

THE LIST

Interview: choreographer Stephen Petronio discusses his new piece, *Water Stories*

The piece, with music from Atticus Ross, will be part of National Dance Company Wales' autumn tour

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From the streets of New York to the Welsh countryside, Stephen Petronio made quite a journey to create his new piece. Known for his raw, energetic work with touches of real beauty, the American choreographer is no stranger to Scottish audiences – both with his own company, and Scottish Ballet's *Ride the Beast*.

In recent years, Petronio has built up a strong relationship with National Dance Company Wales (NDCW), and new work, *Water Stories* (his second commission for the company) will feature alongside Angelin Preljocaj's *Noces* and Christopher

Bruce's *Dream* in NDCW's Glasgow show. 'They treat me very well,' says Petronio of the Cardiff-based company. 'They care about my vision and allow me to go wherever I want to. The dancers are really strong and when I walked in there, they just jumped right on what I was doing, and I love that.'

It was while creating his first work for the company (the Dylan Thomas-inspired *By Singing Light*) that Petronio found his source material for *Water Stories*. 'I did a lot of trekking,' he recalls, 'and there were all these beautiful, sad, crazy waterscapes – reservoirs and waterfalls. And I thought maybe it's a bit of a cliché, like a calendar picture, but water is really part of the identity of Wales, so let's make it a water story.'

Armed with specially commissioned photographs of Welsh bodies of water, and a new score by composer Atticus Ross, Petronio set to work. 'I went there with these images and music, so I had two very clear tracks to work between,' he says. 'The dancers really came along with me, and we've made something I'm very proud of.'

Theatre Royal, Glasgow, Tue 12 Nov.

Photo: Rhys Cozens