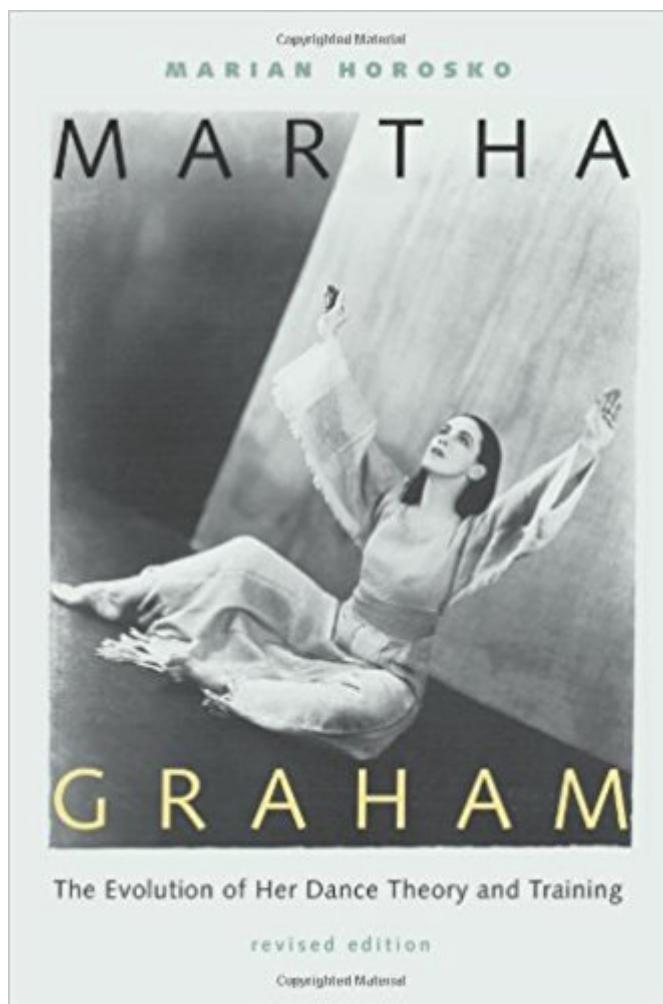


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# Martha Graham: The Evolution Of Her Dance Theory And Training



## Synopsis

"A much-needed update to Horosko's earlier book on Graham, offering an insightful look into the world of Martha Graham from those who worked very closely with her throughout the years."--Elizabeth Bergmann, dance director, Harvard University Marian Horosko brings together new and previously published interviews of Martha Graham's "family" of dancers, teachers, choreographers, and actors and interweaves them with provocative biographical material about the life and influence of the creator of classic modern dance. Spanning the past seventy-five years, the interviews testify to the remarkable legacy that inspired the careers of many in the dance world, among them dancers from the contemporary generation who inherited her technique but never saw her perform. The interviews of teachers, all former Graham students, reflect their passion for maintaining Graham's few fixed principles and her emotional integrity. Some of the foremost actors of Graham's time (she died in 1991) describe their stormy encounters with her in the process of her attempts to teach them that "movement doesn't lie." Although not a textbook--no textbook describing the exercises exists--this book offers the only syllabus in print of Graham's work. Drawn from a private film of a class for her advanced and professional company members in the 1960s, it includes comments from Graham and testifies to her use of imagery in teaching. Photographs that capture the dancers' physical configuration document the development of Graham's choreographic legacy, which expanded and changed as she created each new work, more than 200 in all. These images, along with the interviews and commentary, plot the evolution of Graham's methodology and vocabulary of movement, on which classical modern dance continues to rely. Marian Horosko, a former member of the New York City Ballet, is the author or editor of five books on dance.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"An excellent reflection on this great innovator of modern dance." -- Dance Expression, January 2003 "The dance theories recorded by Horosko are sure to remain the solid foundation of classic modern dance." -- Cleveland Plain Dealer "The first we know of in the countless tomes published about Graham that contains a syllabus of Graham movements....invaluable." -- Back Stage, August 2002 The only book in print with a syllabus of her movements (including advanced work). -- Dancer, July 2005

Marian Horosko brings together new and previously published interviews of Martha Graham's "family" of dancers, teachers, choreographers, and actors and interweaves them with provocative biographical material about the life and influence of the creator of classic modern dance. Spanning the past seventy-five years, the interviews testify to the remarkable legacy that inspired the careers of many in the dance world, among them dancers from the contemporary generation who inherited her technique but never saw her perform. The interviews of teachers, all former Graham students, reflect their passion for maintaining Graham's few fixed principles and her emotional integrity. Some of the foremost actors of Graham's time (she died in 1991) describe their stormy encounters with her in the process of her attempts to teach them that "movement doesn't lie." Although not a textbook--no textbook describing the exercises exists--this book offers the only syllabus in print of Graham's work. Drawn from a private film of a class for her advanced and professional company members in the 1960s, it includes comments from Graham and testifies to her use of imagery in teaching. Photographs that capture the dancers' physical configuration document the development of Graham's choreographic legacy, which expanded and changed as she created each new work, more than 200 in all. These images, along with the interviews and commentary, plot the evolution of Graham's methodology and vocabulary of movement, on which classical modern dance continues to rely.

The stories of Martha Graham are full of gold nuggets. Reflections/Lessons shared from Martha Graham's former students are applicable to many disciplines today. A very worthy book!

Martha Graham did not want to call her dances representative of a particular technique. There

should be "no school of movements" she said. But her dances have a signature, a collection of characteristics that distinguishes them from those of other choreographers. And her signature is the finest of the cursive writing of movement. Graham never scribbled: the swirls that her dances executed are Heraclitean kinetic proof of her exemplary penmanship. And for Graham, gravity is not to be defied but to be exploited: falls to the floor are not prohibited, but encouraged. The ensemble of opinion, the "witnesses to the technique" by those who knew her, danced under her direction, or worked with her is expressed superbly in this book. There is a wide variation in these opinions, but universal agreement on the unique and superb quality of the dances of Martha Graham. Whether one calls it contraction and release, starkness of movement, twists in the torso, movement packed into the instant of action, great body swings, or spiraling around the spine, it is clear that the Graham technique requires discipline as well as the creation of things new. The dancer must depart from the patterns of the past as well as master them. The dancer must indulge herself in what is old and be refreshed in the excitement of originality. It is remarkable but not at all surprising that Martha Graham lived as long as she did. Dancing extends life. All human cultures have some sort of dance. There are no exceptions. The philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche could not believe in a god who did not dance. If he had seen the dances of Martha Graham, he no doubt would have imputed deity status to her and her dancers.

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THIS BOOK IS A MUST FOR DANCERS OR PEOPLE INTERESTED IN DANCING. IT'S FULL OF INTERESTING PHOTOS. BUY IT TODAY, YOU'LL BE GLAD YOU DID!!!! MIKE W. J., GA.

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