



CHILDREN'S THEATER • IN-SCHOOL EDUCATION • THEATER ACADEMY

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**First Stage Children's Theater brings back the popular
IF YOU GIVE A MOUSE A COOKIE**

Adapted by Jody Davidson

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Published by HarperCollins Children's Books, a division of HarperCollins Publishers

Directed by John Maclay

Sponsor: National City Bank, now a part of PNC

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**Main Stage Hall, Milwaukee Youth Arts Center
November 7 – 22, 2009**

This play is most appreciated by families and children ages three to six.

Milwaukee, Wis. (October 5, 2009) – Back by popular demand, First Stage Children's Theater brings back the wacky antics of a mischievous Mouse and a sensible Boy in the stage adaptation of Laura Numeroff's popular children's book, IF YOU GIVE A MOUSE A COOKIE. The show runs November 7 through November 22, 2009 at Main Stage Hall in the Milwaukee Youth Arts Center, 325 W. Walnut Street in Milwaukee.

**Tickets can be purchased by phone at (414) 267-2961 or online at
www.FirstStage.org.**

The play tells the story of Mouse's visit. What happens when you give a mouse a cookie? He'll want some milk to go with it. And when you give a mouse milk, he'll

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First Stage brings back IF YOU GIVE A MOUSE A COOKIE/add one

certainly want something else! Each request of the well-meaning but harried rodent seems to lead to another. A hilarious frenzy ensues while Mom is away as a young boy tries to keep the house and Mouse in order.

IF YOU GIVE A MOUSE A COOKIE is the first of two First Steps series productions of First Stage's 2009-2010 season. The First Steps series is designed to introduce children ages three to six and their families to the theater in a fun, interactive environment. With smaller audiences, these productions engage and involve young people through stories and familiar characters in an intimate environment.

"Families can't get enough of Numeroff's humorous cause and effect stories, but what truly makes the show work is the budding friendship between the boy and the mouse," said **John Maclay, the show's director and First Stage's associate artistic director.** "Through the hysterics, we see two new friends going through the trials and tribulations of getting to know, trust, and truly appreciate one another."

On the return of this production to First Stage's First Steps series, **First Stage Artistic Director Jeff Frank** explains "We kicked off our First Steps series with IF YOU GIVE A MOUSE A COOKIE in 2007, and it was incredibly well-received." Frank continues, "Since several of our performances sold out, and there were a lot of folks young and old who didn't get a chance to see it, we thought 'why not bring it back?'. And for those that did see it the first time, we have a few new surprises planned."

Author Laura Numeroff, a native of Brooklyn, New York, always loved to read and write her own stories as a child and thought she might like to become an author. But when she was 15, she decided she wanted to be a fashion designer like her older sister. After a year of classes in fashion design at the Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, Numeroff

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decided fashion design was not for her. She started taking classes in writing, illustrating, and photography. Her first book, “Amy for Short,” was written for a class assignment and published in 1975 before she graduated from Pratt.

“If You Give a Mouse a Cookie” was Numeroff’s tenth book. The idea came to her on a long car trip between San Francisco and Oregon. This beloved cause and effect story has several spin-offs also penned by Numeroff, including “If You Give a Moose a Muffin” and “If You Take a Mouse to School,” of which the stage adaptation will open March 13 at First Stage Children’s Theater. Numeroff lives in Los Angeles, where she enjoys riding horses, reading biographies and playing with her pets.

Director John Maclay has been First Stage’s Associate Artistic Director since 2003 and has most recently directed HOW I BECAME A PIRATE, WITNESS, PETER AND THE WOLF, FERDINAND THE BULL, GREEN GABLES and THE SHAKESPEARE STEALER, and is the director for JUNIE B. JONES AND A LITTLE MONKEY BUSINESS, opening October 16. John has also directed productions for the Young Company, First Stage’s pre-professional training program for high school students, including ROMEO AND JULIET, MACBETH, PETER AND THE WOLF, THE BODY OF CHRISTOPHER CREED and later this season, A MIDSUMMER NIGHT’S DREAM. As an actor, John has appeared at First Stage in A YEAR WITH FROG AND TOAD, THE QUILTMAKER’S GIFT, PERSEUS BAYOU, HOLES and MIKE MULLIGAN AND HIS STEAM SHOVEL. In addition to working at First Stage, John serves as an adjunct professor with the Carthage College theatre department and has taught theatre at UW-Milwaukee, Carroll College, Lawrence University, North Central College and the Interlochen Arts Academy. John is also a member of the Lake Geneva Theatre Company and a proud member of Actors Equity Association.

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First Stage brings back IF YOU GIVE A MOUSE A COOKIE/add three

The adult actor portraying Mouse is **Jordan Ahnquist** of West Barnstable, Mass., who also appeared in First Stage's 2007 production of IF YOU GIVE A MOUSE A COOKIE.

Young performer roles are double-cast. The young performers portraying the Boy in IF YOU GIVE A MOUSE A COOKIE are **Jacob Bern** of Bayside and **Maxwell Zupke** of Brookfield.

The Artistic Staff for IF YOU GIVE A MOUSE A COOKIE includes: **Alan Piotrowicz** (Lighting Designer), **Melissa Wanke** (Stage Manager, member of Actor's Equity Association, the union of professional Actors and Stage Managers) and **Maria Petrella** (Assistant Stage Manager).

Tickets for IF YOU GIVE A MOUSE A COOKIE are \$12 for adults and \$9 for children ages 12 and under. Tickets may be purchased online at www.FirstStage.org or by phone at (414) 267-2961.

Performance dates: IF YOU GIVE A MOUSE A COOKIE opens Saturday, November 7 at 11:00 a.m. Other performances are held: Saturday, November 7 at 1:00 p.m.; Sunday, November 8 at 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m.; Saturday, November 14 at 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m.; Sunday, November 15 at 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m.; Saturday, November 21 at 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m.; and Sunday, November 22 at 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. The performance on Sunday, November 22 at 1:00 p.m. is interpreted for the deaf and hard of hearing patrons.

Special events for IF YOU GIVE A MOUSE A COOKIE

Sunday, November 15 at 10:00 a.m. and 12:00 p.m.: Beginning one hour prior to each performance on Sunday, November 15, Betty Brinn Children's Museum will provide special pre-show activities for ticket holders. Join staff from the museum in cookie-

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related activities, such as creating a cookie craft, participating in a cookie race, listening to a read of Numeroff's "If You Give a Mouse a Cookie," a cookie jar game, cookie card games, and more.

FACT SHEET

Theater: Main Stage Hall, Milwaukee Youth Arts Center, 325 W. Walnut Street in Milwaukee

Dates: Saturday, November 7 through Sunday, November 22, 2009

Description: What could possibly go wrong when you give a mouse a cookie? Apparently quite a bit, especially when Mom is away. It all begins when a harmless little mouse asks a friendly young boy for a treat. Before you know it, the house is up for grabs and the boy is faced with the unbelievable task of putting everything back in place before Mom comes home.

Performances:

Saturday, November 7 at 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m.
Sunday, November 8 at 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m.
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Sunday, November 15 at 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m.
Saturday, November 21 at 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m.
Sunday, November 22 at 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m.

Ticket prices: \$12 for adults and \$9 for children 12 and under.

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

First Stage Children's Theater is Milwaukee's premier, professional family theater. Founded in 1987, the mission of the company is to provide professional theater productions for young people and their families that engage, enlighten and entertain, Theater Academy training that fosters life skills through stage skills and dynamic in-school education programs that provide learning through theater. 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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