

**MEDIA RELEASE
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Kiwi dance showcased in French Polynesia

Two New Zealand School of Dance students have been invited to perform in Tahiti next month.

Emmi Coupe and Florian Teatiu will perform in two gala performances at Papeete's Cultural Centre alongside Tahitian performers from dance academy L'Ecole de Danse Annie Fayn. This is the fourth such visit NZSD has made to Tahiti since 2005, as part of its professional relationship with school director Annie Fayn

"It's vital that we maintain and build on our strategic ties within the Pacific" says NZSD Director Garry Trinder. "This initiative was forged several years ago by former NZSD Associate Director Wendy Wallace and we are delighted that the relationship with L'Ecole de Danse Annie Fayn continues today. These ongoing visits to Tahiti showcase our dancers and choreography internationally whilst potentially attracting more French Polynesian students to train at the New Zealand School of Dance."

Florian Teatiu is a former student at L'Ecole de Danse Annie Fayn, and is now studying at the New Zealand School of Dance as a result of the 2005 visit. He is now in his third and final year at NZSD, majoring in contemporary dance.

"Going back to Tahiti is a great opportunity for me to share the knowledge I have gained over the last three years at the New Zealand School of Dance," says Florian. "I will be able to show the dancers and the general public in Tahiti that dancing can be a real career."

Emmi Coupe is a classical ballet student at the New Zealand School of Dance and is currently in her second year of training. She is also excited about the chance to present New Zealand dance internationally.

Three starkly different works will be presented in Tahiti, displaying the range of choreography and the quality of training available in New Zealand.

Shona McCullagh's work *Love* is a highly sculptural contemporary duet, performed to music by Georgy Sviridov. This piece will be performed alongside a new neo-classical duet danced to music by George Gershwin, which has been created by former Royal NZ Ballet dancer Anne Anderson. Florian will also perform a poignant solo choreographed by Michael Parmenter, called *Rhapsody*.

Head of Contemporary Dance at NZSD, Tiina Alinen, will accompany the students to Tahiti. "We're very proud to present New Zealand choreographers internationally, particularly ones of this calibre. This visit will also provide us the opportunity to see what the dance community in Tahiti is creating."

Ends.

Photo caption: *New Zealand School of Dance students Emmi Coupe and Florian Teatiu will travel to Tahiti next month to perform three kiwi dance works.*

Photo credit: Stephen A'Court

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