



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 kicks off 25th Anniversary Season with Audience Favorite
SEUSSICAL™**

Based on the works of Dr. Seuss
Co-conceived by Lynn Ahrens, Stephen Flaherty and Eric Idle
Book, music and lyrics by Lynn Ahrens and Stephen Flaherty

Directed by Tony Clements
Music Direction by Brett Ryback
Choreography by Jessica Redish

September 16 through October 16, 2011
Todd Wehr Theater, Marcus Center for the Performing Arts

This play is for everyone ages 3 and up.

Milwaukee, WI – First Stage kicks off its 25th anniversary season as SEUSSICAL™ returns to the Todd Wehr Theater, 929 N. Water Street, downtown Milwaukee, from September 16 – October 16, 2011. Directed by Tony Clements, this family classic imagined by Lynn Ahrens, Stephen Flaherty and Eric Idle is back by popular demand. First Stage's production of SEUSSICAL™ first hit the stage in 2006, playing to sold-out audiences and critical acclaim. Tickets 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 www.firststage.org.

Based on the works of Dr. Seuss, the Cat in the Hat tells the story of Horton, an elephant protecting the tiny speck of dust known as Who. Through dynamic musical numbers and new choreography, this roller coaster of adventure weaves storylines and some of Dr. Seuss's most famous characters together in exciting and unexpected ways. Yet the show keeps with the heart-felt theme of the original production.

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First Stage presents SEUSSICAL™/add one

“This show reminds us that, ‘a person is a person no matter how small’ – something we at First Stage believe with all of our hearts,” said Jeff Frank, First Stage’s artistic director.

Director Tony Clements is a freelance theatre director, actor, playwright, blogger and composer who lives in New York, NY. He is excited to return to Milwaukee to direct SEUSSICAL™. Tony lived and worked in the Milwaukee theatre community for over 20 years before joining the national tour of MAMMA MIA! and relocating to the East Coast. He directed First Stage’s A YEAR WITH FROG AND TOAD (2008) and has also worked locally with the Milwaukee Repertory Theater, Skylight Opera Theatre, Sunset Playhouse and others.

The adult actor cast of SEUSSICAL™ includes **Amber Nicole Dilger** (Member of Actor’s Equity Association) as Gertrude McFuzz; **Karen Estrada** as Mrs. Mayor/Bird Girl; **Jackson Evans** (Member of Actor’s Equity Association) as the Cat in the Hat; **Paul Helm** as Mr. Mayor; **Amy Hillner** (Member of Actor’s Equity Association) as Sour Kangaroo; **Beth Mulkerron** (Member of Actor’s Equity Association) as Bird Girl; **Rick Pendzich** as Horton; **Rána Roman** (Member of Actor’s Equity Association) as Mayzie; **Stephen Wormley** as Wickersham Brother/Yertel; and **Ryan Krueger** as Wickersham Brother 2.

Young performer roles are double-cast. Young performers in the Red Fish cast are **Cole Hines** (as JoJo), **Kamilah Lay** (as Bird Girl) and **Mykiah Thompson** (as Who 3) from Milwaukee; **Seth Keiser** (as Wickersham Brother 3) and **Maggie Keiser** (as Who 2) from West Bend; **Keely Savitt** (as Who 1) from River Hills; **Nicholas Gray** (as Who 4) from Mequon; **Isabel Hemely** (as Who 5) from Grafton; **Teddy Esten** (as Who 6) from Cedarburg; **Elizabeth Stawski** (as Who 7) from St. Francis; and **Alec Aldred** (as Who 8) from Waukesha.

The young performers in the Blue Fish cast are **Brady Tutton** (as JoJo) and **Jacob Bern** (as Who 4) from Milwaukee; **Mari Duckler** (as Bird Girl) from Mequon; **Peter DeGuzman** (as Wickersham Brother 3) from Wauwatosa; **Bryn Hartnett** (as Who 1), **Kirian Hartnett** (as Who 3), and **Liam Hartnett** (as Who 6) from Whitefish Bay; **Natalie Alteri** (as Who 2)

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First Stage presents SEUSSICAL™/add two

from Brookfield; **Taylor Anne Stefanski** (as Who 5) from Racine; **Lydia Stevenson** (as Who 7) from Saukville; and **Matthew Welden** (as Who 8) from Muskego.

