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ROYAL NEW ZEALAND BALLET

EDUCATION
RESOURCE

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STRENGTH & grace

Four ballets by international
female choreographers
celebrating women's suffrage



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SUPPORTING EDUCATION

65 years
OF BALLET



INTRODUCTION

Strength & Grace is a programme of four new works, celebrating two special anniversaries. 2018 is a year that marks the 65th birthday of the Royal New Zealand Ballet and the 125th anniversary of women's suffrage in Aotearoa. The Royal New Zealand Ballet is privileged to bring this programme to the stage to honour both the innovation, drive and determination of New Zealand women, and the wāhine of our company's history.

In *Strength & Grace* we are proud to celebrate a world first, New Zealand becoming the first self-governing nation to grant women the vote in 1893, by commissioning a quartet of world premieres by female choreographers.

New ballets by Sarah Foster-Sproull (New Zealand), Danielle Rowe (Australia), Penny Saunders (United States of America) and Andrea Schermoly (South Africa) were inspired by part of our nation's history. The Royal New Zealand Ballet is committed to continually engaging with new artistic perspectives that will expand and enrich our repertoire and the experience of our audiences.

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We are also pleased, through *Strength & Grace*, to have the opportunity to honour our former General Manager, and guiding light for many in the New Zealand arts community, Sue Paterson ONZM. Strength and grace were qualities that Sue embodied, in her years at the helm of the RNZB, and in her many years as a leader of our community.

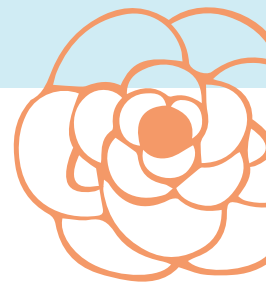


“Do not think your single vote does not matter much. The rain that refreshes the parched ground is made up of single drops”.

KATE SHEPPARD



STRENGTH & grace



CURRICULUM LINKS

In this unit you and your students will:

- Learn about the elements that come together to create a ballet experience.
- Identify the processes involved in making a theatrical production.

CURRICULUM LINKS IN THIS UNIT

Values

Students will be encouraged to value:

- **Innovation**, inquiry and curiosity, by thinking critically, creatively and reflectively.
- **Diversity**, as found in our different cultures and heritages.
- **Community and participation** for the common good.

KEY COMPETENCIES

- **Using language, symbols and text** – Students will recognise how choices of language and symbols in live theatre affect people's understanding and the ways in which they respond.
- **Relating to others** – Students will develop the ability to listen actively and share ideas regarding theatrical ballet performances.
- **Participating and contributing** – Students will be actively involved in their cultural community, understanding the importance of creative environments.
- **Thinking** – Students will reflect on their own thinking and learning after the personal experience of attending a live theatre show.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES FOR LEVELS 7 & 8

Level 7 students will learn how to:

- **Understand dance in context** – Investigate and evaluate the effects of individual, social, cultural, and technological influences on the development of a variety of dance genres and styles.
- **Develop practical knowledge** – Extend skills in the vocabulary, practices and technologies of selected dance genres and styles.
- **Communicate and interpret** – Analyse, explain and discuss aspects of performance and choreography in a range of dance works.

Level 8 students will learn how to:

- **Understand dance in context** – Investigate, analyse, and discuss the features, history, issues, and development of dance in New Zealand, including the contribution of selected individuals and groups.
- **Develop practical knowledge** – Extend and refine skills, practices, and use of technologies in a range of dance genres and styles.
- **Communicate and interpret** – Critically analyse, interpret, and evaluate the artistic features and the communication of ideas in a range of dance works.

NCEA

Strength & Grace, and the use of this resource, is ideal for NCEA level dance teachers and students who are learning to analyse and appreciate a dance performance.



Photo: Maarten Holl, Fairfax NZ

SUE PATERSON ONZM – A STRONG AND GRACEFUL LEADER

KUA HINGA TE TŌTARA I TE WAO NUI A TĀNE

The Royal New Zealand Ballet was deeply saddened by the death in July 2018, of Sue Paterson ONZM, our General Manager from 1999 – 2006. The RNZB will honour Sue by dedicating to her our Wellington season of *Strength & Grace* – qualities which Sue exemplified.

Sue's contribution to the Royal New Zealand Ballet, coming at a time when the company had just moved into our new home at the St James, and had started to receive direct government funding from the Ministry for Culture and Heritage, was immense. Sue's vision for the RNZB was to ensure its financial security, to offer challenges to staff, to take artistic risks and to be accessible to a

wider public. In all of these, she succeeded. Her work built on and fully respected the foundations of the past, but always focused on building and sustaining a ballet company that would serve New Zealand in the 21st century.

In 2004, Sue was made an officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit for services to ballet, and in 2017 was named Metlifecare Senior New Zealander of the Year in recognition of her 40 years of service to arts and culture.

In 2013, Sue described her time at the RNZB as a highlight of her 30 year career in the performing arts. In turn, we would describe her tenure as a highlight in the history of the RNZB.



Matz Skoog, RNZB Artistic Director from 1996 – 2001, says: 'Sue was a colleague who became a lifelong friend, someone I will always remember with love and respect. Working with her was one of the highlights of my time as Artistic Director of the Royal New Zealand Ballet. She and I were a great team and together we brought some exceptional New Zealand and international work to the company repertoire. One that particularly springs to mind was the groundbreaking production of *Ihi Frenzy*, very much a collaborative effort between the two of us. Sue was a visionary who provided exceptional leadership during a time when RNZB faced great change and development; one of her many qualities was her ability to pull people together under one flag, working towards a common goal. But Sue's contribution did not limit itself to the Royal New Zealand Ballet; she was an arts manager who truly loved all aspects of the performing and visual arts and it is impossible to fully appreciate the influence she has had on New Zealand's cultural landscape as a whole. I will always miss her.'

Gary Harris, who was the RNZB's Artistic Director from 2001 – 10, says: 'I've been thinking so much about her all week, and I just think of laughter! I had the best time working with and getting to know Sue, and we used to scream our heads off with laughter. Obviously we got our work done, but with Sue there was always a wonderful energy, passion and positivity, and above all a brilliant sense of humour. She was one of those people that you could always get a giggle out of, even in the most inappropriate places or moments. I loved her for that.'

'My time with RNZB is without doubt one of the highlights of my career, and to have had the privilege of working alongside Sue made it even more special. She became my friend and

mentor and I will always be grateful for the time I had with a very, very special person. An extraordinary person.'

As she moved on to other roles, Sue remained a wonderful professional colleague, advisor, friend and advocate for the RNZB. We will miss her rich wisdom and knowledge of the dance world and the wider arts universe, her gentle kindness, her good company at performances and events, her insightful advice and most of all her sheer delight in dance and the joy that comes in sharing it with others.

Sue was an incredible advocate for the arts in Aotearoa and her spirit will remain an inspiration to the entire arts community here in New Zealand and around the world.

We are profoundly grateful to have had Sue as a part of the RNZB whanau. Sue will be deeply missed and affectionately remembered by everyone who worked with her.



Suffrage – the right to vote in public, political elections. Women in New Zealand were granted this right in 1893. While the right to vote had already been granted to women in some territories in Australia and the USA, New Zealand was the first self-governing country in the world to give the vote to its female population.



NEW ZEALAND HISTORY OF WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE

On 19 September 1893 New Zealand women won the right to vote. As a result, New Zealand became the first self-governing country in the world to extend this right to all women. Suffrage Day celebrates the aims of the movement for gender equality and is a reminder of the ongoing issue of equality for women in all areas of life.

In early New Zealand, women were excluded from any involvement in politics and were not allowed to have their say and vote in elections. The right for women to vote is known as the suffrage movement, and had been introduced as an issue to Parliament since the 1870s, but no actions were taken and the campaigners were not listened to.

In the early 1890s, the campaign was led by Kate Sheppard, a member of the Women's Christian Temperance Union and it finally became a national issue.

Bills were introduced to Parliament in 1891 and 1892, but opposition to women's suffrage was fierce and they were blocked.

Undeterred, women were determined for their voices and thoughts to be heard and contributed to New Zealand society through the power of their vote. In 1893 a petition of over 32,000 signatures was submitted to Parliament. At that time, 32,000 equated to almost a quarter of New Zealand's adult female population.

At 270 metres long, the petition was unrolled in Parliament during the Electoral Bill debate. The effect of the length and number of signatures was too much to ignore, and the bill easily passed. From September 19 1893 all adult New Zealand citizens, both Māori as well as Pākehā, men and women, were entitled to cast their vote and have their voices heard – their first nation in the world to do so.



WHERE ARE WE NOW?

In 2018, New Zealand still has a long way to go to achieve gender equality. In the field of politics, women have held of our most senior constitutional positions: Prime Minister, Governor-General, Speaker of the House of Representatives, Attorney-General, and Chief Justice. The number of female Members of Parliament first reached double figures in the mid-1980s. In today's Parliament, women make up only 33 percent of MPs.



KATE SHEPPARD

1848 – 1934

Have you ever wondered who the lady on the \$10 note is? Kate Sheppard was born in England but came to New Zealand with her family in 1868. Throughout her lifetime she was an active promoter of women's rights, especially the right to vote. She was a skilful writer and a persuasive public speaker and her work culminated in the 32,000 signature petition which was presented to parliament in 1893, resulting in women being granted the vote.

