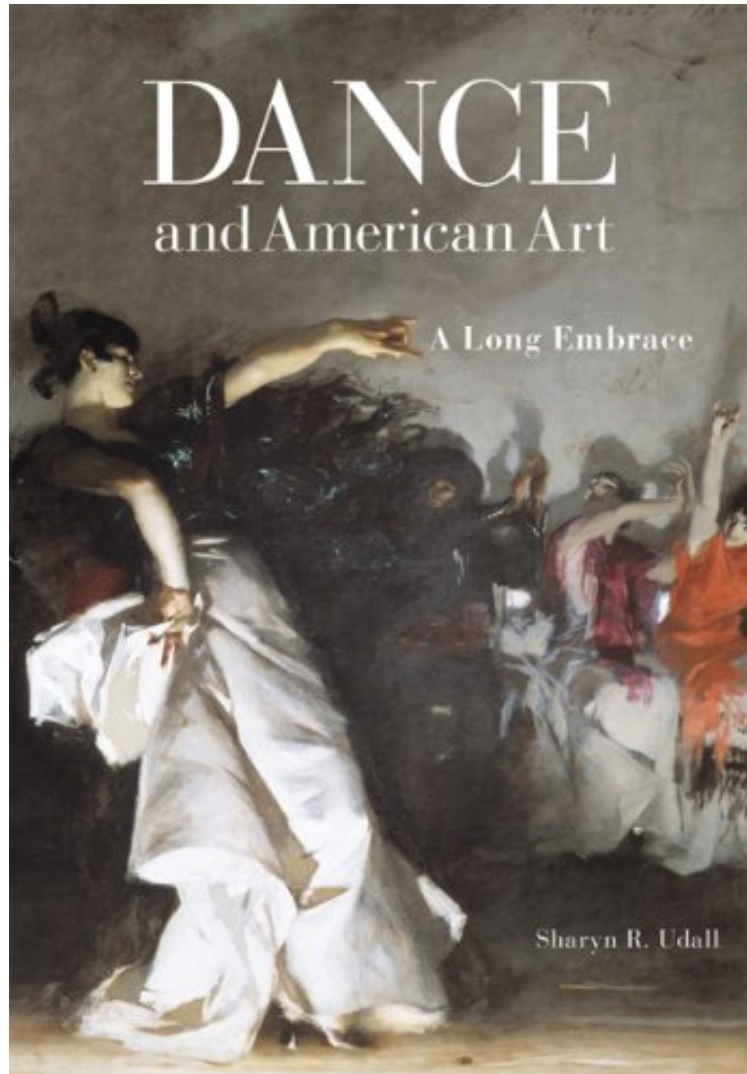


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Dance and American Art: A Long Embrace

Sharyn R. Udall

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Sharyn R. Udall : Dance and American Art: A Long Embrace before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Dance and American Art: A Long Embrace:

From ballet to burlesque, from the frontier jig to the jitterbug, Americans have always loved watching dance, whether in grand ballrooms, on Mississippi riverboats, or in the streets. Dance and American Art is an innovative look at the elusive, evocative nature of dance and the American visual artists who captured it through their paintings, sculpture, photography, and prints from the early nineteenth century through the mid-twentieth century. The scores of artists discussed include many icons of American art: Winslow Homer, George Caleb Bingham, Mary Cassatt, James

McNeill Whistler, Alexander Calder, Joseph Cornell, Edward Steichen, David Smith, and others. As a subject for visual artists, dance has given new meaning to America's perennial myths, cherished identities, and most powerful dreams. Their portrayals of dance and dancers, from the anonymous to the famous—Anna Pavlova, Isadora Duncan, Loie Fuller, Josephine Baker, Martha Graham—have testified to the enduring importance of spatial organization, physical pattern, and rhythmic motion in creating aesthetic form. Through extensive research, sparkling prose, and beautiful color reproductions, art historian Sharyn R. Udall draws attention to the ways that artists' portrayals of dance have defined the visual character of the modern world and have embodied culturally specific ideas about order and meaning, about the human body, and about the diverse fusions that comprise American culture.

By exploring the continual dialogue between art and dance, Udall not only probes dancers' own cultural meanings, she also casts new light on visual artists' persistent reliance on dance to invent new forms, revitalize technique and style, and better understand the human body and movement.—Andrea Harris, editor of *Before, Between, and Beyond: Three Decades of Dance Writing*