

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact

Hannah Cook
Manager – Marketing and Communications
Direct: (414) 902-2110 | Cell: (262) 599-2507
hcook@milwaukeeballet.org

**MILWAUKEE
BALLET**
MICHAEL PINK, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

MILWAUKEE BALLET'S SECOND COMPANY PRESENTS ANNUAL SHOWCASE

- Milwaukee Ballet II stages three original works and a classical scene during their two-weekend production on February 25 and March 4. -

Milwaukee, WI – February 15, 2023 – Milwaukee Ballet's Second Company takes center stage during their annual performance of *Momentum*, a four-piece mixed repertory program. The 21 dancers of Milwaukee Ballet II (MBII) will perform on February 25 and March 4 at Baumgartner Center for Dance in the We Energies Performance Studio.

Momentum features three original contemporary works and a classical favorite, all of which spotlight the MBII dancers' depth and breadth of training.

"This selection of pieces really highlights the multifaceted talents of our dancers," says MBII Artistic Director Mireille Favarel. "I'm thrilled to showcase the technical and artistic abilities of these up-and-coming artists, including the choreography of Amanda Lewis."

MBII dancer Amanda Lewis presents her first choreographed work for the Second Company, *Unspoken*, which explores the experience of woundedness and struggling for control. Milwaukee Ballet School & Academy faculty member and interim MBII Rehearsal Director Calvin Hilpert premieres *Grief and Rage*, his second work for MBII, in which he examines how loss of innocence leaves lasting echoes. Guest choreographer Kristopher Estes-Brown returns to MBII with his new work, *Light, Dark and the In Between*. Featuring 20 dancers, this work highlights the power of ensemble and the space individuals must carve out for themselves through the chaos.

"This is my first time choreographing a piece longer than just a few minutes, and it has been an incredible learning experience," says Lewis. "I like walking into a room knowing exactly what I want, but at the end of the day, it's actually nothing like what I planned. I love that. I think it's so fun."

The program closes with the final scene from classical ballet *The Sleeping Beauty*. "Aurora's Wedding" features the original choreography of Marius Petipa staged by Favarel and Hilpert.

Outside of *Momentum*, Milwaukee Ballet II is an integral part of Milwaukee Ballet. MBII dancers regularly perform in mainstage Company productions, including *The Nutcracker*. Community engagement programs are also a key part of dancers' experience, as they lead workshops and performances at schools, senior centers, and other local organizations.

"The dancers are wonderful and work so hard," praises Favarel. "Their performances in *Momentum* and throughout this season are just the beginnings of the stellar careers that I expect from each of them."

[Performance Information](#)

Momentum will take place on February 25 and March 4 at Baumgartner Center for Dance in the We Energies Performance Studio. Tickets are \$35 for main seating and \$25 for balcony seating. Purchase online at www.milwaukeeballet.org or through the Milwaukee Ballet Box Office at 414.902.2103.

The performance schedule is as follows:

- Saturday, February 25, 4:00 PM
- Saturday, February 25, 7:30 PM
- Saturday, March 4, 4:00 PM

Milwaukee Ballet's 2022/2023 *Season of Timeless Tales* is presented by Donald & Donna Baumgartner with support from United Performing Arts Fund, Wisconsin Arts Board, CAMPAC, Milwaukee Arts Board, and the National Endowment for the Arts.

###

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

Note to Editors: Interviews with Milwaukee Ballet II Interim Rehearsal Director Calvin Hilpert and high-resolution images are available upon request.