Kate Sheppard, born Catherine Wilson on 10 March 1847 in Liverpool, England, spent her childhood in London, Dublin and Nairn. Her uncle was a minister, and had a huge influence on her religious, moral and socialist education.

Kate (as she preferred to be called) was 22 years old when, in 1869, she undertook a three month long journey to New Zealand. She went with her mother and three of her siblings, to join her sister who already lived in Christchurch. Two years later Kate married Walter Allen Sheppard, a Christchurch grocer and at this time she became a dynamic member of the Trinity Congregational Church.

Kate was a founding member of the New Zealand Women's Christian Temperance Union when it formed in 1885. They were dissatisfied with the law's lack of protection and support for women and children, and believed that to enact effective and lasting reforms that women needed the right to vote and to have female representation in Parliament. A passionate advocate for women's suffrage and gender equality, Kate's responsibilities included: public speaking, writing and distributing pamphlets, writing



"All that separates, whether of race, class, creed, or sex, is inhuman, and must be overcome."

KATE SHEPPARD

to newspapers, organising meetings, and encouraging women of all classes to enrol to vote. Kate was instrumental in presenting to Parliament the infamous petition (at that time the longest petition that the New Zealand government had ever seen submitted). On 19 September 1893, the new Electoral Act was passed and New Zealand women were allowed to vote.

Kate's journey as an advocate did not stop there. She continued to work both in Aotearoa and abroad for women's rights. Kate Sheppard died on 13 July 1934, and is proudly remembered as one of New Zealand history's most prominent figures.

READ MORE ABOUT THIS REMARKABLE WOMAN AT:

<https://nzhistory.govt.nz/people/kate-sheppard>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kate_Sheppard



“Is it right that your mother, your sister... should be classed with criminals and lunatics..? Is it right that while the gambler, the drunkard, and even the wife-beater has a vote, earnest, educated and refined women are denied it? ... Is it right... that a mother... should be thought unworthy of a vote that is freely given to the blasphemer, the liar, the seducer, and the profligate?”

KATE SHEPPARD



In 1991, Kate Sheppard replaced Queen Elizabeth II on New Zealand's \$10 banknote. As you've just read, Kate was fundamental in the achievement of New Zealand women fighting for their right to vote. She was a leader raising awareness of the suffrage movement by giving talks, contacting politicians, writing to the press, and producing her own publication *The Prohibitionist*. Beside her is a map of Aotearoa and three Camellia flowers, a symbol for universal suffrage in New Zealand.

INTERNATIONAL TIMELINE OF WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE



1 1893
New Zealand!

1902
Australia

1906
Finland
New Hebrides

1913
Norway

1915
Denmark
Iceland

1917
Belarusian People's Republic
Estonia
Latvia
Lithuania
Canada
Russian Republic
Ukrainian People's Republic
Uruguay
Crimean People's Republic

1918
Austria
Germany
Moldavian SSR
Poland
Russian SFSR
Kyrgyz SSR

1919
Afghanistan
Armenia
Belgium
Georgia
Isle of Man
Sweden
Luxembourg
Netherlands
Southern Rhodesia

1920
Albania
Czechoslovakia
United States

1921
Azerbaijan SSR

1922
Irish Free State

1924
Ecuador
Mongolia
Saint Lucia
Kazakh SSR
Tajik SSR

1927
Turkmen SSR
Uruguay

1928
United Kingdom

1929
Romania
Ecuador

1930
South Africa
Turkey

1931
Ceylon
Chile
Portugal
Spain

1932
Brazil
Maldives
Thailand

1934
Chile
Cuba
Turkey

1935
British Raj
British Burma
Irish Free State
Puerto Rico

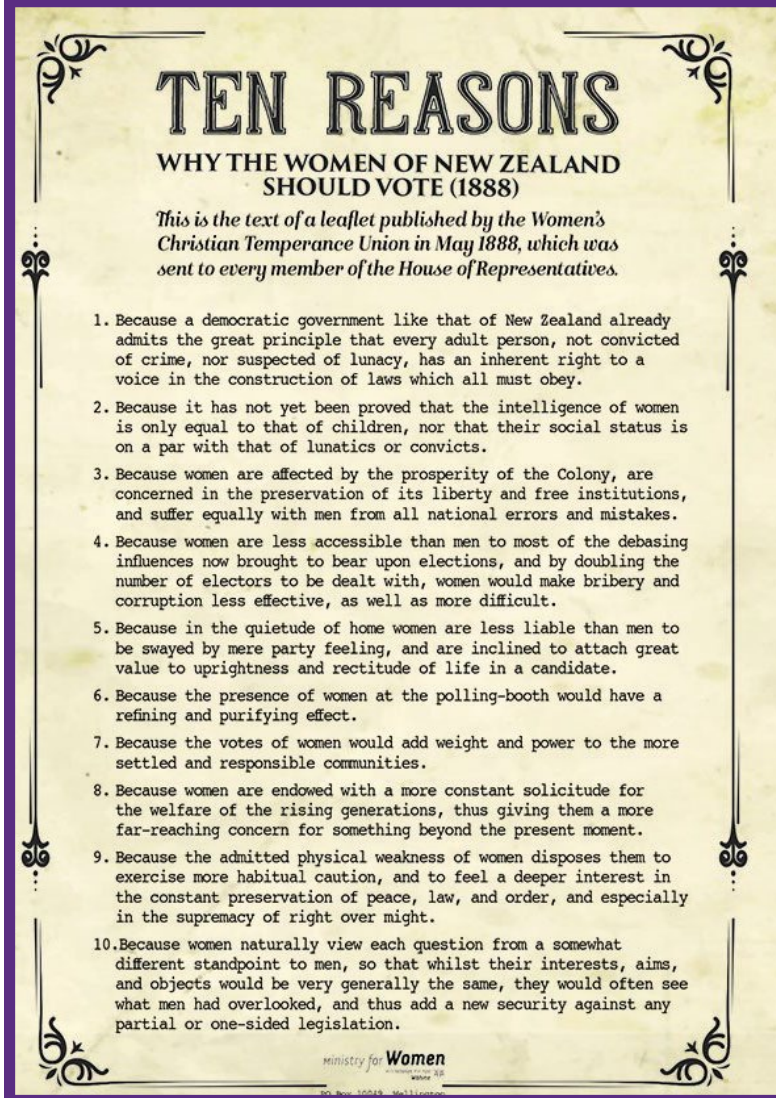
1937
Philippines

1938
Bolivia
Bulgaria
Uzbek SSR

1939
El Salvador
Romania

1941
Panama

POSTER CREATED BY THE MINISTRY FOR WOMEN, TE MINITATANGA MŌ NGĀ WĀHINE.



1942
Dominican Republic

1944
Bermuda
Bulgaria
Jamaica

1945
France
Dutch East Indies
Guatemala
Hungary
Italy
Japan
Senegal
French Togoland
Yugoslavia

1946
Cameroon
French Somaliland
Kenya
North Korea
Liberia
Mandatory Palestine
Portugal
Romania
Venezuela
Vietnam

1947
Argentina
Republic of China
Malta
India
Nepal
Pakistan
Singapore

1948

United Nations adopted
The Universal Declaration
of Human Rights Article 21
Belgium
Israel
South Korea
Niger
Dutch Surinam

1949

Chile
People's Republic of China
Costa Rica
Syria

1950

Barbados
El Salvador

1951

Antigua and Barbuda
Dominica
Grenada
Nepal
Saint Christopher-Nevis-
Anguilla
Saint Vincent and the
Grenadines

1952

United Nations Convention
on the Political Rights of
Women
Bolivia
Côte d'Ivoire
Greece

1953

Bhutan
British Guiana
Mexico

1954

British Honduras

1955

Cambodia
Ethiopia
Honduras
Nicaragua
Peru

1956

Dahomey
Comoros
Egypt
Gabon
British Somaliland

1957

Colombia
Malaya
Southern Rhodesia
Lebanon

1958

Upper Volta
Chad
Guinea
Laos
Nigeria

1959

Brunei
Madagascar
San Marino
Tanganyika
Tunisia
Cayman Islands

1960

Cyprus
Gambia
Tonga

1961

Burundi
Mauritania
Malawi
Paraguay
Rwanda
Sierra Leone

1962

Algeria
Bahamas
Monaco
Uganda
Northern Rhodesia

1963

Congo
Equatorial Guinea
Fiji
Iran
Kenya
Morocco

1964

Libya
Papua New Guinea
Sudan

1965

Botswana
Lesotho
Guatemala

1967

Democratic Republic of
the Congo
Ecuador
Kiribati
Tuvalu
South Yemen

1968

Bermuda
Nauru
Portugal

1970

Andorra
North Yemen

1971

Switzerland

1972

Bangladesh

1973

Bahrain

1974

Jordan
Solomon Islands

1975

Angola
Cape Verde
Mozambique
São Tomé and Príncipe
Vanuatu

1976

Timor Timur
Portugal

1977

Guinea-Bissau

1978

Marshall Islands
Federated States of
Micronesia
Nigeria
Palau

1980

Iraq

1984

Liechtenstein

1985

Kuwait

1986

Central African Republic

1989

Namibia

1990

Western Samoa

1999

Qatar

2001

Afghanistan

2003

Oman

2005

Kuwait
Iraq

2006

United Arab Emirates

2015

Saudi Arabia

HOWEVER...

