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**Contact:**

Leslie Rivers, PR & Media Manager  
o: 414-902-2102 | c: 414-510-0052  
lrivers@milwaukeeballet.org

## **Milwaukee Ballet Announces 2018-19 Season**

- 49<sup>th</sup> season features *Dracula*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and five new works -

**MILWAUKEE** – February 12, 2018 – Milwaukee Ballet announced their 2018-19 season, featuring Michael Pink's *Dracula*, *The Nutcracker*, *Genesis 2019*, *Lambarena*, and Bruce Wells' *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

"This season we celebrate innovation, collaboration, and creation," said Milwaukee Ballet Artistic Director Michael Pink. "As we approach our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, we present a program that blends classic with contemporary, entertaining for ballet lovers and novices alike."

The 2018-19 season opens in October with Pink's most famous work, *Dracula*. This blockbuster ballet has been presented in companies across the United Kingdom, the United States, and Japan. Milwaukee Ballet Orchestra, accompanied by singers from the Florentine Opera's Donald and Donna Baumgartner Studio Artist Program, will perform Philip Feeney's score live.

In December, Milwaukee Ballet presents the holiday classic, *The Nutcracker*. This seasonal spectacular has brightened Wisconsin's holiday season for more than 40 years. Milwaukee Ballet will once again present one sensory-friendly performance for those on the autism spectrum or with sensory processing disorders. Milwaukee Ballet Orchestra will play Tchaikovsky's score for this production with Milwaukee Children's Choir.

Milwaukee Ballet once again hosts *Genesis* in February. This international choreographic competition invites dancemakers from around the world to create new work on Milwaukee Ballet's dancers. Michael Pink chooses three finalists who present their works before a panel of esteemed judges at The Pabst. The judges choose the winner, while ticket buyers vote for the Audience Choice Award.

In April, Milwaukee Ballet presents a mixed bill featuring Val Caniparoli's *Lambarena*. Inspired by a music composition by the same name, this unique work blends classical ballet and African dance. *Lambarena* will be accompanied by two world premieres from Italy's Enrico Morelli and United Kingdom's George Williamson. Both Morelli and Williamson were finalists in the 2017 presentation of *Genesis*, with Morelli winning the Audience Choice Award and Williamson taking the title.

The season concludes with Bruce Wells' *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Shakespeare's enchanting comedy is retold through dance in this family-friendly production that includes students of Milwaukee Ballet School & Academy. Milwaukee Ballet Orchestra, accompanied by the Florentine Opera's Summer

Residency Program artists and Milwaukee Children's Choir, will perform Felix Mendelssohn's score for this engagement.

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

The dancers of the esteemed Milwaukee Ballet II Program will be featured in their own show, *MOMENTUM*, which presents both classical and contemporary pieces at The Pabst February 16.

The 2018-19 season is sponsored by Donna and Donald Baumgartner.

### **Season-Inspired Murals by Walker's Point Creative Collective**

Milwaukee Ballet partnered with Walker's Point Creative Collective to announce the 2018-19 season. The graffiti artists of Walker's Point Creative Collective were commissioned to create murals around their neighborhood to represent each production in the upcoming season. The *Dracula* mural in an alley on National Avenue, *The Nutcracker* is atop the Bern Office Systems building on National Avenue, and *Genesis*, *Lambarena*, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* are inside the Coakley Brother's Building.

Once the murals were complete, photographer Tom Davenport captured images of Milwaukee Ballet dancers in front of the murals, under the art direction of Timothy O'Donnell.

These images were used in Milwaukee Ballet's 2018-19 season brochure.

### **Details on the 2018–19 Season:**

#### **Michael Pink's *Dracula* Oct 25-28, 2018, Marcus Center for the Performing Arts**

Michael Pink's blockbuster returns to stake its claim as a must-see theatrical experience. Surrender to this story of passion, seduction, and transformation this Halloween. New this year, Milwaukee Ballet presents a Student Matinee especially for Middle School students October 25.

#### ***The Nutcracker* Dec 8–26, 2018, Marcus Center for the Performing Arts**

The magic, mayhem, and music of Milwaukee's most popular holiday tradition continues to delight and inspire generations of dance lovers. Milwaukee Ballet will host a sensory-friendly performance December 20.

#### ***Genesis: International Choreographic Competition* Feb 14–17, 2019, Pabst Theater**

Three of the world's brightest young choreographers converge in Milwaukee to present a new, contemporary work before a panel of esteemed figures from the dance world. The winner earns a contract to create a world premiere in a future Milwaukee Ballet season.

**Lambarena Apr 4-7, 2019, Marcus Center for the Performing Arts**

Val Caniparoli's *Lambarena* boldly blends classical ballet with African dance in a truly unique performance. The work is accompanied by the compositions of Johann Sebastian Bach and traditional African songs, as arranged by Pierre Akendengue and Hughes de Courson. Caniparoli's creative team for *Lambarena* includes Scenic and Costume Designer Sandra Woodall, Lighting Designer Lisa J. Pinkham, and African Dance Consultants Naomi Johnson-Diouf and Dr. Zakariya Diouf. Maiqui Manosa will set the piece for Milwaukee Ballet.

The program will be rounded out with two new works from *Genesis* 2017 finalists Enrico Morelli (Audience Choice Winner) and George Williamson (First Place).

**Bruce Wells' A Midsummer Night's Dream May 31–June 3, 2019, Marcus Center for the Performing Arts**

Escape to the Fairy Kingdom for this tale of mischief and mistaken identities. Shakespeare's enchanting comedy comes to life in a delightful dance performance. The music of Felix Mendelssohn is played live by Milwaukee Ballet Orchestra in collaboration with The Florentine Opera's Summer Residency Program Artists, Milwaukee Children's Choir, and Milwaukee Ballet School & Academy.

**MOMENTUM Feb 16, 2019, Pabst Theater – Add-On Performance**

The dancers of Milwaukee Ballet II perform new work by world-class choreographers and beloved pieces from the classical canon. The MBII's will perform at The Pabst in conjunction with *Genesis 2019*.

**About Milwaukee Ballet**

Founded in 1970, Milwaukee Ballet celebrates its 48th season as a staple of Milwaukee's arts and culture scene. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Michael Pink, Milwaukee Ballet has become world-renowned for presenting bold new interpretations of story ballets and cutting-edge contemporary works. Milwaukee Ballet is the home to an international company of dancers and is one of only a 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 (NASD). Milwaukee Ballet's award-winning Community Engagement Department serves more than 30,000 people in Southeastern Wisconsin through original, interactive programs.

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