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*Octavio Roca, Mikhail Baryshnikov, Alicia Alonso*  
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**Octavio Roca, Mikhail Baryshnikov, Alicia Alonso : Cuban Ballet** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Cuban Ballet:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. You can dance ndash; anyone can learn to dance!By MariaBeautiful book about the importance of Cuban ballet and its influence on the early American ballet scene. I was blessed by studying ballet at the Alicia Alonso school of ballet in Havana as a little girl then after the revolution was again blessed by studying ballet for many years with her sister, Cuca Martinez - who was an inspiration in my life. This book covers the techniques, artform, and personal relationships within these geniuses of ballet art. It is a treasure and I know I will hold it dear to my heart forever.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Must reading for fans of balletBy CustomerAs a confirmed balletomane and one involved with our local Cuban Ballet School in Sarasota, I found this book fascinating and informative. The life of Alicia Alonso as portrayed here is a ballet waiting to happen.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great introduction to Cuban BalletBy Hannah BananaI enjoyed this book very much, and although it does not avoid discussing difficult topics, it still comes off a little bit like a puff piece on Alicia Alonso. While reading this book you really do admire her determination and work ethic and success.This does read like a fan writing about a dancer and person he loves. And that is okay, because there is a wealth of info that comes along with that all. So I give it 4 stars only because it is not an objective book, but it is still very good.

The unique style of Cuban ballet is galvanizing the world of dance in the United States, Europe, Latin America, and beyond. This lavishly illustrated book explores the history of Cuban ballet first by focusing on the life and career of the indomitable Alicia Alonso. Then it tells of the many young dancers in the Cuban diaspora who are changing the face of ballet in the 21st Century: Lorena Feijoo, Lorna Feijoo, Joan Boada, Taras Domitro, Jose Manuel Carreno, Rolando Sarabia, and Carlos Acosta to name but a few. While focusing on the artistry and spirit of Cuban dancers, both within and out of Cuba, Octavio Roca pulls no punches but deftly explores the political realities artists face in Cuba and the reasons so many have to leave their beloved home to reach their full potential, taking their grace, beauty, strength, and style with them. Cuba's loss has become the world's gain. And the gripping tales of these beautiful Cuban dancers reads like a novel that happens to be true.

The product of years of research and a lifetime of commitment to Cuban arts and culture, Roca's book explores the history of Cuban ballet. --San Francisco Chronicle. The book is an almost action/adventure - like none other. --San Francisco Sentinel. Roca understands the depths and complexities of their noble commitment to Dance and rejoices in their personal, artistic, and cultural triumphs. His text is lyrical and linear; the arguments are rich and provoking. --San Francisco Sentinel. Dance is all about balance...there is a certain beauty in the fact that Cuban Ballet opens with forewords by Alonso, a supporter of Castro, and by Baryshnikov, the most famous anti-communist defector in the world. --Hispanic-Poder Magazine. The book is a labor of love. --Hispanic-Poder Magazine. From the Author. This book is a work of love, and it is a work of memory. We live in a world where exile is the natural state of many people, but the fact of its being common takes away little of the pain. This is a book by an exile, about those who left and also those who have stayed. It is a very personal journey for me. There is beauty in the arduous, unwilling, often unacknowledged transformation of temporary exile into permanent immigration. There certainly is artistic fervor in these lives. This may offer little solace, an unsatisfactory substitute for the land we lost. But what a surprise it can be to find these labors are now part of the culture of new lands we might call our own. Again let us remember Jose Marti's dictum, that "Hacer es la mejor manera de decir," "Doing is the best way of saying." Just as Alicia Alonso once refused to recognize her blindness as a brutal limitation for her art, dancers in the Cuban diaspora refuse to recognize the loss of their homeland. They are Cuban artists and they are free. What they do with what has been done to them is a touching, gripping tale. Theirs is a bittersweet victory, or perhaps just a sign of the inexorable momentum of history. Theirs is above all a true tale of the greatness of the human soul, of the indomitable spirit of dance. This is their story. From the Inside Flap. "What makes the Cuban dancers stand out, I think, is their ethics. They have a respect for ballet from an early age. It's been said before that no one is born a dancer; you have to want it more than anything. These Cubans want it and feel privileged to be a part of it. They give themselves completely." "I know that Octavio Roca's love of Cuba is as profound as his knowledge of ballet, and I know this book is from his heart." Mikhail Baryshnikov, from his foreword to Octavio Roca's Cuban Ballet. "Cubans are a dancing people. Dance matters to us, and it matters deeply. Now comes Octavio Roca, whom I have known for decades and who has known us his whole life, and he has seen our dancers at home and abroad as well as on tour and with other companies. As a guest of the International Ballet Festival in Havana, Octavio Roca was able to observe the Cuban dance movement in its own environment and to witness the Cuban School of Ballet in all its richness. For me, his critical writing on dance carries a unique sensitivity to an art for he clearly loves. The rest I leave to the future." Alicia Alonso, from her foreword to Octavio Roca's Cuban Ballet. (20091101)