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Rachel McCarthy
Illinois Wesleyan University

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Damaschke '85 Produces Tony-Nominated Musical "Moulin Rouge!"

Oct. 23, 2020

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. — *Moulin Rouge!*, executive-produced by Illinois Wesleyan University alumnus Bill Damaschke '85, has been nominated for 14 Tony Awards including Best Musical.

Despite indefinite postponement of the 74th Annual Tony Awards ceremony, the committee announced this year's nominations on October 15. In total, 18 musicals, plays and play revivals will be considered for awards.

This year marks Damaschke's second time producing a Tony-nominated musical through his theatrical production company StoryKey Entertainment. His 2019 musical [*The Prom* received seven Tony nominations](#) in addition to dozens more from multiple organizations, including a Drama Desk Award for Outstanding Musical.

Damaschke has previously served as president of Animation and Family Entertainment at Skydance Media following two decades with DreamWorks Animation, where he rose from an entry-level production assistant to the company's chief creative officer.

Moulin Rouge! The Musical is an adaptation of the 2001 film of the same name, directed by Baz Luhrmann. The musical tells the story of a depressed young writer who falls for a cabaret actress amid a world of splendor and romance. *The Hollywood Reporter* praised the production's "eye-popping spectacle and off-the-charts energy," and *Time Out New York* described it as "the jukebox musical to end all jukebox musicals."

Along with its Best Musical Tony nomination, *Moulin Rouge!* was also nominated for Best Book of a Musical, Best Performance by an Actor in a Leading Role in a Musical — Aaron Tveit, Best Performance by an Actress in a Leading Role in a Musical — Karen Olivo, Best Performance by an Actor in a Featured Role in a Musical — Danny Burstein and Sahr Ngaujah, Best Performance by an Actress in a Featured Role in a Musical — Robyn Hurder, Best Direction of a Musical — Alex Timbers, Best Scenic Design of a Musical — Derek McLane, Best Costume Design of a Musical — Catherine Zuber, Best Lighting Design of a Musical — Justin Townsend, Best Sound Design of a Musical — Peter Hylenski, Best Choreography — Sonya Tayeh, and Best Orchestrations — Justin Levine, with Katie Kresek, Charlie Rosen and Matt Stine.

Damaschke graduated from Illinois Wesleyan with a bachelor's degree in [music theatre](#) (BFA). He was the University's Distinguished Alumni in 2011 and spoke at Commencement in 2016.



Bill Damaschke '85

By Rachel McCarthy '21