The Artistic Staff for SEUSSICAL™ includes: **Keith Pitts** (Scenic Designer), **Brandon Kirkham** (Costume Designer), **Jason Fassl, USAA** (Lighting Designer), **John Tanner** (Sound Designer), **Sarah Hoffman** (Stage Manager), and **Christine Czerwinski** (Assistant Stage Manager).

Tickets for SEUSSICAL™ start at \$13. Tickets may be purchased at 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.

Performance dates: SEUSSICAL™ opens Friday, September 16 at 7:00 p.m. Other performances are held: Saturday, September 17 at 1:00, 3:30 & 7:00 p.m.; Sunday, September 18 at 1:00 & 3:30 p.m.; Saturday, September 24 at 1:00 & 3:30 p.m.; Sunday, September 25 at 1:00 & 3:30 p.m.; Saturday, October 1 at 1:00 & 3:30 p.m.; Sunday, October 2 at 1:00 & 3:30 p.m.; Saturday, October 8 at 7:00 p.m.; Sunday, October 9 at 1:00 & 3:30 p.m.; Saturday, October 15 at 1:00 & 3:30 p.m.; Sunday, October 16 at 1:00 & 3:30 p.m.

Special events for SEUSSICAL™

Opening Night Reception : Friday, September 16 at 7:00 p.m.

Following the opening night performance First Stage invites all patrons to attend the Opening Night Reception at the Milwaukee Youth Arts Center, 325 W. Walnut Street, located one mile from the Marcus Center. Patrons will have the opportunity to meet and mingle with the cast and crew of SEUSSICAL™ while enjoying refreshments, courtesy of First Stage.

First Stage presents SEUSSICAL™/add three

Opening weekend: Friday, September 16 through Sunday, September 18

Immediately following all opening weekend performances, a drawing for a \$20 gift certificate to Rainbow Booksellers will be held. Gift certificates may be redeemed for a book purchase at the First Stage merchandise counter in the lobby or at Rainbow Booksellers located at 5704 W. Vliet Street, Milwaukee. One winner will be selected at each performance.

FACT SHEET

Location: Todd Wehr Theater, Marcus Center for the Performing Arts, 929 N. Water Street, downtown Milwaukee

Dates: Friday, September 16 – Sunday, October 16, 2011

Description: Back by popular demand, this musical is as fun for children as it is nostalgic for parents. The Cat in the Hat tells the story of Horton, an elephant that resolves to protect all that live on the tiny speck of dust known as Who. Ridiculed by other animals and unwittingly admired by Gertrude McFuzz, Horton soon finds out that his newfound responsibility isn't as easy as he thought. Hold on as this roller coaster of an adventure weaves storylines and characters together in exciting and unexpected ways, introducing you to some of Dr. Seuss's most famous characters along the way.

Performances:

Friday, September 16 at 7:00 p.m. (OPENING NIGHT)

Saturday, September 17 at 1:00, 3:30 and 7:00 p.m.

Sunday, September 18 at 1:00 and 3:30 p.m.

Saturday, September 24 at 1:00 and 3:30 p.m.

Sunday, September 25 at 1:00 and 3:30 p.m.

Saturday, October 1 at 1:00 and 3:30 p.m.

Sunday, October 2 at 1:00 and 3:30 p.m.

Saturday, October 8 at 7:00 p.m.

Sunday, October 9 at 1:00 and 3:30 p.m.

Saturday, October 15 at 1:00 and 3:30 p.m.

Sunday, October 16 at 1:00 and 3:30 p.m.

Ticket prices: Start at \$13

Tickets and information: Call (414) 273-7206 or online at www.firststage.org

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First Stage presents SEUSSICAL™/add four

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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