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MILWAUKEE
BALLET
MICHAEL PINK, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

**MILWAUKEE BALLET'S CELEBRATED CHOREOGRAPHIC
COMPETITION RETURNS WITH *GENESIS***

- Staged in person at Baumgartner Center for Dance and available On Demand February 3-13 -

Milwaukee, WI – February 18, 2022 – Milwaukee Ballet has invited three talented young choreographers to participate in the biennial *Genesis Choreographic Competition*. The choreographers are **Nadine Barton** of Charlotte Ballet, **DaYoung Jung** of Oklahoma City Ballet, and **Price Suddarth** of Pacific Northwest Ballet, who will bring their own unique vision and inspirations to this perennially innovative production. These three artists will each create a new work to be presented in *Genesis* **February 3-13, at Baumgartner Center for Dance and On Demand**. Attendees and viewers are invited to get in on the action by voting for their favorite piece.

Traditionally held every other year, *Genesis* was created to offer up-and-coming choreographers the opportunity to create work on a professional Company. Often serving as a springboard to leap forward in their choreographic careers, the winner will receive an invitation to return to Milwaukee and create a piece in a future season. The ninth year of the *Genesis* competition was scheduled for February 2021 but was canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. What before was an international search has been adjusted due to travel restrictions. Only choreographers from around the United States were eligible this year.

“The *Genesis* competition has become a favorite production amongst our patrons and dancers alike. It continually offers up fresh and inventive dance, and an exciting way for us to engage a new generation of dance lovers,” explains Milwaukee Ballet Artistic Director Michael Pink. “Following the challenges of the past two years, it is thrilling and heartening to welcome our guest choreographers into the studios and continue our commitment to producing new works on our stages.”

For 2022 *Genesis* will be performed live at Milwaukee Ballet’s Baumgartner Center for Dance in the We Energies Foundation Performance Studio. The full production will also be available to stream On Demand via the Company’s online platform at milwaukeeballet.org. The program will return to Pabst Theater in 2024.

“Last season, in response to the pandemic and gathering restrictions, we pivoted to shorter-length performances in house and found that audiences loved the intimate and unique vantage,” shared Pink. “We’re excited to perform *Genesis* at Baumgartner Center for Dance this year and are grateful that our patrons are confident in the health and safety measures we have in place to keep them and our dancers safe. By offering the program On Demand as well, we hope that those who may be hesitant about returning to the theater will still be able to enjoy the amazing talents of our choreographers and dancers.”

[The Process](#)

Artistic Director Michael Pink reviewed 83 submissions from around the United States and selected the three finalists: Nadine Barton (Charlotte Ballet), DaYoung Jung (Oklahoma City Ballet), and Price Suddarth (Pacific Northwest Ballet).

The finalists arrived January 10 for rehearsals. Names of Milwaukee Ballet dancers were drawn out of a hat to determine each choreographer's cast (four women and four men). The choreographers have three weeks, a total of 90 rehearsal hours, to create a 20-minute new work, and present it at Baumgartner Center for Dance for *Genesis* February 3-13.

The winner of *Genesis* will be determined by a panel of esteemed judges: The National Ballet of Canada Artistic Director Hope Muir, Pittsburgh Ballet Artistic Director Susan Jaffe, and Ballet Met Artistic Director Edwaard Liang. The winner will receive a cash prize and a commission to create another original work for Milwaukee Ballet in a future season.

Audience members will also cast a vote for the "Audience Choice Award" winner, who will receive a cash prize.

The Choreographers

A dancer with Charlotte Ballet, **Nadine Barton** has created work performed by Alabama Ballet, Charlotte Ballet, and the Alabama School of Fine Arts. She was voted audience favorite at AROVA Contemporary Ballet's 2017 *Choreographic Showcase*. During quarantine, she ventured into dance film, creating *Face It*, a short film she directed, performed, and choreographed, in collaboration with dancers of Charlotte Ballet.

DaYoung Jung is a principal dancer with Oklahoma City Ballet, having trained at Moscow's Bolshoi Ballet Academy, where she graduated with honors and earned a Specialist degree in Ballet Pedagogy.

As a choreographer, Jung's most recent work, *Dissipation* with Oklahoma City Ballet, was presented at *The Five Moons Dance Festival* in August 2021.

A soloist with Pacific Northwest Ballet (PNB), **Price Suddarth** began his choreographic career at the School of American Ballet's student choreographic workshop in 2007. He has since participated in PNB's *Next Step* performances (formerly the *Choreographers Showcase*) and created work on the Company. Suddarth has choreographed for Kansas City Ballet, Tulsa Ballet, University of Oklahoma's School of Dance, and Ballet Sun Valley. In 2016 he partnered with PNB and Virtual Reality software company PIXVANA, creating works made solely for Virtual Reality.

Competition History

Milwaukee Ballet's *Genesis Choreographic Competition* has helped discover and shine a spotlight on many bright young stars in the dance world. Past winners are:

- **Aleix Mañé**, Spain (2019)
- **George Williamson**, UK (2017)
- **Garrett Smith**, USA (2015)
- **Gabrielle Lamb**, USA (2013)
- **Mauro de Candia**, Italy (2011)
- **Timothy O'Donnell**, Australia (2009)

- **Nelly von Bommel**, France (2007)
- **John Utans**, Australia (2002)

Performance Information

Genesis runs February 3-13, at Baumgartner Center for Dance in Milwaukee's Historic Third Ward. To purchase tickets, call 414-902-2103, or visit milwaukeeballet.org.

The performance schedule is as follows:

- Thursday, February 3, 7:30 pm
- Friday, February 4, 7:30 pm
- Saturday, February 5, 4:00 pm & 7:30 pm
- Sunday, February 6, 12:00 pm & 3:30 pm
- Thursday, February 10, 7:30 pm
- Friday, February 11, 7:30 pm
- Saturday, February 12, 4:00 pm & 7:30 pm
- Sunday, February 13, 12:00 pm & 3:30 pm

All patrons at Baumgartner Center for Dance must comply with Milwaukee Ballet's Audience Entry Protocols, which include proof of vaccination or a negative COVID-19 test within 72 hours for guests age 12 and older. Masks will be required for all patrons, as well as Milwaukee Ballet staff and dancers. Complete Audience Entry Protocols are available at www.milwaukeeballet.org/entry.

Genesis will be available to stream On Demand at milwaukeeballet.org February 3-13. Each three-day rental will include access to exclusive interviews and behind-the-scenes content.

Milwaukee Ballet's 2021/22 Season of Inspiration is presented by Donald and Donna Baumgartner and United Performing Arts Fund.

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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 nearly 30,000 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 Milwaukee Ballet Artistic Director Michael Pink and high-resolution images are available upon request.