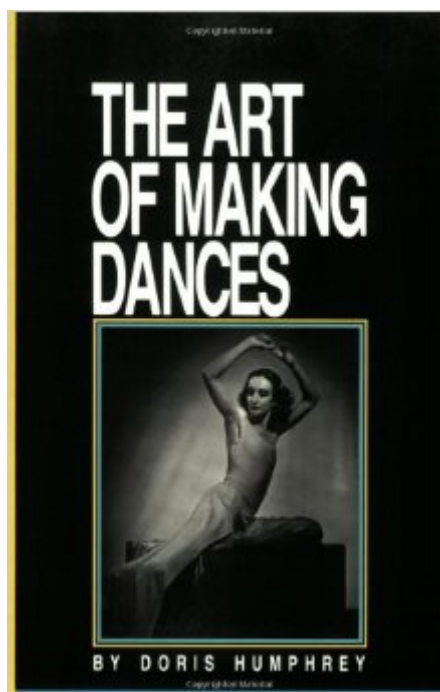


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# The Art Of Making Dances



## Synopsis

Written just before the author's death in 1958, this book is an autobiography in art, a gathering of experiences in performance, and a lucid and practical source book on choreography.

## Book Information

Paperback: 192 pages

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Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.5 x 9 inches

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Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (12 customer reviews)

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## Customer Reviews

as a post-modernist who is always asking "why?" or "who says so?" i see this text as simply brimming with possible areas for undermining aesthetics, theories, and practices in choreography... when i was an undergrad, i learned to choreograph by reading this book. essentially i learned how to make "grocery store list" dances... do i have the "proper" levels? check! do i have "interesting" variations? check! is my music "appropriate" for dance? double check!! have i avoided anything that should be better described with words? ummm... hmmm. well... err... this is where the problems get really big -- yes, i adamantly suggest a beginner learn the material from this book, but only so that the dated notions can be completely thrown away. i give this book 5 stars, because it introduces some of the most important concepts about craft all in one nice, orderly place, but i also give it 5 stars because of the hundreds or thousands of dances that could be made simply to refute the ideas contained herein. yes, get the book... it's essential to your training as a dance maker... yes, throw EVERYTHING away once you've learned it. this text is a bibliography brimming with sources on dance/performance concepts... now that i'm a college professor i'm teaching the choreography 1 class how to use this book as is, but i'm teaching the choreography 4 class how to refute it completely.

Written by one of the master pioneers of American modern dance, "The Art of Making Dances" was Doris Humphrey's final effort before she died in 1958. Published after her death, the book is a tribute to her legacy of providing a formal methodology of the craft of choreography. The book is an excellent manual for the beginning choreographer by outlining elements of dance and music composition, design, dynamics, rhythm and gesture. She includes choreography assignments to illustrate each compositional element. While somewhat dated in its choreography references, Humphrey offers the reader advice for what to look for in formal choreography making the book an excellent introduction to understanding and appreciating dance for the practitioner as well as the audience member. Dalienne Majors Chair of Dance Berkeley Carroll School Brooklyn, NY July 2006

I like this book for it's drawing examples and it's heart to heart talk. I can almost hear the writer talking directly at me about how to look at dancing in a different way. . .the heart and emotion of the dance not the techniques that are drummed into us from the time we first put our foot down. This book was recommended to me from a person that studies and teaches ballet. I am a bellydance student myself but found that it was very helpful in getting over my fears of making my own dances. Highly recommended for all levels and types of dancers.

This is the foundation book. I have read and sometimes purchased many books on choreography, but they all are only extensions of what is presented in this book. It is said that choreography cannot be taught - you can do it or you can't. I agree that the creative inspiration cannot be taught, but the stagecraft can and that is what choreography must be built on. I have danced professionally, and been a teacher and choreographer for almost 35 years. The principles outlined by Doris Humphrey in this book apply to all forms and styles of performance dance. A must for any aspiring choreographer and very useful for teachers.

This book is a wonderful book to advise on how and what to do to make a choreography. Even though it was originally written quite a while ago, it gives current dancers of all dance forms inspiration to create.

I am an actor and this book has tons of great perspective and ideas for stage performances. It's exactly what I was looking for, and gives a great practical look at stage work.

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