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1996-97



SEASON



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# A Midsummer Night's Dream



One of the most dazzling ballets ever to grace a stage, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is a richly embroidered tale of moonstruck lovers and magical spells, of comic mischief-making and mistaken identities, of love first betrayed and then begotten. The setting is an enchanted forest brimming with titlites, fauns and fantasy.

The fairy king has been quarreling with his queen. To resolve the spat and the plight of other mortal lovers in the forest, a love spell is cast. But misadventures abound, including that of the queen who, wrongly love struck, pursues a man accidentally turned into a donkey! Shakespeare's comic eloquence is set into motion by the grand eloquence of Mendelssohn's music and the grandeur of Bruce Wallis' choreography. Replete with stunning costumes, lavish sets, and dance divine and dynamic, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is ballet at its best.

And, for *A Midsummer Night's Dream* only, the Milwaukee Ballet Orchestra will follow the wand of the internationally acclaimed maestro, Stewart Kershaw, formerly of England's Royal Ballet Orchestra!

Join the Milwaukee Ballet for this spectacular season opener with family and friends. Share in the love and laughter of this glorious dream within a dream!

"A Midsummer Night's Dream is as much about laughter as about love... This ballet charms, even enchants."  
—Milwaukee Journal

"Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* has always been a favorite of mine."  
—George Balanchine



SEPTEMBER 26 - 29, 1996

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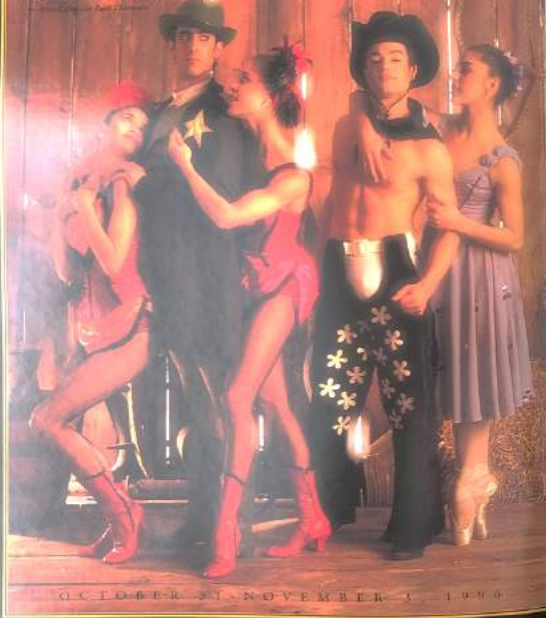
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HOLD ON TO YOUR HATS FOR AN EVENING OF COWBOYS AND COWLAND!

"Audiences around the world love *Billy the Kid*. It's a great American classic created by Milwaukee native, Eugene Loring. He caused a revolution in dance and inspired later works like *Oklahoma* and *Rodeo*."



OCTOBER 31 - NOVEMBER 3, 1996

## Billy the Kid

This all-American favorite was the very first American ballet ever to be created. Now Milwaukeeans will have it for another season as well. *Billy the Kid* was created by one of Milwaukee's own - born on Jones Island - Eugene Loring. Loring created the ballet in 1938 and has legend of a lone cowboy quickly put him in the saddle of success on Broadway and Hollywood. *Billy the Kid* is the story of the Wild West's most dangerous desperado who, by the time he was finally killed at age twenty-one, had killed a man for every year of his life. But this ballet is neither a veteran nor a villain. Billy, rather, is told a toe-tapping tale around the campfire, with Aaron Copland's nostalgic score bringing to life age-bruins and saloon girls, sunsets and showstoppers, and three-eyes under the stars.

This incredible evening also offers two other gold nuggets. Lia de Ribera's whistled *Alcibiades* has been called "a brilliant showcase" that "explodes onto the stage." Set to Berlioz, *Alcibiades* is a madman of music and motion. Bounding athleticism is punctuated by stunning vertical lifts and accented by the orchestra's crackling percussion and vacuum strings.



Rounding out the program is Robert Jeffrey's marvelous and mischievous *Pas de Deux* (performed on five days on the "dance of the golden-eyes," depicting three prima ballerinas dueling daintily for center stage.

When the dust finally settles after this dazzling evening of dance, you'll leave the theater with star dust in your eyes and gold dust in your memories.



