

Infra

GCSE Dance (8236)

Anthology fact file

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| <p>Choreographer</p> | <p>English choreographer Wayne McGregor was appointed Resident Choreographer of The Royal Ballet in 2006, becoming the first contemporary choreographer to hold the post. His many works for The Royal Ballet include <i>Chroma</i> (2006), <i>Limen</i> (2009), <i>Raven Girl</i> (2013) and <i>Wolf Works</i> (2015). He also directed and choreographed <i>Dido and Aeneas / Acis and Galatea</i> (2009) for The Royal Ballet and The Royal Opera.</p> <p>A multiple award-winner, McGregor's work appears in the repertoire of leading international ballet companies and he has created new work for numerous ballet companies. In 1992 McGregor founded Wayne McGregor Random Dance, now a resident company of Sadler's Wells. His interest in cross-discipline collaboration has seen him work across dance, film, music, visual art, technology and science. He has directed movement for theatre and film, including <i>Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire</i>, and music videos, including the Grammy-nominated Lotus Flower for Radiohead.</p> |
| <p>Company</p> | <p>The Royal Ballet owes its existence to the vision of Dame Ninette de Valois, dancer, teacher, choreographer and entrepreneur who assembled a small company and school, in 1931. In 1956, to mark its 25th anniversary, the name The Royal Ballet was granted by Royal Charter.</p> <p>Today the Royal Ballet is one of the great ballet companies of the world. Under the leadership of Kevin O'Hare, the repertory includes works by Founder Choreographer Frederick Ashton and Principal Choreographer Kenneth MacMillan as well as a new canon of work by Wayne McGregor, Christopher Wheeldon and Liam Scarlett. From its base at the Royal Opera House in London's Covent Garden, today's most dynamic and versatile dancers come together with a world-class orchestra and leading choreographers, composers, conductors, designers and creative teams to share an awe-inspiring theatrical experience with diverse audiences worldwide.</p> |
| <p>Date of first performance</p> | <p>13 November 2008 at the Royal Opera House, London.</p> |
| <p>Dance style</p> | <p>Contemporary ballet.</p> <p>McGregor's dance style is distinctive for its speed and energy and for the dynamic, angular, sinuous and hyperextended movements that push dancers to physical extremes.</p> |
| <p>Choreographic approach</p> | <p>McGregor uses three methods to generate movement vocabulary for the piece:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. SHOW a phrase to the whole or part of the cast – dancers watch and either recreate the phrase exactly or create a version. 2. MAKE a phrase on a target dancer or dancers – others watch and copy or develop. 3. TASK – set a choreographic task for dancers to complete or pose a |

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| | <p>choreographic problem for dancers to solve. Typically the task or problem involves imagery as a stimulus for creating movement. The movement vocabulary is then structured into longer “sentences” and “paragraphs”. Finally he works musically with the structure and pieces it all together like a jigsaw.</p> |
| Stimulus | <p>The title <i>Infra</i> comes from the Latin word for 'below' and the work presents a portrait of life beneath the surface of the city. This abstract ballet delves beneath the surface to present a moving meditation on human interactions. “<i>Under the brown fog of a winter dawn. / A crowd flowed over London Bridge, so many.</i>” T.S. Eliot: <i>The Wasteland</i>.</p> |
| Choreographic intention | <p><i>Infra</i> is about seeing below the surface of things. Quite literally in this case, below Julian Opie’s design. You can see people, walking in the street. <i>Infra</i> is about people and the choreography has found a pedestrian language which is recognizably human. When you look at a body on stage, you have some understanding of what that body is doing. The piece is about inferences. It infers particular types of relationships and therefore the emotional content implies itself.</p> <p>One of McGregor’s choreographic aims is to help the audience’s eye in watching a complex structure. But in <i>Infra</i>, McGregor has purposefully left open the full visual field to let the audience make their own selections.</p> |
| Dancers | <p>12 dancers (6 male / 6 female) Brief appearance of a crowd who cross the stage.</p> |
| Duration | 28 minutes |
| Structure | <p>The ballet comprises solos, duets and ensembles with many arresting moments, for instance 6 couples dance duets in six squares of light and a crowd surges across the stage, unaware of one woman’s private grief.</p> |
| Aural setting | <p>Music by Max Richter (performed by The Max Richter Quintet with Jonathan Haswell). Sound design by Chris Ekers.</p> <p>The score mixes melancholy string melodies with electronic sounds and everyday sounds such as train-whistles.</p> |
| Costume | <p>Costume designs by Moritz Junge. Fitted shorts, vests, t-shirts in flesh, black, white, grey colours for the dancers. One female dancer wears a short wrap-around skirt. One male dancer wears long trousers. The females wear pointe shoes, Street clothes are worn for the brief appearance of the crowd.</p> |
| Lighting | <p>Lighting design by Lucy Carter, with whom Wayne McGregor has developed a strong creative partnership.</p> <p>The lighting, which relates closely to the structure, lights the width of the stage and often focuses downstage. Occasionally dancers are lit by shafts of light and at one point 6 rectangles of light frame 6 duets. Colours are used to highlight different sections.</p> |
| Performance environment | Proscenium arch/theatrical setting |
| Staging/set | <p>Set design by artist Julian Opie. An 18m LED screen is placed high on the black back wall. It runs the width of the stage, along which there is a mesmerizing flow of electronic walking figures.</p> |