



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**First Stage presents the
world premiere production
THE AMAZING LEMONADE GIRL**

-Based on the inspirational true story of Alexandra Flynn Scott-

Milwaukee, WI – March 31, 2022 – First Stage is honored to present the world premiere production of THE AMAZING LEMONADE GIRL, written by award-winning playwright/author, First Stage Resident Playwright and Wisconsin actor **James DeVita** and directed by First Stage alum and Northern Sky Associate Artistic Director **Molly Rhode**, with costume design by **Austin Winter**, sound design by **Josh Schmidt** and scenic and lighting design by **Jason Fassl, USA**. In this heartfelt, uplifting play, First Stage audiences will meet Alex Scott. She has a story to tell – about her life and her legacy, her humor and her heart. Alex is young girl who is fiercely determined to make a difference despite the challenges she faces. Alex’s true story reminds us all that a single person can change the world – one act, or even one cup, at a time. Sponsored by **Northwestern Mutual**.

“We are honored to partner with First Stage in the development of THE AMAZING LEMONADE GIRL, bringing the courageous story of Alex and her mission to accelerate the search for a cure for childhood cancer to the stage. Alex’s legacy is one that inspires many and will reach so many families throughout southeastern Wisconsin in seeing this play at First Stage,” stated **Audra Brennan**, Sr. Director of Philanthropy at Northwestern Mutual.

THE AMAZING LEMONADE GIRL runs **April 22 – May 15, 2022** at the Marcus Center’s Todd Wehr Theater, located at 929 N. Water Street in downtown Milwaukee. Tickets start at \$21 and can be purchased in person at the Marcus Center Box Office at 929 N. Water Street, by phone

at (414) 273-7206 or online at firststage.org. Performance runtime is approximately 70 minutes, with no intermission. Suggested for families with young people ages 7+.

Director **Molly Rhode** shared her thoughts about the play: “My favorite thing about this script is how the character of Alex is in total control of the story. When an ensemble bursts forth to assist her, it becomes like an epic playdate, with her directing and re-directing their efforts. There is a great sense of joy and playfulness, while still remaining direct and honest about this hard topic. The show is a celebration of Alex’s legacy and James DeVita crafts the journey beautifully, taking great care of the audience along the way.”

Added Artistic Director **Jeff Frank**: “Every time I hear Alex’s story, it kindles deep inside me a desire to be better and to do more. She reminds us all that we are capable of doing great things.”

BIOGRAPHIES

James DeVita (Playwright), a native of Long Island, NY, is an author and an actor. Some of his other works for young audiences include: A LITTLE HOUSE CHRISTMAS; THE WHITE ROSE (*The true story of Sophie Scholl and The White Rose*); THE THIEF LORD; A MIDNIGHT CRY; TRIALS: THE STORY OF JOAN OF ARC, and BETH; THE PRINCE AND THE PAUPER; WONDERLAND (Musical based on Lewis Carroll’s work); THE CHRISTMAS ANGEL; TREASURE ISLAND; DINOSAUR; THE THREE MUSKETEERS; LOOKING GLASS LAND; BAMBI, A LIFE IN THE WOODS; ARTHUR: THE BOY WHO WOULD BE KING; SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON; POLLYANNA, TOM SAWYER and HUCKLEBERRY FINN. He is also the author of three novels: *The Silenced*, *A Winsome Murder* and *Blue*. James is a recipient of the National Endowment for the Arts Literature Fellowship for Fiction. He is a member of The Dramatists Guild and Actors’ Equity Association.

Molly Rhode (Director) is grateful to be a part of this very special collaboration that honors Alex Scott and her family. Molly is a former Theater Academy student and young performer, and she always loves returning to First Stage, where she’s previously directed THE BEST CHRISTMAS PAGEANT EVER: THE MUSICAL, ANATOLE!, MISS NELSON IS MISSING! and JUST A LITTLE CRITTER MUSICAL. Onstage at First Stage, Molly last appeared at Mrs. Wormwood in Roald Dahl’s MATILDA The Musical. Molly works all over Wisconsin and is the Associate Artistic Director at Northern Sky Theater where she specializes in new play development.

