

NDC Wales hope to make splash with shore-fire hits

by KELLY APTER



National Dance Company Wales: Stephen Petronio - *Water Stories*

THE last time National Dance Company Wales played Glasgow's Theatre Royal, it was the filling in a very British sandwich.

Performing at the Olympics-inspired Dance GB, on the same bill as Scottish Ballet and English National Ballet, the Cardiff-based company elicited the heartiest applause of the night with Christopher Bruce's *Dream*.

Just over a year later, National Dance Company Wales (NDCW) is back – only this time it's all about them.

Currently celebrating its 30th anniversary, NDCW will once again perform Bruce's joyful celebration of sporting activity, but this time *Dream* will sit alongside works by two of the world's most engaging choreographers: Angelin Preljocaj and Stephen Petronio.

Known for his dramatic use of set, props and costumes, Preljocaj was last seen in Scotland in 2012, when the Frenchman brought his epic *And Then One Thousand Years of Peace* to the Edinburgh International Festival.

NDCW will be performing Preljocaj's *Les Noces*, a dark take on weddings set to Stravinsky's score of the same name.

Completing the line-up is American choreographer Petronio, a man whose works for Scottish Ballet, *MiddleSexGorge* and *Ride The Beast*, seared themselves onto the memory with their visceral energy, moments of poignancy and skimpy costumes.

Water Stories is the New Yorker's second commission for NDCW, the inspiration for which came from wandering around the Welsh countryside.

Having already created a piece about the poetry of Dylan Thomas, Petronio wanted to choreograph a second work equally relevant to the company's homeland.

"I thought, how am I going to achieve something with as much resonance for a Welsh company as Dylan Thomas?" recalls Petronio.

"But I just trusted my instinct and thought what do I picture when I think of Wales?"

The answer, it transpired, was water – something Petronio had encountered a lot during his previous visit to Wales, where the waterfalls, reservoirs and rivers had all caught his attention. Back in America, Petronio got wind of Matthew Brandt, a photographer who was capturing bodies of water in new and interesting ways. "Matthew went to Wales and photographed the water," says Petronio. "And then I asked Atticus Ross, who did the soundtrack for *The Social Network* and *Girl with the Dragon Tattoo*, to write the music – to make a river of sound – and he delivered a beautiful score."

Armed with music and images, Petronio headed back to Cardiff to create *Water Stories*, the latest work in the NCDW repertoire, and a potential highlight of the company's show in Glasgow next week.

National Dance Company Wales, Theatre Royal, Glasgow, 12 November. www.ndcwales.co.uk