

The Turbulent Revival of Modern Dance: A Movement Reborn (1935-1939)



The 1930s marked a period of significant upheaval and transformation in the world of art and culture. Amidst the Great Depression and the rise of fascism, modern dance experienced a turbulent rebirth. This new wave of dance, led by a generation of visionary choreographers, challenged traditional conventions and pushed the boundaries of artistic expression.

Turbulent Revival of Modern Dance 1935 - 1939

by Kathleen E. Klein

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

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The Pioneering Spirit of Martha Graham

Martha Graham emerged as one of the most influential choreographers of the era. Her groundbreaking technique, known as the Graham Technique, emphasized deep breathing, pelvic isolations, and strong floor work. Graham's dances often explored themes of female power, sexuality, and the human condition.



The Expressive Genius of Doris Humphrey

Doris Humphrey, another pivotal figure of the period, developed a distinctive approach to dance that focused on the interplay of fall and recovery, weight and release. Her choreography often conveyed emotional narratives through abstract movements.



Doris Humphrey, known for her expressive dance style

The Visionary Influence of Merce Cunningham

Merce Cunningham, a younger choreographer who emerged in the late 1930s, challenged the narrative-based conventions of modern dance. He

introduced chance procedures and postmodern aesthetics into his work, creating dances that were a radical departure from the past.



The Political Context: Dance as Resistance

The turbulent social and political events of the 1930s deeply influenced the work of modern dance choreographers. They used their art as a form of protest and resistance against oppression and injustice.



Modern dance as a means of political expression

The Influence of the New Deal

The New Deal policies of President Franklin D. Roosevelt provided support for the arts, including modern dance. Choreographers such as Graham and Humphrey received government grants that enabled them to create new works and tour extensively.



The Emergence of Dance Companies

The 1930s witnessed the establishment of several influential dance companies, including the Martha Graham Dance Company and the Humphrey-Weidman Dance Company. These companies provided a platform for modern dance choreographers and dancers to showcase their work and reach a wider audience.



The emergence of modern dance companies

The Legacy of the Revival

The turbulent revival of modern dance in the 1930s had a profound impact on the art form. The pioneering choreographers of the era challenged conventions, expanded the boundaries of expression, and used their art as a powerful force for social change.

The legacy of this revival continues to inspire contemporary dance artists and audiences alike, as modern dance remains a vibrant and ever-evolving form of artistic expression.

The turbulent revival of modern dance in the 1930s was a transformative period that witnessed the emergence of visionary choreographers, the establishment of dance companies, and the use of dance as a powerful means of political resistance. The legacy of this revival continues to shape the modern dance world today, inspiring artists and audiences to push the boundaries of expression and use art as a force for social change.

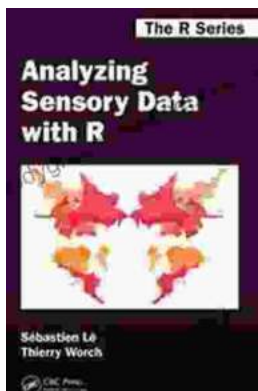


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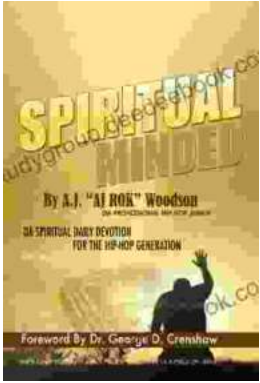
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