



Lucia Joyce: To Dance in the Wake

Carol Loeb Shloss

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"Whatever spark or gift I possess has been transmitted to Lucia and it has kindled a fire in her brain." —James Joyce, 1934

Most accounts of James Joyce's family portray Lucia Joyce as the mad daughter of a man of genius, a difficult burden. But in this important new book, Carol Loeb Shloss reveals a different, more dramatic truth: her father loved Lucia, and they shared a deep creative bond.

Lucia was born in a pauper's hospital and educated haphazardly across Europe as her penniless father pursued his art. She wanted to strike out on her own and in her twenties emerged, to Joyce's amazement, as a harbinger of expressive modern dance in Paris. He described her then as a wild, beautiful, "fantastic being" whose mind was "as clear and as unsparing as the lightning." The family's only reader of Joyce, she was a child of the imaginative realms her father created, and even after emotional turmoil wrought havoc with her and she was hospitalized in the 1930s, he saw in her a life lived in tandem with his own.

Though most of the documents about Lucia have been destroyed, Shloss painstakingly reconstructs the poignant complexities of her life—and with them a vital episode in the early history of psychiatry, for in Joyce's efforts to help her he sought the help of Europe's most advanced doctors, including Jung. In Lucia's world Shloss has also uncovered important material that deepens our understanding of *Finnegans Wake*, the book that redefined modern literature.

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