

For Immediate Release

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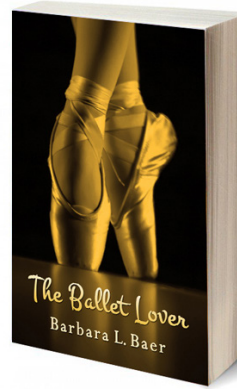
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**New Novel Fictionalizes True-Life Dramas of Rudolf Nureyev and Natalia Makarova**



Regarded as one of ballet's most gifted dancers, Rudolf Nureyev was also known for his volatile temper and brutal behavior toward ballerinas. In a recent autobiography, Dame Beryl Grey revealed how Nureyev kicked one ballerina and threatened another colleague with a knife.

Now a new novel published this month has fictionalized the true-life dramas of Nureyev and Russian ballerina Natalia Makarova during the 1970s.

Author, former journalist, and Stanford graduate Barbara L. Baer explains: "One night while on assignment in Paris during the Black Act of Swan Lake I watched Rudolf Nureyev fail to catch the ballerina Natalia Makarova as she pirouetted into his arms. As she fell, I knew a great wrong had been done to the beautiful dancer and that one day I would write a novel about this moment."

In *The Ballet Lover* (Open Books 2017) Baer recaptures the performance through the eyes of a young American dance aficionado and writer, who interprets the fall as an act of cruelty. When other critics defend Nureyev and accuse Makarova of causing her own tumble, the narrator vows revenge on the page, creating havoc in her own career and discovering surprising parallels between herself and the fallen ballerina.

"*The Ballet Lover* is a smart novel about the glamour and guts of ballet, by novelist Barbara Baer, herself a former dance reviewer, who has created an intriguing behind-the-curtain tale centered on some of the most famous names in dance and on stages from New York to Paris to London in the 1970s and 1980s," says Susan Swartz, columnist and author of *Good Girl, Bad Girl, Juicy Tomatoes, More Juicy Tomatoes*, and the forthcoming novel *Naked Ladies*. "But it is Russia that most claims the heart and curiosity of Geneva, the young savvy American dance critic and book's main character, her wonderful immigrant aunt and her favorite most volatile diva, Natalia Makarova. Somehow Baer is able to pack her small book with exotic food, divine clothes and passionate yearnings as well."

Receptions, readings, and signings to launch the book are scheduled throughout Sonoma County, California during the month of November.

**Saturday, November 4, 12-2:00pm:** Meet and Greet at Copperfields Books, Healdsburg, CA

**Sunday, November 5, 3-5:00pm:** Reading and appearance of Sebastopol Ballet Nutcracker dancers at La Bodega Cafe, Sebastopol, CA

**Sunday, November 12, 2-3:00 pm:** Reading and signing with guest Patty O'Reilly from the Sonoma Conservatory of Dance at Readers' Books, Sonoma, CA

**Sunday, November 19, 3-5:00pm:** Reading and signing with guests Jennifer Jaffe, formerly Smuin Ballet principal, teacher Sonoma State University, and Susan Swartz, columnist and author, at Occidental Center for the Arts, Occidental, CA