



**MAJOR DOUBLE BILL FEATURING
NEW WORLD PREMIERE BY NEIL IEREMIA 'IF EVER THERE WAS A TIME' &
PAUL TAYLOR'S ICONIC 'ESPLANADE'**

MEDIA RELEASE: Monday, September 22: Fresh from performing Neil Ieremia's highly acclaimed work, '*Paradise Rumour*' at the Aichi Triennale in Nagoya, Japan, **BLACK GRACE** is absolutely thrilled to announce their groundbreaking tour in November.

In what has already been a mighty year for the company, two landmark anniversaries will converge in a powerful celebration of dance: the 30th anniversary of prolific dance company, **Black Grace** and the '50th Anniversary' of "*Esplanade*" the iconic work by legendary American choreographer, **Paul Taylor**.

The November double bill will feature a compelling, new world premiere by Neil Ieremia entitled '*If Ever There Was A Time*' alongside Paul Taylor's '*Esplanade*' for strictly limited performances in Auckland at The Civic Theatre on November 21 and in Christchurch at The Isaac Theatre Royal on November 25 and 26.

Tickets will go on sale October 15.

For his latest creation, Ieremia is embarking on a new creative process: after 30 years of meticulously planning each work, he now enters the rehearsal room without a fixed blueprint, allowing the premiere to be shaped through discovery, alive to spontaneity and the unexpected.

Ieremia explains, "My new work, '*If Ever There Was A Time*' is to do with some universal truths. It's about the things that we have in common and the things that connect us rather than the things that divide us. At times it's a desperate lament, a pulsating charge, a soaring prayer of praise. This is my person protest, my quiet revolution."

The November tour marks the first time **ever**, a professional New Zealand company has been licensed to perform Taylor's work – this represents an historic collaboration

for Black Grace and Paul Taylor Dance Company that bridges continents, cultures and generations.

Ieremia says, "As a great lover of dance, I'm excited to be able to bring this truly iconic work to New Zealand audiences. 'Esplanade' is perhaps the late Mr Paul Taylor's most acclaimed work and this presents an extremely rare opportunity for our dancers and audiences to experience something new in our own backyard. I believe great artists and their art, stand the ultimate test of time, and in an increasingly disposable dance world where discipline, form and plain old hard work are undervalued – this is a nod of respect to our rich history."

In what is also a huge honour for the company, Director of Licensing for the Paul Taylor Dance Foundation, Mr. Richard Chen See will travel to New Zealand to hold rehearsals with the Black Grace dancers.

Paul Taylor's seminal work 'Esplanade' is regarded as one of the most iconic and celebrated choreographies in modern dance history. Only previously performed once in New Zealand in 1999 by the Paul Taylor Dance Company itself.

Ieremia also shares a deeply personal connection to Taylor's work. Renowned New Zealand choreographer, the late Douglas Wright danced for the Paul Taylor Dance Company in New York in the 80's which shaped his style of choreography, in turn Ieremia who was working with Wright from the age of 20, was deeply inspired by Taylor's work, which has been particularly evident in his use of composition and musicality throughout his long career.

Fans and followers can stay up to date with Ieremia's new work as it unfolds by following @blackgracedanceco on Instagram.

In what promises to be a dynamic and diverse presentation of dance, these performances are unmissable.

Black Grace World Premiere 'If Ever There Was A Time' by Neil Ieremia & 'Esplanade' by Paul Taylor

**Auckland – The Civic Theatre – November 21 @ 7:30pm
ticketmaster.co.nz**

**Christchurch – The Isaac Theatre Royal – November 25 & 26 @ 7:30pm
ticketek.co.nz**

Tickets available from Wednesday, October 15

Tickets: \$45* - \$99*

*booking fees and levies will apply

blackgrace.co.nz

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Images Esplanade - photography, Toaki Okano
<https://www.dropbox.com/t/XpMvOuE6HulrTpUY>

Images Double Bill - photography, Toaki Okano
<https://www.dropbox.com/t/r8lQaDo15MdgYsWY>

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About Paul Taylor:

Paul Taylor, one of modern dance's most influential choreographers revolutionised the art form with his groundbreaking blend of athleticism, grace and emotional depth. Based in New York City, his visionary works redefined dance, expanding its expressive possibilities and challenging convention.

Founded in 1954, the Paul Taylor Dance Company remains a pillar of modern dance, having performed in over 600 cities across 66 countries.

A quintessential New Yorker, Taylor infused his choreography with the city's energy and diversity, exploring themes ranging from the playful to the profound.

Masterpieces such as Aureole and Esplanade exemplify his signature fusion of classical music and modern movement making his work accessible and deeply poetic.

Over his prolific career, Taylor created 147 original pieces performed by his own company and troupes around the world.

Paul Taylor's legacy lives on through his enduring influence, the vibrancy of his company and the countless artists inspired by his transformative vision.

Richard Chen See:

Richard Chen See has a distinguished thirty-year international performing career as a dancer, including fifteen years as a principal performer with the Paul Taylor Dance Company. Mr. Chen See brings unparalleled expertise and insight into the repertoire and technique of one of America's most influential modern dance figures. His deep, first-hand knowledge was further enriched under the personal guidance of Paul Taylor himself.

Since 1999, Mr. Chen See has been actively involved in re-mounting Taylor's dances, earning international recognition as a master teacher, coach, and regisseur of these works. His leadership was formalized in 2021 when he was named Director of Licensing for the Paul Taylor Dance Foundation, a role in which he is responsible for stewarding the company's canon as it is mounted by dance companies and

conservatories around the world. This position underscores his profound understanding of the technical, artistic, and pedagogical requirements essential to preserving and transmitting Taylor's legacy with integrity and excellence.

End.