1. One country does not allow their people, male or female, to vote: Brunei.
2. Vatican City is the only country that does not allow women to vote. The only election held in Vatican City is to vote for the new Pope. This is done by cardinals, and the Catholic Church only allows men to be cardinals.
3. Australian women, with the exception of Aboriginal women, won the vote in 1902 but male and female Aboriginal Australians, Australia's Indigenous people, did not have the right to vote until 1962.
4. Canadian women, with the exception of First Nations people of Canadian women, won the vote in 1917. First Nations people of Canada, male and female, did not win the vote until 1960.
5. South African women gained voting rights in 1930; however, black citizens would not have full voting rights until the end of Apartheid in the 1990s.
6. King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia decreed in 2011 that women were allowed to stand as political candidates and vote. However, this did not actually occur until 2015, almost a year after the King died.

THE SUFFRAGE 125 SYMBOL

New Zealand's Ministry for Women, or mihitanga mō ngā Wāhine, has developed a Suffrage 125 symbol to help promote and identify related activities and events. Suffrage 125 celebrations held throughout 2018 are motivated by raising awareness that people of diverse cultures have contributed to furthering the rights of women and girls in New Zealand. The Ministry for Women's goal is to motivate the next generation of change makers to continue that progress to achieve gender equality.

THE PHRASE

The phrase 'Whakatū Wāhine' phrase represents women — and all people — standing for the rights of women. It was central to the Suffrage Centenary celebrations in 1993 and remains relevant today as people across New Zealand, both men and women, continue to take a stand for gender equality.

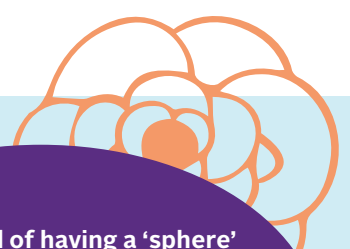
THE SYMBOL

The Suffrage 125 symbol draws on historical colours and icons adopted by women's suffrage petitioners and presents them in a contemporary form. Violet represented dignity and self-respect and the white camellia was worn by people supporting women's right to vote in New Zealand. The '125' contains a koru in the design of the number two as a link to our distinct New Zealand culture.



THE CAMELLIA

The camellia is a suffrage symbol that recalls how suffragists gave their supporters in Parliament white camellias to wear in their buttonholes. In what is now called "a battle of the buttonholes", anti-suffragists gave their parliamentary supporters red camellias to wear. In 1993, during the 100 year commemorations of women getting the vote, 'Kate Sheppard' camellias planted at in the grounds of the New Zealand Parliament in 1993 to celebrate the 100 year anniversary of women getting the vote. The National Council of Women gifted the camellia shrubs to Parliament.

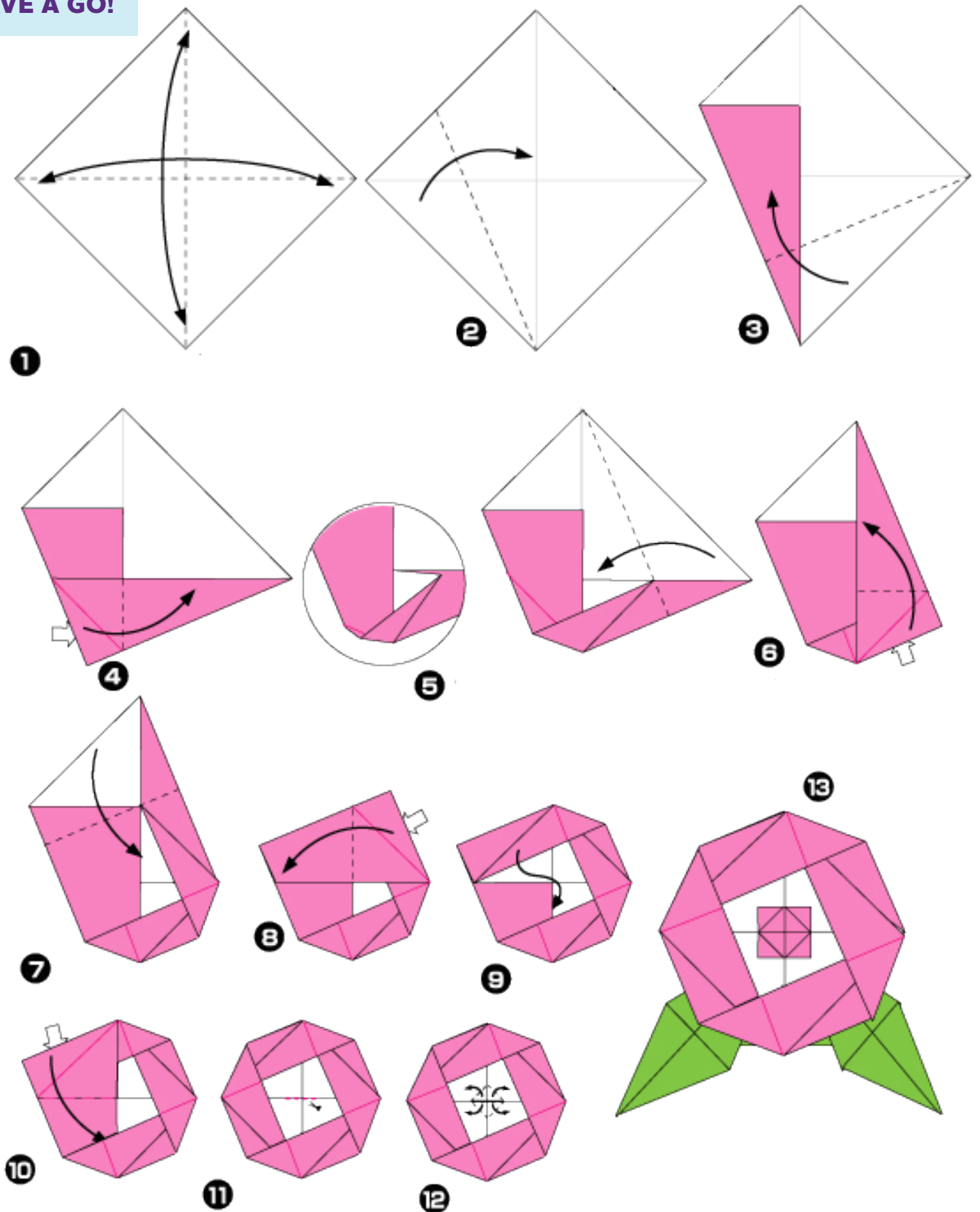


"We are tired of having a 'sphere' doled out to us, and of being told that anything outside that sphere is 'unwomanly'. We want to be natural just for a change... We must be ourselves at all risks."

KATE SHEPPARD

ORIGAMI CAMELLIA FLOWER

HAVE A GO!



FOR MORE VISIT:

<https://www.sinfieldtrust.org/b3d312e09aed9104.html>

PIONEERING NEW ZEALAND WOMEN

New Zealand has a long and proud history of women achieving incredible feats and accomplishments. Here are some inspiring wāhine from Aotearoa.

“The question for me is whether we can keep Earth a safe, pleasant place for humankind and the ecosystems we rely on.”

KATE SHEPPARD

KATE SHEPPARD

Kate Sheppard was the driving force behind the campaign for women's suffrage in New Zealand. Despite fierce opposition, she helped make world history in 1893 by presenting to Parliament a 270 metre long petition with 32,000 signatures from New Zealand women and men who supported the cause.



KRISTINE BARTLETT

Named the 2018 New Zealander of the Year, equal pay campaigner Kristine Bartlett has worked as an aged care worker in rest homes for over 20 years. She spent five years fighting a court battle to secure a pay rise for 55,000 care and support workers – roles which are primarily taken up by women and are low paid. Her landmark case began in 2012 when she issued a complaint to the Employment Relations Authority that her chosen industry was low paid because it was dominated by female workers. After three court cases and two appeals, the Supreme Court finally ruled in Bartlett's favour, offering a major pay settlement.



DAME WHINA COOPER

Dame Whina Cooper dedicated her life to fighting for Māori land rights and improving living conditions for Māori women. She established several land development schemes and became the foundation president of the Māori Women's Welfare League, before gaining notoriety for leading the 1975 hīkoi (march) from the Northland community of Te Hāpua to Parliament in Wellington. Protesting the colonial alienation of Māori from their land, the march was iconic in New Zealand history because of its 79 year old female leader and due to the increasing numbers of its participants. The crowd walked 1000 kilometres from one end of Te Ika-a-Mauī (North Island) to the other.



JEAN BATTEN

New Zealand aviatrix Jean Batten is globally renowned for her record-breaking long-distance flights. In 1934 she made world headlines after successfully completing a solo return journey from Australia to England. By November 1935, she had become the first woman to fly herself across the South Atlantic, and in October 1936 she made the first ever direct flight from England to New Zealand. Batten's final long-distance flight, once more from Australia to England,



took place in 1937. She retired from public life and lived quietly before her tragic death in 1982, which could have been prevented with an operation that she refused to undergo.

NANCY WAKE

A World War II hero, Nancy Wake is better known for her code name, the 'White Mouse', because of her ability to evade capture.

The Wellington-born Wake was married to a wealthy Frenchman when war broke out. She joined the French Resistance, was smuggled into England for training and then parachuted back into France to undermine the Axis powers. At one point she was number one on the Gestapo's most-wanted list (with a five million franc reward for her capture), and was the most decorated WWII servicewoman on the Allies' side.