ADULT CAST

Karen Estrada, Member of Actors’ Equity Association, (Mom/Customer/Ensemble); **Rick Pendzich**, Member of Actors’ Equity Association, (Dad/Customer/Ensemble); **James Carrington**, Member of Actors’ Equity Association, (Doctor 1 & 2/Customer/Reporter/Emcee/Ensemble); **Alanya Perry** (Understudy for Karen Estrada) and **Jarvell Williams** (Understudy for Rick Pendzich and James Carrington).

YOUNG PERFORMER CASTS

Young Performer roles are double cast. Young Performers in the Blue Cast include: **Pietja Dusek** (Elm Grove) as Alex; **Nala Patel** (Mequon) as Ensemble and **Andrew Kindler** (Brookfield) as Ensemble.

Young Performers in the Purple Cast include: **Maia Scherman** (Grafton) as Alex; **Sanaiah Hibbler** (Oak Creek) as Ensemble and **Liam Jeninga** (Delavan) as Ensemble.

The Artistic Staff for **THE AMAZING LEMONADE GIRL** includes: **Molly Rhode** (Director); **Austin Winter** (Costume Designer); **Josh Schmidt** (Sound Designer); **Jason Fassl, USA** (Scenic/Lighting Designer); **Daniel J. Hanson**, Member of Actors' Equity Association, (Stage Manager) and **Carrie Johns** (Assistant Stage Manager).

Tickets start at \$21 – Tickets may be purchased at [firststage.org](https://www.firststage.org) or through the Marcus Center Box Office, in person at 929 N. Water Street in downtown Milwaukee or by phone (414) 273-7206 or toll free at (888) 612-3500. The number for TDD (for deaf and hard of hearing patrons) is (414) 273-3080.

COVID Protocols: First Stage is no longer requiring proof of vaccination upon arrival, but masks are still required in the theater. First Stage COVID safety protocols and updates can be viewed here: [firststage.org/covid-19-safety-protocols/ - performances](https://www.firststage.org/covid-19-safety-protocols/-performances)

Digital Playbill: The digital playbill includes artistic/actor/designer bios as well as an interview with the director. To view the digital playbill please visit: dpb-web.instantcore.com/program/10152/page/10152?cid=5173700

Special events for THE AMAZING LEMONADE GIRL

Pay What You Choose Performance: Friday, April 29, 2022 at 7:00 p.m.

Pay What You Choose tickets are available on a first come, first served basis with a minimum suggested donation of \$5 per person. Doors open at 6:00 p.m. on the day of the performance. Patrons are encouraged to arrive early. [firststage.org/events-tickets/tickets-offers/pay-what-you-choose/](https://www.firststage.org/events-tickets/tickets-offers/pay-what-you-choose/)

ASL Interpreted Performance: Sunday, May 15, 2022 at 4:00 p.m.

This performance will be sign language interpreted for patrons who are deaf or hard of hearing. Assistive listening devices are also available at the Todd Wehr Theater. [firststage.org/plan-your-visit/accessibility/sign-language-interpreted-performances/](https://www.firststage.org/plan-your-visit/accessibility/sign-language-interpreted-performances/)

Sensory Friendly Performance: Saturday, April 30, 2022 at 4 p.m.

A Sensory Friendly Performance with accommodations for families with children on the autism spectrum will take place on Saturday, April 30 at 4 p.m. Sensory accommodations include lower sound, house lights up, a quiet area staffed by an educator experienced with the care of students on the autism spectrum and other developmental differences, and more. Tickets for

Sensory Friendly Performances are \$10. Order by phone at **(414) 267-2961**, weekdays 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. to reserve tickets. To learn more visit: firststage.org/plan-your-visit/sensory-friendly-performances/.

