



Dancing Genius: The Stardom of Vaslav Nijinsky

Hanna Järvinen

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Dancing Genius is the first book-length critical study on Vaslav Nijinsky as a star dancer of the Ballets Russes company. Through looking into definitions of virtuosity, stardom and genius, Hanna Järvinen contrasts contemporary materials from Russia, France, England and the United States with later, hegemonic interpretations. Nijinsky emerges as a celebrity figure whose dancing was attributed with genius in order to raise the prestige of the art form, but a figure also attributed with 'racial' characteristics in a thoroughly Orientalist manner. Tracing the historical figure in contemporary documents and later reminiscences, the book opens up questions about authorship in dance, about critical evaluation of performance practice, and the manner in which past events are turned into history.

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