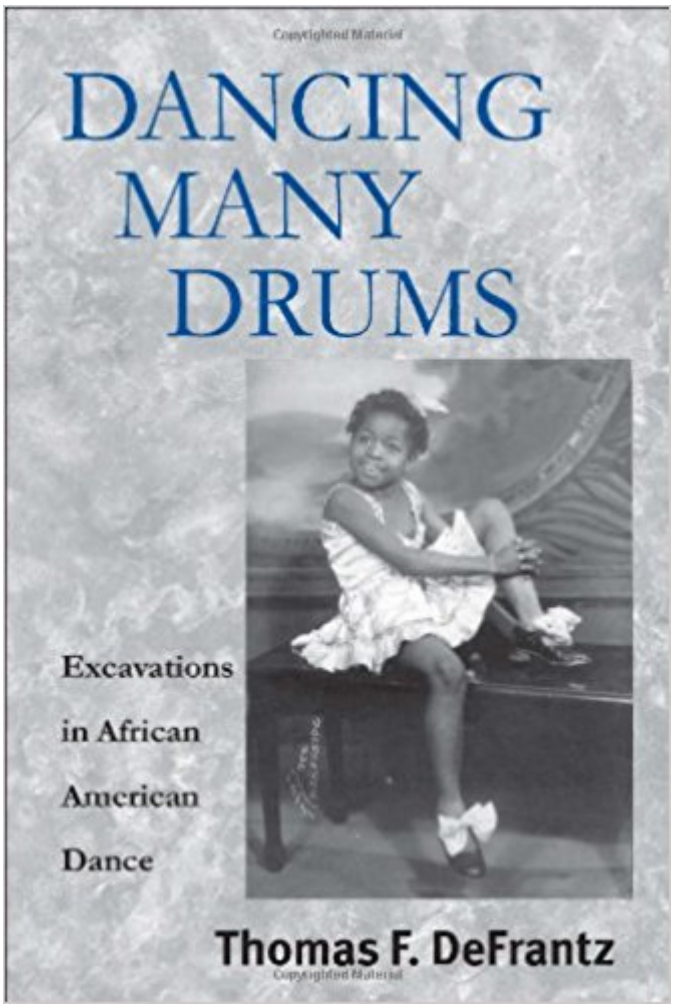
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Dancing Many Drums: Excavations In African American Dance (Studies In Dance History)



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Synopsis

Few will dispute the profound influence that African American music and movement has had in American and world culture. Dancing Many Drums explores that influence through a groundbreaking collection of essays on African American dance history, theory, and practice. In so doing, it reevaluates "black" and "African American " as both racial and dance categories. Abundantly illustrated, the volume includes images of a wide variety of dance forms and performers, from ring shouts, vaudeville, and social dances to professional dance companies and Hollywood movie dancing.Bringing together issues of race, gender, politics, history, and dance, Dancing Many Drums ranges widely, including discussions of dance instruction songs, the blues aesthetic, and Katherine DunhamÃ¢â ¬â„¢s controversial ballet about lynching, Southland. In addition, there are two photo essays: the first on African dance in New York by noted dance photographer Mansa Mussa, and another on the 1934 "African opera," Kykunkor, or the Witch Woman.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"Dancing Many Drums unearths many artists and performance companies whose work should be made available to the scholarly community and the general public. DeFrantz presents new scholarship by new writers who are well versed in the history of African American dancing, many through actual dance practice."Ã¢â ¬â •Anita Gonzalez, Florida State University

Thomas F. DeFrantz is associate professor of music and theater arts at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He is the author of Dancing Revelations: Alvin AileyÃ¢â ¬â„¢s Embodiment of African American Culture (Oxford U Press, 2004). In addition to scholarly articles, he has written on dance for the Village Voice and Philadelphia Inquirer. He is a dancer and choreographer and for many years directed the dance history program at the Alvin Ailey American Dance Center in New York City.

DANCING MANY DRUMS is an invaluable journey into the sophistication and beauty of African American dance forms. His knowledge is impressive. Not only is he a dancer himself, he has read extensively about the historical and critical background of the work he explores. I recommend this book highly to other dance artists and to students of dance research.

This is not only a great read but an excellent resource. The text is a great addiition for dance history and African-American studies.

Expertly written by dancer and choreographer Thomas F. DeFrantz (who is also an Associate Professor of Music and Theater Arts, Massachusetts Institute of Technology) , Dancing Many Drums: Excavations In African American Dance is a ground breaking and seminal study of African-American music and dance, ranging from ring shouts and vaudeville to Hollywood movie dancing. A scholarly, well-researched, fascinating analysis that studies the very heart of the dance, Dancing Many Drums is a very highly recommended contribution to Music History Studies; African/American Studies; and Cultural History Studies supplemental reading lists and academic reference collections.

This is the most helpful book that I have found on African American Dance. From Hill’s essay on Katherine Dunham’s Southland to Green’s work on Pearl Primus, this is an excellent resource on dance culture, especially as a form of resistance. DeFrantz also provides a useful and well-written overview in his introduction that contextualizes many of the essays. This book is very accessible and extremely valuable.

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