"Audiences around the world love *Billy the Kid*. It's a great American classic created by Milwaukee native, Eugene Loring. He caused a revolution in dance and inspired later works like *Oklahoma* and *Rodeo*."

Artistic Director Bill Thompson



OCTOBER 31 - NOVEMBER 3, 1996



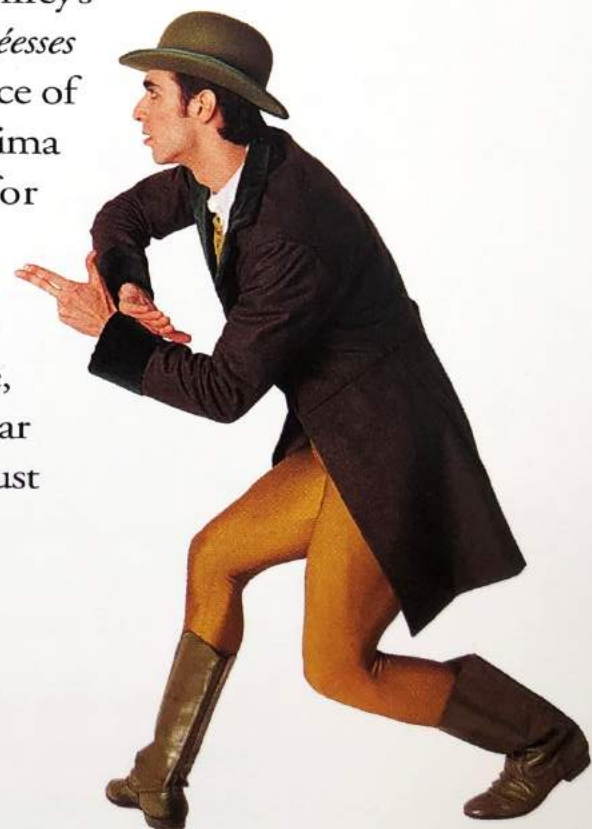
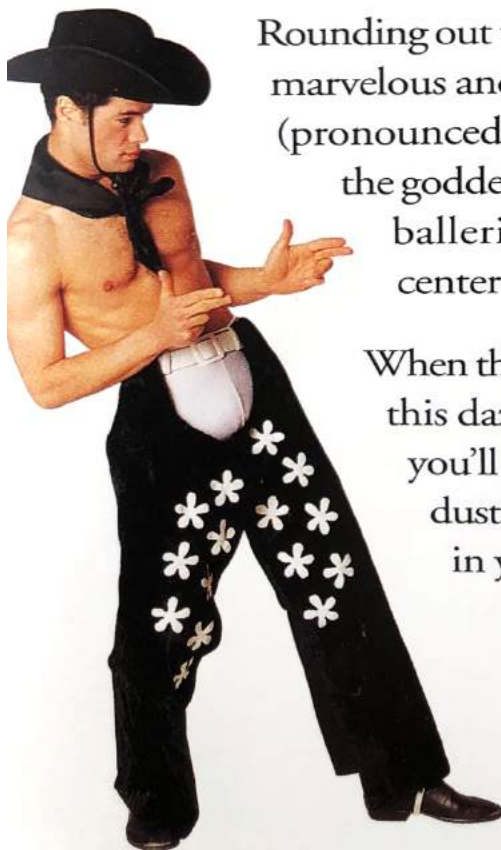


This all-American favorite was the very first American ballet ever to be created, but Milwaukeeans will love it for another reason as well. *Billy the Kid* was created by one of Milwaukee's own – born on Jones Island – Eugene Loring. Loring created the ballet in 1938 and his legend of a lonesome cowboy quickly put him in the saddle of success to Broadway and Hollywood. *Billy the Kid* is the story of the Wild West's most dangerous desperado who, by the time he was finally killed at age twenty-one, had killed a man for every year of his life. But this ballet neither venerates nor vilifies Billy. Rather, it tells a toe-tapping tale around the campfire, with Aaron Copland's nostalgic score bringing to life sagebrush and saloon girls, sunsets and shoot-outs, and shut-eye under the stars.

This incredible evening also offers two other gold nuggets. Lisa de Ribère's whirlwind *Music* has been called "a brilliant showcase" that "explodes onto the stage." Set to Bartok, *Music* is a maelstrom of music and motion. Bounding athleticism is punctuated by stunning vertical lifts and accented by the orchestra's crackling percussion and staccato strings.

