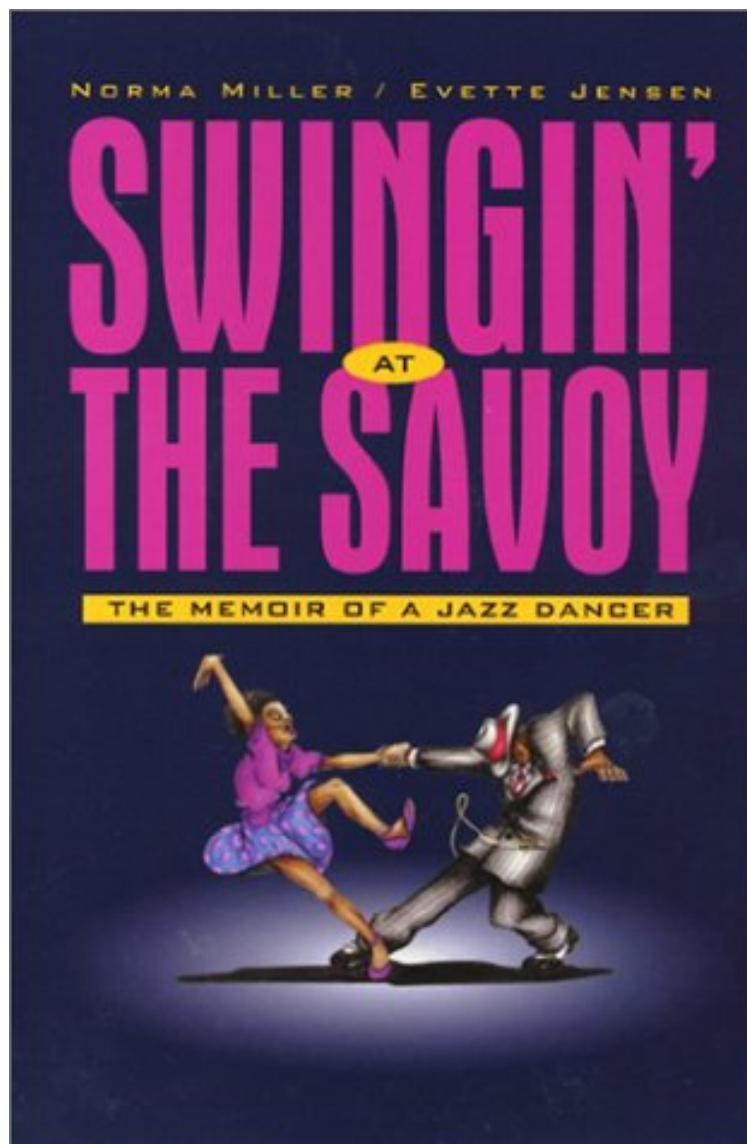


(Free) Swingin At The Savoy

Swingin At The Savoy

Norma Miller

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Norma Miller : Swingin At The Savoy before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Swingin At The Savoy:

8 of 9 people found the following review helpful. Fluffy but FunBy Stephen CannonIn the 1930s and 1940s, Swing jazz captivated America in a way no musical style ever had before. Swing was largely developed in Harlem and its driving beat made dance an inevitable component of this new music. The new dance created was the lindy hop, a non-classic couples dance largely created on the floor of the Savoy Ballroom.Swinging at the Savoy traces the life of

Harlemite Norma Miller, who came of age just at the perfect time to invest her entire future in a faddish dance despite protests from her disapproving mother. Of course, Norma beat the odds and made a decent living as a performer, but this is not what the book is about. The real draw of this book is the chance to glean musical and dance history straight from the horse's mouth. Indeed, Norma discusses the bands, the clientele, the lifestyle, the celebrities she met, and racial issues, but more often than not the bubbly Norma gets caught up in the warmth of her very dear memories. *Swinging at the Savoy* follows Norma through innumerable dance performances, which were far from dull thanks to infectious Norma's joy and enthusiasm for dance. However, I would have preferred that her performances had been given a bit less weight and more had been included a few more anecdotes on Duke Ellington and Chick Webb, more discussion on issues such as the development of the music and dance, and how interracial dancing was possible in the dark ages of the 1930s. Of course, the book is subtitled *The Memoir of a Jazz Dancer* and so I cannot really fault the book for putting the events of Norma's life at the center. Furthermore, the book is prefaced with an excellent essay by jazz expert Ernie Smith that provides a solid historical perspective on the music and dance of Swing. *Swinging at the Savoy* is a breeze to read and includes a good number of photographs that help bring the book to life. I recommend this book to anyone interested in African-American culture, jazz, dance, or U.S. history.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. I love Norma Miller and thank her for sharing her stories
By Andrea Cody
This is the story of a real dancer! I love Norma Miller and thank her for sharing her stories. They are amazing and inspirational!
0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. From someone who helped create Swing
By lisle_g
Great narrative of the early Swing movement and the people who created it!

Dancer, award-winning choreographer, show producer, stand-up comedienne, TV/film actress, and author, Norma Miller shares her touching historical memoir of Harlem's legendary Savoy Ballroom and the phenomenal music and dance craze that "spread the power of Swing across the world like wildfire". It was a time when the music was Swing, and Harlem was king. Renowned as "the world's most beautiful ballroom, and the largest and most elegant in Harlem, the Savoy was the only ballroom not segregated when it opened in 1926. The Savoy hosted the best bands and attracted the best dancers by offering the challenge of fierce competition. White people travelled uptown to learn exciting new dance styles. Dance contest winner by fourteen, Norma Miller became a member of Herbert White's world famous Whitey's Lindy Hoppers and a celebrated Savoy Ballroom Lindy Hop champion. "Swingin' at the Savoy" chronicles a significant period in American cultural history and race relations, as it glorifies the popularised home of the Lindy hop, and the birthplace of such memorable dance fads as the Big Apple, Shag, Truckin', Peckin', Susie Q, the Charleston, Peabody, Black Bottom, Cake Walk, Boogie Woogie, the Shimmy, and tap dancing. Miller shares anecdotes about her youthful encounters with many of the greatest jazz legends in music history including Ella Fitzgerald, Count Basie, Benny Goodman, Billy Holiday, Artie Shaw, Duke Ellington, Ethel Waters and even boxer Joe Louis.

"A refreshing look at the history of swing dancing is *Swingin' at the Savoy*.... Miller has not only created an entertaining history of swing, but more importantly, gives the reader a sense of the personalities of people and places most have only heard of. The book is unique as a humorous autobiography, full of youthful antics and charm. Delightful anecdotes and photos of big bands give us a view of swing music and its popularity in a real world aspect different than most music historians today." -Lance Benishek, *Dancing USA*

"This is an important book, bringing some much-overdue attention to the swing dancers who along with the musicians defined the era." -Robert Tate, *Jazz Now*

From the Publisher
A celebration of a life of dancing the Lindy Hop
From the Inside Flap
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