



DUENDE

Duende – or the spirit of evocation – was a term first developed by the poet Federico García Lorca in 1933, referring to those moments in artistic activity when something else takes over, when something speaks through the performer, when the work of that performer reverberates throughout an entire audience.

It also happens to be the name of a mythical, supernatural being or sprite in Spanish folklore.

A term closely related to flamenco, duende is often used in the abstract to denote the primitive creative instinct, described by Lorca as ‘a dance with the devil’, or a feeling of irrationality and earthiness, characterised by a heightened awareness of death, representing ‘the very dearest thing that life can offer.’ Duende is something that rises up from the lowest depths of the body, from the darkness. Lorca said: ‘Those dark sounds are the mystery, the roots that cling to the mire that we all know, that we all ignore, but from which comes the very substance of art.’

I believe that art is a quest... not for perfection, nor for excellence, but for this intangible thing called duende, it’s something that permeates all creativity... the whole creative universe... and results in work that demands (and so often receives) a raw, almost guttural emotional response. It’s a rare thing of beauty, and a rarity that I’m happy to say I have borne witness to throughout my work with the lovely Ed... From a breathtaking solo performance in a huge concrete bunker beneath Islington Green for a photo shoot with the formidable Nick Knight, to the hallowed main stage at Covent Garden under the direction of the inimitable Wayne McGregor.

Ed’s work is more often than not a violent rejection of the status quo, delivered with an eye towards what André Breton described as ‘convulsive beauty’. His work is a ferocious meditation on beauty and barbarism, delivered with an assured air of shock-and-awe grandiosity.

Simply put, if duende is a sprite, then in human form it would surely be Ed Watson.

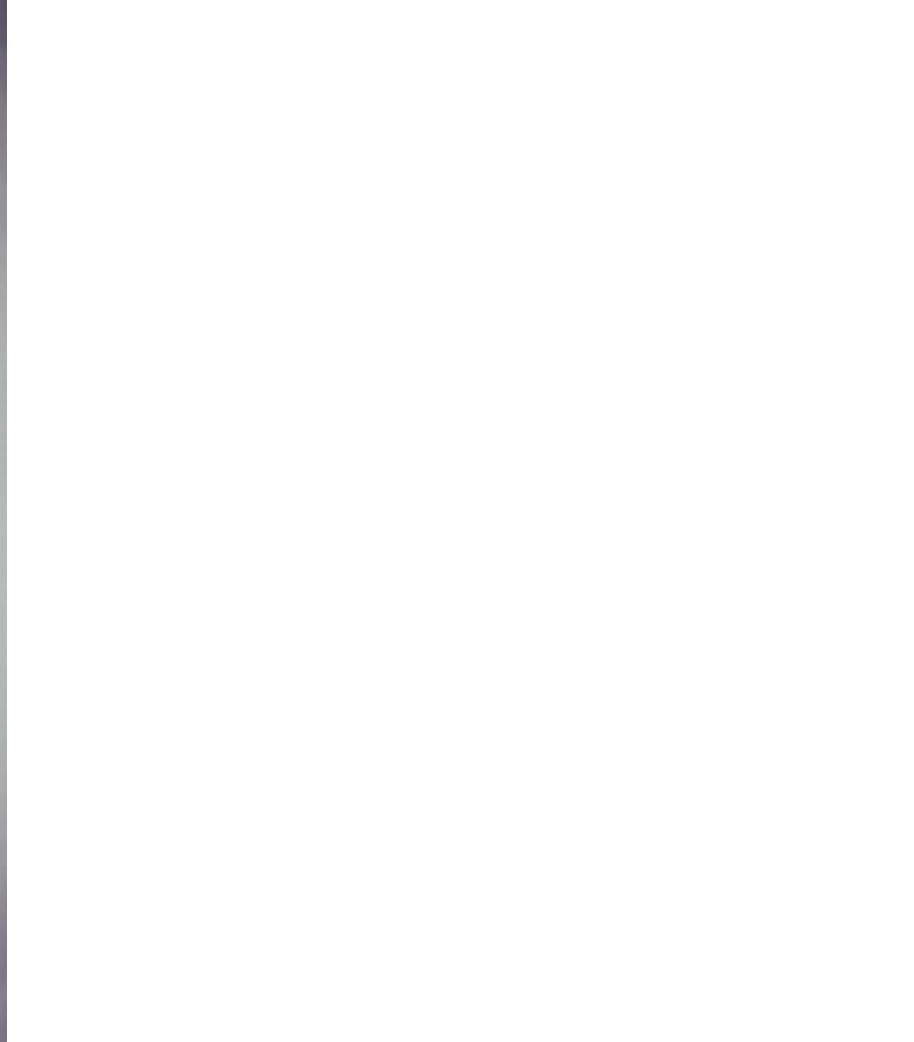




“ I still come in every day and want to be better. ”

in conversation with Lyndsey Winship for *The Evening Standard*









At the concrete bunker beneath Islington Green for Gareth Pugh and Nick Knight.

⚡ Here is artistry, tremendous in expressive
force, in intensity and intelligence. ⚡

Clement Crisp















DANCING OUTSIDE THE BOX







