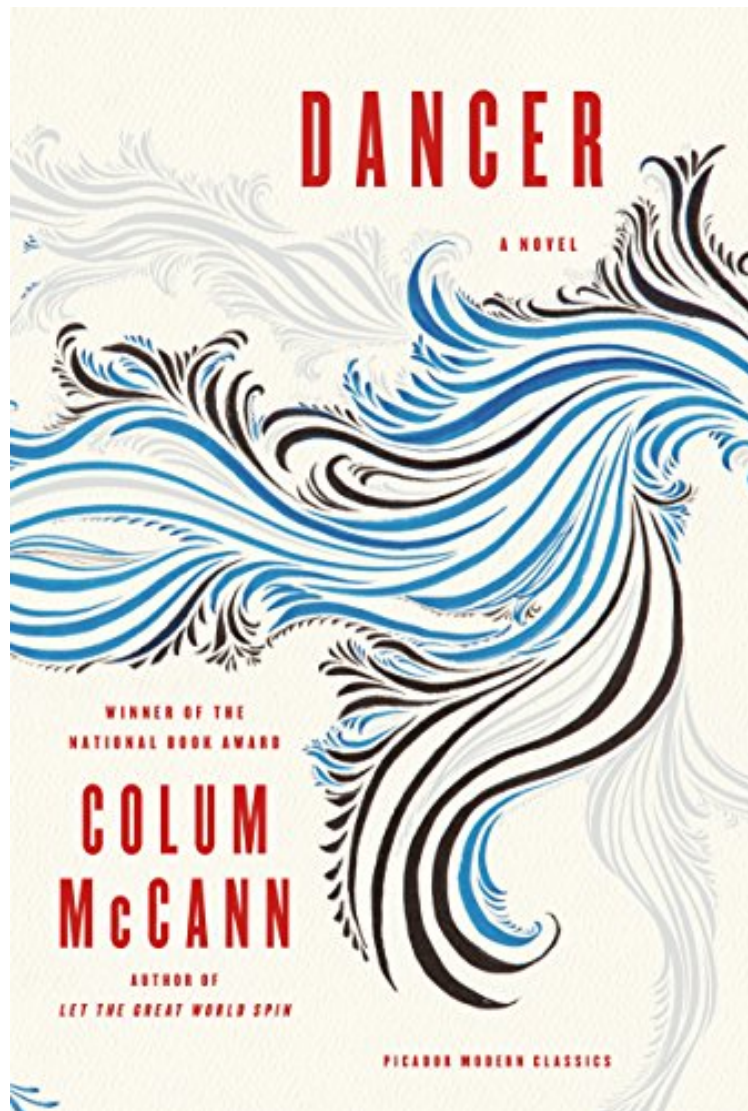


(Ebook free) Dancer: A Novel (Picador Modern Classics)

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Von Colum McCann

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Von Colum McCann : Dancer: A Novel (Picador Modern Classics) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Dancer: A Novel (Picador Modern Classics):

KurzbeschreibungFrom the acclaimed author of This Side of Brightness, the epic life and times of Rudolf Nureyev,

reimagined in a dazzlingly inventive masterpiece—published to coincide with the tenth anniversary of Nureyev's death. A Russian peasant who became an international legend, a Cold War exile who inspired millions, an artist whose name stood for genius, sex, and excess—the magnificence of Rudolf Nureyev's life and work are known, but now Colum McCann, in his most daring novel yet, reinvents this erotically charged figure through the light he cast on those who knew him. Taking his inspiration from the biographical facts, McCann tells the story through a chorus of voices: there is Anna Vasileva, Rudi's first ballet teacher, who rescues her protégé from the stunted life of his town; Yulia, whose sexual and artistic ambitions are thwarted by her Soviet-sanctioned marriage; and Victor, the Venezuelan hustler, who reveals the lurid underside of the gay celebrity set. Spanning four decades and many worlds, from the horrors of Stalingrad to the wild abandon of New York in the eighties, *Dancer* is peopled by a large cast of characters, obscure and famous: doormen and shoemakers, Margot Fonteyn and John Lennon. And at the heart of the spectacle stands the artist himself, willful, lustful, and driven by a never-to-be-met need for perfection. In ecstatic prose, McCann evokes the distinct consciousness of the man and the glittering reflection of the myth. The result is a monumental story of love, art, and exile.