KATHERINE MANSFIELD

Katherine Mansfield is an internationally renowned modernist writer. Born in Wellington in 1888, historians and academics claim that Mansfield revolutionised the 20th century with her short stories, and is New Zealand's most famous historical literary figure. Two of her most well-known short stories include *The Dollshouse* and *The Garden Party*. She lived her adult life as an expatriate in London, she was known for being unconventional and is remembered proudly as having said, in 1922, "Risk! Risk anything! Care no more for the opinions of others, for those voices. Do the hardest thing on earth for you. Act for yourself. Face the truth". Author Virginia Woolf famously said that Mansfield had produced 'the only writing I have ever been jealous of.'



KATE EDGER

Kate Edger was New Zealand's first woman to gain a university qualification, and the first woman in the British empire to earn a Bachelor of Arts. She graduated with a BA in Latin and Mathematics from the University of Auckland in 1877, before becoming the foundation headmistress of Nelson College School for Girls at the age of 26. As a child Edger was educated by her father, Reverend Samuel Edger, before he sought permission for her to study at an esteemed Auckland school for boys. Edger applied for a University Scholarship to continue on to tertiary studies – which she gained successfully without disclosing her gender.



GEORGINA BEYER

In 1995 Georgina Beyer became the world's first openly transgender mayor when she was elected Mayor of Carterton, a rural New Zealand town known for being conservative. Holding this office for five years, she then became the world's first transgender MP, serving three terms as a Member of Parliament for the Labour Party until she retired in 2007. Beyer has campaigned indefatigably for the rights of transgender people. She introduced a parliamentary bill that included "gender identity" to the Humans Rights Act in 1993, protecting people against discrimination because of their gender identity. She remains a staunch advocate and activist for gender rights.



JACINDA ARDERN

The Right Honourable Jacinda Ardern is New Zealand's 40th Prime Minister and the world's youngest head of government. At 37, Ardern was the youngest New Zealand PM in 150 years, and Aotearoa's third ever female leader. She was elected PM merely weeks after becoming Labour Party leader and Leader of the Opposition. Her politics advocate for mental health awareness, addressing child poverty, and supporting education, healthcare, equal pay and LGBTQIA issues. In 2018 Ardern gave birth to her first child, becoming the second world leader ever to give birth while in office. As well as Prime Minister, she holds the roles of Minister for National Security and Intelligence, Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage, and Minister for Child Poverty Reduction.



DAME MIRIAM DELL

Dame Miriam Dell has dedicated her life to women's advocacy, and been consistently at the forefront of women's issues both in New Zealand and internationally. Dell was a founding member of the Hutt Valley Branch of the National Council of Women (NCW), becoming National President of the Council in 1970. In 1974 she became chairperson of the Committee on Women and coordinator for the International Women's Year, representing the New Zealand Government at all three UN Conferences for the Decade of Women. Dell organised the International Council of Women 1988 Centennial Celebrations in Washington, D.C., and managed the I.C.W's Third World Development Programme until 1991. Her life's work promoting women's advancement, gender equity and equal rights in society was recognised in 1993 when she was awarded a membership in the Order of New Zealand, the country's highest civil honour.



KLEIN PERSPECTIVES BY ANDREA SCHERMOLY. CHOREOGRAPHED ON KANSAS CITY BALLET, PHOTOGRAPHY BY BRETT PRUITT & EAST MARKET STUDIOS.



UNTITLED BY PENNY SAUNDERS. CHOREOGRAPHED FOR THE 2017 NATIONAL CHOREOGRAPHERS INITIATIVE, PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAVE FRIEDMAN.



WOMEN OF THE ROYAL NEW ZEALAND BALLET

In the 65th year of the Royal New Zealand Ballet, the company has been under the artistic leadership of a female director twice. The first appointment was American born Una Kai, who held the position from 1973 until 1975, when she returned to Europe. The second ever appointment of a female Artistic Director for the Royal New Zealand Ballet came in 2017, with Patricia Barker assuming the role.

ARTISTIC DIRECTORS OF THE ROYAL NEW ZEALAND BALLET

Poul Gnatt, 1953 – 1962, 1969

Russell Kerr, 1962 – 1968

Bryan Ashbridge, 1971

Una Kai, 1973 – 1975

Philip Chatfield, 1975 – 1978

Harry Haythorne, 1981 – 1992

Ashley Killar, 1992 – 1995

Matz Skoog, 1996 – 2001

Gary Harris, 2001 – 2010

Ethan Stiefel, 2011 – 2014

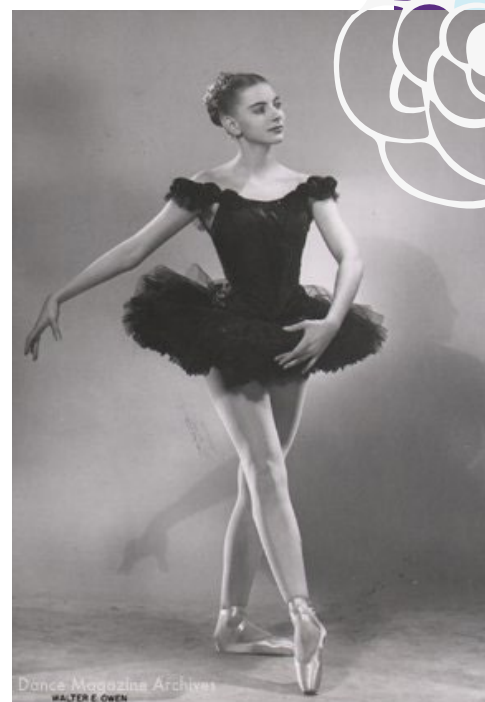
Francesco Ventriglia, 2014 – 2017

Patricia Barker, 2017 – Current

UNA KAI, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR 1973 – 1975

Una Kai was born in 1928 in Glenridge, New Jersey, United States and fell in love with ballet at the age of five when her aunt took her to see the Ballet Russe. While attending the School of American Ballet, Una was concurrently accepted to perform with the Ballet Society, which was later renamed New York City Ballet. Under the direction of George Balanchine, Una danced with the New York City Ballet for twelve years.

Upon retiring as a performer, Una became an assistant ballet mistress and began travelling to companies across Europe and the States to stage Balanchine works. After four years she returned to New York and resumed her position as ballet mistress of the NYCB, and then successfully applied for the Artistic Director position of the New Zealand Ballet (at that time it had not yet gained its Royal title). While in New Zealand Una staged many Balanchine works on the company but when the national Arts Council cut their funding in 1975 she returned to Europe, taking up the ballet mistress position at the Royal Danish Ballet for six years. Back in America, Una worked with the Kansas City Ballet for thirteen years until retiring. In her retirement Una still enjoys dancing various ballroom styles, affirming the truism “once a dancer, always a dancer”.



PATRICIA BARKER, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR 2017 – CURRENT

Patricia Barker was born in Richland, Washington, USA, where she received her early ballet training. She later studied on scholarship at Boston Ballet School and Pacific Northwest Ballet School. At age 17, she joined Pacific Northwest Ballet and quickly rose to the rank of Principal Dancer.

During her 27 year career, she performed extensively throughout Europe, Asia, Australia and North America in many of the great full-length classical ballets and contemporary works by renowned choreographers. She appeared as a guest artist with national and international ballet companies and performed in many galas throughout the world. She graced the covers of Dance Magazine, Danser, Pointe Magazine, Dance Australia, Dance Teacher, Dance Pages, Ballet Review and Dance International.

Barker, along with Jiří Kylián, was co-artistic advisor to the Slovak National Ballet from 2006 to 2010. She has staged works for the Balanchine Trust for companies including Pacific Northwest Ballet, Slovak National Ballet and Hungarian National Ballet.

Barker became Artistic Director of Grand Rapids Ballet and Director of the Grand Rapids Ballet School in 2010, commissioning several full-length classical and contemporary world premieres. In 2011, Barker conceived the contemporary dance series MOVEMEDIA for which over 30 works have since been commissioned from some of the leading contemporary choreographers. MOVEMEDIA's dual purpose was also to prominently feature works by female choreographers such as Annabelle Lopez Ochoa, Andrea Schermoly, Susan Jaffe, Gina Patterson, and Princess Grace Award winners Robyn Mineko Williams and Penny Saunders, Grand Rapids Ballet's resident choreographer since 2014.

Barker was appointed as the Royal New Zealand Ballet's Artistic Director in June 2017.



NEW PATHWAYS

As the women of New Zealand forged new pathways for themselves in 1893, so too does the Royal New Zealand Ballet look to support the work, development and creativity of female artists. RNZB Artistic Director Patricia Barker is passionate about fostering new choreographic talent, and in the *Strength & Grace* season has curated a programme of four leading international female choreographers.

The RNZB is excited to welcome these new artists to the company, and to include their artistic voices to our repertoire. This is the first time any of these choreographers have worked on the company, and for one contemporary choreographer this is her first foray creating work on a classical company. To find creative stimuli for these works, the four choreographers both looked into the past and the future, finding inspiration in New Zealand history and in the untold possibilities the future may hold.

SARAH FOSTER-SPROULL
NEW ZEALAND



DANIELLE ROWE
AUSTRALIA



PENNY SAUNDERS
UNITED STATES OF
AMERICA



ANDREA SCHERMOLY
SOUTH AFRICA





CHOREOGRAPHER **SARAH FOSTER-SPROULL**



Sarah Foster-Sproull is an acclaimed choreographer working in New Zealand and internationally. She is the Artistic Director of Foster Group Dance and Creative New Zealand's Choreographic Fellow for 2017-2019. Sarah has choreographic relationships with Footnote New Zealand Dance, the Royal New Zealand Ballet, Co3 (Perth), Tamsyn Russell and DanceBase (Edinburgh), Guangdong Modern Dance Company (China), T.H.E. (Singapore), and VOU (Fiji). To date, her choreographic work has been performed in New Zealand, Australia, Singapore, China, Britain, Ireland, Scotland, Canada, and Fiji.

