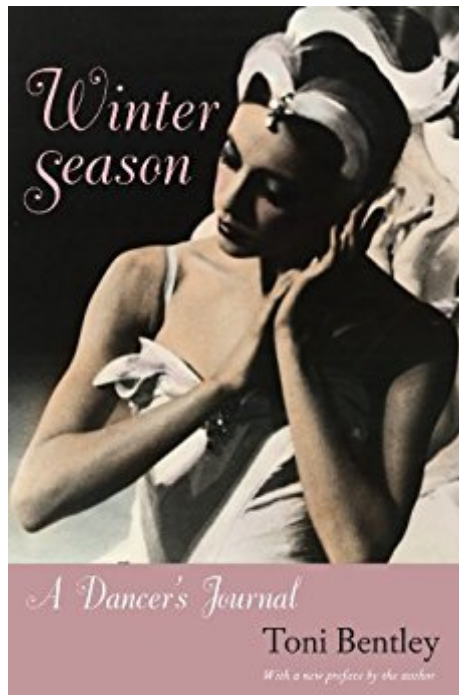




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Winter Season: A Dancer's Journal, With A New Preface



Synopsis

Quite possibly the most revealing book about the world of ballet ever to see print. —National Review —“One of the most intelligent and introspective glimpses ever offered into one of the most competitive and excruciatingly nervous existences in the arts.” —New York Times Book Review —“Without entirely stripping away the glamour of being a dancer, Bentley’s candid and modest account makes for a moving revelation about the price discipline and control exacts from young dancers in the name of art.” —Chicago Tribune —“A mini-marvel, impossible to put down. . . . As a dancer’s-eye portrait of the choreographer, a divinity to Ms. Bentley as well as, apparently, to everyone else in the NYCB and to uncounted other ballet lovers in the world beyond, the book is invaluable.” —New York Review of Books An irresistible inside look at one of the world’s great dance companies, *Winter Season* is also a sensitive, intimate, and almost painfully honest account of the emotional and intellectual development of a young woman dedicated to one of the most demanding of all the arts. Bentley’s association with the New York City Ballet began when she was accepted by the affiliated School of American Ballet at the age of eleven. Seven years later, she became a member of the company. In the fall of 1980, as the winter season opened, she found herself facing an emotional crisis: her dancing was not going well. At 22 she felt that her life had lost direction. To try to make something of her experience, on paper if not on stage, she began to keep a journal, describing her day-to-day activities and looking back on her past. The result is perhaps the closest that most of us will ever come to knowing what it feels like to be a dancer, on stage and off. It also offers memorable glimpses of some notable members of the City ballet, with, at the center, the man whose vision they all served — George Balanchine.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Fabulous book. Tony Bentley is wise beyond her years. They say you write what you know, and she does. I saw myself in so many of the pages, which made it all so much more hard-hitting. Her accounts of her love affair with "the Duke" and how she was able to basically compartmentalize it in order to continue in her other (intense) love, of ballet and performing, was particularly fascinating. You feel you are in New York too, walking in her footsteps, as you follow her through her many adventures of body and mind. A must read for any artist or love of great writing!

I was also a dancer in NYC. Wish I could have read this then. Along with so many of us who experienced the same painful, beautiful, confusing lives. I would make the same choices had I to do it over. At age 73 I still do tendues, battement jetes, port de bras and stretches.....badly but I love them. Great writer. Read Toni's account of her life in the greatest ballet company the world has known. Sorry it took me years to finally read it myself.

I highly recommend this book written from the perspective of a NYC ballerina in the form of a journal documenting a single season she experienced with the ballet company in the time of Balanchine. This book takes the reader right into the world of the ballet dancer and the exhaustion, joy, pride, doubts and fears experienced as the season progresses.

I chose this book while looking to immerse myself in the wonderful yet tough world of classical ballet, trying to get a glimpse of what a ballerina thinks, worries and dreams about during a performance season. In that sense, Bentley's book was a great choice. Through the pages of her journal one meets characters as "Mr. B," the timeless George Balanchine, Suzanne Farrell (Bentley's personal idol), Baryshnikov, Nureyev, Kirkland and other legends of ballet with which the author was lucky

to work. Her prose is agile and enjoyable, and the best thing about this book is that she doesn't tell the utopian odyssey of the "ugly duckling" ballerina that suddenly becomes a principal. It's the real account of a corps dancer, with all the uncertainty and yet all the wonderment of a professional dance, not just dancing for a living but, as she puts it, living for dance. Nevertheless, as I came to the last page of the book, I was left wanting more. One winter season came and went swiftly and with it, the world of ballet evaporated before my eyes before I knew it. So, as a junkie, I had to go looking elsewhere to "get my fix" of more ballet =).

Even at the tender age of 22, which she was when she wrote *Winter Season*, Toni Bentley could really write. Deeply sensitive inside look at the heart and soul of a dancer.

No "Dancing on my Grave" but nonetheless an interesting well-written account about one professional dancer's experience with a well known ballet company.

Good book, well written, inside look into ballet. I would recommend it.

Wonderful insight to the world of ballet!

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