Dancer, like Colum McCann's previous novels *This Side of Brightness* and *Songdogs*, is an elegant weave of historical fact and fictional imagining. Here his central character is the late, great, Rudolf Nureyev—the Soviet dancer who defected to the West at the height of the Cold War, partnered Margot Fonteyn and became ballet's first international male superstar. The "real" Nureyev remains an enigmatic, even iconic figure—as infamous for his petulance, lavish lifestyle, voracious sexual appetite and tragic AIDS-related death as for his dancing. McCann wisely eschews a straightforward account of Rudolf's outrageous life. His sympathetic portrait of the priapic star, which seems oddly weak on dance itself but certainly has scenes to rival *The Satyricon*, is ingeniously discursive. Nureyev is often more omnipresent than actually present—his story related through a series of diary entries, reports and different narrative perspectives and voices, including the dancer's own. (On occasions, he even briefly drops from view entirely and the travails of his family, friends and his mentors, the Vasilevas, come to the fore.) Divided into four loosely chronological sections, the novel spans the length of Nureyev's dancing career, opening in Stalin's war-ravaged Russia, where the young Rudolf earned sugar lumps for entertaining wounded soldiers, and closing with his last sickly performance and a final, fleeting, visit home. Exile and displacement are really the chief themes of the book and McCann's Nureyev is a man scarred and agitated by the decision to abandon his homeland. "I dance", he notes at one point, "so much—too much—in order not to think of home". McCann seems to imply, however, that it is his disapproving father, who never saw him dance, who fuelled his relentless ambition. Forays into cod-Freudian psychoanalysis aside, this gripping reinvention of Nureyev, rich in period detail and characterisation, is well conceived, marvellously wrought and eminently readable.

--Travis Elborough *Pressestimmen* "A beautiful, floating novel about Nureyev's life and art." --"The New York Times Book "Exuberant and exhilarating . . . A brilliant leap of imagination." --"San Francisco Chronicle" "The goal of a book like this is to catch the spirit of the person and his age. It's a tall order, and one that "Dancer" pulls off brilliantly." --"The Seattle Times" "Fascinating . . . A triumph of voice . . . McCann's fluid lyricism brilliantly convey's Nureyev's towering professional achievement and the wasteland of his personal life." --"Newsday" "A monumental life . . . Stylistically, *Dancer* is a leap itself." --"Los Angeles Times" "An engrossing portrait of a man so complex that no mere biography could possibly convey more than a sliver of his personality. . . . The Nureyev who strides impatiently through its pages seems entirely convincing." --Terry Teachout, "The Baltimore Sun" "Every sentence sounds new and beautiful, no matter how often it's read." --"USA Today" "Dancer "is the most breathtaking tribute to Nureyev since Jamie Wyeth's famous paintings." --"Esquire" "Dazzling . . . an intimate portrait . . . "Dancer "is bigger than the dance, bigger than biography, too. . . . Relish McCann's dizzy, fascinating glimpse." --"Miami Herald" "A beautiful, floating novel about Nureyev's life and art. "The New York Times Book " Exuberant and exhilarating . . . A brilliant leap of imagination. "San Francisco Chronicle" The goal of a book like this is to catch the spirit of the person and his age. It's a tall order, and one that "Dancer" pulls off brilliantly. "The Seattle Times" Fascinating . . . A triumph of voice . . . McCann's fluid lyricism brilliantly convey's Nureyev's towering professional achievement and the wasteland of his personal life. "Newsday" A monumental life . . . Stylistically, *Dancer* is a leap itself. "Los Angeles Times" An engrossing portrait of a man so complex that no mere biography could possibly convey more than a sliver of his personality. . . . The Nureyev who strides impatiently through its pages seems entirely convincing. "Terry Teachout, The Baltimore Sun" Every sentence sounds new and beautiful, no matter how often it's read. "USA Today" "Dancer "is the most breathtaking tribute to Nureyev since Jamie Wyeth's famous paintings. "Esquire" Dazzling . . . an intimate portrait . . . "Dancer "is bigger than the dance, bigger than biography, too. . . . Relish McCann's dizzy, fascinating glimpse. "Miami Herald" "A beautiful, floating novel about Nureyev's life and art." --The New York Times Book "Exuberant and exhilarating . . . A brilliant leap of imagination." --San Francisco Chronicle "The goal of a book like this is to catch the spirit of the person and his age. It's a tall order, and one that *Dancer* pulls off brilliantly." --The Seattle Times "Fascinating . . . A triumph of voice . . . McCann's fluid lyricism brilliantly convey's Nureyev's towering professional achievement and the wasteland of his personal life." --Newsday "A monumental life . . . Stylistically, *Dancer* is a leap itself." --Los Angeles Times "An engrossing portrait of a man so complex that no mere biography could possibly convey more than a sliver of his personality. . . . The Nureyev who strides impatiently through its pages seems entirely convincing." --Terry

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