Sarah holds a Masters in Dance Studies (First Class Hons) from the University of Auckland with a focus on dancer-centred choreographic leadership. Her choreographic research traverses large scale works for up to 35 performers, to intimate performances involving one or two dancers. In 2015 she was one of five choreographers selected internationally by Crystal Pite (Kidd Pivot, Nederlands Dans Theater, The Royal Ballet) to participate in the Craft of Embodiment workshop in Banff, Canada.

This year Sarah will premiere new work with the Royal New Zealand Ballet, Footnote NZ Dance, Guangdong Modern Dance Company (China), and VOU (Fiji) and her own company Foster Group in Edinburgh. In 2019 she will tour her acclaimed choreography *Orchids* internationally, and make new dance work in New Zealand, Australia, and Singapore.

In her previous career as a performer, Sarah was a founding dancer and choreographer of The New Zealand Dance Company, and additionally danced for Kiwi legends Douglas Wright, Malia Johnston, Michael Parmenter,

SARAH FOSTER-SPROULL, IMAGE FROM THE NEW ZEALAND DANCE COMPANY. PHOTO BY JOHN MCDERMOTT.



and Raewyn Hill. Through her extensive performance career she has traveled to Australia, The Netherlands, Ireland, The United Kingdom, The Middle East, Canada, Germany, Fiji, Japan, Indonesia, and America.

ORCHIDS BY SARAH FOSTER-SPROULL. CHOREOGRAPHED FOR FOSTER GROUP, PHOTOGRAPHY BY JOCELEN JANON.



COMPOSER EDEN MULHOLLAND

Eden Mulholland, Ngāti Uepohatu, is one of New Zealand and Australia's most gifted and sought after composer/collaborators for dance, theatre, film and television.

Eden has scored commissions for Sarah Foster-Sproull, Malia Johnston (Eden is a founding member of MOTH) Raewyn Hill (Co3 in Perth, where Eden is an Associate Artist) Michael Parmenter, Touch Compass, Footnote, Ross McCormack, the New Zealand Dance Company, Okareka and Atamira to name a few.

Eden's approach to devised theatre work is often unconventional, intuitive, and almost always driven by intensive collaboration with other artists. As a former contemporary dancer, Eden is no stranger to communicating abstract concepts through music and sound design. An accomplished multi-instrumentalist and vocalist, he will often perform his music live onstage.

Eden's music is licensed to many other commercial projects worldwide. He releases music to the wider public under his own name and can be found at edenmulholland.com



ORCHIDS BY SARAH FOSTER-SPROULL, IMAGE FEATURING THE CHOREOGRAPHER'S DAUGHTER IVY FOSTER. CHOREOGRAPHED FOR FOSTER GROUP, PHOTOGRAPHY BY JOCELEN JANON.



DESPITE THE LOSS OF SMALL DETAIL

CHOREOGRAPHY:
SARAH FOSTER-SPROULL

MUSIC:
EDEN MULHOLLAND

NO. OF DANCERS:
8

COSTUME:
DONNA JEFFERIS & ESTHER LOFLEY

LIGHTING DESIGN:
ANDREW LEES

“Grit and determination is where this dance work began” states Sarah Foster-Sproull, New Zealand choreographer and maker of *Despite the Loss of Small Detail*. This work was inspired by the undeniable strength of character and fortitude of the women, and their allies, who drove the women’s suffrage movement in Aotearoa.

Taking the season title *Strength & Grace*, as her artistic point of departure, Foster-Sproull focussed her creative process on the development of a movement language that both reflects these themes, and incorporates her contemporary dance background with the technical skill and aesthetic of the classical ballet form.

Reflecting what Foster-Sproull considers the suffrage movements “push against the accepted norms of an era towards change”, this new choreography similarly challenges and pushes against the known, accepted, or recognisable form of the classical ballet genre.



RNZB DANCERS IN REHEARSAL FOR *DESPITE THE LOSS OF SMALL DETAIL* BY SARAH FOSTER-SPROULL. PHOTO BY STEPHEN A.COURT.



QUESTIONS WITH THE CHOREOGRAPHER

What idea inspired you to create your work *Despite the Loss of Small Detail* on the RNZB?

What resonates with me about the New Zealand women’s suffrage movement was the undeniable strength of character required to foreground women’s rights. I am moved by the grit and determination necessary to push against the accepted norms of an era towards change and greater representation for women in political and legal realms. I responded to this provocation by investing time in the dancers developing a strong, clear, driving movement language.



RNZB DANCERS IN REHEARSAL FOR *DESPITE THE LOSS OF SMALL DETAIL* BY SARAH FOSTER-SPROULL. PHOTO BY STEPHEN A'COURT.

Can you tell us about your choreographic process in the studio?

In the choreographic process we explored community, hierarchy, coercion, and dominance as thematic drivers. We worked to deify Abigail Boyle with a halo of hands, which she ultimately dismisses, and frustrate Loughlan Prior by badgering him with a swift system of hand gestures.

I am a contemporary choreographer, and this is my first opportunity to create a dance work on a ballet company. As such, it is quite possible that my choreographic method is divergent from ballet norms. I would like to thank the dancers for their patience, commitment, expertise, glorious dancing, and movement contribution to the work.

How would you describe your choreographic aesthetic?

We experimented with exploring the form of ballet from a contemporary dance perspective, and vice versa. Some early dance material in the piece originates from the graceful balletic acting evident in traditional story ballets, but pushed to its breaking point in a systematic and unrelenting fashion.

Ultimately, I see the work existing in two halves, the first dealing with 'strength' as an unrelenting force embodied by and embodying the dancers. The second half explores strength through the act of support and touch in a direct and relational manner.

In what ways do you consider that the music you're working with supports your vision for the choreography?

My long-time collaborator Eden Mulholland's music for this work is built upon percussion, I am in awe of his ability to intuitively match the movement being created with an essential complementary or contrasting musical 'vibe'.





Do you have any female role models, or women whose achievements or careers have inspired or impacted you in a significant way?

As a New Zealander, an artist, a mother, and a feminist I am proud of the work of pioneer female suffragists Kate Sheppard and the members of the New Zealand women's suffrage movement. To these women, and their allies, I owe a debt for the freedom that I now experience as a citizen, a voter, and a woman capable of owning and controlling my own property, actions, and life work in Aotearoa.





CHOREOGRAPHER DANIELLE ROWE

Born in Adelaide, Australia, Danielle Rowe trained at the Australian Ballet School before joining the Australian Ballet in 2001, where she danced for ten years as a Principal. In 2011, Danielle left Australia to join Houston Ballet and in 2012 moved again to join the prestigious Nederlands Dans Theater. Danielle has performed in a large variety of works and worked intimately with many acclaimed choreographers, notably Jiří Kylián, Mats Ek, Crystal Pite, Wayne McGregor, Paul Lightfoot, Sol Leon and Alexander Ekman.

In early 2015, Danielle made her choreographic debut with *Margarie & Thomas* for Nederlands Dans Theater's SWITCH program. She then relocated to San Francisco later that year, where she continued her choreographic career. Her works include *untitled* with Garen Scribner for DanceFAR (2015), *For Pixie* for SFDanceworks (2016/17), *O* for Berkeley Ballet Theater (2017), *And Here We Are* for Diablo Ballet (2018), *Itchy Bot Bot: A Family Portrait* for Oakland Ballet (2018) and *Adam's Key* for Grand Rapids Ballet (2018).

Danielle is currently the Associate Artistic Director for SFDanceworks, a new contemporary repertory company based in San Francisco.

ADAMS KEY BY DANIELLE ROWE. CHOREOGRAPHED FOR GRAND RAPIDS BALLET, PHOTOGRAPHY BY JADE BUTLER, COURTESY OF GRAND RAPIDS BALLET.



THE OLD CHILD BY DANIELLE ROWE. CHOREOGRAPHED FOR SFDANCEWORKS, PHOTOGRAPHY BY ALEXANDER RENEFF-OLSON.



COMPOSER

ALTON SAN GIOVANNI

Composer Alton San Giovanni is a songwriter, composer, and multi-instrumentalist currently based in San Francisco, California. Originally from Humboldt County, Alton is a founding member of Niteppl and has performed and released his music for the past six years. He is a touring member of Ryan Karazija's Low Roar where he performs as a keyboardist and percussionist, as well as Ableton Live technician. Along with his pop music, Alton composed music for Dawson Dance SF as well as Dawson | Wallace, and was a featured speaker for CSSSA in 2014 at Cal Arts. In 2016 he completed his BFA in Music Production and Sound Design for Visual Media at Academy of Art University. A frequent collaborator with Danielle Rowe, he has composed music with SF Danceworks, Grand Rapids Ballet, and Oakland Ballet.

REMEMBER, MAMA ADDITIONAL RECORDINGS:

'Mother – A Word That Means The World To Me'

- Composer Cliff Adams
- From the album *Sing Something Simple*
- Performers The Cliff Adams Singers
- Deutsche Grammophon



ALTON SAN GIOVANNI LIVE MUSIC PERFORMANCE AND COMPOSITIONAL COLLABORATION ON *THE OLD CHILD* BY DANIELLE ROWE. CHOREOGRAPHED FOR SFDANCEWORKS, PHOTOGRAPHY BY ALEXANDER RENEFF-OLSON.