Rounding out the program is Robert Joffrey's marvelous and mischievous *Pas de Déesses* (pronounced pa dŭ day-ez) or "dance of the goddesses," depicting three prima ballerinas dueling daintily for center stage.

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# The Firebird

In 1910, in a country aflame with fiery revolution, Igor Stravinsky emblazoned the Russian legend of the Firebird. His famous "Firebird Suite" was written for a ballet about a magical bird of fire, whose splendor, ebullient life and resiliency in the face of evil. Since then, the *Firebird* has held a special place in the history of ballet.

It is with great pride that the Milwaukee Ballet presents a contemporary world premiere of this triumphant tale, choreographed by a rising new star in the dance world, Ed Burgess—a Milwaukee resident whose works have been seen around the world. Critics have called the choreography of this dancer of dance "achingly beautiful," "mesmerizing," and characterized by "athleticism" and "burning intensity." The *New York Times* praised his "lithe, all-out dancing" as the "expression of happy triumph." The marriage of Stravinsky's symphonic fireworks and Burgess's provocative poses and firecracker quickness promise to ignite excitement across the nation. But the fire quakes will strike in Milwaukee!

Works by two other trailblazers in dance will also be featured. One of the most popular choreographers in America, David Parsons creates dance stunningly athletic and artistically subtle. His piece *Bach/Now* is "an ebullient tribute to the joy of life" overflowing with "uninhibited movement," according to the *New York Times*.

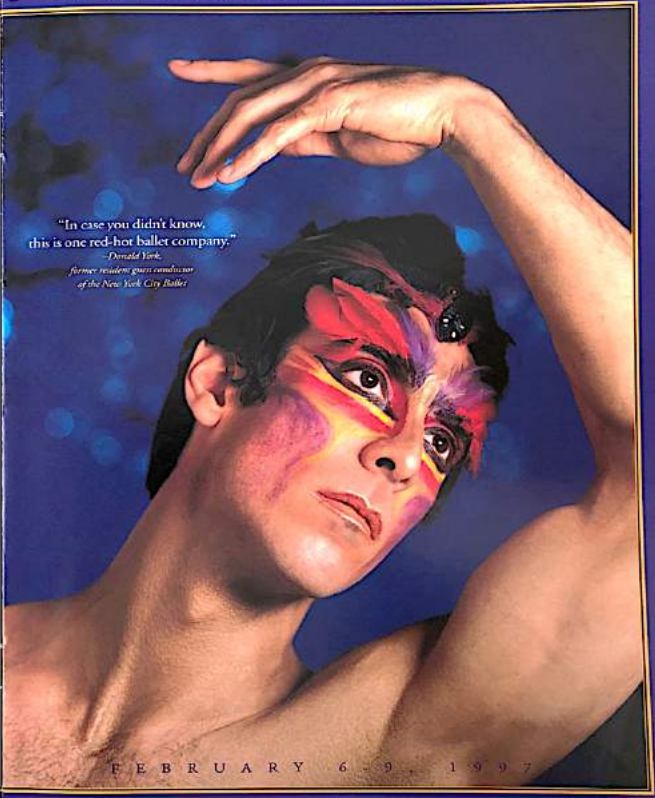
Kathryn Davis's innovative and colorful piece called *Bach's Lament* marvelously matches the music of Bach and avant-garde performance artist and poet Laurie Anderson for a rollicking, frolicking picnic with perversity!

Don't miss this fantastic fusion of explosive dance, soaring music, and incendiary invention. It will kindle your passion for contemporary dance.



"In case you didn't know, this is one red-hot ballet company."

