



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact 414.267.2929

First Stage Children's Theater presents

Giggle, Giggle Quack

Adapted by James E. Grote
Music and lyrics by George Howe
Based on the book by Doreen Cronin
Pictures by Betsy Lewin

October 4 – 19, 2008
Main Stage Hall, Milwaukee Youth Arts Center

This play is part of First Stage's First Steps Series and is designed to introduce children ages three to six to the theater in a fun, interactive environment.

Milwaukee, Wisconsin (September 24, 2008) – Based on the entertaining book by award-winning author Doreen Cronin, a menagerie of mischievous barnyard friends take over the farm in First Stage Children's Theater's production of GIGGLE, GIGGLE QUACK, which runs October 4 through 19 at Main Stage Hall in the Milwaukee Youth Arts Center, 325 Walnut Street in downtown Milwaukee. The play is part of First Stage's First Steps series, specifically geared toward younger children and their families.

In First Stage's presentation of GIGGLE, GIGGLE QUACK, Farmer Brown packs his bags for a much-needed vacation leaving his brother Bob in charge of the farm, but remembers to warn Bob to "Watch out for Duck!" – and with good reason. When sly, witty Duck has success with a note he leaves for Bob requesting pizza with anchovies, the other conspiratorial barnyard creatures pen their own requests – and poor Bob

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mistakenly thinks his brother left all these notes. It's craziness on the farm with pigs happily lolling on the sofa and lounging in bubble baths, and crafty cows choosing the flick on movie night. It's not long before these enterprising animals are living the life of luxury, which is sure to delight any child who changes the rules when parents are away.

Director Todd Denning is pleased to bring the dysfunctional, highly entertaining barnyard family from First Stage's CLICK, CLACK MOO: COWS THAT TYPE back again for GIGGLE, GIGGLE QUACK. "This time around, Cow, Hen, Pig and Duck create more musical mischief and animal high jinks for Farmer Brown and his brother Bob," said Denning. He went on to explain, "If CLICK, CLACK MOO featured cows that type, GIGGLE, GIGGLE QUACK celebrates ducks that write; and proves that armed with a golden pencil and their imaginations, there is no end to the mayhem these animals can create if they work together."

Last year was the inaugural season for the First Steps series and a successful one, at that, according to Rob Goodman, First Stage's managing director. "In terms of ticket sales, we were delighted to meet our goals, but more importantly, we successfully introduced our youngest audiences to the theater with this series of thoroughly enchanting productions."

PLAY SUMMARY

Farmer Brown takes a vacation and leaves his brother Bob in charge, along with a handwritten list of instructions on how to take care of the animals – including one specific direction to "Keep an eye on Duck. He's Trouble." Apparently Duck is an accomplished writer as well, as his rewritten instructions call for pizza for the hens, bubble baths for the pigs and movie night for the cows. The tail wags the dog in this account of a barnyard gone wild.

ARTISTIC STAFF

Director	Todd Denning
Scenic Designer	Mark Hare
Costume Designer	Kristina Van Slyke
Lighting Designer	Brad Bingheim
Choreographer	Karl Miller

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ADULT ACTORS

Pig	Beth Mulkerron
Farmer Brown/Brother Bob	Rick Pendzich
Cow	Karen Estrada

YOUNG ACTORS

Duck

Giggle Cast

Madison Kitchen
Shorewood

Quack Cast

Alison Kennedy
Waukesha

Hen

Rachel Schmeling
Brookfield

Sydney Kirkegaard
Franklin

PERFORMANCE DATES

GIGGLE, GIGGLE QUACK opens Saturday, October 4, in the Main Stage Hall at the Milwaukee Youth Arts Center. The 1:00 p.m. performance on Sunday, October 19, will be interpreted for deaf and hard of hearing patrons. The full schedule of family performances is:

Saturdays	October 4, 11 & 18	11 a.m. & 1 p.m.
Sundays	October 5, 12 & 19	11 a.m. & 1 p.m.

TICKET INFORMATION

Ticket prices for GIGGLE, GIGGLE QUACK are:

Adults: \$12

Children (12 and under): \$9

Tickets may be purchased by calling our Patron Services Manager at (414) 267-2961, weekdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. or online at www.FirstStage.org.

ARTISTIC STAFF BIOGRAPHIES

Todd Denning (Milwaukee) – Director

Todd is proud to say that he has been a part of the First Stage Family for 10 years. In that time, he has worked as an actor, director, stage manager, teacher, fight choreographer, sound designer and engineer. Todd is also the co-director of the Young Company of the First Stage Theater Academy and has directed several Young Company and Classical

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Company Class productions, including MACBETH, THE CRUCIBLE, TARTUFFE, INHERIT THE WIND and TWELFTH NIGHT. He was also the director of last season's mainstage production of THE QUILTMAKER'S GIFT. Look for Todd in the upcoming production of CHARLOTTE'S WEB, he'll be playing Mr. Arable and Templeton. Todd holds an MFA from the University of California-Irvine.

