraordinarily revealing book is to be in the presence of Jerome Robbins." -- Edward Villella "It is candid yet balanced, insightful about his work and revelatory about his theater. It lays bare the tension between Robbins the person and Robbins the artist." -- *Los Angeles Times* "Jowitt's fascinating biography of the innovative director of Broadway musicals and choreographer of masterpieces for the New York City Ballet...trenchantly reveal[s] Robbins's relationship with his own beliefs....Compelling." -- *The New York Times* Book (front page) "Ms. Jowitt's book has the authenticity that comes only from being there." -- Twyla Tharp