



Transforming Lives Through Theater

Office address: 325 W. Walnut Street • Milwaukee, WI 53212
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**First Stage's First Steps Series presents:
DON'T LET THE PIGEON DRIVE THE BUS!**

Based on the books by Mo Willems
Adapted by Ernie Nolan

Directed by Jeff Frank

Sponsored by PNC
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**Milwaukee Youth Arts Center
January 14 through February 5, 2012**

This play is most appreciated by families with children ages 3 to 6.

Milwaukee, WI – First Stage continues its 25th season with DON'T LET THE PIGEON DRIVE THE BUS! based on the wildly popular children's book series by Mo Willems, January 14 through February 5, 2012 at the Milwaukee Youth Arts Center, 325 W. Walnut Street in downtown Milwaukee. This interactive theater experience is part of First Stage's First Steps Series, designed to introduce children ages 3 to 6 to live theater in an engaging and lively environment. Tickets can be purchased online at www.firststage.org or by phone at the First Stage Box Office at (414) 267-2961.

Buckle up for this highly interactive adventure that puts you in the driver's seat. Everybody's favorite pigeon wants to drive the bus, and it's up to you to decide his fate. But the fun doesn't stop there. Should he eat a hot dog? Get a puppy? Stay up late? It's entirely up to you. Join the pigeon and all of his friends on this exciting audience favorite. Hold on tight! You never know where this unpredictable journey will take you!

Director Jeff Frank has acted as First Stage's artistic director since February 2003. Previously he had served as education director/associate artistic director. Jeff is a native Wisconsinite who

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First Stage presents **DON'T LET THE PIGEON DRIVE THE BUS!**/add one

earned a B.F.A. in theater from UW–Whitewater and went on to the University of Utah, earning an M.F.A. in child drama. Over the past 12 seasons Jeff has directed many First Stage productions - including this season's holiday show JUNIE B. IN JINGLE BELLS, BATMAN SMELLS! Among his favorites are: PETER PAN AND WENDY, U: BUG: ME, THE NEVERENDING STORY, SLEEPING BEAUTY, TOM SAWYER, SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON, LILLY'S PURPLE PLASTIC PURSE, A LITTLE HOUSE CHRISTMAS, THE HOBBIT, A MIDNIGHT CRY, PERSEUS BAYOU, A CHRISTMAS STORY and THE GIVER.

The cast of DON'T LET THE PIGEON DRIVE THE BUS includes adult actor **Chris Feiereisen** (Member of Actor's Equity Association) as the Bus Driver. Young performer roles are double-cast. Young performers in the Hot Dog Cast are **Anna Arenas** (as Duckling) from Brown Deer and **Sebastian Palmer** (as Pigeon) from Sheboygan. Young Performers in the Frappuccino Cast are **Skylar Cranfield** (as Duckling) from Milwaukee and **Garrett Kim** (as Pigeon) from Hartland.

The Artistic Staff for DON'T LET THE PIGEON DRIVE THE BUS includes: **Brandon Kirkham** (Scenic Designer); **Lyndsey Kuhlmann** (Costume Designer); **Alan Piotrowicz** (Lighting Designer); **Matt Whitmore** (Sound Designer) and **Mariel Hildenbrand** (Assistant Stage Manager).

Tickets for DON'T LET THE PIGEON DRIVE THE BUS are \$10. Tickets may be purchased at www.firststage.org or by phone (414) 271-2961.

Performance dates: **DON'T LET THE PIGEON DRIVE THE BUS** opens Saturday, January 14 at 11:00 a.m. Other performances are held: Saturday, January 14 at 1:00 p.m.; Sunday, January 15 at 11:00 a.m. & 1:00 p.m.; Saturday, January 21 and Sunday, January 22 at 11:00 a.m. & 1:00 p.m.; Saturday, January 28 and Sunday, January 29 at 11:00 a.m. & 1:00 p.m.; and Saturday, February 4 and Sunday, February 5 at 11:00 a.m. & 1:00 p.m.

FACT SHEET

Location: Milwaukee Youth Arts Center, 325 W. Walnut Street, downtown Milwaukee

Dates: January 14 – February 5, 2012

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First Stage presents DON'T LET THE PIGEON DRIVE THE BUS/add two

Description: Buckle up for this highly interactive adventure that puts you in the driver's seat. Everybody's favorite pigeon wants to drive the bus, and it's up to you to decide his fate. But the fun doesn't stop there. Should he eat a hot dog? Get a puppy? Stay up late? It's entirely up to you. Join the pigeon and all of his friends on this exciting audience favorite. But hold on tight. You never know where this unpredictable journey will take you! Part of our First Steps Series, this play is geared toward children ages 3 to 6, introducing them to live theater in an engaging, interactive and lively environment.

Performances

Saturday, January 14 at 11:00 a.m. & 1:00 p.m.

Sunday, January 15 at 11:00 a.m. & 1:00 p.m.

Saturday, January 21 at 11:00 a.m. & 1:00 p.m.

Sunday, January 22 at 11:00 a.m. & 1:00 p.m.

Saturday, January 28 at 11:00 a.m. & 1:00 p.m.

Sunday, January 29 at 11:00 a.m. & 1:00 p.m.

Saturday, February 4 at 11:00 a.m. & 1:00 p.m.

Sunday, February 5 at 11:00 a.m. & 1:00 p.m.

Ticket prices: \$10

Tickets and information: Call (414) 267-2961 or online at www.firststage.org

About First Stage

Celebrating its 25th anniversary in the 2011-12 season, First Stage touches hearts, engages minds, and transforms lives by creating extraordinary theater experiences for young people and families through professional theater productions that inspire, enlighten, and entertain; unparalleled Theater Academy training that fosters life skills through stage skills; and dynamic Theater in Education programs that promote active learning in our schools and community. First Stage is a member of TYA/USA, the American Alliance for Theatre and Education, the Wisconsin Alliance for Arts Education and Americans for the Arts, as well as Theatre Wisconsin and Milwaukee Arts Partners, and is a cornerstone member of the United Performing Arts Fund (UPAF).

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