

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Milwaukee Ballet presents world premiere of Michael Pink's *Beauty and the Beast*
-Artistic Director presents his newest family-friendly production, April 12-15-**

MILWAUKEE – March 22, 2018 – Milwaukee Ballet presents the world premiere of Michael Pink's *Beauty and the Beast* at the Marcus Center for the Performing Arts, April 12-15, 2018. Following his acclaimed productions of *Peter Pan* and *Mirror Mirror*, Pink will offer a mystical adaptation of the beloved fairytale to appeal to all ages.

"*Beauty and the Beast* is a well-known, popular story. It provides the kind of narrative that I love to delve into and present with imaginative, undiscovered viewpoints," said Milwaukee Ballet Artistic Director Michael Pink. "The audience can easily escape into the beauty of this production, which will please ballet lovers and newcomers alike."

Pink's production is inspired by Jeanne-Marie LePrince de Beaumont's 1756 adaptation of the original folktale. Belle is the hero of her own story and uses her love of literature to guide her on her adventure with the Beast.

"Belle's imagination is her strength. It gives her the knowledge and confidence to take on the Beast, his world, and her destiny," Pink explained.

Beauty and the Beast features the professional Company, Milwaukee Ballet II, and nearly 80 students of Milwaukee Ballet School & Academy.

Pink is widely praised for his interpretations on the world's best loved stories. *Beauty and the Beast* is the most recent full-length ballet Pink has premiered in Milwaukee, joining *Dorian Gray* (2016), *Mirror Mirror* (2014), *La Bohème* (2012), and *Peter Pan* (2010).

Pink commissioned a score from British composer Philip Feeney, which will be played by Milwaukee Ballet Orchestra for this engagement under the direction of Milwaukee Ballet Music Director Andrews Sill. With *Beauty and the Beast*, Pink and Feeney celebrate a 30-year collaboration, which began with their first ballet, *Memoire Imaginaire*, in 1987.

The creative team is rounded out by Emmy Award-winning lighting designer David Grill, Canadian costume designer Paul Daigle (*La Bohème*), and New York City-based scenic designer Todd Edward Ivins (*Mirror Mirror*).

Story Summary

A handsome Prince rules his kingdom with a cold heart. He is a product of his entitled upbringing: callous and selfish, with little regard for the welfare of his people. An Enchantress strips him of his looks and transforms him into a Beast. He meets Belle who gives him a new sense of hope and a reason to become a better version of himself.

Belle is bright with an unquenchable love of literature, destined to write her own adventure. When her father is captured by the Beast, she bravely offers to take his place. Now, a prisoner in the enchanted castle, she uses her generous spirit and intelligence to help the Beast discover his humanity.

Free Community Events

Barre Talk: Beauty and the Beast

March 27, 6:30-8pm

88Nine Radio Milwaukee, 220 E Pittsburgh Ave, Milwaukee

Milwaukee Ballet's Barre Talk events feature a member of Milwaukee Ballet artistic staff and a guest speaker leading animated conversation on topics important to the ballet world and beyond. For *Beauty and the Beast*, Artistic Director Michael Pink shares his vision and process of taking the fairy tale from the page to the stage. Details at milwaukeeballet.org.

Beauty and the Beast Story Time

April 7, 2-3pm

Milwaukee Public Library, 814 W Wisconsin Avenue, Milwaukee

Milwaukee Ballet Artistic Director Michael Pink reads the classic fairy tale aloud in the Central Library's Children's Room. The afternoon includes a visit from members of the cast, and a ballet-inspired craft.

Tickets and Performance Schedule

Beauty and the Beast runs April 12-15, 2018 at the Marcus Center for the Performing Arts, 929 N. Water Street, Milwaukee. Tickets available at (414) 902-2103 or visit milwaukeeballet.org. Due to popular demand, an extra matinee has been added. The performance schedule is as follows:

Thursday, April 12 | 7:30pm

Friday, April 13 | 7:30pm

Saturday, Apr 14 | 1:30pm

Saturday, Apr 14 | 7:30pm

Sunday, April 15 | 1:30pm

Sponsors

Beauty and the Beast is presented by Sue and Allan "Bud" Selig, through their support of the Campaign for New Work, as well as Donna and Donald Baumgartner and Nita Soref. Philip Feeney's score was commissioned by Susanna and Justin Mortara. Paul Daigle's costume designs were commissioned by the Ettinger Family Foundation.

The 2017-18 season is presented by Donna and Donald Baumgartner, with operational support from the United Performing Arts Fund.

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.