



Body of a Dancer

Renee D'Aoust

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2011 Finalist for *Fore Word Review's* Book of the Year Award in Autobiography/Memoir

"A remarkably clear-eyed descent into New York's surreal world of modern dance peopled by the obsessed, dispossessed, sexy, suicidal, brutal, broke, and absurd."—Lance Olsen, author of *Nietzsche's Kisses*

The award-winning writer **Renée E. D'Aoust** draws from her experiences as a modern dancer in New York during the nineties. Her luminous prose spotlights this passionate, often brutal world. Trained at the prestigious Martha Graham Center, D'Aoust intertwines accounts of her own and other dancers' lives with essays on modern dance history. A dancer's body, scarred, strained, and tough, bears witness to the discipline demanded by the art form. *Body of a Dancer* provides a powerful, acidly comic record of what it is to love, and eventually leave, a life centered on dance.

"D'Aoust describes in great candor and plainspoken wit all the idiosyncrasies of dancers and their necessary sacrifices: "'Leave home, leave country, forget secondary education, forget any guarantee of a stable income, destroy naïve innocence about the body'"—*Shelf Awareness*

"With exquisite description, absolute honesty, and a clear compelling voice, *Body of a Dancer* offers an unforgettable account of one artist's bittersweet journey."—Dinty W. Moore

Renée E. D'Aoust's essays have been featured as notable essays in *Best American Essays* in 2006, 2007, and 2009. Her nonfiction work has been included in the anthology *Reading Dance*, edited by Robert Gottlieb and nominated for the Pushcart Prize. D'Aoust is the recipient of an NEA Dance Criticism

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