Concerto for Four Harpsichords, Strings, and Continuo in A minor, BWV 1065 – Largo

- Composer J S Bach
- From the Album *Bach, J.S.: Piano Concertos BWV 1060, 1061, 1063 and 1065*
- Performers Christoph Eschenbach, Hamburger Philharmoniker, Gerhard Oppitz, Helmut Schmidt, Justus Frantz
- Label Deutsche Grammophon

Twelve Variations on 'Ah! Vous dirais-je, maman'

- Composer W A Mozart
- From the album *Piano*
- Performer Myung Whun Chung
- Label ECM New Series



REMEMBER, MAMA

CHOREOGRAPHY:
DANIELLE ROWE

MUSIC:
ALTON SAN GIOVANNI
WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART
JOHAN SEBASTIAN BACH
CLIFF ADAMS

NO. OF DANCERS:
22

COSTUME:
DONNA JEFFERIS & ESTHER LOFLEY

LIGHTING DESIGN:
ANDREW LEES

Rowe's previous works as a choreographer display an ongoing interest in exploring interior worlds, alongside the structure and dynamics of family. As an artist she shows an interest in placing intimacy and complex relationships under the microscope and onto the stage. Rowe's works are characterised by the compassion with which she creates narratives through dance.



RNZB DANCERS IN REHEARSAL FOR
REMEMBER, MAMA BY DANIELLE ROWE.
PHOTO BY STEPHEN A' COURT.

QUESTIONS WITH THE CHOREOGRAPHER

What idea inspired you to create your new work *Remember, Mama*?

I have been inspired by the strong women in my life, especially my mother and my mother-in-law. They are both single mothers and, in some way, heroes to all their children, male and female. This work is a celebration of the strength, sacrifice and beauty of motherhood. It is a glimpse into the world of one mother and her son; the ebbs and flows of their relationship over time, revealing that behind every great man, is a great woman.





How would you describe your choreographic aesthetic?

Each piece I create has its own style. The story or concept dictates which movement vocabulary, rooted in ballet technique, is drawn from my choreographic language. Common to my works is the sense of a 'gentle story'. While I aim to communicate a clear narrative, I invite the audience to attach their own thoughts and so see their own story in mine.

How do you incorporate the production elements of music, costume and lighting design into your choreographic vision?

When I create a new work, I start by planning the structure and flow of the piece. Every element has to support the storytelling. I think about lighting, staging, costumes and music from the get-go. To me, all these elements are just as important as the choreography and need to be elegantly interwoven in order to genuinely engage the audience. With the help of the RNZB wardrobe team, I have designed costumes that are an unaffected take on 1890s working class fashion. The women's costumes resemble uniforms, presenting a sense of harmony and strength, while the men's costumes are somewhat unassuming, yet sound.

Can you tell us about your choreographic process in the studio?

From the moment I begin working with the dancers I want them to feel valued and excited about the work. I come into the studio with a clear vision of what I want to achieve so that the dancers are well-informed and understand why I'm making particular choices about movements or gestures. It's important to me that they trust me and feel invested in the work. The rehearsal process is part refining – starting with many options and then editing, but also fleshing out details. The fun part is eventually transferring the choreography completely to the dancers. The movement

becomes their own. It is no longer my piece, but theirs.

What do you hope the audience will take away from watching your work **Remember, Mama?**

Until I became a mother myself, I didn't quite understand that motherhood is also a sisterhood. It forms a bond and creates common ground among women. The piece ends with the sense of mothers and grandmothers watching over us, through the many changes in our lives and our relationships with them. I hope that the audience will be entertained but will also leave the theatre thinking about the women who have made a difference in their lives with gratitude and love.



RNZB DANCERS IN REHEARSAL FOR REMEMBER, MAMA BY DANIELLE ROWE. PHOTO BY STEPHEN A'COURT.



CHOREOGRAPHER PENNY SAUNDERS



Penny Saunders, originally from West Palm Beach, Florida, graduated from the Harid Conservatory in 1995, and began her professional career with The American Repertory Ballet under the direction of Septime Webre. She went on to dance with Ballet Arizona, MOMIX Dance Theater and Cedar Lake Ensemble and in 2004 she joined Hubbard Street Dance Chicago. In 2011, Penny won the International Commissioning Project which launched her choreographic career, creating pieces for Hubbard Street's main and second company, Whim W'Him, SFDanceworks, Neos Dance Theater, Owen Cox Dance Group, and The Nexus Project. Penny is honored to be the choreographer in residence at Grand Rapids Ballet, receiving support from The New York City Ballet Choreographic Commissions Initiative, and to be the recipient of the 2016 Princess Grace Choreographic Fellowship. In the 2017-2018 season Penny is excited to be collaborating with Cincinnati Ballet, BalletX, Missouri Contemporary Ballet, the Royal New Zealand Ballet, SFDanceworks, Tulsa Ballet 2, as well as making her first full length work for Grand Rapids Ballet.

OUT OF KEEPING BY PENNY SAUNDERS. CHOREOGRAPHED FOR HUBBARD STREET DANCE CHICAGO, PHOTOGRAPHY BY TODD ROSENBERG.



PENNY SAUNDERS IN REHEARSAL WITH COMPANY MEMBERS FROM WHIM W'HIM. PHOTOGRAPHY BY BAMBERG FINE ART PHOTOGRAPHY.



MUSIC PIECES FOR SO TO SPEAK

Sonata No 1 pour violon, viole obligée et basse-continue in D Minor – Grave

- Composer Elisabeth Jacquet de la Guerre
- From the album *Sonates pour violon, viole obligée et basse-continue*
- Performers Ensemble La Rêveuse, Bertrand Cuiller (harpsichord / organ), Florence Bolton (viola), Stéphan Dudermeil (violin)
- Label © & © Mirare – MIR 105

Aether, Ascent, Opaque

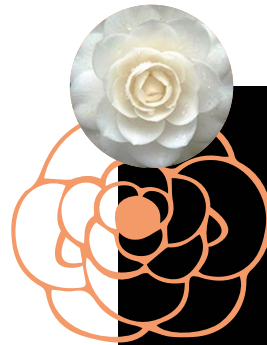
- Composer / Performer Hildur Guðnadóttir
- From the album *Without Sinking*
- Label Touch UK

Quintette No 1

- Composer Dustin O'Halloran
- From the album *Lumiere*
- Performers ACME Ensemble of New York, Dustin O'Halloran (keyboards), Ben Russell, Yuki Numata (violins), Nadia Sirota (viola)
- Label Splinter Records
- © FatCat Records

Forgiveness (interpreted by Sarah Nemtanu)

- Composer Armand Amar
- From the soundtrack album *Human*
- © & © 2015 Long Distance Productions under exclusive licence to Parlophone Records Ltd, a Warner Music Group Company



**UNTITLED BY PENNY SAUNDERS.
CHOREOGRAPHED FOR THE 2017
NATIONAL CHOREOGRAPHERS INITIATIVE,
PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAVE FRIEDMAN.**



SO TO SPEAK

CHOREOGRAPHY:
PENNY SAUNDERS

MUSIC:
HILDUR GUÐNADÓTTIR
DUSTIN O'HALLORAN
ARMAND AMAR
ELISABETH JACQUET DE LA GUERRE

NO. OF DANCERS:
15

COSTUME:
DONNA JEFFERIS & ESTHER LOFLEY

LIGHTING DESIGN:
ANDREW LEES

Penny Saunders first work on the Royal New Zealand Ballet, *So to Speak*, is another characteristic example of her “wonderfully complex” and “moving” choreography (Merli V. Guerra, from *The Arts Fuse*). Saunders creates theatrical dance works, often playing within the tension of light and dark, and the drama inherent of multiple bodies, and their relationships, on stage.

In *So to Speak*, Saunders imagined the conversations and power struggles that must have happened in homes around the world as women campaigned for the vote. They're conversations that are continuing today: there are still countries where women are viewed as unequal and can't vote. The fact that so much was achieved in New Zealand 125 years ago is worth celebrating.

As women campaigned to be heard publicly, they also struggled privately. Focusing on the smaller, yet necessary battles that were fought within the home, *So to Speak* celebrates the conversations that wives and daughters dared to have.



RNZB DANCERS IN REHEARSAL FOR
SO TO SPEAK BY PENNY SAUNDERS.
PHOTO BY STEPHEN A' COURT.

QUESTIONS WITH THE CHOREOGRAPHER

What idea inspired you to create your work *So to Speak* on the RNZB?

At the moment, I find myself inspired by young people in the US. They are the ones having the brave conversations about issues like gun control, and they are quick to change. Progress for older generations seems glacial in comparison: an evolution rather than a decision to be different. I think we can all learn from our sons and daughters and from the knowledge and insight that our children bring.





This is the first work you've made on the RNZB. How did you prepare for working on a new company, with dancers you're unfamiliar with?

Before arriving in New Zealand, I tried to get to know the RNZB, watching videos of the dancers, seeing the types of music that they'd worked with in the past, and researching the New Zealand suffrage movement. Having those details to draw on helped to guide the larger choices I've had to make in creating this work, and to set the parameters of what we would explore in the studio. I also spent many weeks building up a playlist of potential music, which has then been refined through the rehearsal period as the work has taken shape.

