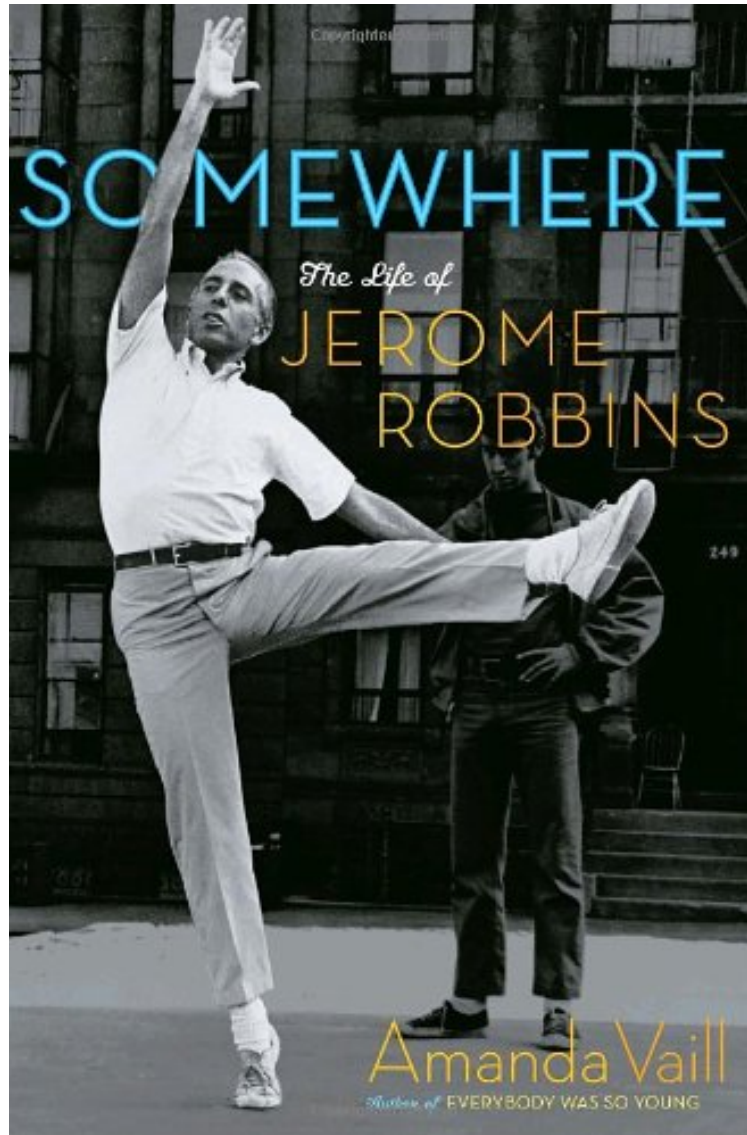


[Free] Somewhere: The Life of Jerome Robbins

Somewhere: The Life of Jerome Robbins

Amanda Vaill

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Amanda Vaill : Somewhere: The Life of Jerome Robbins before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Somewhere: The Life of Jerome Robbins:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Excellent bio of a haunted geniusBy NocturnalI'm just finishing this book and wanted to stay home from work just so I could continue to read it. I have loved Robbins' choreography since WSS (movie) came out when I was 8 years old. I was lucky to be living in NYC and got to see some of his ballets/dances. He lived an exciting life and yet lived under a cloud that he wasn't quite good enough, that someone