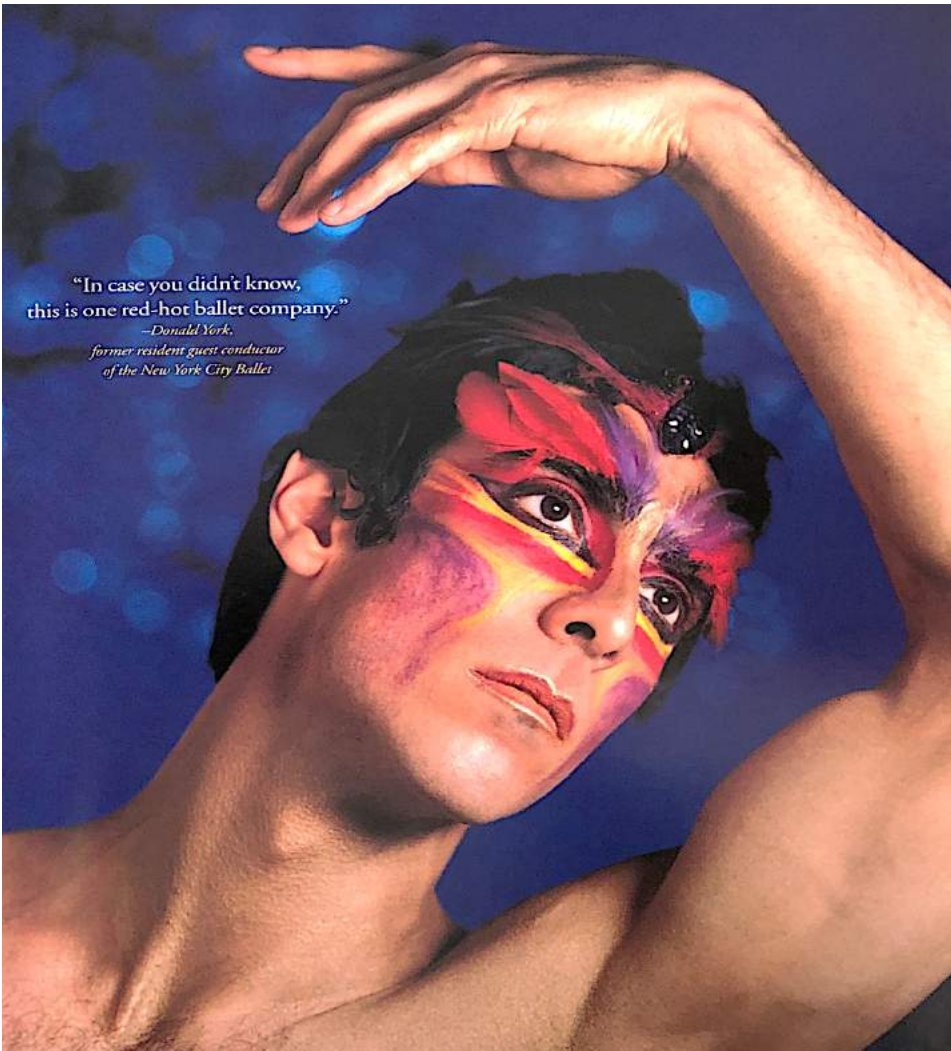
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FEBRUARY 6-9, 1997

