

# Time and place

Wayne McGregor

trying stuff. It was a nonjudgmental group, and I try to generate that kind of environment in my own work.

I grew up in Stockport,

Cheshire, and was a very physical child. I did gymnastics and wanted to be moving all the time. In the 1970s and early 1980s, there were lots of dance movies around, like Grease, with John Travolta. Dance never felt like a decision — it felt like something I always wanted to do.

For the Bretton course, you had to demonstrate a commitment to choreography. I had been dancing since I was seven, and had taught dance from the age of 12. I'd started with American ballroom and done modern, jazz and disco. My teacher was against competitions, so one way she encouraged me to continue dancing was to let me make up my own variations — which was choreography, I now realise.

My parents were very supportive. They've encouraged me to stick at things for a while. If I took up a musical instrument, I couldn't do just one week. I'd have to give it a really good try. They instilled that sense of adventure and confidence, and I think that is a fantastic gift that parents can give you — to experiment and to try.

I founded my company [Random Dance] at 21, straight out of university. I wanted to do my own dancing and do something that reflected the age I was living in. I guess that was youthful arrogance and not knowing the whole picture of the world.

I have this ferocious appetite for change. I don't want to feel I am an expert in something. Never trust experts, because there is a sense in which you stop learning. I hope I can have a lifetime of not being satisfied with what I do.

Interview by Nicola Venning

■ Wayne McGregor's *Random Dance Company* is touring *Atomos* in January, with shows at *Sadler's Wells, London ECI*, on February 13 and 14 ([randomdance.org/tickets](http://randomdance.org/tickets)). His latest work, *Tree of Codes*, will premiere at the *Manchester International Festival* next July

Bretton Hall was a wonderful combination of incredible architecture and space, where lots of people were doing creative things. It was one of the few places in the world where you could do multiple arts degrees and work with composers, musicians and artists. The halls of residence were surrounded by Georgian arts college buildings in 224 acres of beautiful Yorkshire countryside, right in the middle of the Yorkshire Sculpture Park.

It was 1988, and I was 18, and in the first year of their dance degree. Our studio was in the ballroom. The windows opened up so you could dance inside and outside, with 360-degree views. Now I like studios with windows, even if it's over an industrialised site. I like to see where I am.

We did as much of our work on site locations in the grounds as we did in a room. It's really important not to always be surrounded by four walls. You could grab a violinist or a cellist and work with 10 dancers in a space where the horizon line was very different. Many of our performances were around the sculpture exhibitions in the park. That whole relationship between space, body, earth and buildings was really different. It changed the way I think about bodies and spaces — I like to be outside all the time.

Bretton Hall gave me an even more voracious appetite for working collaboratively and across art forms. I lived next to a ceramicist, while a painter and a violinist were just down the hall. This has a massive effect on you when you are thinking about how you might make things — how might they be involved? It's a knowledge exchange. It doesn't matter whether the domain is music, visual arts or cognitive neuroscience. There is something about thinking about the world in a different way that excites you.

I remember the fun of Bretton Hall, and the idea of shared endeavour. The creative process should be a place of play and enjoyment, because that is where you are most free to take risks. We had that, and that sense of just



Bretton Hall changed my life, and my dancing: my choreography was shaped by a ceramicist, a violinist and a painter. It was a leap into the unknown



ALEXANDRA GOSS

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## Moving on



Wilkinson has been living in France, but is looking in Wiltshire

## Jonny come home

Ladies of Wiltshire, rejoice! **Jonny Wilkinson** has been scoping homes in the picturesque county. There's no word yet on his budget, but he was reportedly the highest-paid rugby player in France during his stint at Toulon, so he should easily be able to stretch to a pad worthy of a sporting superstar.