FACT SHEET

About: THE AMAZING LEMONADE GIRL

Based on the true story of **Alexandra Flynn Scott**

by **James DeVita**

Directed by **Molly Rhode**

Sponsored by **Northwestern Mutual**

Location: Marcus Center's Todd Wehr Theater, 929 N. Water Street, Milwaukee

Live Performances: April 22 – May 15, 2022

Description: Meet Alex Scott. She has a story to tell – about her life and her legacy, her humor and her heart. The story of a young girl fiercely determined to make a difference despite the challenges she faces. Alex's true story reminds us all that a single person can change the world – one act, or even one cup, at a time. *Performance run time is approximately 70 minutes with no intermission. Suggested for families with young people ages 7+.*

Performances:

- Friday, April 22 at 7:00 p.m. – *OPENING NIGHT*
- Saturday, April 23 at 1:00 & 4:00 p.m.
- Sunday, April 24 at 1:00 & 4:00 p.m.
- Friday, April 29 at 7:00 p.m. – *PAY WHAT YOU CHOOSE PERFORMANCE*
- Saturday, April 30 at 1:00 & 4:00 p.m. – *SENSORY FRIENDLY PERFORMANCE AT 4:00 p.m.*
- Sunday, May 1 at 1:00 p.m. & 4:00 p.m.
- Friday, May 6 at 7:00 p.m.
- Saturday, May 7 at 1:00 & 4:00 p.m.
- Sunday, May 8 at 1:00 & 4:00 p.m.
- Friday, May 13 at 7:00 p.m.
- Saturday, May 14 at 1:00 & 4:00 p.m.
- Sunday, May 15 at 1:00 p.m. & 4:00 p.m. – *ASL INTERPRETED PERFORMANCE at 4:00 p.m.*

For more information, please visit firststage.org or call (414) 267-2961.

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About First Stage

First Stage is one of the nation's leading theaters for young people and families. First Stage touches hearts, engages minds and transforms lives by creating extraordinary theater experiences through professional theater productions that inspire, enlighten and entertain. Its Theater Academy, the nation's largest high-impact theater training program for young people, fosters life skills through stage skills and serves nearly 2,000 students each year. As Wisconsin's leader in arts-integrated education in schools, First Stage's dynamic Theater in Education programs promote literacy, character building and experiential learning throughout the curriculum, serving over 20,000 students each year. First Stage was selected to participate in the Partners in Education program of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts (2012) and was the recipient of the *Milwaukee Business Journal's* Eureka Award, recognizing creativity and innovation in business, education and the arts for its Next Steps program for students on the autism spectrum (2013, 2015). 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

Northwestern Mutual Foundation

The Northwestern Mutual Foundation launched its [Childhood Cancer Program](#) in 2012 to find better treatments and cures to childhood cancer, while also providing family and patient support and aiding those who struggle with the long-term effects of treatment. With the support of Northwestern Mutual's employees and financial advisors nationwide, the company has contributed more than \$40 million and funded over 500,000 hours of research through the program.

Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation (ALSF)

Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation (ALSF) shares the vision of our founder and creator [Alexandra "Alex" Scott](#) — a cure for all children with cancer. To change the lives of children with cancer through funding impactful research, raising awareness, supporting families, and empowering everyone to help cure childhood cancer. When Alex, who was diagnosed with childhood cancer just before her first birthday, was 4, she told her parents she wanted to set up a front yard lemonade stand. Her plan: to give the money to doctors to help them find a cure. Her first "Alex's Lemonade Stand," held with the help of her older brother Patrick, raised an astonishing \$2,000 in one day. While bravely fighting her own cancer, Alex continued to set up lemonade stands every year. As news spread of the remarkable girl so dedicated to helping other sick children, people everywhere were inspired to start their own lemonade stands — donating the proceeds to her cause.

In 2004 when Alex passed away at the age of 8 — her stand and inspiration had raised more than \$1 million towards finding a cure for the disease that took her life. Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation (ALSF) was started by her parents in 2005 to continue the work that Alex began. Our mission is simple: to change the lives of children with cancer through funding impactful research, raising awareness, supporting families and empowering everyone to help cure childhood cancer. Since Alex set up her first lemonade stand in 2000 — truly exemplifying the

saying “When life hands you lemons, make lemonade” — we have raised more than \$250 million.

Alex’s Lemonade Stand Foundation is the living embodiment of Alex’s spirit of determination and hope. Like Alex, we believe that every person can make a difference. Together, we can bring about a cure. Please join us in “making lemons into lemonade” today! To learn more: alexlemonade.org