Can you tell us about your choreographic process in the studio?

My choreography is inspired by the people in front of me. I want the dancers to look like their best selves. This is definitely a ballet, but I'm following my intuition as it takes shape – I love a good story, but sometimes being abstract can be really effective. It depends on the story and how best to tell it.

Can you describe the movement language that excites you as a choreographer?

At the moment, I'm delving into gestural work. Simple gestures – arms, heads, the act of touching, can be dynamic and captivating, and sometimes a small and intimate physicality can engage the viewer. Dance is really just amplifying those everyday gestures, and repeating material – like a leitmotif in music



RNZB DANCERS IN REHEARSAL FOR SO TO SPEAK BY PENNY SAUNDERS. PHOTO BY STEPHEN A'COURT.



– is a useful tool in bringing the audience along, as those gestures combine into phrases and themes. Gestures reveal character, and when they are altered, they underline the character's dramatic trajectory through the work.

What do you hope the audience will take away from watching your work So to Speak?

There is a family at the heart of this piece. The father is not a bad man, but he is of his time and is uncomprehending of why his wife and daughter might want to change the status quo. His resistance is rooted in his reluctance to give up a position of privilege – after all, power is never just handed down. The mother and daughter figures have different conversations with him – there's a generation gap between them as well, with the daughter trying to help her mother to rise.



How do you incorporate the production elements of music, costume and lighting design into your choreographic vision?

The conversations my piece is trying to depict are universal, and so although the set and costumes have a flavour of the past – long skirts, table and chairs, a hanging lamp – it is not restricted to a specific date and time. Rather than collaborating with a designer I've initiated ideas with the wardrobe and production team, and they've been great.

Interestingly, you've chosen to select four pieces of music from different composers and combine them for your soundscape. How does integrating these diverse musical pieces help you as the choreographer to relate your story to the audience?

I was leaning towards classical works for the music, but I needed to keep things timeless so have gone more contemporary in places. I try to keep a common thread through the pieces I've chosen by keeping instrumentation similar. I do a lot of my own mixing and find that this gives me the freedom and flexibility to build up a sound design that will make connections between sections seamless and really reinforce the story.

*RNZB costume designer Esther Lofley says that her design for *So to Speak* is based on the idea that "If Kate Sheppard wore a leotard, this is what she'd wear!". Interestingly, Kate Sheppard also displayed concern for the human impact on environment, and the fabric used to make these leotards are fabrics produced from recycled materials.*

Do you have any female role models, or women whose achievements or careers have inspired or impacted you in a significant way?

I find every woman inspiring: the sacrifice of motherhood, the nurturing that we all do – it's such a necessary part of the human experience. I'm inspired by women who step out of their comfort zone to make history happen. Sometimes we take it for granted. For this project, I have loved delving into the subject matter and learning. There's been a sense of awakening and deepening understanding, and creating and working with new people is a constant shove into new territory. I've picked up new tools as an artist, a woman, a mother and a human.





CHOREOGRAPHER ANDREA SCHERMOLY



Andrea Giselle Schermoly was born in South Africa. She trained at the National School of the Arts under Vyvyan Llorayne, Johannesburg and on full scholarship at Rambert Ballet and Contemporary School and shortly thereafter on full scholarship at the Royal Ballet School, London. She competed internationally as a member of the South African National Rhythmic Gymnastics Team. She danced professionally for Boston Ballet Company and the Netherlands Dance Theater having performed works and original creations by acclaimed choreographers as Jiří Kylián, Paul Lightfoot and Sol Leon, Mats Ek, Johan Inger and Ohad Naharin.

She has choreographed for Ballet Met, Cape Dance Company, Kansas City Ballet Company, State Street Ballet, Grand Rapids Ballet Company, Louisville Ballet Company, Santa Barbara Dance Theater, Festival Ballet Theater, Ballet Theatre Afrikan, Quixotic Cirque Nouveau, Boston Ballet 2, Joffrey Ballet Concert Group, The Juilliard School solos evening and directed and choreographed a dance narrative film for The Ashley Boudier Project presented at The Joyce Theater, NYC, which went on to be presented by San Francisco Dance Film Festival. She was awarded the 'Outstanding Choreographer' award in 2012, 2013 and 2017 at the Youth America Grand Prix. In 2014 she choreographed at Lincoln Center for YAGP's 15th anniversary gala evening on dancers Maria Kochetkova (principal San Francisco Ballet) and Joaquin de Luz (principal New York City Ballet). The piece has since been re-staged at the 'Buenos Aires International Dance Gala' in Argentina and 'Stars of the 21st Century Gala' in the Champs Élysées, Paris. Andi has

choreographed for feature films, commercials and music videos including 'Beautiful Now', 'Bunheads', Justin Bieber/Pooh Bear and Deorro music video and choreographically assisted on projects as 'Budweiser Superbowl Commercial' and 'Star Trek into Darkness'. She's created work for principal dancers attending international galas. She has upcoming creations with Louisville Ballet and Santa Barbara Dance Theater.



**CHOREOGRAPHER ANDREA SCHERMOLY
IN REHEARSAL AT LOUISEVILLE BALLET.
PHOTOGRAPHY BY SAM ENGLISH.**



**CHOREOGRAPHER ANDREA SCHERMOLY
IN REHEARSAL AT CAPE DANCE COMPANY.
PHOTOGRAPHY BY HELENA FAGAN.**



MUSIC PIECES FOR STAND TO REASON

Violin Sonata No 3 in D minor – Grave

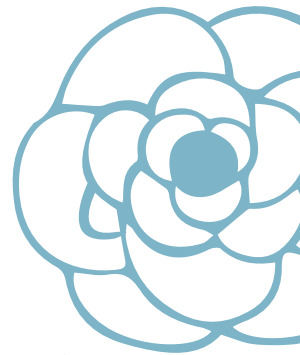
- Composer Johann Paul von Westhoff
- From the album *Sonatas pour Violin et Basse Continue*
- Performers David Plantier (violin), Andrea Marchiol (harpsichord)
- Label © Zig Zag Territoires, distributed in New Zealand by Ode Records

Sonata No. 14 in C sharp minor ‘Quasi una fantasia’ Op. 27 No. 2 ‘Moonlight’

- Composer Ludwig van Beethoven
- From the album *The 55 Best Relaxing Piano Songs*
- Performer London Piano Consort
- Label © Foodcourt Records – X5 Music Group

Le Badinage 4eme livre de pieces de viole

- Composer Marin Marais
- From the album *Tous les matins du monde*
- Performers Jordi Savall, Rolf Lislevand, Marin Marais,
- Label: ALIA VOX
- By kind permission of Alia Vox



**CHOREOGRAPHER ANDREA SCHERMOLY
IN REHEARSAL AT BALLEMET.
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JENNIFER ZMUDA.**



**KLEIN PERSPECTIVES BY ANDREA
SCHERMOLY. CHOREOGRAPHED ON
KANSAS CITY BALLET, PHOTOGRAPHY BY
BRETT PRUITT & EAST MARKET STUDIOS.**





STAND TO REASON

CHOREOGRAPHY:
ANDREA SCHERMOLY

MUSIC:
**JOHANN PAUL VON WESTHOFF
MARIN MARAIS
LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN**

NO. OF DANCERS:
8

COSTUME:
DONNA JEFFERIS & ESTHER LOFLEY

LIGHTING DESIGN:
ANDREW LEES

Choreographer Andrea Schermoly drew inspiration for *Stand to Reason* from Kate Sheppard's infamous suffrage pamphlet, 10 Reasons Why the Women of New Zealand Should Vote (1888).

Schermoly's previous choreographic works demonstrate her curiosity and passion for other art forms and the cyclical relationship they have for her as a creator. Drawn from an eclectic range of media, these inspire her and provide the creative stimulus for her own choreographic work. Earlier choreographies have been inspired by the song writing of seminal rock music Bob Dylan (*Fare Thee Well* performed by Ballet Met), while *Klein Perspectives* (created on Kansas City Ballet) is an exploration of the French Conceptual artist Yves Klein; transforming the perception of the two dimensional form of visual art through the expression of dance.

RNZB DANCERS IN REHEARSAL FOR *STAND TO REASON* BY ANDREA SCHERMOLY. PHOTO BY STEPHEN A'COURT.



QUESTIONS WITH THE CHOREOGRAPHER

What idea inspired you to create your work *Stand to Reason* on the RNZB?

Patricia invited four female choreographers, including me, to celebrate the 125th anniversary of New Zealand granting women the right to vote. She explained it as a time to celebrate women, dance and New Zealand and have free rein as to how we could interpret that and/or showcase it.

Whilst researching New Zealand's suffrage movement, I was most intrigued with a pamphlet that circulated via the activists of the Women's Christian Temperance Union that stated ten clear reasons as to why women should vote. They are thought provoking as some of these reasons, albeit forthright, seem horribly archaic and arbitrary. The fact that a women should have to draw such stark, written articulations and obvious comparisons of reasonings to convince men of their worth is saddening actually. Our humanity is just not assumed and that is still an issue today elsewhere.



Can you tell us about your choreographic process in the studio?

I enjoy working with the bodies in front of me, with the souls in front of me and try my best to collaborate in a way that is fulfilling for the dancers too. I don't pre-set steps too much as I'm inspired by each new individual's character and contribution to the work. I don't know if my process is unique, to be honest. I know I try to remain positive and encouraging and give the artists room to bring themselves to the plate, I hope.

