

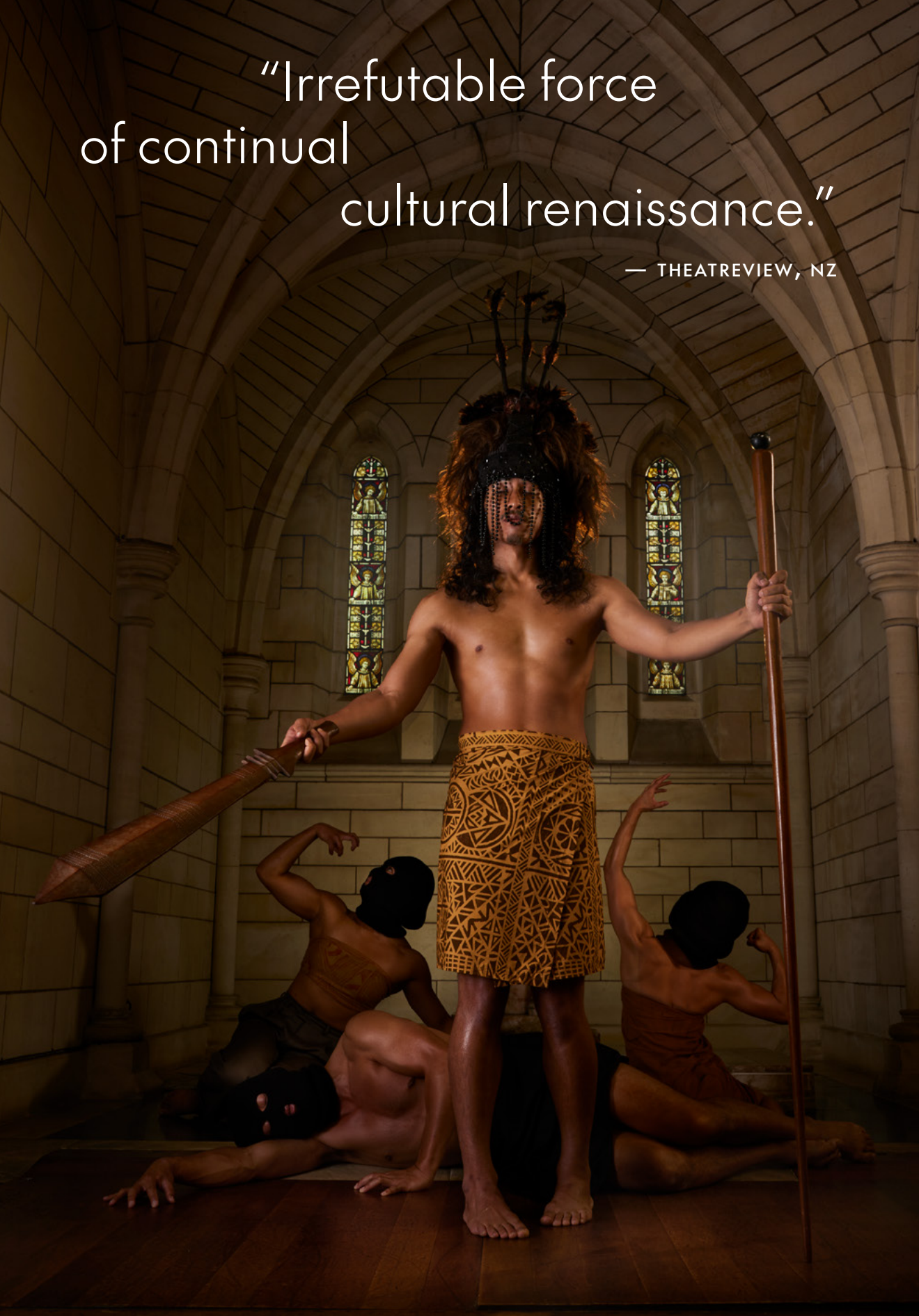


Black Grace,  
New Zealand's  
leading contemporary  
dance company



“Irrefutable force  
of continual  
cultural renaissance.”

— THEATREVIEW, NZ



Motivated to provide a different perspective and a fresh voice in the dance scene, Neil Ieremia founded his own company, Black Grace, in 1995, with ten male dancers of Pacific, Māori and New Zealand heritage. Drawing from his Samoan and New Zealand roots to create innovative dance works that reach across social, cultural and generational barriers, Mr. Ieremia has changed the face of contemporary dance in New Zealand and turned Black Grace into one of the most recognizable and iconic cultural brands.


