

WENDY WHELAN

Wendy Whelan is the Associate Artistic Director of New York City Ballet. One of the most acclaimed dancers of her generation, she followed a storied 30-year career at NYCB with a variety of multi-disciplinary projects with cultural organizations around the world. She was named NYCB Associate Artistic Director in February 2019.

As a dancer with NYCB, Whelan counted principal roles in more than 125 ballets in her repertory, dancing virtually all of the major Balanchine roles, working closely with Jerome Robbins on many of his works, and was also the dancer most choreographed on in NYCB history, creating leading roles in more than 50 new works by such choreographers as William Forsythe, Twyla Tharp, Alexei Ratmansky, Christopher Wheeldon, Jorma Elo, Lynne Taylor-Corbett, Wayne McGregor, Peter Martins, and numerous others. Following her retirement from NYCB in 2014, she cultivated multi-disciplinary performance projects with a range of collaborators including choreographers Kyle Abraham, Joshua Beamish, Brian Brooks, Alejandro Cerrudo, Lucinda Childs, Daniele Désnoyers, Javier De Frutos, David Neumann, Annie-B Parson, and Arthur Pita.

Whelan began studying dance in Louisville with Virginia Wooton, a local teacher, and at the Louisville Ballet Academy. In 1981 she received a scholarship to the Summer Course at the School of American Ballet and a year later, enrolled as a full-time student at SAB. She was named an apprentice with NYCB in 1984 and joined the corps de ballet in 1986. She was promoted to Soloist in 1989 and to Principal Dancer in 1991. Her awards include the Dance Magazine Award in 2007, and in 2009 she was given a Doctorate of Arts, honoris causa, from Bellarmine University in her hometown of Louisville, Kentucky. In 2011, she received both the Jerome Robbins Award and a Bessie Award for Sustained Achievement in Performance.