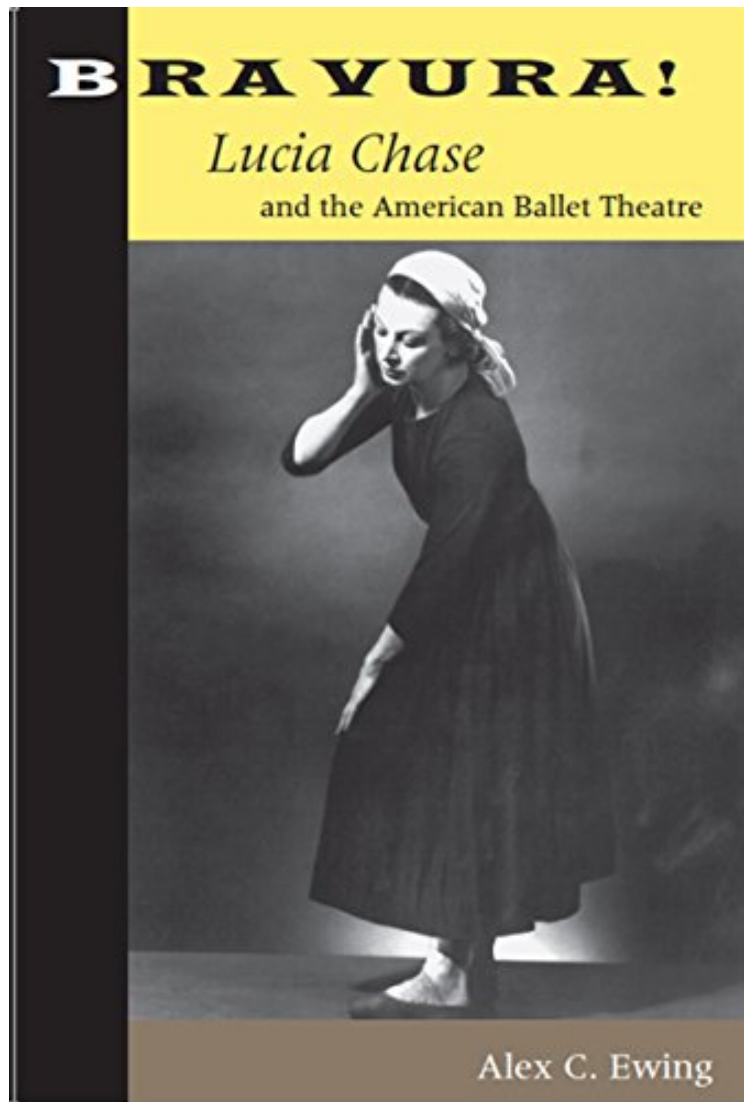


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Bravura!: Lucia Chase and the American Ballet Theatre

Alex C. Ewing

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Alex C. Ewing : Bravura!: Lucia Chase and the American Ballet Theatre before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Bravura!: Lucia Chase and the American Ballet Theatre:

12 of 13 people found the following review helpful. Bravo Bravura !By CustomerUp front, I'm an insider. The author is my cousin, the subject my aunt.I was only a distant and very junior spectator to some of the events recounted in the book.One reason for writing this review is that I, like hundreds of the members of American Ballet Theatre (ABT) during the forty years described, was the beneficiary of Lucia Chase's extraordinary kindness and generosity. This is a way of publicly expressing my thanks to her.But Lucia Chase was many things besides being kind and generous. She

was passionate and determined, often to the point of hair-tearing obstinacy. The book is a must read for anyone interested in American ballet. For today's balletomanes accustomed to having five important companies in New York and dozens elsewhere across the country, the book describes the painful process of arriving there. ABT was the pioneer. Its birth and survival were a saga. When it was launched in the 1940's, the U.S. was a wasteland in terms of ballet, the only offerings being sporadic visits by foreign companies. The hard grit business of creating a ballet public in the U.S. meant years of gruelling bus tours between modest hotels, low salaries, inadequate theatres and perpetual financial insecurity. Only ABT did this. The book is beautifully crafted and perfectly edited. It reads like a thriller. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. For Ballet Lovers By Susan Nehez I really enjoyed this book because my cousin danced with American Ballet Theater. I enjoyed learning about the history, how it was founded and the struggles of its existence. Too bad it didn't mention the pizza party I hosted for the troop in my apartment when they visited and performed at my school, The University of Missouri in 1968. That was a really fun night. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By Lisa B Interesting book about the history of ballet in America

Long-awaited biography of the "Queen Mother" of American Ballet "A book that should be read by historians, ballet artists, ballet lovers, and book lovers in general. It is a fascinating story not only about the growth of ballet in America but also of the courage and persistence of a Great Lady."--Irina Baronova "It's high time the magnetically American story of Lucia Chase and Ballet Theatre was told. Like the history-making and aptly named company she kept, Lucia was colorful, daring, and almost self-destructively determined--an original always in passionate pursuit of the original."--Arthur Laurents "Lucia Chase, an American original, is made vivid on these pages. For over forty years much of ballet in the U.S. rode her coattails, or vice versa--you decide."--Eliot Feld To many people, Lucia Chase (1897-1986) was the American Ballet Theatre, and her reign as the queen of American ballet lasted for more than four decades. It was Chase who brought Nureyev, Bujones, Kirkland, and eventually Baryshnikov to ABT. Under her leadership, the company worked with such legends as Agnes de Mille, Anthony Tudor, Jerome Robbins, and Twyla Tharp. Her drive, ambition, tenacity, and money kept the doors open even during the lean years. A dancer when the company made its debut in 1940, she was artistic director for an unprecedented thirty-five years, from 1945 to 1980. Over the course of her career, she received numerous honors and awards, including the U.S. Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest civilian honor. Combining unique personal insights as Chase's son along with experience garnered from his own professional dance and administrative career, Alex Ewing offers the definitive story of one of the true pioneers in the world of American ballet.

About the Author Alex C. Ewing is chancellor emeritus of the North Carolina School of the Arts and former general director of the Joffrey Ballet.