



PROGRAM: BLACK GRACE

MARCH 19 / 2:30 PM

MEMORIAL AUDITORIUM

ARTISTS

Black Grace

A separate program will be provided at the performance.

PROGRAM

All choreography by Neil Ieremia.

Minoi (1999)

Minoi fuses a traditional Samoan dance style known as *Fa'ataupati* (slap dance) and western contemporary dance as a means of exploring cultural identity issues, live singing, and vocalizations.

Pati Pati (2009)

This work is a mixture of excerpts from older repertoire that utilizes body percussion influenced by traditional Samoan *Sasa* (seated dance) and *Fa'ataupati* (slap dance).

Crying Men – Excerpt (new work)

In this sneak preview of his latest work, Ieremia explores masculinity from a Pacific perspective.

Mother Mother (premiered 2013)

Mother Mother was originally choreographed for a music video, on request from the popular New Zealand band Fat Freddy's Drop.

INTERMISSION

As Night Falls (2016)

A poetic ode to our troubled world, *As Night Falls* is a beautiful new work set to the timeless and passionate sounds of Antonio Vivaldi.

PROGRAM SUBJECT TO CHANGE. Please be considerate of others and turn off all phones, pagers, and watch alarms. Photography and recording of any kind are not permitted. Thank you.



ABOUT THE COMPANY

New Zealand's leading contemporary dance group, Black Grace, was founded by Neil Ieremia in 1995. Ieremia draws from his Samoan and New Zealand roots to create innovative dance works that reach across social, cultural, and generational barriers.

The dancing itself is highly physical, rich in the storytelling 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 Europe, Japan, South Korea, Mexico, Australia, and New Caledonia. In 2004 Black Grace made its U.S. 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 acclaim.

NEIL IEREMIA, ONZM, FOUNDING ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Founding Artistic Director Neil Ieremia is one of New Zealand's most accomplished choreographers, a creative entrepreneur,

and an inspirational leader. Born in Wellington and of Samoan heritage, Ieremia was raised in a tough working-class neighborhood in a country focused more on sporting prowess and agriculture than creative expression. At the age of 19 and with no formal training, he resigned from his banking job, left home, enrolled in a full-time dance program, and broke his parents' hearts.

In his final year of training, he was invited to join the prestigious Douglas Wright Dance Company, whom he worked for until 1996. As a freelance professional dancer, Ieremia also worked with many other leading New Zealand choreographers in addition to creating a number of commissioned works.

Motivated to provide a different perspective and a fresh voice on the dance scene, Neil Ieremia founded his own company, Black Grace, in 1995, with 10 male dancers of Pacific, Maori, and New Zealand heritage. Since then, he 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. Internationally

his work has been presented in Australia, Canada, Germany, Holland, Luxembourg, Mexico, New Caledonia, South Korea, Scotland, Switzerland, Japan, and the United States.

Numerous firsts for a New Zealand choreographer include sell-out performances at Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival (U.S. debut 2004 and 2005), a four-week season on New York City's 42nd Street, and 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, Neil Ieremia 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 2009 Black Grace was presented with a resolution passed by the Guam Legislature in recognition of its work with local communities, and 2010 saw the mayor of Honolulu officially proclaim February 6, 2010, "Black Grace Day." Black Grace also received a Herald Angel Award at the 2014 Edinburgh Festival Fringe. In 2015, Ieremia received a City of Porirua Anniversary Award and the Senior Pacific Artist Award from Creative New Zealand. Most recently, Ieremia was appointed an Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit for services to dance.