



Media Contact:

Vanessa Reza

VReza@boelterlincoln.com

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**YOUNG COMPANY BRINGS JAMES DEVITA'S TIMELY
*THE ROSE OF TREASON BEYOND THE STAGE***

In partnership with Violins of Hope – Wisconsin, presented by the Milwaukee Youth Symphony Orchestra

MILWAUKEE (September 29, 2025)—This fall, First Stage's award-winning [Young Company](#) opens its season with *The Rose of Treason* by Resident Playwright James DeVita, a breathtaking play that asks: what does it take to stand up for what's right? Running November 7–16, 2025, at the Milwaukee Youth Arts Center's Goodman Mainstage Hall, the production extends beyond the stage with historic exhibits, family workshops and a panel discussion.

Based on the true story of **Sophie Scholl and the White Rose**, [The Rose of Treason](#) follows a group of young university students in 1943 Germany who dared to speak out against the Nazi regime. Armed only with typewriters, leaflets, and courage, their quiet resistance became a resounding act of bravery. Their story is a hopeful testament to the inspiring power of young voices.

"I hope the audience leaves understanding that any one of us can fight injustice," said Director Reva Fox. "Whether your actions are large or small, you can stand up for what is right. You can make a difference. And when one person stands up to injustice, we help encourage others to stand with us."

In collaboration with [Violins of Hope – Wisconsin](#), presented by the Milwaukee Youth Symphony Orchestra, and the [Holocaust Education Resource Center](#), First Stage invites audiences to connect with this story and its themes beyond the stage. Each performance will feature one of the historic instruments from the Violins of Hope collection (owned and played during the Holocaust) accompanied by a docent sharing the remarkable history behind the instrument.

As part of this collaboration, First Stage will exhibit one of the historic instruments from Violins of Hope, a collection owned and played during the Holocaust. At each performance, a docent will share the remarkable history of the featured instrument.

Special events include Pre-Show Family Workshops on Nov. 8 and 15 at 3:30 p.m., hosted by First Stage's Education Department, and a panel discussion on Nov. 9, facilitated by the Holocaust Education Resource Center.

"We are grateful to widen the conversation beyond the stage, and to invite our audiences to reflect alongside us on the power of conscience, conviction, and collective action," said Michelle LoRicco, Director of Young Company.

The production features Young Company students **Reiley Fitzsimmons** as Sophie Scholl, **Marko Van Slyke** as Hans Scholl, **Lio Landis** as Christoph Probst, **William Swoboda** as Alex Schmorell, **Elliot Lippman** as Willi Graf, and more. [Full list of cast and creative team available here.](#)

The Rose of Treason is recommended for audiences ages 12 and up—ideal for families, students, educators, and anyone seeking stories of courage. The production runs approximately 90 minutes, including an intermission.

Tickets are \$28, with a "[Pay What You Choose](#)" performance on Friday, Nov. 14 at 7 p.m. Tickets available at www.firststage.org.

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About First Stage

Founded in 1987, First Stage is one of the nation's leading theaters for young people and families, and a driving force behind the creation of the best and most innovative plays for family audiences, theater training programs for young people, and education initiatives for its schools and community. First Stage ensures that all programming is not only accessible to its community but that it is reflective of the community it serves.

First Stage produces plays that honor the young person's point of view, include diverse and traditionally underrepresented voices, and inspire meaningful conversations. First Stage has presented more than 70 world premiere productions that address important subject matters relevant to today's youth. The Theater Academy is one of the nation's largest high-impact theater training programs for young people (3-18 years old). Through a challenging curriculum taught by professional teaching artists, the Academy nurtures life skills through stage skills and includes the Next Steps Program that tailors Theater Academy classes to the needs of young people on the autism spectrum and with other developmental disabilities. As Wisconsin's leader in arts-integrated education in schools, First Stage's dynamic Theater in Education Programs cleverly blend theater activities with standard curriculum—allowing more than 10,000 students annually to learn traditional academic subjects through creativity and self-expression.

First Stage is a member of TYA/USA, Milwaukee Arts Partners, and is a cornerstone member of the United Performing Arts Fund (UPAF). For more information, visit firststage.org

THE ROSE OF TREASON is produced by special arrangement with THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY of Woodstock, Illinois.