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Milwaukee Ballet Announces 50th Anniversary Season

- 2019-20 season features Michael Pink's celebrated *Peter Pan* and grand opening of new facility -

MILWAUKEE – March 4, 2019 – Milwaukee Ballet has announced their 2019-20 season, featuring *Coppélia*, *The Nutcracker*, *Ballet Russe Reimagined*, *PUSH*, and the return of Michael Pink's *Peter Pan*. This season marks the Company's 50th anniversary and the move into its new facility, the Baumgartner Center for Dance.

“Our golden anniversary season celebrates the company's milestones and continues its proud tradition of excellence and innovation,” said Milwaukee Ballet Artistic Director Michael Pink. “I've curated a series to excite our most passionate fans and engage those who may be new to our artform. Even our most classical works are presented with the modern audience in mind, keeping it accessible and compelling.”

The 2019-20 season opens with the classical favorite *Coppélia* (Oct. 17-20). This celebrated ballet was the Company's first, full-length production, premiering in the Marcus Center's Uihlein Hall in 1970. Originally starring Cynthia Gregory and Ted Kivitt from the American Ballet Theatre in the lead roles, *Coppélia* set the course for success for Milwaukee Ballet. Kivitt eventually became Milwaukee Ballet Artistic Director in 1981. Milwaukee Ballet brings this imaginative tale back to life to ensure ballet fans of all ages can celebrate the 50th anniversary together. Milwaukee Ballet Orchestra performs Léo Delibes' score.

In December, Milwaukee Ballet presents the holiday classic, *The Nutcracker*, which has been brightening Wisconsin's holiday season for more than 40 years. Milwaukee Ballet Orchestra plays Tchaikovsky's iconic score with Milwaukee Children's Choir. Milwaukee Ballet will once again present a sensory-friendly performance for those on the autism spectrum and with sensory processing disorders.

Milwaukee Ballet pays homage to one of the most creative periods of ballet history with *Ballet Russe Reimagined* at The Pabst Theater (Feb 13-16, 2020). In the 1900s, Diaghilev's *Ballets Russes* brought innovative choreographers, designers and artists of the time together to create new works that changed the future of ballet. Milwaukee Ballet's own Timothy O'Donnell, Nicole Teague-Howell and Petr Zahradníček use this as a blueprint for their reinventions of *The Rite of Spring*, *The Firebird* and *Petrushka*.

Milwaukee Ballet pushes the boundaries of dance in a contemporary series aptly named *PUSH*. (March 26-29, 2020). This mixed repertory program features a new work featuring the sounds of local band The Vitrolum Republic. Internationally-celebrated choreographer Alejandro Cerrudo presents his evocative *Extremely Close*, last seen in Milwaukee in 2012. Spanish choreographer Aleix Mañé made a splash in the dance world by winning Milwaukee Ballet's 2019 *Genesis* competition with his world premiere of *ExiliO*. He returns with another new work to round out this triple bill.

The season concludes with one of Milwaukee Ballet's most acclaimed works, Michael Pink's *Peter Pan* (May 7-17, 2020). This family-friendly production opened to sold-out houses when it made its world premiere in 2010. PBS broadcast the production nationally in 2014. In 2020, Pink takes the Company back to Neverland for two weekends of high-flying fun. Milwaukee Children's Choir will join Milwaukee Ballet Orchestra to perform Philip Feeney's score.

Milwaukee Ballet Orchestra's conducting duties will be shared between Milwaukee Ballet Music Director Andrews Sill and Milwaukee Ballet Associate Conductor Pasquale Laurino.

As a special add-on performance, the organization's second company, Milwaukee Ballet II, presents *Momentum* March 7, 2020. These international artists on the brink of becoming professionals shine in this mixed repertory program combining classical repertoire with new work created by the Program's graduates. *Momentum* will be performed in the studio theater of the new Baumgartner Center for Dance.

Tickets

Tickets to the 2019-20 season are now available in subscription packages through the Milwaukee Ballet's box office at 414-902-2103 and online at milwaukeeballet.org. Tickets to individual performances go on sale July 2019.

Sponsors

The 2019-20 season is sponsored by Donna and Donald Baumgartner with Golden Anniversary Sponsors BMO Harris Bank and We Energies Foundation. Milwaukee Ballet also acknowledges the support of United Performing Arts Fund.

