

# PHOENIX RESTAGES: NIGHTLIFE AT THE FLAMINGO

**ORIGINALLY CREATED 1983  
2016 RE-STAGING**

**CHOREOGRAPHY**  
Edward Lynch

**MUSIC**

- Summertime by George Gershwin  
Charleston by Tennessee Ten
- Big Apple Contest by Solomon Douglas
- Dickies Dream by Lester Young
- Sing Sing Sing by Benny Goodman
- Shorty George by Count Basie and His Orchestra
- Ding Dong by Lester Young
- Swinging the Blues by Count Basie and His Orchestra
- Jumping at the Woodside by Count Basie and His Orchestra

**LIGHTING DESIGN**  
Martin Smith

**COSTUME DESIGN & REALISATION**  
Emma Louise James

**PHOENIX**  
Dance Company

**"NIGHTLIFE AT THE FLAMINGO"**

**EDWARD LYNCH, CHOREOGRAPHER**  
PHOTOGRAPHY: TERRY O'RYEN

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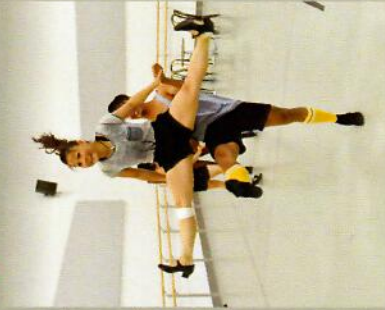
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Phoenix Dance Theatre has embarked upon a revival of **NightLife at The Flamingo**, a work originally choreographed in 1983 by Edward Lynch to mark its thirty-fifth anniversary. **NightLife at The Flamingo** is an energetic celebration of 1940s club culture, combining Lindy Hop, Jazz, Charleston and modern dance styles. According to Lynch, the work is largely inspired by The Nicholas Brothers, an African American duo of dancing brothers renowned for acrobatic tap and jazz performances. **NightLife at The Flamingo** is one of the company's earliest works and featured on the television in 'Phoenix Dance' for The South Bank Show in 1984, contributing to its popularity. The work was created under the artistic direction of David Hamilton for 5 male dancers (1983) who worked closely together to develop their identity as a dance company. The work was later adapted to include 4 female performers (1989) and October 2016 will see the largest cast to perform it.



Phoenix Dance Theatre frequently revisits its historic repertoire, or 'archive pieces', but it is exceptionally rare the original dance cast performs these. The revival of **NightLife at The Flamingo** is especially significant due to the multiple generations of dancers who are involved in the company. Phoenix Youth Academy, early company members and the current dance company have been brought together for the first time in this revived work. This fresh approach is an intrinsic moment in the company's history and builds upon the success of previous anniversary celebrations in 2011. On 11.11.11, the thirtieth anniversary of the company's formation, an evening of performance curated by Sharon Watson involved members of the company from across its then thirty year history. Founder company members and multiple generations of dancers who had previously performed with the company returned to Leeds to perform a revived historic repertoire for an invited audience. Although historical documentation of these works was particularly limited, the event proved that it was possible to capture something of the essence of the original works owing to the knowledge, experience and memories of the dancers.

## NightLife at The Flamingo 35 dancers for 35 years of Phoenix Dance Theatre!



Watching the dancers rehearse in the studio, it has been evident that previous relationships held by those performers have helped with recalling memories of the work. For the original cast, memories of working together in the studio and having grown up together play a large part in the re-emergence of group dynamics and spirit of the work. This has included original founding members (Donald Edwards), early members of the company (Stephen Derrick) one of the first females to join the company in 1989 (Seline Derrick) and those who performed the work in subsequent years (Hughie Davis, David Hughes).

Sharon Watson and Edward Lynch have fond memories of the work, in particular its liveliness, camaraderie and expression of Black cultural history that seem fitting for the celebration of Phoenix's legacy. The multiple generations of dancers taking part in this revival have been able to gain further insight into the company's history and have been introduced to new styles of movement and performance as a result. This is central to Lynch's approach, as he claims that the overall aim of the work is to bring something of the past into the present in order to 'Catch the spirit of the nightlife of the 30s and the 40s'. Phoenix remains connected to its Leeds based roots and **NightLife at The Flamingo** is an opportunity to gain insight into those who have characterised its place in British Dance throughout the past 35 years.

**Dr Laura Griffiths**  
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Leeds Beckett University