



ROYAL  
BALLET

MAY 2015

PRESS RELEASE

**WORLD PREMIERE: OTHER STORIES**  
**EDWARD WATSON AND WENDY WHELAN -**  
**FIVE CHOREOGRAPHERS, FIVE NEW WORKS**

Thursday 9 July – Sunday 12 July

Linbury Studio Theatre

Royal Ballet Principal **Edward Watson** and **Wendy Whelan**, former Principal at New York City Ballet for over 20 years, perform *Whelan/Watson: Other Stories*, a programme of five contemporary works created especially for them by world-acclaimed choreographers **Annie-B Parson**, **Arlene Phillips**, **Arthur Pita**, **Danièle Desnoyers** and **Javier de Frutos**.

*Other Stories* brings Whelan and Watson together for the first time in an evening of contemporary dance taking inspiration from waltz, tango and disco. The pair will perform three duets by Arthur Pita (who previously created the Olivier Award winning *The Metamorphosis* on Edward Watson for the Linbury Studio Theatre), Danièle Desnoyers and Javier de Frutos. Whelan will also perform a solo choreographed by Annie-B Parson, while Watson will dance a solo created by Arlene Phillips.

Costumes and set design are by **Jean-Marc Puissant**, with lighting by **Bruno Poet**, music direction by **Frank Moon** and soundscape by **Daniel Peppe**. *Other Stories* will tour to City Center, New York in 2016.

Director of The Royal Ballet **Kevin O'Hare** adds "Edward Watson and Wendy Whelan are two artists whose exceptional talents are recognised throughout the dance world. This programme brings them together for the first time to collaborate with five

contemporary choreographers to create new work showcasing their highly original talents."

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## Notes to Editors

**Whelan/Watson: Other Stories** Thursday 9 July – Sunday 12 July

Thursday 9, Friday 10, Saturday 11 July at 7:45pm,

Sunday 12 July at 3pm

The production lasts approximately one hour, with no interval.

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**Royal Opera House, London WC2E 9DD**

### WHELAN/WATSON: OTHER STORIES

Choreography	<b>Annie-B Parson, Arlene Phillips, Arthur Pita, Danièle Desnoyers and Javier de Frutos</b>
Music direction	<b>Frank Moon</b>
Designs	<b>Jean-Marc Puissant</b>
Lighting design	<b>Bruno Poet</b>
Soundscape	<b>Daniel Peppe</b>

## Biographies

**Edward Watson** joined The Royal Ballet in 1994 and was promoted to Principal in 2005. He has won particular acclaim for his interpretation of roles in the works of

Kenneth MacMillan including Crown Prince Rudolf (*Mayerling*), Romeo (*Romeo and Juliet*), The Chosen One (*The Rite of Spring*), Woyzeck (*Different Drummer*) and roles in *Gloria* and *Song of the Earth*, in addition to his many other roles for The Royal Ballet. In 2012 Watson received an Olivier Award for Outstanding Achievement in Dance for his role in Arthur Pita's *The Metamorphosis* and he has had numerous roles created on him by Royal Ballet Artistic Associate Christopher Wheeldon and Resident Choreographer Wayne McGregor.

**Wendy Whelan** was a Principal of New York City Ballet for over 20 years. She danced as a guest artist with The Royal Ballet in 1994, performing the *pas de deux* from William Forsythe's *Herman Schmerman*, and in July 2014 she performed her show *Restless Creature* in the Linbury Studio Theatre. With NYCB she performed a wide spectrum of the George Balanchine repertory and worked closely with Jerome Robbins on many of his ballets. She has created roles in 13 ballets for Christopher Wheeldon, as well as in ballets by Jorma Elo, William Forsythe, Wayne McGregor, Alexei Ratmansky, Twyla Tharp and Shen Wei.

**Annie-B Parson** co-founded America's Big Dance Theater, creating over 20 works that have toured the US and internationally. Outside of Big Dance, she choreographed David Byrne's *Here Lies Love*, which recently ran in the UK at the National Theatre and earned Parson a 2015 Olivier Award nomination for Best Theatre Choreographer. Alongside theatre and dance Parson choreographs for rock concerts (including David Byrne and St. Vincent), opera (Nico Muhly) and MTV (Salt 'n Pepa, Laurie Anderson).

**Arlene Phillips** has choreographed professionally since the 1970s, first coming to prominence as creator of the dance group Hot Gossip. She has choreographed extensively for film, television, music videos, concerts and theatre, becoming a household name in 2004 as a judge on BBC1's *Strictly Come Dancing*. In 2002 she was made an OBE for Services to Dance, and her awards include an Olivier, Tony, MTV Video Award and an Emmy.

**Arthur Pita** has worked internationally in opera, musicals, plays and film. He created the award winning *The Metamorphosis* on Edward Watson for the Linbury Studio Theatre in 2011, and his other work for the Linbury includes *And Then Gone* (2006) and *God's Garden* (2010), and in 2014 he brought his acclaimed production *The World's Greatest Show* to the Royal Opera House's Paul Hamlyn Hall. For The Royal Opera he has created the choreography for *Carmen*, *La donna del lago* and 2015's *Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny*.

**Danièle Desnoyers** founded her Montreal-based dance company Le Carré des Lombes in 1989, and has choreographed contemporary dance internationally ever since. In 2014 she created *Paradoxe Mélodie*, a work for 10 dancers and a harpist, which received its world premiere at the Canada Dance Festival. The same year, she also (re)created *Duos pour corps et instruments*, a pivotal work in her artistic path, in celebration of the 25th anniversary of her company. These two pieces epitomise Danièle's avid interest in acoustic and musical scores in her work as a whole.

Venezuelan choreographer **Javier de Frutos** has worked extensively in dance, theatre, TV and film. In 2012 he created the piece *Studies in M* for the Linbury Studio Theatre and his work is in the repertoire of many dance companies, including Rotterdam Dance Group, Ballet Shindowski, Nuremberg Ballet, Rambert Dance Company, The Royal New Zealand Ballet, and Gothenburg Ballet. Theatre credits include *Carousel* (Chichester Festival Theatre), *London Road* (National Theatre) and the West End and touring productions of *Cabaret* for which he won the 2007 Olivier Award for Best Theatre Choreographer.

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