would discover the truth (that he was just faking it) and call him out, feared being discovered that he was Jewish and, and at least for half of his life, feared he'd be labeled a homosexual. That's a lot of hiding and self-doubt. And yet, he created dances like no one else has. This book exposes all this, in a gentle, loving manner so you come to love this man, care about who he was behind the celebrity. It makes you wonder if all of his fears was the reason he drove himself (and everyone else) do relentlessly to excel. It makes you wonder if insecurity is what makes for a great dancer (many dancers seem to have a whole lot of self-doubt). It makes you wonder what he may have been like or may have achieved (or not achieved) had he grown up feeling loved and cherished by everyone, confident about his abilities, proud of his heritage, etc. It's sad to think that he went through life feeling that no one really loved and understood him. Many probably did but he couldn't see that. I am glad Robbins inhabited this world and gave us, for whatever reason, his heart and soul in his dances and directing and everything else. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. This is a brilliant book. You can feel the love and respect ...By Elaine Shefer This is a brilliant book. You can feel the love and respect and awe of the author for Jerome Robbins. Although it is incredibly researched and factual it is never dull in spite of all the minute details. She knows everything about him, professionally and personally. It is never gossipy, only warm and humanistic. When you finish the book you actually miss Jerome Robbins and now that I indeed finished the book, and it was not a small book, I want to read it over again, just to be near this genius and incredible person. What a privilege those who worked with him had, to be near such a man, so dedicated to his art, so creative and so exciting. Yes, this was a great book. It's a real page turner. I couldn't put it down. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Very good biography. By Rosalie S. Jerome Robbins life is fascinating. He was an amazing dancer, choreographer, director, and producer, and his work was very important in the development of dance in America.

From the author of the acclaimed *Everybody Was So Young*, the definitive and major biography of the great choreographer and Broadway legend Jerome Robbins To some, Jerome Robbins was a demanding perfectionist, a driven taskmaster, a theatrical visionary; to others, he was a loyal friend, a supportive mentor, a generous and entertaining companion and colleague. Born Jerome Rabinowitz in New York City in 1918, Jerome Robbins repudiated his Jewish roots along with his name only to reclaim them with his triumphant staging of *Fiddler on the Roof*. A self-proclaimed homosexual, he had romances or relationships with both men and women, some famous like Montgomery Clift and Natalie Wood some less so. A resolutely unpolitical man, he was forced to testify before Congress at the height of anti-Communist hysteria. A consummate entertainer, he could be paralyzed by shyness; nearly infallible professionally, he was conflicted, vulnerable, and torn by self-doubt. Guarded and adamantly private, he was an inveterate and painfully honest journal writer who confided his innermost thoughts and aspirations to a remarkable series of diaries and memoirs. With ballets like *Dances at a Gathering*, *Afternoon of a Faun*, and *The Concert*, he humanized neoclassical dance; with musicals like *On the Town*, *Gypsy*, and *West Side Story*, he changed the face of theater in America. In the pages of this definitive biography, Amanda Vaill takes full measure of the complicated, contradictory genius who was Jerome Robbins. She re-creates his childhood as the only son of Russian Jewish immigrants; his apprenticeship as a dancer and Broadway chorus gypsy; his explosion into prominence at the age of twenty-five with the ballet *Fancy Free* and its Broadway incarnation, *On the Town*; and his years of creative dominance in both theater and dance. She brings to life his colleagues and friends from Leonard Bernstein and George Balanchine to Robert Wilson and Robert Graves and his loves and lovers. And she tells the full story behind some of Robbins's most difficult episodes, such as his testimony before the House Un-American Activities Committee and his firing from the film version of *West Side Story*. Drawing on thousands of pages of documents from Robbins's personal and professional papers, to which she was granted unfettered access, as well as on other archives and hundreds of interviews, *Somewhere* is a riveting narrative of a life lived onstage, offstage, and backstage. It is also an accomplished work of criticism and social history that chronicles one man's phenomenal career and places it squarely in the cultural ferment of a time when New York City was truly a helluva town.

From *Publishers Weekly* Starred . Robbins (1918-1998) was the choreographic genius behind the 1957 Broadway hit *West Side Story* and other musical classics, in addition to such great ballets as *Fancy Free* and *Dances at a Gathering*. Vaill (*Everybody Was So Young: Gerald and Sara Murphy: A Lost Generation Love Story*) was given unprecedented access to Robbins's personal papers after his death, and the result is a critically sophisticated biography that's as compulsively readable as a novel. As she traverses Robbins's growth as an artist, his ambivalence about his Jewish heritage, his bisexuality and his relationships with other artists from Balanchine, to Bernstein to Baryshnikov, she writes with both passion and compassion. More than Deborah Jowitt in her recent Robbins bio, Vaill delves into Robbins's personal life, quoting frequently from his diary and letters. But the result isn't salacious; rather, it allows a more vibrant and vital rendering of the man. Known for being very harsh on dancers, Robbins was called everything from "genius and difficult to tyrant and sadist," says Vaill, "yet the work... was marked by an ineffable sweetness and tenderness." In her balanced, sensitive portrait of an American theatrical genius, Vaill captures these contradictions elegantly. The book is essential reading for lovers of theater and dance. (Nov. 21) Copyright Reed Business

Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. Praise for *Somewhere*"Jerome Robbins is the great subject of American theatrical biography—self-contradictory, self-hating, arrogant and terrified and gifted almost beyond compare—and Amanda Vaill has done him justice. I can't think of a better full-length portrait of an American choreographer or director, and I can't imagine a better book about Robbins ever being written."Terry Teachout, drama critic, *The Wall Street Journal*"Amanda Vaill has written an epic biography—remarkable in scope and meticulous in detail. She explores the energizing worlds of Broadway, the ballet and Hollywood from the 1940s through 2000 and she paints a vivid picture of the mercurial Jerome Robbins, master choreographer and director of such legendary musicals as *West Side Story* and *Fiddler On the Roof*. Vaill is especially insightful about Robbins's frenetic private life—he loved both men and women with equal passion; how he juggled his dozens of relationships while creating masterpiece after masterpiece in theatre and ballet is just part of this amazing story."Patricia Bosworth, author of *Montgomery Clift and Diane Arbus: A Biography*. "Exactly ten degrees north of terrific" was the verdict on Jerome Robbins's first ballet, and the description holds as well for this masterful, culturally astute biography. Amanda Vaill brings Robbins and the dance equally and irresistibly to life on the page. A sheer delight."Stacy Schiff, author of *Vra: Mrs. Vladimir Nabokov and A Great Improvisation*"As she did in her biography of Gerald and Sara Murphy (*Everybody Was So Young*, 1998), the author takes what seems like a shopworn subject and refreshes it with her discerning eye... All the Robbins biographies have their merits, but this empathetic and accessible take is the one most likely to appeal to general readers."Kirkus (starred)"A critically sophisticated biography that's as compulsively readable as a novel."Publishers Weekly (starred)From the Inside FlapJerome Robbins (born Jerome Rabinowitz in 1918) was one of the most important figures in American dance and musical theater in the twentieth century. He was the Co-Artistic Director with George Balanchine of the fledgling New York City Ballet in 1948, bringing Broadway vernacular energy to complement Balanchine's austere classicism and choreographing such classic ballets as *Facsimile*, *Dance at a Gathering*, and *Afternoon of a Faun*. His ballet to a score by Leonard Bernstein, *Fancy Free*, electrified the dance world and would transmogrify into the immortal musical *On the Town*. On Broadway, he choreographed *The King and I*, *The Pajama Game*, *Bells Are Ringing*, and *Peter Pan*, and choreographed and directed *West Side Story*—probably his most enduring achievement. In his private life he was an ambivalent, semi-closeted homosexual and his cooperation with the McCarthy committee during the witch-hunts of the 1950s estranged him from many of his closest friends. He was an artistic giant whose life embodied many of the tensions and contradictions of the American century. He exemplified, in his life no less than his work, the flowering of American in the mid-twentieth century—in particular the emergence of New York as the capital of world culture.*Somewhere* by Amanda Vaill is being written with full access to the Robbins papers, a voluminous collection of letters, diaries, notebooks, memos, and production notes that form an unrivaled archive of a singular man's life and a singular moment in our cultural history. Supremely accomplished and entertaining, it not only chronicles Robbins's phenomenal career and plumbs his complex private life but will place him squarely in the cultural ferment of his time and his native city. It explains the tangle of contradictions that made him such an infuriating, fascinating, oddly vulnerable human being and such a protean creative figure, and offers a densely populated narrative that will draw readers in and along. *Somewhere* is a major biography of a true entertainment legend.