The news is stoking hopes that the recently retired fly-half, scorer of the last-minute drop goal against Australia that secured the 2003 World Cup for England, will return to our shores, having upped sticks for the south of France in 2009. Yet Wilkinson, 35, who married Shelley Jenkins last year, still needs to sell the 19th-century Northumberland mansion where he lived while playing for Newcastle Falcons. The seven-bedroom house came onto the market for £1.5m in June, and has now been reduced to £1.195m. **01434 410025, fostermaddison.co.uk**

## Scene of the crime

Budding crime writers seeking literary inspiration can rent part of **Agatha Christie's** old home in Holland Park, which is available for £1,550 a week. Christie and her second husband, the archeologist Max Mallowan, bought a house encompassing 47 and 48 Campden Street, London W8, in 1930. The bestselling writer penned works including *Murder on the Orient Express* and *The Murder at the Vicarage* there before the couple moved a few streets away in 1934. **020 7938 3866, struttandparker.com**



## Now for the sequel

As the go-to heroine for English period dramas, **Keira Knightley** is well accustomed to sagas. Yet the Pirates of the Caribbean star probably didn't envisage her property sale becoming one. She accepted an offer on her £2.75m Huguenot townhouse in east London in June, but the deal appears to have fallen through, so the four-bedroom property is back on the market once again, at the same price.

Knightley, 29 — who is currently on cinema screens in the Alan Turing biopic *The Imitation Game*, with Benedict Cumberbatch — bought the Spitalfields property for £2.4m in December 2010, according to Land Registry records. Set over six floors, the quirky home has a bright blue kitchen, a canary-yellow dining room and a basement cinema painted in lavender. The grade II listed building, which was run as the Three Tun Tavern in the late 18th century, was first put up for sale by the Hollywood A-lister in September 2013 for £3m.

The gamine actress has long since moved out: she bought a £4m "family-sized" home in north London with her husband, the musician James Righton, 31, last December.



Knightley accepted an offer on her £2.75m east London townhouse in June, but now it's back on the market



## Still in the game

In the spring, **Boris Becker** stepped in to save his Mallorcan holiday home, just moments before it was due to be auctioned off by the Spanish courts for alleged nonpayment of a builder's bill. Never one to give in easily, the six-time Grand Slam singles winner has put Son Coll, his 60-acre estate near the town of Arta, back on the market again, for offers over £10m.

The former tennis star bought the 12-bedroom pile — which has a pool, a helipad and, of course, a tennis court — in the late 1990s and has been trying to sell it on and off since 2007, when it was priced at €15m (£11.9m). Becker, 47, who lives in the Swiss town of Schwyz with his wife, Lilly Kerssenberg, and their son, says: "The finca has served its purpose. My children, family and friends have spent wonderful days there, celebrating late into the night." **00 34 971 532221, balearic-properties.com**



Boris Becker, pictured with his wife, Lilly Kerssenberg, has put his Mallorcan finca back on the market for £10m



£835,000

## INTERIORS OF THE WEEK

Crisp colours and wooden floors have been combined with vintage features to great effect in this Victorian conversion on Grandison Road, London SW11. Midway between Clapham and Wandsworth Commons, the upper-floor, split-level maisonette has two double bedrooms, two bathrooms and a kitchen/diner with handsome emerald tiles and white units. The living room is a real showpiece, with wooden shutters, corning, an open fire and built-in storage. **020 7223 7574, cluttons.com**



£475,000

## PROJECT OF THE WEEK

It's a shell — but what a shell. Dating from the 17th century or earlier, this farmhouse in Peterchurch, near Hereford, was once part of the Wellbrook Manor estate. It needs complete renovation inside, but has five bedrooms, three receptions and period features such as flagstone flooring, inglenook fireplaces, exposed beams and bread ovens. The property is set in six acres in the Golden Valley, with an adjoining coach house and three traditional barns; more land might be available through separate negotiation. **01432 273087, knightfrank.co.uk**



From £105,000

## HOLIDAY HOME OF THE WEEK

Demolition is under way at the Atlantic House, an early-20th-century seafront hotel in New Polzeath, Cornwall. It's being replaced with nine furnished holiday flats (and 14 hotel rooms), each with a balcony. The two- and three-bedders are available in shared five-week fractions, which are priced at £105,000-£135,000. The development is five miles from Wadebridge and offers direct access to Polzeath beach — where Princes William and Harry, David Cameron and Hugh Grant have all surfed. **01208 863206, johnbray.co.uk**

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