How would you describe your choreographic aesthetic?

I'm drawn to awkward, perhaps quirky movement that strikes an emotional chord and is a deeper portal to internal struggle. My aesthetic is clean, I would say, still rooted in some form of classical contemporary but has a strange organized chaos about it. I pack movement in quite tightly and enjoy the physical and emotional challenge that comes with the doing of it. Movement motifs are difficult for me to describe but I'd say I place an emphasis on arm movement. It feels descriptive and evocative to me, personally. I have tried to keep a mass of people moving together more as well, which is a new challenge for me.

In what ways do you consider that the music you're working with supports your vision for the choreography?

The music is repetitive but nuanced and lends itself to a feeling of ongoing persistence: the persistence of women trying to get their point across. I archive music constantly and find myself drawn to things, sometimes years later, if it is where my imagination and themes are dwelling.

Do you have any female role models, or women whose achievements or careers have inspired or impacted you in an significant way?

Who are the women that inspire me? I'm a great admirer of my fellow South African, Charlize Theron and take inspiration from her as a strong willed, self-realised, unique, social activist artist.

What do you hope the audience will take away from watching your work *Stand to Reason*?

At the time of writing, I have not yet finished my process, I can't talk about the take-away feelings until after our premiere, but so far now, I can say I'm inspired by the strength and beauty of the artists of the RNZB and the complete humility to try something new and bite in. I don't think I can say what the audience will think or feel. I hope to convey an idea of ongoing need for change and the fact that women have to remain relentless and persistent in their causes for equality and human rights.



STRENGTH & grace

WORDFIND



E R E C N A D O D R H L W Z K Q D O W O S Q
 E K J G S W O C T B D M A F A O R A E T O A
 S P E M U G E L I G C Q X R T U E V A M F Q
 Q S T V F G T W L K P H H J E Q O B B T C M
 T O N A F A O Z U W A C V O S P B J N S X H
 S F K I R M V Y N O T H K Y H Y T W E R R D
 F T L A A A O R Z R R O J N E W H L M I S N
 A X E K G M T G I L I R F S P R Q C O F V Y
 G X D A E R T Z P D C E C M P E S E W D V Z
 E D F N V E H T O P I O X Y A E I Q I L A L
 N B L U H B G S C R A G H F R N G F V R U B
 D H D D Y M I F H E B R J D D O N Y B O V W
 E Y P N B E R F A M A A L H F I A C L W B A
 R S A T K M C K C I R P Z I D P T M B Z E H
 E R X X G E O A U E K H E T A T U Q P R S I
 Q Q F W M R M C V R E E G B R M R Y O W C N
 U T F Q Q P T W C E R R B I K J E C V X P E
 A R R U A B P S C I T I L O P V S N W C T Z
 L J D I V C A M E L L I A Q F Y T G T Y S P
 I V G G P F K S M A L L D E T A I L E C F V
 T N D W P E T A C O V D A I N O I T I T E P
 Y V W N B O Q A F J M M J K A E P S O T O S

ADVOCATE
 AOTEAROA
 CAMELLIA
 CAMPAIGN
 CHOREOGRAPHER
 DANCER
 GENDER EQUALITY

KATE SHEPPARD
 PARLIAMENT
 PATRICIA BARKER
 PETITION
 PIONEER
 POLITICS
 REMEMBER MAMA
 RIGHT TO VOTE SIGNATURES

SMALL DETAIL
 SO TO SPEAK
 SUFFRAGE
 UNAKAI
 WAHINE
 WOMEN
 WORLD FIRST
 WORLD PREMIERE

DANCE EXERCISES



All of the *Strength & Grace* choreographers expressed an interest in the use of gesture within their choreographic language. We all use gestures in our everyday life, so let's look at some ways that we can transform pedestrian movement into dance choreography.

MIME IN CLASSICAL BALLET

For centuries mime has been used as a choreographic and storytelling tool in classical ballet. As an art form that doesn't use words, choreographers sometimes use mime to help make the narrative clear for the audience to understand. Ballet dancers use basic gestures and universal body language to convey emotions and ideas that will be recognisable for spectators to understand, even if it's their first experience of ballet.

Let's learn some traditional ballet gestures! These can be done seated if needs be, but are almost always performed standing up. Once you've learnt them and can remember them, try putting them together with a partner to tell us a story.

Love

This is a nice and easy one to start with! Cross both of your hands over your heart, one hand on top of the other.

Anger

Create two fists with your hands and wave your arms wildly in the air in front of you.

Sadness

Make blades with your hands so that your fingers are touching, not spread out. Place the edges of your pinky fingers to either side of your face, palms facing inwards. Run your hands down your face to symbolise tears streaming from your eyes.

Beautiful

To describe beauty, use one hand to trace around the oval of your face in a circular motion and then clasp both of your hands together at the end of the motion.

Thinking

To show that you're thinking deeply, place your hand or fingertips to your temple or forehead.

Listening

Can you hear that? Cup your hand and place it beside your ear and then tilt your head in towards your hand to emphasise that you're listening very carefully.

Begging

Clasp your hands together with your fingers interlocked, and then shake your hands towards and away from you. If you are trying to show desperation, then this gesture can be in a kneeling position.

Death

Clench your hands into fists and, with your arms in front of you, cross your arms at the wrists.

Knock Knock

This one is borrowed straight out of real life. Make a fist with one hand and pretend to bang it on an invisible door in front of you.

Make a Promise

Squeeze the index and middle finger of one hand together, curling the other fingers into a fist. Raise this hand into air and place your other hand over your heart.

Kiss

Ballets often have romantic storylines, and as a dancer you can show a kiss by delicately placing one or two fingers to your lips.

Let's Dance

Place your arms high over your head in a rounded, oval shape (or fifth position if you're a ballerina), and then circle your hands around each other.

GESTURE GAMES

Creating choreography can be fun and creative, and instead of starting from an idea we can also make dance movement inspired by game playing. Here is a game to that we can play in a group or pairs, and it will end up helping us to create gestural choreography.

Universal Gestures

Have a talk with your students about gesture and how all people use gesture and body language to be understood without using words or talking. Explain how some gestures are universal, and we can use these to be understood by speakers of any language or culture.

Ask each of your students to stand up and perform a universal gesture. Start with simple commands (hello, stop, come here, go away, hunger, etc) before giving them more complex scenarios to try (for example, a have a pair show a super hero and someone in need of help, or ask a duo to mime being a puppet with a second student being their puppet-master controlling the strings). If you have senior students then they should devise their own scenarios.

What's in the Box?

This is a great game to play with students to get them in the zone and confident with trying out gestural shapes. We can all use our hands to mime or describe objects. Have your students stand in a circle and start the game off by passing an imaginary box to your left. One at a time, have your students perform opening the box and pulling out an object that they need to describe with their hands or arms. The objects could be anything they can think of, good examples to start off with are a book, a cup of tea, binoculars, shoes, a ball, an ice-cream, or a violin. The student needs to show the purpose of the object, how heavy or light it is, how large or small it is, and how they hold or use it. When someone calls out the correct object, the student can put the object back into the box and pass the box on to the person to his or her left.

Action in Motion

Discuss with your student common, everyday activities activity that they are all familiar with. Activities could include catching the bus, studying in a classroom, going for a picnic, having a shower, or going to the beach.

Ask each student to come up with 4 – 5 gestures or actions that they would do during their chosen activity, and arrange these gestures in an order to create once continuous phrase of movement.

Now that each student has a their own basic movement phrase, it's time to develop them further by applying choreographic devices. For each of the four gestures, have the dancers apply one of the following devices:

Augmentation

A choreographic device where movements are made larger in space or time.

Instrumentation

A choreographic device where a movement performed by a body part(s) is transferred to another body part(s).

Repetition

A choreographic device in which movements or motifs are repeated.

Inversion

A choreographic device where a movement is turned upside down.

Locomotion

A choreographic device in which a movement that was performed on the spot is transformed to so that it travels through space.

To continue developing these phrases, place the dancers into pairs of trios and have them teach each other their phrases. Encourage them to structure their phrases together using the elements of solo, partnering, unison, canon and repetition to transform their solos into a group piece.



THE NAME GAME

Gestural movement can provide a comfortable starting point for students new to exploring movement and dance. This game starts with the students exploring gestural movement and is then transformed into dance vocabulary through layering on further instructions. The directions are designed to transform basic arm gestures into a dance phrase that encompasses the entire body.

Have each student write their name in the air. After everyone has done this, ask them to try it with their non-dominant hand. Now let's make this more complex with a selection of the following instructions:

- Ask the students to change the level of their writing by using high, medium and low levels.
- Ask your dancers to isolate different body parts to perform their shapes.
- Remind the dancers to think about the size and scale of their movement, and to use a combination of large and small movements for range of motion.
- Encourage your dancers to think about alternating between different fonts or styles of writing. Discover how your movement changes by using both flowing cursive writing, and big block letters.
- Question your dancers if they are still all standing up using their arms to create their writing. What does their phrase look like if they try it sitting or kneeling down, as a floor phrase, or a travel phrase that travels across the room?
- For advanced students, or students ready for a challenge, you can write down a list of 26 body parts with a corresponding letter (e.g. A = left hip, B = right knee etc). Have your students try writing out an entire sentence using the letter and body part coordinates. The choreographic tools of levels, dynamics, and scale should still be applied to the resulting movement phrase.

