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**WENDY WHELAN TO BID FAREWELL  
TO NEW YORK CITY BALLET  
DURING THE COMPANY'S 2014 FALL SEASON**

**Whelan to Give Farewell Performance on Saturday, October 18 at 8 p.m.**

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New York City Ballet announced today that Principal Dancer Wendy Whelan will retire from the Company during the 2014 Fall Season. Whelan has performed with NYCB for 30 years, having first danced with the Company as an apprentice beginning in 1984. She became a member of the corps de ballet in 1986, was promoted to Soloist in 1989, and became a Principal Dancer in 1991. The program for Whelan's farewell performance with NYCB on Saturday, October 18 at 8 p.m. will be announced at a later date.

Whelan, who underwent hip surgery followed by a successful recovery period in recent months, has not performed during NYCB's current 2013-14 season but is also planning to return to NYCB to dance during the Company's 2014 Spring Season. Her repertory for the Spring Season, which will take place from April 29 through June 8 at the David H. Koch Theater at Lincoln Center, will be announced at a later date.

During her extraordinary career with NYCB, Whelan has danced leading roles in countless works by NYCB's co-founding choreographers George Balanchine and Jerome Robbins, and has also had roles created for her by a vast array of choreographers, including Robbins, NYCB's Ballet Master in Chief Peter Martins, Jorma Elo, William Forsythe, Wayne McGregor, Lynne Taylor-Corbett, Twyla Tharp, Ulysses Dove, and numerous others.

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Whelan has also had an ongoing creative collaboration with former NYCB Soloist and Resident Choreographer Christopher Wheeldon, who created leading roles for Whelan in seven of his works for NYCB. In addition, Whelan has originated leading roles in all three of the works that choreographer Alexei Ratmansky has created for New York City Ballet -- *Russian Seasons*, *Concerto DSCH*, and *Namouna, A Grand Divertissement*.

Whelan was born and raised in Louisville, Kentucky where she began taking dance classes at the age of three. At the age of eight she performed as a mouse with the Louisville Ballet in its annual production of *The Nutcracker*, and that year she also began her professional ballet training with the Louisville Ballet Academy. In 1982 Whelan received a scholarship for the summer course at the School of American Ballet, the official school of New York City Ballet, and a year later became a full-time student at the School.

In addition to her work with New York City Ballet, Whelan has toured extensively throughout the United States, Europe and Asia, and has appeared as a guest artist with The Royal Ballet at Covent Garden, the Maryinsky Ballet in St. Petersburg, Russia, and with Morphoses/The Wheeldon Company. Whelan appeared in the Coffee variation in the 1993 film version of *George Balanchine's The Nutcracker™*, and has also appeared with NYCB in several nationally televised *Live From Lincoln Center* broadcasts.

In 2007 Whelan was nominated for Britain's Olivier Award and Critics' Circle Award for her performances with Morphoses/The Wheeldon Company at Sadler's Wells in London. She also received the 2007 Dance Magazine Award, and in 2009 was awarded an honorary Doctorate of Arts from Bellarmine University in her hometown of Louisville. In 2011 she was honored with both The Jerome Robbins Award and Bessie Award for Sustained Achievement in Performance.

During the summer of 2013 Whelan premiered an evening-length program of new dance called *Restless Creature* at the Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, which featured Whelan performing in four original works created by choreographers Kyle Abraham, Joshua Beamish, Brian Brooks, and Alejandro Cerrudo. This summer, Whelan will perform *Restless Creature* in London and at the Vail International Dance Festival, and following her retirement from NYCB, she will bring the evening-length work to 12 U.S. cities from January – May 2015.

In addition, Whelan will embark on a second project of new works with Royal Ballet Principal Dancer Edward Watson, which will premiere in London in July of 2015, and will also be performed at New York City Center in the spring of 2016. In conjunction with this project, Whelan has been appointed Artistic Associate at City Center, and beginning on November 1 City Center will serve as Whelan's home for developing future projects and collaborative work for two years.

Single tickets for Whelan's farewell performance with NYCB on October 18 will go on sale later this year. For more information on New York City Ballet visit [nycballet.com](http://nycballet.com).