

"In *The Dance Claimed Me*, we see Pearl Primus dancing a dance performed only by Watusi men. We see her electrifying performance at the first Negro rally at Madison Square Garden in New York City, where she became moon and prayer. Rain. Thunder. Light on the world stage. We feel the pulse of this twentieth century African-American woman claiming the dance of her people for all people and we chant Amen. Amen. A woman. A woman."

**SONIA SANCHEZ**, author of *Morning Haiku*

"*The Dance Claimed Me* is at once an invaluable contribution to the cultural history of American dance as well as a scintillating account of an extraordinary life. As dancer, a force majeure; as choreographer, a culturally groundbreaking and influential innovator; as devotee and tireless teacher of traditional African cultural values, Mama Pearl Primus was the embodiment of black consciousness and womanhood at its very best. All of which emerges powerfully from these pages."

**EKWUEME MICHAEL THELWELL**, author of *The Harder They Come*

"Peggy and Murray Schwartz have taken the great, complicated life and legacy of Pearl Primus and given us a way to learn, breathe, and feel Pearl's life journey. Dance scholars, African American historians, and lovers of dance will all inhale this book."

**JAWOLE WILLA JO ZOLLAR**, Founding Artistic Director of Urban Bush Women

"Pearl Primus was a cauldron of creativity. When she danced she allowed us to share her soul. Peggy and Murray Schwartz celebrate one of the most fantastic beings to set rhythms on the sacred ground called Earth."

**CHUCK DAVIS**, Founding Artistic Director of the African American Dance Ensemble

"Peggy and Murray Schwartz have written a bold biography of one of the most important figures in American dance. Pearl Primus almost singlehandedly lifted African dance to the American stage and gave the world her magic in a daring creativity sustained by a sheer love of movement. This book should be read by anyone seeking to understand modern dance traditions."

**MOLEFI KETE ASANTE**, author of *The History of Africa*

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