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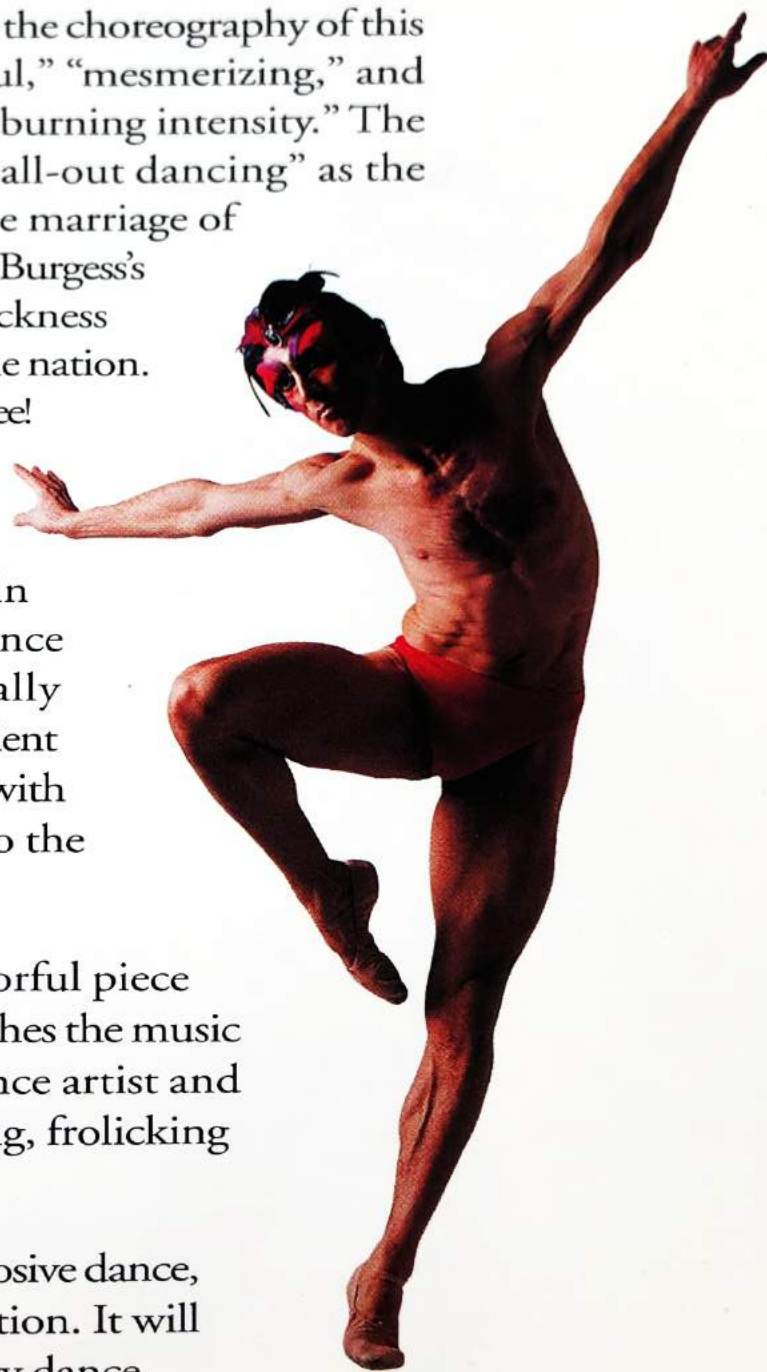
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Works by two other trailblazers in dance will also be featured. One of the most popular choreographers in America, David Parsons creates dance stunningly athletic and artistically robust. His piece *Bachiana* is "an ebullient tribute to the joy of life" overflowing with "innocent merriment," according to the *New York Times*.

Kathryn Posin's innovative and colorful piece called *Bach's Lunch* marvelously matches the music of Bach and avant-garde performance artist and poet Laurie Anderson for a rollicking, frolicking picnic with perversity!

Don't miss this fantastic fusion of explosive dance, searing music, and incendiary invention. It will kindle your passion for contemporary dance.







Milwaukee Ballet is one of the Midwest's best-kept cultural secrets."  
—Dance Magazine

APRIL 3-6, 1997

## Under the Sun

*Under the Sun* is a milestone ballet by dance mega-star Margo Sappington, the creator of the blockbuster hit *Virgin Forest* and one of the creators of Prince's *Billboards*. *Under the Sun* is based on the wildly colored, geometric works of the artist Alexander Calder. Sappington reinvents Calder's curves and colors on stage in a kind of comic cubism of happy feet and giddy geometry. Dancers defy gravity and redefine dance with acrobatic aplomb — they are high, they are low, they are sideways or upside down. They are even suspended in space or sliding upside-down on a 26-foot vertical pole! Add to this quicksilver choreography the fabulous costumes of Tony Award-winning designer Willa Kim and the original score of Hollywood composer Michael Kamen, and you have a masterpiece of epic, albeit oblique, proportions!

*Unknown Territory*, by dance giant Choo-San Goh, is another showcase of athletic adventure. Choo-San Goh was called "the most sought after choreographer in America" by the *New York Times* before his untimely death. *Unknown Territory* is the story of a warrior's rite of passage and the princess whose hand he seeks. Glittering costumes adorn gladiators and great ladies in this touching tale of self-discovery and selflessness.

Genard Charles' *Parallel Lives* is also a dance of life's passages. Set to music by Leonard Bernstein, the ballet opens to a huge picture frame enlisting four dancers in dramatic formal attire. A love triangle complicated by a child untangles its way through an emotional labyrinth of human foible and fortitude.

Indulge yourself in this extraordinary evening of artistic adventure, of dance imitating art imitating life.



