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The wired world of dancer Wendy

Feb 12 2008 by Lew Baxter, Liverpool Daily Post



EVERYONE knows how Peter Pan whisked Wendy to Neverland in the famous children's tale, but choreographer Wendy Hesketh has created a modern-day kind of flyaway magic just as enthralling.

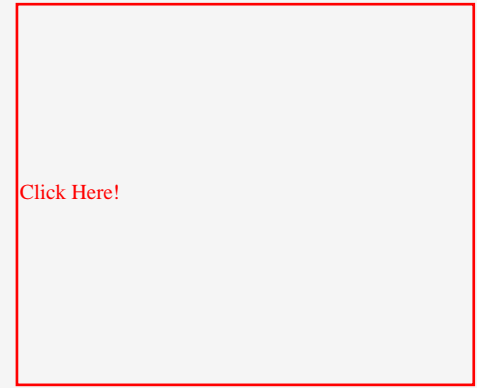
Indeed, she and her fellow acrobatic dancer pal Jamie Ogilvie have swapped fantasy for reality as they swoop and swish about.

And for those who have seen their astonishingly agile performances it is just as eye-popping as JM Barrie's glorious imaginary characters.

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Wendy runs the inspirational Wired Aerial Theatre from a warehouse close to Liverpool docks. They are currently out and about on the company's first ever UK tour, although their respective skills have already wowed audiences as far away as New Zealand.

In just a short eight-year period, Wendy and Jamie – Wired's technical wizard – have created a series of theatre and site-specific shows using their incredible aerial techniques that are in great demand all over Britain and abroad.

And, only weeks after setting up camp back in her native Merseyside in late 2006, Wendy was on tenter-hooks, so to speak, as she honed a new dance work premiere at the Royal Opera House in London.

It is that piece, Handmade/ Manmade, that she, Jamie and a small company are touring. The show also includes a largely solo work by Wendy called Stuffed.

"I was delighted that we were invited to open the British Dance Initiative show at the Playhouse recently as that marked our Liverpool debut," said Wendy, who was born and raised in Rainford and then studied at Brighton before honing her talents at the London Contemporary Dance school.

Later Wendy and Jamie were both members of the Argentinian De La Guarda aerial theatre company, where they combined their skills of contemporary dance and physical theatre with gymnastics, climbing – and flying.

Their reputations flew before them when they were in New Zealand. They were invited to put on a demonstration for the world premiere of Lord of the Rings: Return of the King.

"It was in front of 128,000 people and the director Peter Jackson, It was the most exciting two minutes of my life," said Wendy, who also offers workshops in aerial display.

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* WIRED Theatre is at Runcorn's Brindley Centre, on Thursday, Feb 21. Box

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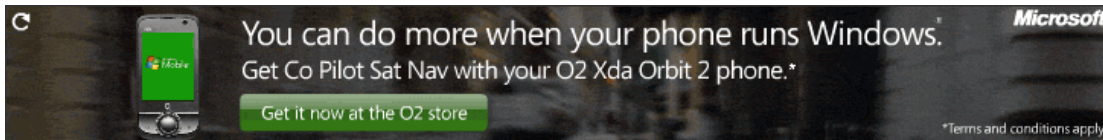
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