

Detroit Opera

Ballet Preljocaj's provocative, eco-conscious *Swan Lake* at the Detroit Opera House, Feb. 17–19



Ballet Preljocaj performs *Swan Lake*. Photo by JC Carbonne

DETROIT, January 23, 2023—How can we protect swans and keep our lakes clean? Those are the core questions posed by contemporary French choreographer Angelin Preljocaj in his visionary take on *Swan Lake*, which will be presented at the Detroit Opera House from **February 17 to 19**. This provocative reinterpretation sets Tchaikovsky's timeless tale of love and betrayal against the backdrop of a dystopian ecological tragedy, with industry tycoons set against eco-conscious heroes.

Preljocaj's *Swan Lake* bridges ballet and modern dance, in a co-presentation by Detroit Opera and University Musical Society, Ann Arbor. Audiences who have seen Ballet Preljocaj's previous four appearances in Ann Arbor, including the magical *Snow White* a decade ago, are

in for a treat when classical ballet meets modern dance on the stage of the Detroit Opera House.

There is scarcely a more iconic ballet than *Swan Lake*. The heroine, dancing the dual role of Odette/Odile (representing good and evil), requires strong acting as well as ballet technique. The role has been referred to as the “Mona Lisa” of ballet. Originally staged by Marius Petipa with Lev Ivanov in 1895, Preljocaj re-imagined this classic in 2020. With 26 dancers and choreographed to an innovative soundscape utilizing the familiar Tchaikovsky score infused with techno dance music, this *Swan Lake* truly takes flight in its beautiful tribute to the original. The evil sorcerer von Rothbart is portrayed as an industrialist who wants to exploit fossil fuels against a backdrop of unbridled capitalism, while Siegfried and Odette are the two eco-conscious heroes who try to thwart his plans. The production—blending narrative ballet and storytelling and featuring video design by Boris Labbé, costume designs by Igor Chapurin, and lighting design by Éric Soyer—“is theatrical in the best sense of the word” (Paris Institute) and “combines the elongated lines of ballet with the flattened planes and multidirectionality of Merce Cunningham’s choreography, as well as a low, grounded center of gravity” (*New York Times*).

PERFORMANCE DETAILS

Ballet Preljocaj: Swan Lake

Friday, February 17, 7:30 pm

Saturday, February 18, 7:30 pm

Sunday, February 19, 2:30 pm

Detroit Opera House

Tickets from \$29 at detroitopera.org or 313.237.7464

Tickets also available at ums.org or 734.764.2538

Pre-concert talks: Pre-concert talks will take place at Detroit Opera House one hour before each performance.

Masterclass: Detroit Opera will offer a Ballet Master Class with Ballet Preljocaj on Saturday, February 18, from 11am to 12:30pm. The class is open to the public and free with a corresponding ticket stub or \$25 without a ticket stub and will take place in the Margo V. Cohen Center for Dance in the Ford Center for Learning at the Detroit Opera House. [Pre-registration is required.](#)

For more information and to purchase tickets, visit the [Detroit Opera website](#).

Detroit Opera’s spring dance sponsor is Ford Motor Company Fund. Our media partner is WDET 101.9 FM.

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