

Media release
For immediate release

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NZ School of Dance students recognized in major award

Two New Zealand School of Dance students have taken top honours at the prestigious Alana Haines Australasian Awards.

Katherine Grange and Andre Santos have won second and third place respectively at the AHA Awards, which are held every second year in Auckland. Andre also received the Audience Favourite Award.

Fellow NZSD student Haruka Tsuji also danced in the competition, reaching the semi-finals.

Katherine, Andre and Haruka competed against approximately 130 other dancers in the senior section of the awards. The young dancers traveled from all over New Zealand and Australia to perform in the competition.

The competitors perform contemporary and classical solos in three elimination rounds, culminating with the cream of Australasia performing in the Grand Finals.

The competition was adjudicated by Gailene Stock (Director of the Royal Ballet School in London), Mark Annear (Australian Ballet School) and Sir Jon Trimmer (Royal NZ Ballet). Mark Annear applauded the School for presenting such strong dancers: "As always the high level of the students training was most evident, particularly their musicality and performance quality. All the students engaged 100% with their solos demonstrating their commitment to their artform and the wonderful preparation from their tutors."

Raised in Tauranga, nineteen year old Katherine Grange is now in her third year of training at the New Zealand School of Dance. "I was honoured to be recognised amongst such talented dancers." said Katherine of her result. "There was such an amazing atmosphere backstage, and the audience was fantastic as well. It was a great experience all round." Katherine also won first place at the NZ National Ballet Award last year.

Seventeen year old Andre Santos is originally from Brazil, and was a 2007 finalist at the Youth America Grand Prix in New York. He was subsequently offered a scholarship at the New Zealand School of Dance and is now in his second year of training.

The New Zealand School of Dance has a long history with the Alana Haines Australasian Award, and has produced several winners over the two decades.

The award was established in 1991 to commemorate the life of promising young dancer, Alana Haines, who died at age eleven in a car accident.

The New Zealand School of Dance is one of the leading dance conservatoires in the Southern Hemisphere. Entry is by audition only, and students may study either a two-year Certificate or three-year Diploma in Dance Performance. NZSD is based at Te Whaea: National Dance & Drama Centre, in facilities shared with Toi Whakaari: NZ Drama School.

Ends.

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