

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

# MILWAUKEE BALLET

MICHAEL PINK, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

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## **MILWAUKEE BALLET PRESENTS DARK TALE *HUNCHBACK OF NOTRE DAME* - Victor Hugo's Literary Classic Comes Alive March 23-26 at Marcus Center-**

**Milwaukee, WI – March 7, 2023** – Milwaukee Ballet performs Artistic Director Michael Pink’s *Hunchback of Notre Dame* for the first time in over a decade on March 23-26 at Marcus Performing Arts Center. This full-length ballet is based on the classic novel by Victor Hugo, author of *Les Misérables*, as part of the Company’s 2022/23 *Season of Timeless Tales*.

Created by the same artistic team that produced *Dracula*, *Hunchback of Notre Dame* recounts the dramatic story of the ostracized Quasimodo, the beautiful Esmeralda, and the wicked Frollo. Pink’s choreography viscerally highlights the dynamics of lust, power, and betrayal that Hugo presented in his work. An original score by Philip Feeney elevates the haunting tale.

“Restaging this ballet after so many years has been invigorating,” says Pink. “It is a serious and difficult work that encompasses the spectrum of human emotion, which showcases both the technical ability and full artistic range of our dancers.”

Milwaukee Ballet Leading Artists Marize Fumero and Lahna Vanderbush will play the role of Esmeralda opposite Garrett Glassman and Benjamin Simoens, respectively. Davit Hovhannsiyan and Craig Freigang will dance as Frollo, with the remainder of the cast rounded out by Artists of the Company and dancers from Milwaukee Ballet II.

Audiences will be transported to medieval Paris through exquisitely detailed costumes and an immersive set. The grittiness of fifteenth-century France will be tangible for viewers as they watch the tragedy unfold.

“Victor Hugo’s narrative world has the complexity and scope of an epic, which is what makes it so challenging and rewarding to create on stage,” says Pink. “Yet its real power comes from its intimacy, from the scenes shared by just three principal characters. They are who really drive this story.”

## **[Story Summary](#)**

The beautiful dancer Esmeralda is condemned by Archdeacon Frolo as depraved, yet he finds himself lusting after her and plots to have her kidnapped. Phoebus, the Captain of the Guard, intervenes and begins to seduce Esmeralda. Enraged, Frolo murders Phoebus and frames Esmeralda, but she is rescued by the beleaguered hunchback Quasimodo, who provides her with sanctuary in the belfry of Notre Dame Cathedral. Tragically, it is not enough to save her from a horrifying end caused by the evil men around her and the unjust power they wield.

### **Performance Information**

*Hunchback of Notre Dame* runs March 23-26 at Marcus Performing Arts Center. Tickets start at \$44 and are available for purchase via the Milwaukee Ballet Box Office at 414-902-2103 or online at [milwaukeeballet.org](http://milwaukeeballet.org).

The performance schedule is as follows:

- Thursday, March 23, 7:30 PM
- Friday, March 24, 7:30 PM
- Saturday, March 25, 7:30 PM
- Sunday, March 26, 1:30 PM

Please Note: This ballet contains mature themes and is therefore recommended for audience members aged 16 and older.

Milwaukee Ballet's 2022/2023 *Season of Timeless Tales* is presented by Donald & Donna Baumgartner with support from United Performing Arts Fund, Wisconsin Arts Board, CAMPAC, Milwaukee Arts Board, and the National Endowment for the Arts.

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### **About Milwaukee Ballet**

Milwaukee Ballet was founded in 1970. Led by Artistic Director Michael Pink, Milwaukee Ballet creates a rich and diverse community through its inspiring dance performance, education, and outreach. Milwaukee Ballet hosts an international Company of dancers and maintains 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, teaching beginner through pre-professional levels in three locations: Third Ward, Fox Point, and Brookfield. Milwaukee Ballet's award-winning Community Engagement department serves nearly 30,000 people in Southeastern Wisconsin each year through original, interactive programs. Milwaukee Ballet is a proud cornerstone member of United Performing Arts Fund and holds a four-star rating from Charity Navigator.

*Note to Editors: Interviews with Milwaukee Ballet Artistic Director Michael Pink and high-resolution images are available upon request.*