Mark Hare (Milwaukee) – Scenic Designer / Props Director

Mark is First Stage's props master. In addition to his props director duties, Mark designed scenery for First Stage's IF YOU GIVE A MOUSE A COOKIE, CLICK CLACK MOO: COWS THAT TYPE, AND THEN THEY CAME FOR ME: REMEMBERING THE WORLD OF ANNE FRANK, TWO DONUTS, MUFARO'S BEAUTIFUL DAUGHTERS, SEUSSICAL and puppet design for THE BFG. Mark also designed scenery and props for BUNNICULA. For the past eleven summer seasons, Mark has been the props master for American Players Theatre.

Kristina Van Slyke (Milwaukee) – Costume Designer

Kristina is very excited to be designing for GIGGLE, GIGGLE QUACK. She has been part of the First Stage family for the past nine seasons. She has spent eight of those seasons as manager of the costume shop. Past First Stage design credits include STONES OF WISDOM, TWO DONUTS, SIDEWAYS STORIES FROM WAYSIDE SCHOOL, MUFARO'S BEAUTIFUL DAUGHTERS and LILLY'S PURPLE PLASTIC PURSE.

Bradley E. Bingheim (Milwaukee) Lighting Designer

Since the start of construction in 2004, Brad has been the Facility Manager of the Milwaukee Youth Arts Center where he oversees day-to-day operations of the wonderful facility. Before opening MYAC, Brad served for eight seasons as the production stage manager at First Stage Children's Theater. He has also worked at Milwaukee Chamber Theatre, the Milwaukee Rep, Next Act Theatre, The Skylight, Pine Mountain Music Festival (MI), Des Moines Metro. Opera (IA), and the Little Theatre of Chester (MA). He holds a BA from Western Illinois University and an MFA from the Professional Theatre Training Program at UWM. Brad is a member of Actors' Equity, the union of professional actors and stage managers.

Karl Miller (Milwaukee) Choreographer

Karl is excited to return to First Stage after previously serving as choreographer for THE

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MAGIC MRS. PIGGLE-WIGGLE! and EINSEIN: HERO OF THE MIND. Karl has had an extensive career in theatre as an actor, dancer, singer and choreographer in Milwaukee for over 30 years. He has performed with OFF THE WALL THEATRE, BIALYSTOCK AND BLOOM, THE SKYLIGHT, the old BROADWAY BABY, IN TANDEM THEATRE and FLORENTINE OPERA COMPANY. He directed YOU'RE A GOOD MAN, CHARLIE BROWN for First Stage Theater Academy's Young Company. He also teaches Musical Theatre classes for the Academy. Karl also choreographs for Oconomowoc High School, Greendale High School and Wauwatosa West High School, and is currently teaching a Fosse dance class at UW-Whitewater. Karl also keeps busy working with the education department at The Skylight.

ACTOR BIOGRAPHIES

Beth Mulkerron (Wauwatosa) – Pig

Beth is honored to be working with First Stage Children's Theater again. Most recently she played the role of Turtle in First Stage's A YEAR WITH FROG AND TOAD. Beth studied Music Theatre at Cincinnati's Conservatory and received her BFA from Florida State. Career highlights include New York City's Off-Broadway musical REDHOOK, performing in concert with Davis Gaines and voiceover credits that include NBD's *Ed*. Additionally, Beth has performed in various performances at The Skylight or as Fay in Windfall Theatre's ANYONE CAN WHISTLE.

Rick Pendzich (South Milwaukee) – Farmer Brown/Brother Bob

This is Rick's first show with First Stage Children's Theater. Since graduating from UW-Whitewater, he has worked with many of Milwaukee's theaters including Chamber Theatre, Milwaukee Shakespeare, In Tandem Theatre, Bialystock & Bloom, Nevermore Theatre and American Players Theatre. Rick's favorite roles include: Charlie Brown in YOU'RE A GOOD MAN CHARLIE BROWN, Stanley in BRIGHTON BEACH MEMOIRS and Ferdinand in THE TEMPEST. Rick will return to First Stage after the new year for THE DINOSAUR PLAY, in which he will play a triceratops, The Tank.

Karen Estrada (Milwaukee) - Cow

A long-time First Stage Academy student, Karen is very pleased to be making her debut in GIGGLE, GIGGLE QUACK. After graduating from the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, Karen lived and worked in Minneapolis for a while before returning to Milwaukee. She has since received her massage therapy degree and worked with In Tandem Theatre, Cornerstone Theatres and Milwaukee Shakespeare. She also teaches with Next Act's summer theater program and with the Springer Theatre Academy in Columbus, Georgia. Karen will be appearing next in THE SHOW with In Tandem Theatre in December.

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First Stage Children's Theater is Milwaukee's premier, professional family theater. Founded in 1987, the mission of the company is to touch hearts and transform lives by creating exceptional, professional theater experiences for young people and families. First Stage is member of Milwaukee Arts Partners and Theater Wisconsin, and a cornerstone member of the United Performing Arts Fund (UPAF).

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