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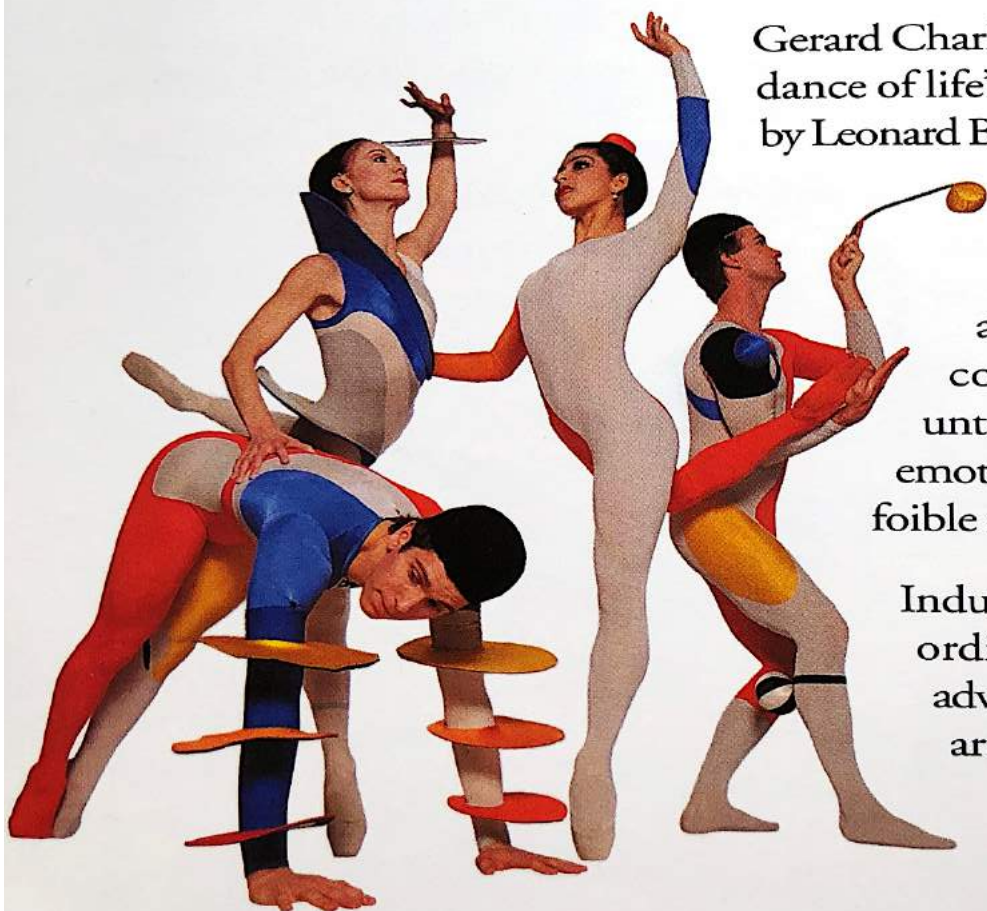


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# Swan Lake

The most beloved ballet in history, *Swan Lake* paints a lovely landscape, awash in arabesques and adagios, of haunting tragedy and love triumphant beyond death. A beautiful princess under a sorcerer's wicked spell is imprisoned in a swan's body. Languished but lovely, she floats upon a lake formed from her mother's tears. A handsome prince hunting with a crossbow is poised to pierce her heart. Instead, he falls in love. For under the veil of darkness, the princess magically emerges as a beautiful woman. But this love between prince and princess possessed is ill-fated. An evil black swan, sly and sinuous, wends her way into the prince's heart through sorcery. The drama is heightened by Tchaikovsky's soaring score, taking flight with quivering strings and trumpeting horns, to heights only the heart knows. Who better to conduct such heavenly harmony than the world renowned Kenneth Scharmerhorn.

Statuesque in sculptural poses both swanlike and womanlike, the roles of the White Swan and Black Swan, played by the same dancer, are the ultimate for a prima ballerina. *Swan Lake* is, in both a prophetic and a professional sense, a dance of immortality. The White Swan dances for the immortality of her love, and the prima ballerina dances for her own immortality on stage.

Experience ballet's greatest classic, performed by one of the country's best ballet companies, conducted by one of the country's greatest maestros. It will be an evening you'll never forget.



