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MILWAUKEE BALLET

MICHAEL PINK, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

MILWAUKEE BALLET PRESENTS HAUNTING *GISELLE*

- The dramatic production will feature an instrument from the *Violins of Hope*—Wisconsin residency -

Milwaukee, WI – September 24, 2025 – Milwaukee Ballet will open its 2025/26 Season *Beyond Belief* with the tragic and timeless story of *Giselle*, presented by We Energies Foundation, running from October 17-19 at Marcus Performing Arts Center. Renowned for its resonance and intensity, the production marks a long-awaited return to Milwaukee with its first performance since 2015.

Like many adaptations of the classic *Giselle*, Artistic Director and choreographer Michael Pink sets the story in a time and place that compels audiences to grapple with its power dynamics and troubling romance in new ways. In this version, the story is set during World War II, with the love between the titular Giselle and militaristic Albrecht crossing physical, political, and emotional barriers.

“*Giselle* isn’t a World War II story, or perhaps not *just* a World War II story,” reflects Pink. “It’s a human story, highlighting the worst and the best of us all: oppression and justice, vengeance and forgiveness, hatred and love. I want audiences to relate what they see onstage to what else they know of our history, as well as what we see happening in the world today.”

The Company is proud to partner with *Violins of Hope*—Wisconsin and Milwaukee Youth Symphony Orchestra for this production. *Violins of Hope* is a private collection that restores and shares violins played by Jewish musicians during the Holocaust, further deepening the verisimilitude of Pink’s setting and honoring the legacy of those who lived and died during this dark period.

“Working with *Violins of Hope* on *Giselle* is an inspiring gift to us all,” says Pink. “Its history and the music it produces bring a profound sense of humanity to the production that our dancers and musicians are honored to embody.”

On Sunday, audiences can attend a special pre-show presentation by the Holocaust Education Resource Center in the Anello Atrium of Marcus Performing Arts Center. From 1:15-1:45, this program will provide historical context to the World War II era, specifically regarding the key role the arts played in sparking joy and fueling resistance among its victims. No RSVP is necessary, and seats are first-come, first-served; a performance ticket to the 2:00 showtime on Sunday, October 19th is required.

This reimagined production features a musical arrangement by Gavin Sutherland after Adolphe Adam’s original score, alongside modern choreography by Pink that pays tribute to the original choreography by Jean Coralli and Jules Perrot. It was co-created with Christopher Gable for England’s Northern Ballet in 1997, with the original cast featuring Pink’s now-wife Jayne Regan as Giselle and Milwaukee Ballet Rehearsal Director Denis Malinkine as Albrecht. Both have been heavily involved in coaching the Leading Artists playing these roles in the upcoming production.

Giselle is generously presented by We Energies Foundation, which is also sponsoring Violins of Hope—Wisconsin and Skylight Music Theater’s production of *Fiddler on the Roof*.

Performance Information

Giselle will take place from October 17-19 at Marcus Performing Arts Center. Tickets start at \$40 and may be purchased online at www.milwaukeeballet.org or through the Milwaukee Ballet Box Office at 414.902.2103.

The performance schedule is as follows:

- Friday, October 17, 2025 — 7:30 PM
- Saturday, October 18, 2025 — 2:00 PM
- Saturday, October 18, 2025 — 7:30 PM
- Sunday, October 19, 2025 — 2:00 PM

Giselle is presented by We Energies Foundation and its media partner is Wisconsin Public Radio.

Milwaukee Ballet’s 2025/26 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.