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First Stage announces Artistic and Creative Teams for 2023/24 season

Milwaukee, WI – August 24, 2023 – First Stage, one of the nation’s leading theaters for young people and families, announced today the Artistic and Creative Teams for the upcoming 2023/24 season. The season will kick off on October 6, 2023 at the Marcus Center’s Todd Wehr Theater with the inspiring world premiere **DREAM, QUICKIE! DREAM!**, based on the books by Green Bay Packer legend **Donald Driver**, written by **Gloria Bond Clunie** and directed by popular Milwaukee actor/director **Dimonte Henning**. This production is co-commissioned by **First Stage** and the **Marcus Performing Arts Center**. For the complete 2023/24 season line up, please visit: firststage.org/events-tickets/2023-2024-season-of-plays/

The Artistic and Creative Team for **DREAM, QUICKIE! DREAM!** includes: **Dimonte Henning** (Director); **Martin McClendon** (Scenic Designer); **Trinae Williams-Henning** (Costume Designer); **Jason Fassl, USA**, (Lighting Designer); **Antoine Reynolds** (Sound Designer); **Christopher Gilbert** (Movement Choreographer) and **Lonnae Hickman** (Puppet Designer and Builder). This mainstage production will be performed at the Marcus Center’s Todd Wehr Theater **October 6 – 29, 2023**.

The Artistic and Creative Team for **THE BEST CHRISTMAS PAGEANT EVER: THE MUSICAL** includes: **Molly Rhode**, First Stage alum/A MIDSUMMER NIGHT’S DREAM/THE AMAZING LEMONADE GIRL/THE BEST CHRISTMAS PAGEANT EVER, (Director/Choreographer); **James Carrington**, Bob Marley’s THREE LITTLE BIRDS/ARTHUR™ AND FRIENDS MAKE A MUSICAL/THE AMAZING LEMONADE GIRL, (Assistant Director); **Bill Busch** (Music Director); **Kristin Ellert** (Scenic Designer); **Daryl Harris** (Costume Designer); **Lyndsey Kuhlmann** (Cutter/Draper and Assistant Costume Designer); **Erica Lauren Maholmes, USA** (Lighting Designer) and **Matt Whitmore** (Sound Designer). This mainstage production will be performed at the Marcus Center’s Todd Wehr Theater **November 24 – December 24, 2023**.

The Artistic and Creative Team for **THE LIGHTNING THIEF: THE PERCY JACKSON MUSICAL** includes: **Jeff Frank**, THE HOBBIT/RUDOLPH THE RED-NOSED REINDEER™: THE MUSICAL!, (Director/First Stage Artistic Director); **Tim Rebers** (Music Director); **Madelyn Yee** (Scenic Designer); **Yvonne Miranda, USA** (Costume Designer); **Maaz Ahmed** (Lighting Designer); **Sarah Ramos** (Sound Designer); **Ami Majeskie** (Choreographer); **Jamey Feshold** (Fight Director) and **Nikki Kulas** (Properties Master/Puppet Designer). This mainstage production will be performed at the Marcus Center's Todd Wehr Theater **February 3 – March 3, 2024**.

The Artistic and Creative Team for **DIARY OF A WIMPY KID: THE MUSICAL** includes: **Julie Woods-Robinson** (Director); **Paula Foley Tillen** (Music Director); **Casey Price** (Scenic Designer); **Jason Orlenko, USA** (Costume Designer); **Kevin Alexander, USA** (Sound Designer); **Jason Fassl, USA** (Lighting Designer) and **Molly Rhode** (Choreographer). This mainstage production will be performed at the Marcus Center's Todd Wehr Theater **April 6 – May 5, 2024**.

The Artistic and Creative Team for **THE FORGOTTEN GIRL** includes: **Jon Royal** (Director); **Amaya Rockett** (Scenic Designer); **Jazmin Aurora Medina** (Costume Designer); **Jared Gooding** (Lighting Designer) and **Kevin O'Donnell** (Sound Designer). This production will be performed at Milwaukee Youth Center's Goodman Mainstage Hall **October 20 – November 12, 2023**.