"Swan Lake is a shimmering jewel."  
-Milwaukee Journal

"Breathtaking... the Milwaukee Ballet's *Swan Lake* has become more spellbinding than ever."  
-Milwaukee Sentinel

"Electrifying...if the on-stage voltage would have been any higher at the Milwaukee Ballet's performance of *Swan Lake*, the Auditorium Theater would have exploded."  
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MAY 22 - 25, 1997



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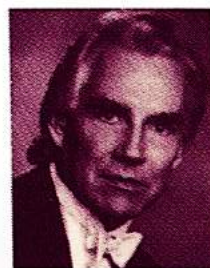
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SHARE THIS HOLIDAY TRADITION WITH SOMEONE YOU LOVE

"Nowhere in America, perhaps nowhere in the world for that matter, can you enjoy a finer production than right here in Milwaukee... Give yourself and your family a grand Yuletide present this year and see the Milwaukee Ballet's *Nutcracker*. You won't be sorry."  
*—Exclusively Yours Magazine*



DECEMBER 12-29 1996

# The Nutcracker

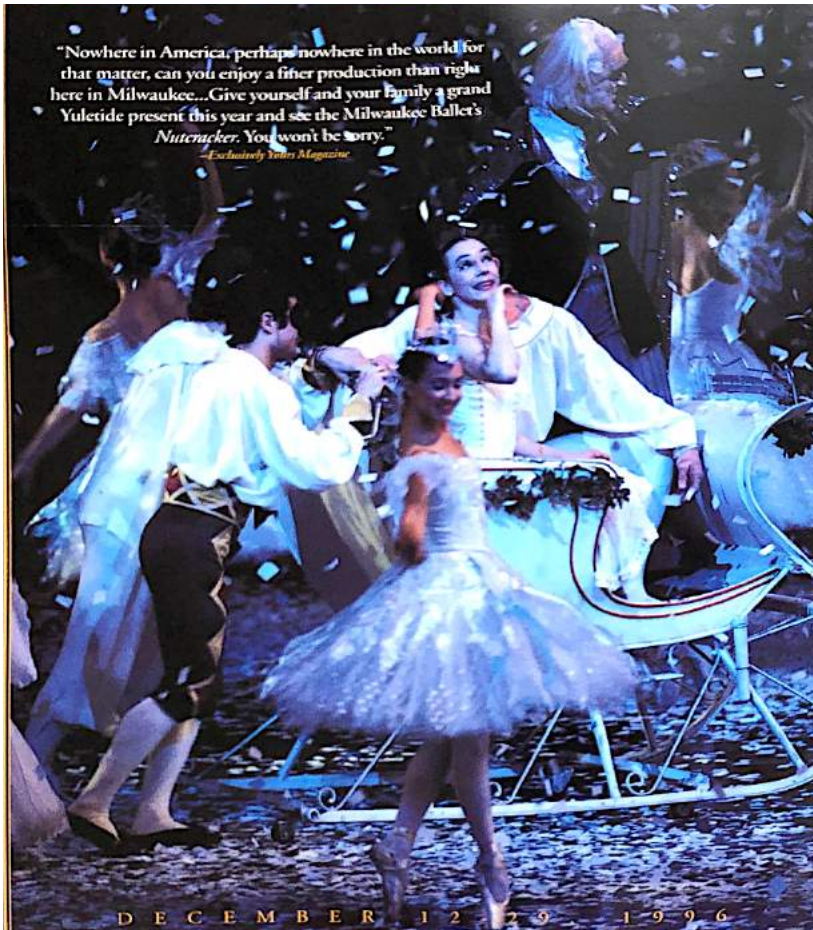


As the snow falls and the curtain rises, enter a Land suspended in fantasy, where Sugarplum Fairies rule and children's dreams come true. This is a land of drummer boys and battle mice, angels and Arabian dancers, harlequins and a handsome Nutcracker prince. *The Nutcracker* is the Milwaukee Ballet's Crown Jewel, a sparkling spectacle of dance, drama and dress that will fill the eyes and the soul. See why *The Nutcracker* is Wisconsin's most loved holiday tradition — why over one million people have been entranced by its magic! So, if you're looking for something to make your holiday special, escape to the Land of Sweets. The warmth and wonder of *The Nutcracker* will melt your heart. And, grown-ups, be forewarned! *The Nutcracker* has a curious effect, for in the privacy of darkness illuminated only by dazzling dancers and Tchaikovsky's magical music, adults forget their age and remember all that divides old from young is this — the young still believe that dreams can come true.



Share *The Nutcracker* with someone you love, especially a little one, and be charmed back to childhood.

