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# MILWAUKEE BALLET

MICHAEL PINK, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

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**MILWAUKEE BALLET'S CURRENT *NUTCRACKER* ON STAGE FOR THE FINAL TIME  
- *The holiday favorite starts December 10, for the final run before a new production opens in 2023* -**

**Milwaukee, WI – November 17, 2022** – Milwaukee Ballet's holiday favorite, *The Nutcracker*, returns this December for the 25<sup>th</sup> and final year of the current production. An annual tradition for generations of families, the magical extravaganza will come to life once again December 10-24, 2022, at Marcus Performing Arts Center's Uihlein Hall.

The city's largest winter holiday spectacle features a cast of nearly 150 dancers, including students from Milwaukee Ballet School & Academy, who join the professional dancers of Milwaukee Ballet Company and the Milwaukee Ballet II Second Company. Tchaikovsky's festive score is performed live by the Milwaukee Ballet Orchestra under the direction of Associate Conductor Pasquale Laurino.

"During my 20 years in Milwaukee, I have seen how much *The Nutcracker* means to our community with families and friends returning year after year," said Artistic Director Michael Pink. "This year will be extraordinarily special as we say farewell and perform the current production for the last time."

*The Nutcracker* has been performed in Milwaukee for decades and the appeal of this magical story has never waned, continuing to attract new audiences each year. However, after 25 years, the current Milwaukee Ballet production has outlived its usable life, with costumes and sets beyond continued maintenance. This provides the organization with an exciting opportunity to breathe new life into the timeless classic. Earlier this month, Pink unveiled plans for a reimagined, all-new production scheduled to debut in December 2023.

The new *Nutcracker* will retain much of the traditional story and characters that people have come to know and love. However, Pink will reimagine the overall production and infuse it with new magic and creativity. All sets, costumes, and props in the production will be new—from the elaborate ballgowns to feathered hairclips, from the mechanical props to the wooden nutcracker doll. Refreshed choreography and a revamped cast of characters will bring new life and energy to the stage next year.

"Conceiving of, and producing, a new *Nutcracker* is perhaps one of the most exciting opportunities for any classical ballet company," said Pink. "We recognize the decades of memories and will take care to preserve the tradition for many generations to come."

Pink has brought together an award-winning design team to bring his vision to life. Set designer Todd Edward Ivins, an Associate Artist for Milwaukee Repertory Theater, has worked with Pink on numerous ballets and musicals. Costumes are being designed by Emmy-nominated designer Gregory A. Poplyk, whose most recent

work has been featured in the HBO series *The Gilded Age*. Emmy Award-winning lighting designer David Grill, continues his longtime collaboration with Pink and Milwaukee Ballet, and the creative talents of Chicago based VonOrthal Puppets will round out our design team.

Milwaukee Ballet is currently in the midst of a \$5 million New *Nutcracker* Capital Campaign to support the design and build of new sets and costumes, establish a preservation fund to ensure ongoing maintenance of all elements of the production, and support expanded community engagement initiatives related to this project with the Give Back to MKE fund. Information regarding the campaign can be found online at [milwaukeeballet.org/support/new-nutcracker/](http://milwaukeeballet.org/support/new-nutcracker/)

### **Ticket Information**

*The Nutcracker* runs December 10-24, 2022, at the Marcus Performing Arts Center, 929 N. Water Street in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Tickets start at just \$44 and are available online at [milwaukeeballet.org](http://milwaukeeballet.org) or through the Milwaukee Ballet or Marcus Center Box Offices at 414.902.2103 and 414.273.7121.

The schedule is as follows:

- Saturday, December 10 at 2:00 PM
- Saturday, December 10 at 7:30 PM
- Sunday, December 11 at 1:00 PM
- Sunday, December 11 at 6:30 PM
- Wednesday, December 14 at 7:00 PM (Sensory Friendly Performance)
- Friday, December 16 at 7:30 PM
- Saturday, December 17 at 2:00 PM
- Saturday, December 17 at 7:30 PM
- Sunday, December 18 at 1:00 PM
- Sunday, December 18 at 6:30 PM
- Wednesday, December 21 at 7:30 PM
- Thursday, December 22 at 7:30 PM
- Friday, December 23 at 7:30 PM
- Saturday, December 24 at 2:00 PM

### **Sensory Friendly Performance**

Milwaukee Ballet will perform its seventh annual Sensory Friendly version of *The Nutcracker* for those with autism or sensory processing disorders. This adapted performance of the holiday classic, presented in partnership with Marcus Performing Arts Center and United Performing Arts Fund, takes center stage Wednesday, December 14, at 7:00 PM.

Tickets are available through Milwaukee Ballet's Box Office at 414.902.2103.

Milwaukee Ballet's 2022/23 Season is presented by Donald & Donna Baumgartner with support from the 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 thousands of 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 Michael Pink and high-resolution images are available.*