

**Media Release  
For Immediate Release  
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## **ASTRONOMICAL DANCE PREMIERE**

See some of the best young dancers in the country perform in the New Zealand School of Dance Choreographic Season, *IN A SPACE*. This innovative performance season will integrate daring aerial work, stunning lighting, video projection and edgy set design.

The New Zealand School of Dance Choreographic Season has become a much-anticipated annual event in the Wellington dance calendar, and is created by third year contemporary dance students from the New Zealand School of Dance in collaboration with design and technical students from Toi Whakaari: NZ Drama School.

This year's Choreographic Season is thematically based on astronomy; exploring the world of black holes, cosmic rays, Jupiter and its surrounding moons. The student choreographers' various interpretations of the astronomy theme weave together into a one-hour dance work that is high energy and quirky.

The music ranges from ambient sound-scapes, kiwi dub, sixties songstress Nancy Sinatra, Tahitian drumming and opera, reflecting the broad range of choreography presented within the performances.

The astronomy theme of *IN A SPACE* ties in with Matariki, the Maori New Year, which is celebrated in June throughout New Zealand. 2009 is also the International Year of Astronomy, providing a surge of interest in all things astronomical.

The students have been mentored by some of New Zealand's best contemporary dance choreographers in the process of creating their work.

"Working with the NZ School of Dance students has been a fantastic experience," says Sarah Foster, Artistic Coordinator of *IN A SPACE*, "They have an exceptionally high technical standard and an excellent work ethic. Their work is some of the best student choreography I have ever seen."

Sarah Foster graduated from NZSD in 1997 and since then has established a highly successful career as a dancer and choreographer. In recent years she has choreographed two new works for Footnote Dance, and performed in Michael Parmenter's *TENT*, for which she received the 'Best Female Performer' award at Tempo, Auckland's Festival of Dance. She is this year's Choreographic Fellow at the NZ School of Dance.

Foster has spent the last few months working closely with the student choreographers – Gina Andrews, Jana Castillo, Robbie Curtis, Claire Hughes, Jessica Jefferies, Nicola Leahey, Lucy Marinkovich, Florian Teatiu and Xu Jingwen – to create *IN A SPACE*.

Well-known New Zealand choreographers Malia Johnston (Creative Director of WOW) and Daniel Belton (Daniel Belton & Good Company) have also been mentoring the students.

Head of Contemporary Tiina Alinen is pleased with the students' use of technology within the performance season. "It's vital to keep our students up to speed with current industry practice."

The New Zealand School of Dance has a strong tradition of producing choreographic talent. NZSD alumni include renowned contemporary choreographers Raewyn Hill, Mary-Jane O'Reilly, Taiaroa Royal, Taane Mete and Shona McCullagh.

*IN A SPACE* opens Friday 5 June at Te Whaea Theatre, Wellington.

**Ends.**

*IN A SPACE*  
Te Whaea Theatre  
11 Hutchison Road  
Newtown  
Wellington

7.30pm, Friday 5 & Saturday 6 June  
2.00pm, Sunday 7 June  
7.30pm, Tuesday 9 – Saturday 13 June

Tickets are \$18, or \$15 concession.  
Bookings: 04 381 9254 or [www.nzschooldance.co.nz](http://www.nzschooldance.co.nz)

Photo caption: *Contemporary dance students from the New Zealand School of Dance choreograph and perform bold new work this June.*

Photo credit: *Stephen A'Court*

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