

NEW ZEALAND SCHOOL OF DANCE 2026 CHOREOGRAPHIC SEASON OPENS 26 JUNE AS PART OF THE PŌNEKE FESTIVAL

The 2026 Choreographic Season brings together the creative voices of New Zealand School of Dance (NZSD) third-year contemporary dance students in a full-length performance of original works. *NOTE TO SELF* gives students the opportunity to develop and share their choreographic works in a professional, supportive environment, while offering audiences a rare chance to experience the next generation of New Zealand contemporary dance as it emerges.

While each work has been created independently, the programme has been thoughtfully woven into a shared performance experience. The title *NOTE TO SELF* reflects a striking thread that emerged throughout the creative process: introspection. Across the season, the works explore body memory and self-perception, isolation and connection, comfort and growth, masking and identity, the things we inherit from those who came before us, and what it means to move forward.

Mentored by NZSD dance tutor **Matte Roffe**, the students have honed their creative processes across many months of development. As Roffe notes *"What stands out about this year's cohort is their willingness to make work about what's actually on their minds. My job has been to help them shape that honesty into craft and then to trust them with it."*

The works reflect a wide range of cultural perspectives, personal vocabularies and approaches to sound and design. Nicola Anslow and Kataraina Poata's *RESIDUUM* is shaped by whakapapa, unfolding in reverse to reveal its origins; Strahan Cormican-Jones composes his own score for *Soft as Bone*; Poppy Lawrence's *Solace* builds an immersive world from recordings of conversations and environmental sounds, paired with projected light.

NOTE TO SELF promises an inspiring season that celebrates the curiosity, craft and emerging artistry of the next generation of New Zealand choreographers and dancers, taking its place as part of the **Pōneke Festival of Contemporary Dance**.

NOTE TO SELF opens at Te Whaea: National Dance and Drama Centre on Friday 26 June and runs until Friday 3 July 2026, with eight public performances plus two free schools matinees. **The season will be presented in NZSD's newly opened David Carson-Parker and Jeremy Commons Studio - a stunning purpose-built performance space.** Tickets are \$15 - \$30 and are available now www.nzschooldance.ac.nz/events/choreographic-season-2026

Duration of each performance: 1 hour 30 minutes

Venue: Te Whaea: national dance and Drama Centre

Ticketing: Tickets available at www.nzschooldance.ac.nz/events/choreographic-season-2026

Imagery and video: [TBC: link to media kit with Stephen A'Court photography and Jeremy Brick video.]

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