The Baumgartner Center for Dance

Milwaukee Ballet will move into its new headquarters in August 2019, a special milestone of the golden anniversary celebration and the Company's enduring legacy. The Baumgartner Center for Dance, a two-story, 52,000-square-foot facility, is located at 128 N. Jackson Street in Milwaukee's Third Ward.

The new facility will house the Milwaukee Ballet Company, School & Academy, administrative offices, rehearsal spaces and a studio theater. There will be a total of seven studios, three more than the Company's current headquarters.

The increased space will facilitate the creation of new classes and centralize the community engagement programs to a more accessible, more visible location, which supports Milwaukee

Ballet's mission to transform lives and connect communities through inspiring performances, community engagement, education and training.

The construction of the Baumgartner Center for Dance is supported by Milwaukee Ballet's capital campaign, co-chaired by Justin Mortara, Donna and Donald Baumgartner and Sue and Allan 'Bud' Selig. The Baumgartners, whose name will be featured on the new facility, announced their lead gift of \$10 million in September 2018. Since then, The Herzfeld Foundation and The Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation have also publicly announced their donations.

The capital campaign also supports The Artistic Fund to create new works and extend programming excellence, the Give Back to Milwaukee Fund, dedicated to our community engagement programs, and costs of operating the larger facility.

Details on the 2019–20 Season

***Coppélia* October 17-20, Marcus Performing Arts Center**

Choreography: Michael Pink

Music: Léo Delibes

Milwaukee Ballet celebrates its 50th anniversary by bringing the classic *Coppélia* back to life! This ballet was the Company's first, full-length production, premiering in the Marcus Center's Uihlein Hall in 1970. *Featuring Milwaukee Ballet Orchestra.*

***The Nutcracker* Dec 7–26, 2019, Marcus Performing Arts Center**

Choreography: Michael Pink

Music: Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky

It's the most wonderful time of the year! *The Nutcracker* has delighted generations of families in Milwaukee since 1977. *Featuring Milwaukee Ballet Orchestra, Milwaukee Ballet School & Academy, Milwaukee Children's Choir.*

***Ballet Russes Reimagined* Feb 13-16, 2020, Pabst Theater**

Milwaukee Ballet reimagines one of the most creative periods of ballet history as its own artists present adaptations of the *Russes'* most popular works.

- Timothy O'Donnell (resident choreographer) – *The Rite of Spring*
- Nicole Teague-Howell (leading artist) - *Firebird*
- Petr Zahradnicek (choreographer in residence) - *Petrushka*

***PUSH*. March 26-29, 2020, Marcus Performing Arts Center**

Milwaukee Ballet pushes the boundaries of dance with a mixed repertory program of contemporary work aptly named *PUSH*.

- World premiere featuring the music of The Vitrolum Republic
- World premiere from *Genesis* 2019 winner Aleix Mañé
- Alejandro Cerrudo - *Extremely Close*

Michael Pink's *Peter Pan* May 9-17, 2020, Marcus Performing Arts Center

Choreography: Michael Pink

Music: Philip Feeney

Milwaukee Ballet returns to Neverland with two weekends of high-flying fun. *Featuring Milwaukee Ballet Orchestra, Milwaukee School & Academy and Milwaukee Children's Choir.*

MOMENTUM March 7, 2020, Baumgartner Center for Dance – Add-On Performance

These international artists of Milwaukee Ballet II shine in this mixed repertory program combining classical repertoire with new work created by the Program's graduates.

About Milwaukee Ballet

Founded in 1970, Milwaukee Ballet celebrates its 50th Anniversary season in 2019-20. Led by Artistic Director Michael Pink, Milwaukee Ballet transforms lives and connects communities through inspiring performance, community engagement, education and training. Milwaukee Ballet hosts an international company of dancers and is one of the few companies in the nation to maintain its own orchestra. Milwaukee Ballet School & Academy is the only professional dance school in the Midwest accredited by the National Association of Schools of Dance. Milwaukee Ballet's award-winning Community Engagement department serves nearly 40,000 people in Southeastern Wisconsin each year through original, interactive programs. In August 2019, Milwaukee Ballet will move its headquarters to a new facility in Milwaukee's Third Ward, the Baumgartner Center for Dance.

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Note to editors: High-resolution images of the productions and interviews with Artistic Director Michael Pink available.