

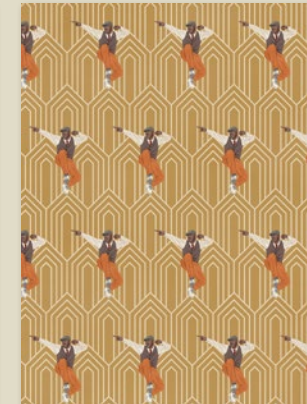
Welcome to the Arts: Dance



TIMES BEST CHILDREN'S BOOKS OF 2023!

- The first title in the new dazzling new Welcome to the Arts series.
- The perfect gift for anyone who is a fan of *Strictly Come Dancing* or *Dancing With the Stars*
- Phenomenal immersive artwork by multi award-winning artist, Jason Raish
- Expertly written, lively text by Sadler's Wells CEO, Sir Alistair Spalding
- Published in conjunction with Sadler's Wells Theatre - one of the world's leading dance organisations
- Beautiful large format artwork makes the reader feel they are really there

Welcome to the Arts: Dance



"Dancers are the messengers of the gods."

Martha Graham

Born in 1894 in Pennsylvania, Martha Graham showed an early interest in dance, but her parents did not approve of her becoming a dancer. It was only after her father's death in 1914 that Graham, then aged 20, was able to pursue her dream and enrolled at the Denishawn school in Los Angeles. The eventual pioneer and creator of modern dance, Graham allowed and encouraged women to be at the forefront of artistic achievement.

Graham created a dance technique that allowed the performers to become aware of, and use, their gravity as opposed to ballet where the emphasis was on the dancers appearing weightless. Graham also worked on the principle of 'contracting and release', in her choreography movement comes from the tension of pulling in, or 'contracting', the pelvic muscles and curving the spine. The flow of energy is then 'released' from the body when it straightens. When repeated, this gives a rhythmic flow to the movement, a cycle similar to breathing in and out, but with more exaggerated movements. It was used in many of Graham's greatest choreographies, including the solo dance *Lamentation* and larger group works such as *Chronicle* (1926). It is still practised as a daily class in many dance companies and schools today.

The main themes of Graham's work include Greek mythology and American history. While her early works featured only female dancers, men joined Graham's company in 1938, prompting her to explore new themes. For example, the staged work *Appalachian Spring* (1944) explores the experiences of early American pioneers, but also the act of falling in love.

By presenting ideas and images that were unfamiliar, Graham introduced a new era in dance. She collaborated with composers such as Louis Horst and the fashion designers Calvin Klein and Donna Karan. She taught actors including Liza Minnelli and Gregory Peck and inspired future dance greats such as Merce Cunningham (see page 39) and Taylor Swift.

— NOW SHOWING —

Martha Graham stars in *Lamentation*, premiered 8 January 1930 at Maxine Elliott's Theatre, New York City | Choreographed by Martha Graham | Music by Zoltan Kodaly

Lamentation, sometimes referred to as the Dance of Sorrow, is a four-minute solo piece first performed by Graham herself. The costume was deliberately designed to restrict her movements and to enhance the accession of grief, but also to highlight its boundaries.

41

| | |
|------------------|--------------------------|
| Pub Date | 26/10/2023 |
| Pub Price | £25.00 |
| ISBN | 9781800783362 |
| H x W | 370 x 272mm |
| Binding | Hardback |
| Age Range | 9-11 years |
| Author | Alistair Spalding |
| Illustrator | Jason Raish |
| Extent | 112pp |
| Word Count | 21858 words |
| Rights Available | World |