His company tours the length and breadth of New Zealand developing new audiences and a new appreciation for dance. The work itself is highly physical, rich in the story telling traditions of the South Pacific and expressed with raw finesse, unique beauty and power.

The Company features some of New Zealand's finest dancers and has toured internationally to Australia, Canada, Germany, Holland, Switzerland, Japan, Luxembourg, Scotland, Mexico, South Korea, Taiwan and New Caledonia.

In 2004 Black Grace made its USA debut, performing a sold-out season at Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, with a subsequent return to the Festival in 2005. Since then, the Company has performed regularly throughout North America earning audience and critical acclaim.

In 2009 Black Grace was presented with a resolution passed by the Guam Legislator in recognition of their work with local communities, and 2010 saw the Mayor of Honolulu officially proclaim the 6th February 2010 as "Black Grace Day". Black Grace received a Herald Angel Award at the 2014 Edinburgh Festival Fringe.

Neil and Black Grace received the inaugural Moana Creative Enterprise Award at the 2022 Pacific Business Trust Awards, sponsored by Creative New Zealand.



“Black Grace is now  
one of our foremost  
cultural exports,  
and its founder Ieremia,  
leads the current  
arts vanguard.”

— STUFF, NZ

“A language that  
is multi-layered  
for world consumption”

— NEW ZEALAND ARTS REVIEW



A man is captured in a dynamic, theatrical pose, suspended in the air as he balances on a complex wooden lattice structure. He is wearing a vibrant green and white patterned shirt and dark pants. The background is a dramatic sunset or sunrise, with a warm, golden glow filtering through the silhouettes of tall, thin trees. The overall atmosphere is one of raw energy and artistic expression.

“Black Grace crosses geographical and social boundaries, often with innovative flair and theatricality

... it packs the raw visceral power of a primal communal rite into a carefully constructed form of rigor and sophistication.”

— THE BOSTON GLOBE

Neil Ieremia is arguably New Zealand's most accomplished choreographer, a creative entrepreneur and inspirational leader.



NEIL IEREMIA, ONZM  
FOUNDING ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Born in Wellington and of Samoan heritage, Mr. Ieremia was raised in a tough working class neighbourhood in a country focused more on sporting prowess and agriculture rather than creative expression. At the age of nineteen and with no formal training, Mr. Ieremia resigned from his banking job, left home, enrolled in a full time dance programme and broke his parents' hearts.

As a freelance professional dancer, Mr. Ieremia worked with many leading New Zealand choreographers as well as creating a number of commissioned works before founding Black Grace in 1995.

Numerous 'firsts' for a New Zealand choreographer include sell-out performances at Jacob's Pillow

Dance Festival (USA debut 2004 and 2005), a four-week season on New York City's 42nd Street, performances at the renowned Cervantino Festival in Mexico, the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, and the 2010 Cultural Olympiad in Vancouver.

Among his many other achievements, Mr Ieremia has received a 2005 Arts Foundation of New Zealand Laureate Award, and the 2009 Paul D. Fleck Fellowship in the Arts from The Banff Centre, Canada. In 2015, Mr Ieremia received a City of Porirua Anniversary Award and the Senior Pacific Artist Award from Creative New Zealand. In 2016, Mr. Ieremia was appointed an Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit for services to dance, and in 2021 received a KEA World Class Award. Neil is an Honorary Member of Dance ICONS and Global Ambassador for What Dance Can Do.

"The distinguishing spirit of this troupe is incredible speed and stamina, an exhilarating, seemingly inexhaustible energy."

— THE NEW YORK TIMES



Over Black Grace's almost 30-year history, Neil Ieremia has created numerous choreographies, ranging from short-length (approximately 3–20 minutes) to major, full-length works (60–75 minutes), with the addition of large-scale, immersive digital works in 2022.

Contact Black Grace  
for further information:

**Abby Ieremia**

Producer

abby@blackgrace.co.nz

(+64) 21 142 7942

www.blackgrace.co.nz

@blackgracedanceco

To view video content:



이러미아  
이러미아

© Neil Ieremia, 2024

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form by any means without the prior written permission of the publisher. All Neil Ieremia and Black Grace live and digital experiences, performances and choreography are protected by intellectual property rights and may not be reproduced, transmitted or broadcast by any means, or altered or adapted in any way without the prior written permission of Neil Ieremia.



