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# MILWAUKEE BALLET

MICHAEL PINK, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

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## MILWAUKEE BALLET PRESENTS SEASON FINALE *CARMEN*

**- The sensual production will lead off with a world premiere by Genesis winner Tsai Hsi Hung. -**

**Milwaukee, WI – April 22, 2025** – Milwaukee Ballet will stage the deadly love triangle of *Carmen* from May 16-18 at The Pabst Theater. Highlighting the tantalizing sexuality and fierce independence of its titular femme fatale, this production will mark the first performance of this popular story by Milwaukee Ballet since 2001.

“There’s a reason *Carmen* has captured imaginations for decades,” says Artistic Director Michael Pink. “The raw emotions of love, jealousy, and obsession resonate with audiences in foundational yet complex ways, so every production brings something new to the table.”

This particular adaptation is choreographed by Mark Godden, who has enjoyed a long history at Milwaukee Ballet. Starting in 2001, he regularly returns and creates original and adapted works such as *Angels in the Architecture* and *The Magic Flute*. His *Carmen* premiered on Mexico’s Ballet de Jalisco in 2018, and Milwaukee Ballet will perform it for the first time in the United States. The iconic score by Rodion Shchedrin, inspired by Georges Bizet’s opera, will be enjoyed alongside original lighting and projection work by local designer Jason Fassl.

The program will include a new work choreographed by Tsai Hsi Hung, winner of Milwaukee Ballet’s 2024 *Genesis International Choreographic Competition*. Critics hailed Hung’s original work *The living quality* as “wholly unexpected...[with] choreography that roars.” Her new work promises to be equally unexpected.

Longtime Leading Artist Barry Molina has announced his retirement at the end of this season. Molina has been with the Company since 2011 and is best known for the roles of Peter in *Peter Pan*, Renfield in *Dracula*, and Fritz in *The Nutcracker*. He will dance in both *Carmen* and Hung’s world premiere, having a featured role in the latter.

“Barry has always impressed me with his athleticism and thoughtful approach to his craft,” says Pink. “He exemplifies the vision and mission of our company. We wish him the very best in his next endeavors.”

Milwaukee Ballet will collaborate with Florentine Opera on several *Carmen*-themed collaborations, as both companies are preparing to present the story this spring. Along with several digital content pieces, the organizations will host an exclusive subscriber event featuring excerpts from both productions followed by a Q&A with Artists and Artistic Leadership.

Milwaukee Ballet has also resurrected the popular “Pints Before Pointe” event. Led by the company’s newly established Emerging Leaders Council, this event will invite young professionals from throughout the city to enjoy a preshow panel with the choreographers before attending opening night of *Carmen*.

*Carmen* is sure to end Milwaukee Ballet’s 2024/25 Season *Love & Lust* with flare, leaving audiences hungry for the season to come.

### **Performance Information**

*Carmen* will take place from May 16-18 at The Pabst Theater. Tickets start at \$40 and may be purchased online at [www.milwaukeeballet.org](http://www.milwaukeeballet.org) or through the Milwaukee Ballet Box Office at 414.902.2103.

The performance schedule is as follows:

- Friday, May 16, 2025 — 7:30 PM
- Saturday, May 17, 2025 — 2:00 PM
- Saturday, May 17, 2025 — 7:30 PM
- Sunday, May 18, 2025 — 2:00 PM

*Carmen* is made possible by presenting sponsors Kathleen and Donald Wilson with support from principal sponsor Studio Gear.

Milwaukee Ballet's 2024/2025 Season is presented by Donald & Donna Baumgartner and the United Performing Arts Fund (UPAF), with support from Wisconsin Arts Board, CAMPAC, Milwaukee Arts Board, and the National Endowment for the Arts.

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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.*