



Press release

## **Dancer and choreographer Aleksander Ekman and composer Mikael Karlsson honoured with the EBU-IMZ Outstanding Achievement Award**

**The International Music + Media Centre and the European Broadcasting Union recognize dancer and choreographer Aleksander Ekman and composer Mikael Karlsson for their outstanding contributions to music + dance in the audiovisual industry.**

Vienna, 4 October 2023

**Prague: The 2023 EBU-IMZ Outstanding Achievement Award was bestowed upon dancer and choreographer Aleksander Ekman and composer Mikael Karlsson, for, “not just for their individual brilliance, but also for their dynamic partnership that has enriched the world”. as IMZ President Arild Erikstad has put it.**

Describing the achievement never does the work of art justice. But there is something of a genuine inquiry, the lust for something new and the courage to create it, that has driven these two gentlemen to exactly those heights that make art so enriching.

Mikael Karlsson and Alexander Ekman have two quite different approaches to art. Whilst one creates image with the movement of the body, through dance, the other focusses on music and composition entirely. But in art, there is always the need for a link of the seemingly unconnected. And so, the two set up to compose music with movement and movement with music. Creating multiple pieces together, they showed us what art is all about: exploration, creation and revelation. Their collaboration began in 2012 and blossomed into multiple successful productions, such as “[Swan Lake](#)”, “[A Midsummer Night’s Dream](#)”, “[COW](#)” and “[PLAY](#)”.

The award of course not only honours the recipient’s collaborative works, but also their individual contributions.

“It gives me great joy that the EBU Music Group and the IMZ Board selected Alexander Ekman and Mikael Karlsson for their contributions and accomplishments to our sector. Their works have made a long-lasting impact on the audiovisual performing arts sector, and even though they are receiving the Outstanding Achievement Award individually, I cannot think of Mika without thinking of Alex and vice versa – they are an inspiring team and I cannot wait to see what’s next”, remarked Arild Erikstad, IMZ President and Executive Producer at NRK.

Ieva Rozentale, Chairwoman of the EBU TV Music Expert Group and Head of Culture at Latvian Television, stated that “with their unparalleled creativity, Karlsson and Ekman became

trailblazers in the realm of composing, dance and choreography, leaving a profound impact on audiences on and off the screen. I cannot think of a better choice for this year's award".

Mikael Karlsson, who obtained his master's degree in classical composition from the Aaron Copland School of Music, ventured into many different genres, finding room to express not only himself but also the sentiments he helped to illustrate. One of his most famous works being his compositions for the Battlefield Series.

Alexander Ekman is a dancer, choreograph and costume designer, already showing his versatility on paper, and never fails to leave a mark after the actual experience of one of his performances. Humorous, deep and lightening sharp movements entertain audiences worldwide. So, it comes as no surprise that his choreographies have been performed by many big ensembles, such as les Ballet de Monte Carlo, the Boston Ballet, Pacific North West Ballet, the Semperoper Ballett, the Nederlands Dans Theater, the Norwegian National Ballet, the Royal Swedish Ballett, the São Paulo City Ballet, the Sydney dance Company, and the Wiener Staatsballett.

### **ABOUT THE EBU-IMZ OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT AWARD**

The EBU-IMZ Outstanding Achievement award is a joint initiative of the IMZ International Music + Media Centre and the EBU European Broadcasting Union alongside the ITF Golden Prague. Established in 2017, the award recognises excellence in music + dance in the audiovisual industry and has been presented to Brian Large, Bruno Monsaingeon, Anca-Monica Pandelea + Gabrielle Babin Gugenheim, Christopher Nupen and Peter Sellars. Find more info here.

### **ABOUT THE IMZ INTERNATIONAL MUSIC + MEDIA CENTRE**

As a global business network for more than 150 Member Organisations, the IMZ International Music + Media Centre provides relevant information + opportunities for those active at the intersection of performing arts + media: leading film + TV production companies, public + private broadcasters, streaming platforms, distributors + record labels as well as opera houses, concert halls, orchestras and dance companies. The IMZ is committed to the sustainable advancement of the industry and bases its activities around four pillars: Market Access + Network, Professionalisation, Audience Development and Innovation + New Business Models. [www.imz.at](http://www.imz.at)

### **ABOUT THE EBU EUROPEAN BROADCASTING UNION**

The European Broadcasting Union is the world's foremost alliance of public service media, representing 115 member organisations in 65 countries. Their members operate nearly 2,000 television, radio and online channels and services, and offer a wealth of content across other platforms. Together they reach an audience of more than one billion people around the world, broadcasting in more than 160 languages. Moreover, the EBU operates Eurovision and Euroradio services. [www.ebu.ch](http://www.ebu.ch)

### **ABOUT THE GOLDEN PRAGUE INTERNATIONAL TELEVISION FESTIVAL**

Hosted by Czech TV in collaboration with the EBU + the IMZ, the annual Golden Prague International Television Festival brings together media experts from across the world and the general public, promoting the performing arts on television by honouring the best music + dance film productions in three main categories, one special mention award and two special prizes. This year marked the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the festival!

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