

Being a Ballerina: The Power and Perfection of a Dancing Life by Gavin Larsen will release on 4/27/2021

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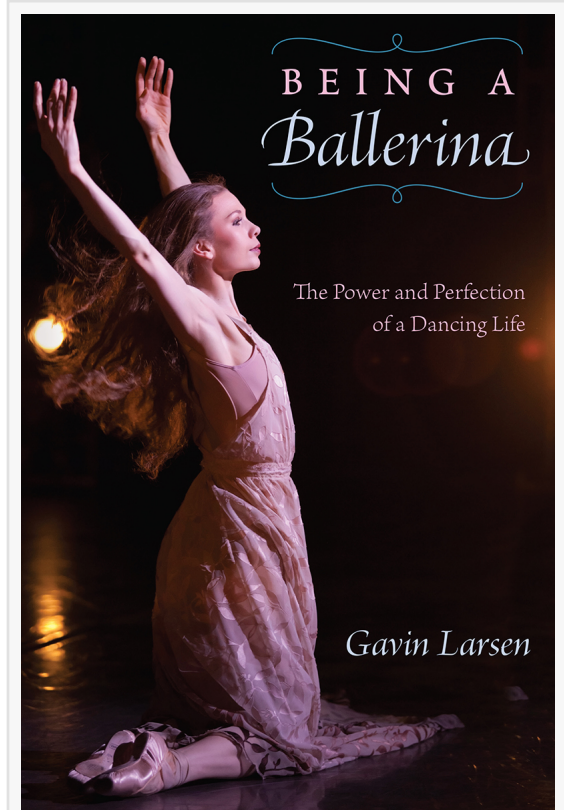
A look inside a dancer's world

Gavin Larsen's [memoir](#) is not only a story of a dancer's life and career, it is an inspiring and honest story of what drives the dancer. Being a [Ballerina](#) reveals sacrifices, the drive for perfection, the resilient power of the dancer's body. Larsen also reveals the rewards of personal achievement within the world of dance.

"Larsen relates in great detail and remarkable prose how she became a ballerina. With her we enter a school. With her we enter a theater. With her we listen in the wings and rush out onto the stage, the destination of her desire, the music her guide. We read about the difficult training that must be mastered and the fragility of the body during the process of learning technique. We learn about the joy of performance. I loved reading it."—Allegra Kent, former principal dancer, New York City [Ballet](#)

"Gentle, genuine, and honest, Larsen shares her experiences generously, offering a compelling glimpse into a ballerina's world—one that beautifully illustrates not only what it takes to become a professional dancer but what it means to be a ballerina."—Jennifer Carlynn Kronenberg, author of *So, You Want to Be a Ballet Dancer?*

"I laughed out loud, cringed, and teared up relating to the joys and trials that a career in ballet requires and that Larsen so vividly conveys. Her wit and humanity bring behind-the-scenes experiences to life with the candor of a good friend along with the invaluable insights of a real



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ballerina. If you want to be a ballerina or want to know what it takes to be one, this is a must-read.”—Elysia Dawn, arts consultant and former dancer

Inspiring, revealing, and deeply relatable, *Being a Ballerina* is a firsthand look at the realities of life as a professional ballet dancer. Through episodes from her own career, Gavin Larsen describes the forces that drive a person to study dance; the daily balance that dancers navigate between hardship and joy; and the dancer’s continual quest to discover who they are as a person and as an artist.

Starting with her arrival as a young beginner at a class too advanced for her, Larsen tells how the embarrassing mistake ended up helping her learn quickly and advance rapidly. In other stories of her early teachers, training, and auditions, she explains how she gradually came to understand and achieve what she and her body were capable of.



Author, Gavin Larsen

“

This is the best book I’ve ever read about becoming and being a dancer. Every word rings true.”

*Robert Gottlieb, Editor and
Dance Critic*

Larsen then re-creates scenes from her experiences in dance companies, from unglamorous roles to exhilarating performances. Working as a ballerina was shocking and scary at first, she says, recalling unexpected injuries, leaps of faith, and her constant struggle to operate at the level she wanted—but full of enormously rewarding moments. Larsen also reflects candidly on her difficult decision to retire at age 35.

An ideal read for aspiring dancers, Larsen’s memoir will also delight experienced dance professionals and fascinate anyone who wonders what it takes to live a life dedicated to the perfection of the art form.

Gavin Larsen was a professional ballet dancer for 18 years before retiring in 2010. A principal dancer with Oregon Ballet Theatre, she also danced with Pacific Northwest Ballet, Alberta Ballet, the Suzanne Farrell Ballet, and as a guest with Ballet Victoria. She has written for *Pointe*, *Dance Teacher*, *Dance Spirit*, *Dancing Times*, *Oregon ArtsWatch*, *Dance/USA’s From the Green Room*, *the Maine Review*, and *The Threepenny Review*, among others. She writes and teaches in

Asheville, North Carolina.

Requests for interviews, review copies of *Being a Ballerina*, and additional information should be directed to David Ivester at david@author-guide.com

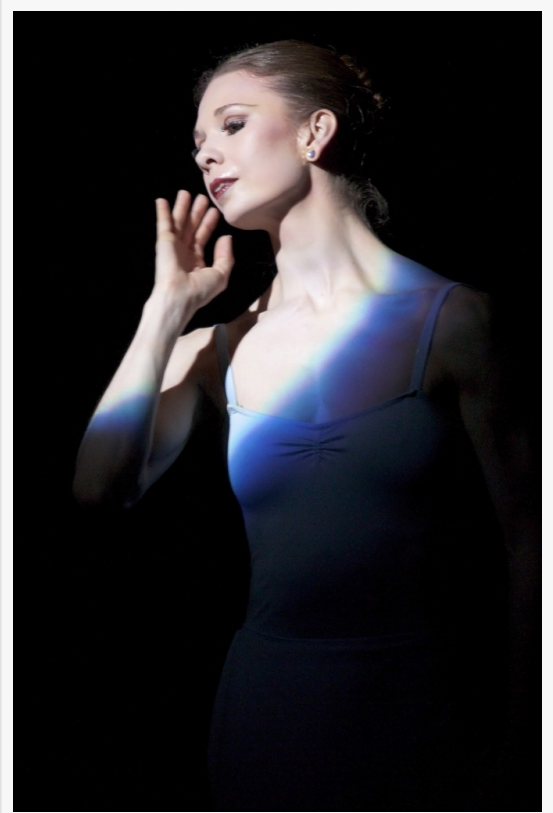
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Gavin Larsen in Tolstoy's Waltz and Duo Concertant

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