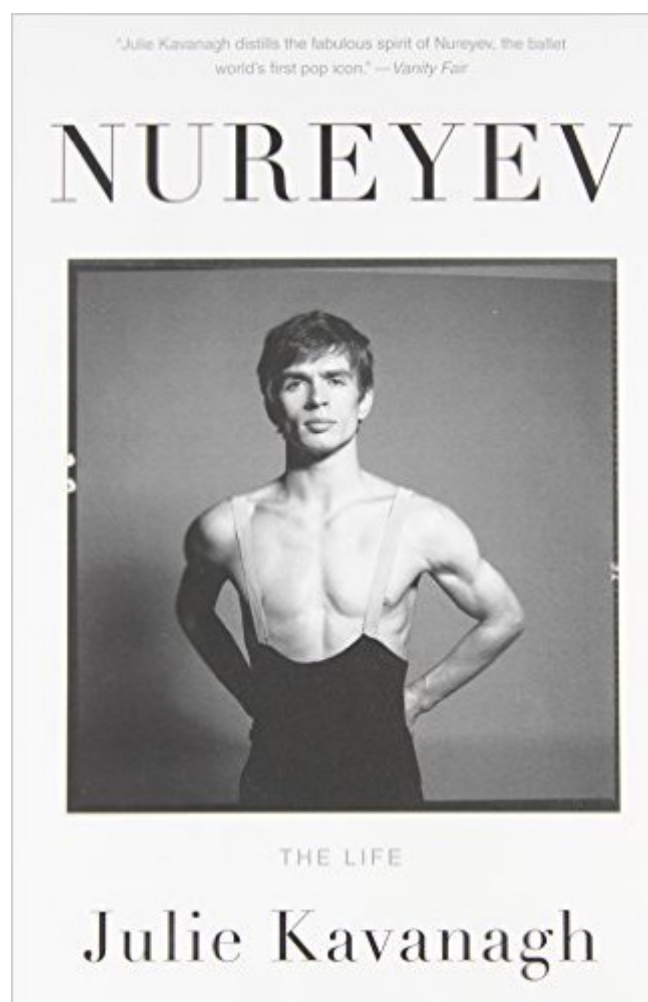


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# Nureyev: The Life



## Synopsis

Rudolf Nureyev, one of the most iconic dancers of the twentieth century, had it all: beauty, genius, charm, passion, and sex appeal. No other dancer of our time has generated the same excitement, for both men and women, on or off the stage. In this superb biography, Julie Kavanagh deftly brings us through the professional and personal milestones of Nureyev's life and career: his education at the Kirov school in Leningrad; his controversial defection from the USSR in 1961; his long-time affair with the Danish dancer Erik Bruhn; his legendary partnership with Margot Fonteyn at the Royal Ballet in London. We see his fiery collaborations with almost all the major living choreographers including Ashton, Balanchine, Robbins, Graham, and Taylor. And we see Nureyev as he reinvigorated the Paris Ballet Opera in the early 1980s before his death from AIDS complications in 1993. *Nureyev: The Life* is the most intimate, revealing, and dramatic picture we have ever had of this dazzling, complex figure.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Rudolf Nureyev, flamboyant dancer with the Kirov Ballet of Leningrad (St. Petersburg), began life on a train to the Eastern Russian front. He was the son of Tatar parents from a remote part of the Soviet Union. His father was a soldier who was rarely home. The family was extremely poor and often hungry, but his mother managed to sneak them into a performance of a ballet when Rudolf was five. He was determined from that time on to learn to dance and perform on the stage. He had the talent, determination and perseverance to succeed. Julie Kavanagh has documented the life of

this dancing man in this encyclopedic volume. She includes information about Nureyev's early training in his hometown, Ufa, his extensive training with mentor Pushkin and Pushkin's wife, Xenia in St. Petersburg. She details his defection to the West in Paris that read like a spy novel - complete with KGB operatives. Nureyev's passion for dance and for learning propels him to work with choreographers from the Paris Opera Ballet to West Side Story. Kavanagh includes titillating factoids about Nureyev's personal life - hobnobbing with the rich and famous, his womanizing, his homosexual lifestyle, and his final battle with HIV/AIDS. She also talks about his dancing. Nureyev is first and foremost a ballet dancer and she documents his transition from the formal classical ballet style to the avant-garde modern dance styles he helped to create. This tome, and it is a tome of nearly 700 pages without counting the extensive footnotes, acknowledgements and index, is an extensive account of a fascinating person. It is quite readable, with the caveat that there are multitudinous Russian names, ballet terminologies, and musical references. These kept me reading somewhat slower than usual.

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