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Photographer Jordan Matter's *Dancers Among Us* is full of images like this one of Jeffrey Smith, former member of Paul Taylor Dance Company.

BOOKS



Dancers Among Us: A Celebration of Joy in the Everyday

By Jordan Matter. NYC. Workman Publishing Company, Inc. 2012. 231 pages. Illustrated. Paper. \$17.95.

Inspired by his toddler son's wide-eyed enthusiasm for life, photographer Jordan Matter decided to rediscover the world around him through his camera lens. Using professional dancers as his muses and everyday life as a canvas, Matter began photographing dancers leaping, laughing, reclining, and soaring in some of the most unconventional spots: in offices, crossing a busy street, high up in a leafy tree limb, and even in the shower!

His new book *Dancers Among Us* gathers a vast collection of images organized around themes like work, play, love, exploration, and dreaming, and showcases both Matter's sensitivity and sense of humor. And there's no Photoshopping here, so when you see Michelle Fleet suspended upside-down in a crowded office cubicle or Erin Clyne powerfully launching across train tracks while an engine's glowing lights creep up behind her—you know it's the real deal. Matter's personal anecdotes about life, learning, and family are excellent companions to his photos. Honest and spontaneous, his pictures are sure to resonate with dancers and non-dancers alike. His advice to readers: "Relish moments large and small, recognize the beauty around you, and be alive!" —Emily Ancona

No Daughter of Mine is Going to Be a Dancer: Dancing for Agnes de Mille and the Giants of Dance in the 40's

By Sharry Traver Underwood. Charleston, SC. Published by the author. 2012. 372 pages. Illustrated. Paper. \$15.95.



Noel Coward gave us the song "Don't Put Your Daughter on the Stage, Mrs. Worthington." Now Sharry Traver Underwood has given us *No Daughter of Mine is Going to Be a Dancer*. It was her

father's viewpoint. But she left home in the artistically exciting but financially sketchy 1940s to ricochet between dance classes, performing (with Ted Shawn and many others), teaching, and a potpourri of outside jobs.

It was a hard existence, but Underwood's account is liberally flavored with humor. She must also have kept voluminous notes over the years. Her descriptions of the works in which she danced are so clear and enticing that the reader feels like jumping up to try them. They range from Broadway gems like *Bloomer Girls* and *Finian's Rainbow* to modern dance classics like Charles Weidman's *A House Divided* and *Fables for Our Time*.

The book is self-published, which explains vagaries in editing. Also, some of the many photographs are too small or too foggy to do justice to Underwood's bright text. —Doris Hering

Jordan Matter, Courtesy Workman Publishing

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