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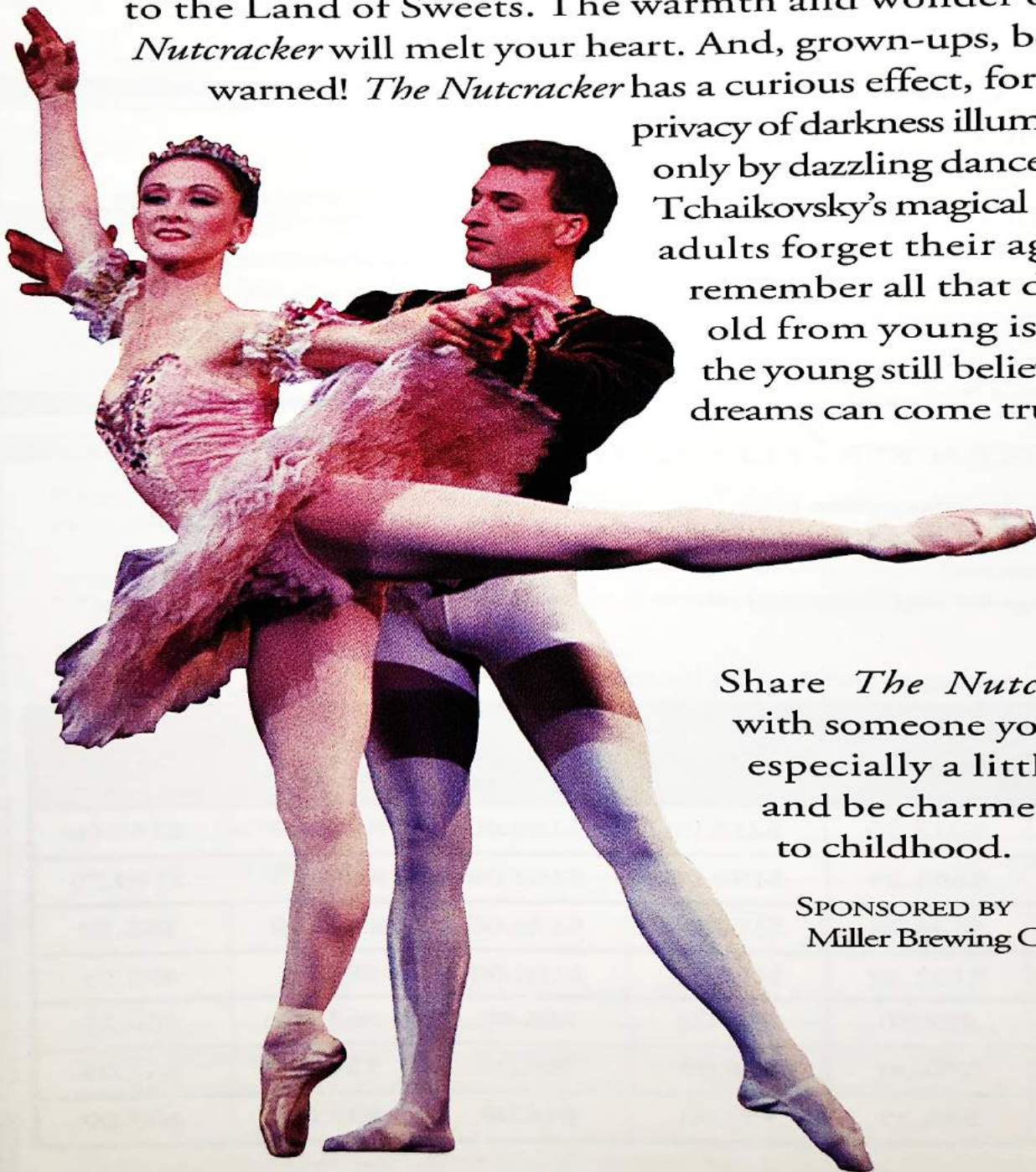
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BALLET IS THE  
HALLOWED ARENA WHERE ARTIST  
AND ATHLETE BECOME ONE  
WITH FIRE IN THE SOUL  
AND FURY IN THE FEET.

EXPERIENCE THIS LOVELY ART  
WROUGHT OF SATIN AND SINEW,  
CRINOLINES AND COURAGE,  
PASSION AND PERFECTION.

