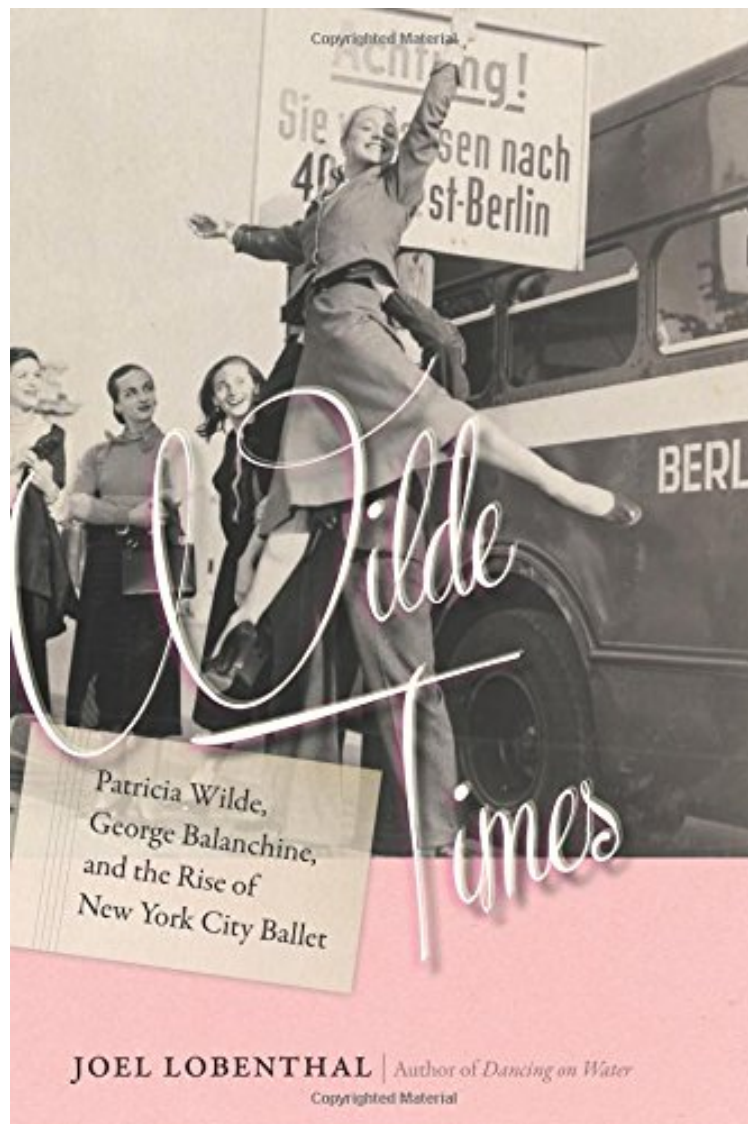


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## Wilde Times: Patricia Wilde, George Balanchine, and the Rise of New York City Ballet

Joel Lobenthal

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**Joel Lobenthal : Wilde Times: Patricia Wilde, George Balanchine, and the Rise of New York City Ballet** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Wilde Times: Patricia Wilde, George Balanchine, and the Rise of New York City Ballet:

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. a world of brilliant dancers, mercurial directors and the dramas that

unfolded ...By Lucky ReaderThis book transported me to another time and place, a world of brilliant dancers, mercurial directors and the dramas that unfolded onstage and off. To be honest, I picked it up because of the author and not because I follow ballet. I didn't expect to be so engrossed. But maybe because I don't know the art form, the descriptions have so much life; there was no preconceived picture in my head, only what Lobenthal conjured. The lessons go far beyond ballet. As his previous work *Dancing on Water* brought to life the siege of Leningrad, *Wilde Times* reveals the impact of other dramatic events, notably the polio epidemic. I'll stop here to avoid spoilers and leave it to experts to evaluate this book's contribution to the cannon of ballet literature - only to conclude by saying my experience as a reader was bliss.4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Patricia WildeBy yan ekThis book accurately paints a picture that we can only know from recollection by someone like Patricia Wilde. The whole nature of professional ballet was different in her dancing career and her generation developed what present dancers benefit from today. Every element-from companies, choreographers, performances, dancer's techniques, abilities and style has evolved because of events outlined, written and retold in this book. The dancers in NYCB, during her time, were taught how to dance by Balanchine and they then went out and created a second and third generation of dancers, refining the same things, better and better all the time. This book is accurate in its details and that, in itself, makes it worthy. I'd wished for more photographs and getting detail about her career at Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre but that is still left for PBT to do.2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. A terrific read!By G. MooreThis is a wonderful, concise, at times quite chatty memoir about a great ballerina in the greatest of ballet companies. It is also a delicious look at the multiple facets of Balanchine.

At eighty-seven, Patricia Wilde remains a grande dame of the ballet world. As a young star she toured America in the company of the Ballet Russe. In her heyday in the 1950s and 60s, she was a first-generation member and principal dancer of New York City Ballet during the uniquely dramatic Balanchine era—the golden age of the company and its hugely gifted, influential, exploitative, and dictatorial director. In *Wilde Times*, Joel Lobenthal brings the world of Wilde and Balanchine, of Tanaquil Le Clercq, Diana Adams, Suzanne Farrell, Maria Tallchief, and many others thrillingly to life. With unfettered access to Wilde and her family, friends, and colleagues, Lobenthal takes the reader backstage to some of the greatest ballet triumphs of the modern era and some of the greatest tragedies. Through it all Patricia Wilde emerges as a figure of towering strength, grace, and grit. *Wilde Times* is the first biography of this seminal figure in American dance, written with the cooperation of the star, but wide-ranging in its use of sources to tell the full and intertwining stories of the development of Wilde, of Balanchine, and of American national ballet at its peak in the twentieth century.

This first biography of the performer presents a window into the world of Balanchine at an important time in dance history. *Library Journal*