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MILWAUKEE BALLET

MICHAEL PINK, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

MILWAUKEE BALLET SECOND COMPANY TAKES CENTER STAGE

- *Milwaukee Ballet II presents first showcase since pandemic; performing March 5 & 12 -*

Milwaukee, WI – February 17, 2022 – Milwaukee Ballet’s second company presents its annual showcase, *MOMENTUM*, on **March 5 and 12**. The up-and-coming dancers of **Milwaukee Ballet II** (MBII) perform their biggest show of the season, featuring a mixed repertory program of classical and contemporary dance.

Milwaukee Ballet Resident Choreographer and MBII Rehearsal Director Timothy O’Donnell presents an extended reimagination of his *Chopin Etudes*. MBII dancers demonstrate their classical abilities in scenes from *Sylvia* staged by MBII Artistic Director Mireille Favarel. Rounding out the showcase is the world premiere of *a long stretch of night* by Milwaukee Ballet School & Academy faculty member Calvin Hilpert.

MOMENTUM runs two weekends, opening Saturday, March 5 (4:00 PM) at Cardinal Stritch University in Glendale, followed by two performances March 12 (4:00 PM and 7:30 PM) at Milwaukee Ballet’s We Energies Foundation Performance Studio at Baumgartner Center for Dance in Milwaukee’s Historic Third Ward.

The March 2020 run of *MOMENTUM* was cut short due to the COVID-19 pandemic, with only one show performed before shutdown. “We are beyond grateful to be able to perform *MOMENTUM* again with a full roster of MBII dancers,” Favarel said. “After a two-year interruption, it is reaffirming and inspiring to see our dancers’ youthful energy back on stage.”

MBII is made up of 19 young dancers from around the world who are dedicating their lives to ballet in pursuit of a professional career. In addition to their training and professional development, they support the Company by performing in mainstage productions, such as *The Nutcracker* and the upcoming 2021/22 season finale *Beauty and the Beast*. MBII dancers also serve as ambassadors in the community throughout the year.

“MBII is truly vital to our organizational mission, as the dancers support our artistic productions, help facilitate our outreach programming, and often share their talents assisting in our school,” Milwaukee Ballet Artistic Director Michael Pink said. “Also equally important is that dancers have this opportunity to come through the program and go on to have internationally successful careers. In fact, more than half of our current Company Artists are former MBII dancers.”

Tickets for *MOMENTUM* are \$35 and available for purchase online at www.milwaukeeballet.org or through the Milwaukee Ballet Box Office at 414.902.2103.

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About Milwaukee Ballet II

The Nancy Einhorn Milwaukee Ballet II Company was established in 1978 to nurture and develop gifted young dancers, bridging the gap between student and professional. The dancers build their technical skills and artistry by dancing alongside the professionals of Milwaukee Ballet Company in mainstage productions. These dancers are also featured in their own performances in various Wisconsin venues and studio showcases. Milwaukee Ballet II trainees are a vital part of the award-winning Department of Community Engagement. Graduates of the program are among the ranks of professional companies worldwide.

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 the United Performing Arts Fund and holds a four-star rating from Charity Navigator.

Note to Editors: Interviews with Milwaukee Ballet II Artistic Director Mireille Favarel and high-resolution images are available upon request.