



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

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**FIRST STAGE CHILDREN'S THEATER
SINGLE TICKETS ON SALE NOW FOR 2009-2010 SEASON**

Milwaukee, Wis. (August 24, 2009) – Single tickets for First Stage Children's Theater's twenty-third season of productions for young people and families are on sale now. The season will feature productions adapted from celebrated children's literature, including JUNIE B. JONES AND A LITTLE MONKEY BUSINESS, a musical adapted from Barbara Park's popular series of books, as well as the return of the perennial holiday favorite THE BEST CHRISTMAS PAGEANT EVER, adapted from the book by Barbara Robinson. Performances are held at the Todd Wehr Theater in the Marcus Center for the Performing Arts, 929 N. Water Street in downtown Milwaukee; First Steps series performances (plays suited for children ages three to six) are held at the Milwaukee Youth Arts Center, 325 W. Walnut Street in Milwaukee.

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First Stage Children's Theater
2009-2010 Single Tickets On Sale Now /add one

MAINSTAGE SERIES PLAYS

**Performed at the Todd Wehr Theater, Marcus Center for the Performing Arts, 929
N. Water Street in downtown Milwaukee**

JUNIE B. JONES AND A LITTLE MONKEY BUSINESS

October 16 – November 14, 2009

Based on the book by Barbara Park

Music and lyrics by Joan Cushing

Directed by John Maclay

The precocious kindergartner Junie B. Jones has a big, giant dilemma. There's a new "P.U. STINK BOMB B-A-B-Y" brother at her house and she has no idea what to bring to school for Show and Tell. But when Grandma Miller calls him "the cutest little monkey," she decides she just may have the best Show and Tell ever. Junie B.'s two bestest friends Grace and Lucille are trading her everything they own just to see her "real, alive baby monkey." And guess what else? Maybe she can bring him to school on Pet Day.

For everyone ages four and up.

THE BEST CHRISTMAS PAGEANT EVER

November 27 – December 24, 2009

Book and adaptation by Barbara Robinson

Directed by Jeff Frank

Nobody would have believed that the Herdman kids – the worst kids in the history of the world! – would have wanted to take part in the annual church Christmas Pageant. And nobody would have believed that this year's pageant would be the best ever. But through the Herdmans' newfound enthusiasm while retelling the miracle of the Christmas story, everyone discovers the true meaning of Christmas.

For everyone ages four and up.

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First Stage Children's Theater
2009-2010 Single Tickets On Sale Now /add two

THE THIEF LORD

January 22 – February 14, 2010

Book by Cornelia Funke

Adapted by James DeVita

World premiere

Directed by Jeff Frank

From the author of *Inkheart*, comes another amazing tale of adventure and intrigue. On the run from their heartless aunt and uncle, orphans fifteen-year-old Prosper and six-year-old Bo flee to Venice, the enchanted city their mother had told them so many tales of. There, they join a group of children led by the mysterious, masked figure known as the "Thief Lord." The brothers relish being part of this colorful new family, but the Thief Lord has secrets of his own. And soon the boys are thrust into circumstances that will lead them to a fantastic, spellbinding conclusion.

For everyone ages eight and up.

THE WIZ

March 5 – 28, 2010

Adapted from *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* by L. Frank Baum

Book by William F. Brown

Music and lyrics by Charlie Smalls

Orchestrations by Richard Carsey

World premiere of the Theater for Young Audiences (TYA) adaptation by First Stage Children's Theater

Directed by Anthony (Tony) Horne

In this version of the classic story, *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* by L. Frank Baum, young Dorothy, a hip Scarecrow, an uptight Tin Man and a mama's boy Lion seek help from the Great Man in the flashy city in this dazzling and funky musical set to a lively score combining rock, gospel and soul music. The cool hop down the yellow brick road includes hit songs such as "Home," "If You Believe" and "Ease on Down the Road."

For everyone ages six and up.

First Stage Children's Theater
2009-2010 Single Tickets On Sale Now /add three

ALEXANDER, AND THE TERRIBLE, HORRIBLE, NO GOOD, VERY BAD DAY

April 9 – May 9, 2010

Based on the book by Judith Viorst

Lyrics by Judith Viorst

Music by Shelly Markham

Directed by Jeff Frank

It's 7:00 a.m. You wake up with a nasty wad of gum in your hair. Trip on your skateboard. Drop your sweater in a sink full of water. And your brothers express interest in trading you for some roller blades. And now it's only 7:15 a.m.! As bad days go, it's tough to top Alexander's. He's the funniest fed-up kid ever, and this is one of the coolest musicals ever.

For everyone ages three and up.

In addition to these five productions scheduled for the 2009-2010 season at the Todd Wehr Theater, First Stage Children's Theater celebrates its third season of the First Steps series. This series of two plays – for children ages three through six – is designed to introduce our youngest audience members and their families to the theater in a fun, interactive environment. With smaller audiences, these intimate productions are specifically designed to engage and involve the youngest audience members and their families.

FIRST STEPS SERIES PLAYS

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

IF YOU GIVE A MOUSE A COOKIE

November 7 – 22, 2009

Adapted by Jody Davidson from *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie*

Text copyright by Laura Numeroff

First Stage Children's Theater
2009-2010 Single Tickets On Sale Now /add four

Illustrations copyright by Felicia Bond
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Directed by John Maclay

The mishaps and mayhem begin when Mouse comes to visit. The well-meaning but harried rodent simply asks for a treat, and then the chaos starts. A hilarious frenzy ensues when a young boy tries to keep the house and Mouse in order when Mom's away. Young audiences will love seeing their favorite trouble-making Mouse on stage.

IF YOU TAKE A MOUSE TO SCHOOL

March 13 – 28, 2010

Adapted by Ernie Nolan from *If You Take a Mouse to School*

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Directed by Jeff Frank

The famous little mouse from *If You Give A Mouse A Cookie* is back in time for the first day of school. Besides working a math problem and spelling a word or two, Mouse creates chaos with a science experiment, builds a little house for himself out of blocks, and writes his very own first book.

TICKET INFORMATION

Single tickets for Mainstage series shows are on sale today with prices range from \$10.50 to \$36.50. To purchase single tickets, contact the Marcus Center Box Office at (414) 273-7206 or toll free at (888) 612-3500, or order online at www.FirstStage.org.

For First Steps series, tickets are \$12 for adults and \$9 for children ages 12 and

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First Stage Children's Theater
2009-2010 Single Tickets On Sale Now /add five

under. To purchase single tickets to a First Steps performance, contact the First Stage Box Office at (414) 267-2961 or order 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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