



Milwaukee Ballet reports a blockbuster 2015-16 season with highest audience numbers in 10 years

-Company enjoys growth in ticket sales, community outreach efforts-

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MILWAUKEE – June 17, 2016 – Milwaukee Ballet Board Chair and President Jud Snyder said Milwaukee Ballet's box office sales for the past season were the highest in 10 years with an increase in total attendance of 15% on last season.

Milwaukee Ballet completed its 46th season with ticket revenue exceeding \$2.3 million.

"More than 54,000 people enjoyed our 35 main stage performances this season – that's 7,000 more than last year," said Snyder.

"Ticket sales also increased for our School & Academy showcase and our Milwaukee Ballet II performances. This bears testament to our inspiring programming, talented dancers, and the important community connections we have built and nurtured in Milwaukee."

Artistic Director Michael Pink is proud of the artistic breadth of the past season, which included literary classics such as internationally-renowned *Dracula*, Pink's bold new full-length premiere of *Dorian Gray*, and the popular *ALICE (in wonderland)*.

"This past season goes down in records as one of our best ever. It's been a blockbuster year for ticketing, but it has also provided a splendid visual treat and artistic journey for Wisconsin audiences."

"This season we featured more than 250 student dancers from our Milwaukee Ballet School & Academy in *The Nutcracker* and *ALICE (in wonderland)*. These opportunities provide valuable performance experience to our students, and help them make memories that last a lifetime," said Pink.

Pink underscored the Company's strong commitment to bringing new work to Milwaukee audiences.

"New work is the lifeblood of our art form. I'm thrilled we will present four world premieres next season, bringing challenging, fresh work to the Milwaukee stage," Pink said.

Milwaukee Ballet's *Campaign for New Work* continues, with matching support from Sue and Allan 'Bud' Selig. This three-year campaign supports Milwaukee Ballet's ability to underwrite new programming for the professional company, Milwaukee Ballet II and the School & Academy.

In her first season as Executive Director, Julia Glawe noted that an increased focus on patron loyalty is paying dividends for the Company.

"We have worked diligently this season to connect with our patrons with increased quality and frequency, and with stories and experiences which help provide a deeper appreciation of this art form and build even stronger connections to Milwaukee Ballet," Glawe explained.

Snyder, President of BMO Harris Equipment Finance Company and completing his first full season as Milwaukee Ballet Board Chair and President, noted the Ballet Company worked to deepen its relationship with the residents of Southeastern Wisconsin.

"In addition to our performances, 30,000 people attended our outreach programs, including 75 schools, 50 homeschool groups, Boys & Girls Clubs, senior centers, and hospices. Our Tour de Force program, where our dancers work with children with disabilities, continues to inspire," explained Snyder.

Company dancers return in September to begin rehearsing for the 2016-17 season, which includes *Scheherazade*, the contemporary *Genesis* competition at The Pabst, the perennial classic *La Sylphide*, and Michael Pink's *Mirror Mirror*.

Subscription packages are on sale now for 2016-17 with new seats now available. Tickets to individual performances go on sale on July 25.

Our 2015-16 season was proudly presented by Donna & Donald Baumgartner, who have renewed their sponsorship for 2016-17.

About Milwaukee Ballet

Founded in 1970, Milwaukee Ballet will celebrate its 50th Anniversary in 2019-20. Milwaukee Ballet has become world-renowned for presenting both bold, new interpretations of story ballets, and cutting-edge, evocative contemporary works. Milwaukee Ballet is the home to an international company of dancers, and is one of the few companies in the nation to maintain its own orchestra.

About Nancy Einhorn Milwaukee Ballet II Program

The Nancy Einhorn Milwaukee Ballet II Program 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 main stage productions. These dancers are also featured in their own performances in Wisconsin venues and studio showcases. Milwaukee Ballet II trainees are a vital part of the award-winning Department of Community Outreach. Graduates of the program are among the ranks of professional companies worldwide.

About Milwaukee Ballet School & Academy

Founded in 1975, Milwaukee Ballet School & Academy (MBSA) has more than 600 students in three branches: Milwaukee, Fox Point, and Brookfield. Featuring an international faculty led by Director Rolando Yanes, MBSA is the only dance school in the Midwest accredited by the National Association of Schools of Dance. Students receive the finest dance training in an encouraging and professional atmosphere. MBSA students also appear onstage with the professional Company for Milwaukee Ballet's annual production *The Nutcracker*, and star in their own showcase each spring.

About Milwaukee Ballet's Community Outreach Program

Milwaukee Ballet's Department of Community Outreach brings the power of movement and dance to life in schools, libraries, nursing homes, and community centers all over Southeast Wisconsin. Our hands-on workshops, performances, in-school residencies, promote confidence, a healthy lifestyle, and creativity. Our esteemed year-round ballet program, Relevé, continues to draw acclaim and our landmark Tour de Force program won the Milwaukee Business Journal Eureka Award in 2015. Community Outreach also oversees the student matinee series, which brings students to the theater to experience the magic of a live ballet performance.

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