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Classical Ballet Terms: An Illustrated Dictionary



Synopsis

Wherever ballet is taught in the world, and in whatever language, it retains one common denominator: the technical terms used are in French. Yet there are many discrepancies in the perceived meaning, spelling and usage between various countries and teaching methods, and this dictionary aims to prevent confusion by explaining the precise meanings of over 560 of the French technical terms used in classical ballet. The dictionary is also unique in that it addresses the problems of correct spelling and grammar. These details may be relatively unimportant to the average dancer, but it is essential that they should be correctly applied when dealing with the printed word. While most of the entries are concerned with the correct translation and basic explanation of technical terms, there are also extended entries which trace both the historical background and the linguistic origins of particular aspects of ballet terminology. The dictionary is an essential reference work not only for ballet dancers and teachers, but for all audience members who wish to have a better technical understanding of this most elegant of art forms.

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Customer Reviews

Richard Glasstone has worked internationally as a dancer, choreographer and teacher. He was invited by Dame Ninette de Valois to join the staff of The Royal Ballet School and during his 15 years there he held the posts of Senior Teacher for Boys and Director of the Dance Composition Course. Richard Glasstone now teaches at The Rambert School, in London.

Richard Glasstones "Classical Ballet Terms" is a great contribution to the public that is coming to understand ballet and its traditions. It is one thing to be awed by a male ballet dancer doing a series of Entrechat springing across the floor and knowing the movements that he is accomplishing and how he is doing it. That is nicely illustrated in Glasstone's short, concise and well-illustrated dictionary of classical ballet terms and forms. I'm still awed by the great ballerinas (usually Russian) when they do all those fouettes in the Odile scene in Swan Lake. Again the series of movements are described in this very handy (and short) booklet. In my youth I had a Handbook of Ballet by the great Agnes de Mille which helped me to appreciate the inner workings of this art form. The book of Glasstone is a very useful modern update.

Helpful book, but wish there were just a few more photographs and diagrams.

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