The Artistic and Creative Team for the Young Company Performance Project of **HENRY IV, PART 1** includes: **Marcella Kearns**, MACBETH/THE TWO GENTLEMEN FROM VERONA, (Director); **Michelle Verbos** (Costume Coordinator); **Marion Frank** (Lighting Coordinator); **Derek Buckles** (Sound Coordinator); **Christopher Elst, SAFD** (Fight Director) and **Kayla Salter Giltner** (Dramaturg). This production will be performed at Milwaukee Youth Center's Goodman Mainstage Hall **December 8 – 17, 2023**.

The Artistic and Creative Team for **ELEPHANT AND PIGGIE'S "WE ARE IN A PLAY!"** includes: **Michelle LoRizzo** (Director/Choreographer/First Stage Associate Artistic Director); **Jonathan Gideon** (Music Director); **Em Allen** (Scenic Designer); **Lyndsey Kuhlmann** (Costume Designer); **Shane O'Neil** (Lighting Designer); **Derek Buckles** (Sound Designer) and **Maya O'Day Biddle**, Young Performer last seen in Bob Marley's THREE LITTLE BIRDS, (Assistant Choreographer). This production will be performed at Milwaukee Youth Center's Goodman Mainstage Hall **February 24 – March 17, 2024**.

The Artistic and Creative Team for the Young Company Performance Project of **ENEMY OF THE PEOPLE** includes: **Josh Pohja** (Director). This production will be performed at Milwaukee Youth Center's Goodman Mainstage Hall **April 19 – 28, 2024**.

The Artistic and Creative Team for **ESCAPE FROM PELIGRO ISLAND** includes: **Jeff Frank** (Director/Artistic Director); **Leo Madson**, THE HOBBIT, (Assistant Director); **Kristin Ellert** (Scenic Designer); **Jazmin Aurora Medina** (Costume Designer); **Tim Thistleton** (Lighting Designer) and **Elisabeth Weidner, USA** (Sound Designer). This production will be performed at Milwaukee Youth Center's Goodman Mainstage Hall **May 10 – June 2, 2024**.

Tickets

First Stage offers three ways to purchase tickets for its 2023/24 season. **Family Packages** allow ticket buyers to choose just two or more plays in the season to save up to 30% off regular ticket prices, while also providing free and flexible ticket exchanges and priority seating. **The All-Access Membership**, available at \$75 per household, gives members two complimentary tickets to redeem throughout the season with an additional 20% discount off additional ticket purchases, discounts on Theater Academy classes, the annual Make Believe Ball and more. Family Packages and All-Access Memberships are on sale now. Single tickets to First Stage's 2023/24 season are also on sale now.

For additional information about the 2023/24 season and to order tickets, please go to firststage.org or call **(414) 267-2961**.

Google Drive: Here is a link to photos and logos for the 2023/24 season:

drive.google.com/drive/folders/1QBARMrwHcWfAP-Xs6GBH_REsyrldyDOH

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About First Stage

Founded in 1987, First Stage is one of the nation's leading theaters for young people and families, and a driving force behind the creation of the best and most innovative plays for family audiences, theater training programs for young people and education initiatives for its schools and community. First Stage ensures that all programming is not only accessible to its community but that it is reflective of the community it serves.

First Stage produces plays that honor the young person's point of view, include diverse and traditionally underrepresented voices and inspire meaningful conversations. First Stage has presented more than 70 world premiere productions that address important subject matters relevant to today's youth. The Theater Academy is one of the nation's largest high-impact theater training programs for young people (3-18 years old). Through a challenging curriculum taught by professional teaching artists, the Academy nurtures life skills through stage skills and includes the Next Steps Program that tailors Theater Academy classes to the needs of young people on the autism spectrum and with other developmental disabilities. As Wisconsin's leader in arts-integrated education in schools, First Stage's dynamic Theater in Education Programs cleverly blend theater activities with standard curriculum – allowing more than 10,000 students annually to learn traditional academic subjects through creativity and self-expression.

First Stage is a member of TYA/USA, the American Alliance for Theatre and Education, the Wisconsin Alliance for Arts Education, Milwaukee Arts Partners and is a cornerstone member of the United Performing Arts Fund (UPAF). firststage.org