



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Second Season of *Amplify* – First Stage’s BIPOC Short Play Series – returns this fall**

*-Featuring three world premieres by BIPOC playwrights Nikkole Salter, Tyrone L. Robinson/Postell Pringle and José Casas-*

**Milwaukee, WI – August 10, 2021** – First Stage, one of the nation’s leading theaters for young people and families, is delighted to announce the second season of their new **Amplify – BIPOC Short Play Series** beginning on **September 1, 2021**. The series launched virtually in the spring of 2021 during the pandemic and featured the world premiere virtual productions of *COPPER HORNS IN WATER* by First Stage alum Ty Defoe and *UNMUTED* by First Stage Resident Playwright Alvaro Saar Rios and composer Debbie Wicks La Puma. Both productions were well received, both critically and with audiences, and reflected First Stage’s commitment to commissioning work by Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) whose voices offer the organization an opportunity to expand its artistic horizons and develop its audience’s perspective.

First Stage has a long history of age-appropriate casting and of centering its work on the young person’s point of view. Understanding the power of connection that young people feel when they see themselves and their stories on stage or virtually, First Stage is eager to continue this series featuring newly commissioned work from noted BIPOC playwrights and directors.

Artistic Director **Jeff Frank** shared thoughts on *Amplify*: “I am thrilled that First Stage is able to offer the second season of our *Amplify* series – this time with live audiences in addition to the virtual options that will be available on our YouTube channel. Each of these productions features the work of a national playwright using their voice to lift those of the young people of Milwaukee. Connecting these remarkable writers with our amazing young people and

witnessing them all working together to create powerful plays that speak with authenticity has been an amazing experience. We can't wait to share their work with First Stage audiences."

Each play will be available on the First Stage YouTube channel, and is free to stream on demand. Select plays in the Amplify Series will have limited in-person performances. These live performances will be free to attend, but advance reservation is required. Audiences may reserve tickets starting **September 1**. Information is available at:

<https://www.firststage.org/events-tickets/2021-22-season/amplify-bipoc-short-play-series/>

**The 2021/22 Amplify – First Stage's BIPOC Short Play Series schedule is:**

### **HOW TO ACTUALLY GRADUATE IN A VIRTUAL WORLD**

By [Nikkole Salter](#)

Directed by [Samantha Montgomery](#)

Streaming September 1 – December 5, 2021

When Milwaukee High announces that graduation will be virtual, TT gathers friends to come up with a way to make the ceremony special. As they weigh their options – and battle invisibility, hopelessness and indifference – we learn how the pandemic affected them all. Is an achievement an achievement if it goes unacknowledged? Tune in and consider this question in this provocative short play. *Suggested for families with young people ages 12+.*

The production will also be presented as part of the Milwaukee Black Theater Festival – Youth Arts Night on **Wednesday, August 18, 2021 at 6:30 p.m.** at St. Ann's Indaba Bandshell. To learn more, please go to: [milwaukeechambertheatre.org/2021mbtf](http://milwaukeechambertheatre.org/2021mbtf)

### **STEP KIDS**

A one-act musical by [Tyrone L. Robinson](#) and [Postell Pringle](#)

Directed by [Christopher Gilbert](#)

Limited capacity live performances at the Milwaukee Youth Arts Center:

Saturday, October 2 at 4 p.m. & 7 p.m. and Sunday, October 3 at 1 p.m. & 4 p.m.

Streaming October 11 – December 5, 2021

A group of seemingly unconnected high school students find common ground in the most unlikely of places – the audition for their school's competitive step dance team. As the students become unified through the power of rhythm and dance, experience the joy of finding your tribe in this energetic performance. *Suggested for families with young people ages 10+.*

### **THE TALE OF LA LLRONA AS TOLD BY CONSUELO CHAVEZ**

By [José Casas](#)

Directed by [David Flores](#)

Limited capacity live performances at the Marcus Center's Todd Wehr Theater:

Saturday, October 23 at 4 p.m. & 7 p.m. and Sunday, October 24 at 1 p.m. & 4 p.m.

Streaming October 30 – December 5, 2021

Disappointed that a thunderstorm has stopped them from their traditional trick or treating, six middle-schoolers huddle together in a basement on what might be the last time they are together to celebrate All Hallow's Eve. To pass the time, they share some of their favorite ghost stories . . . but are they just stories? *Suggested for families with young people ages 12+.*  
*Warning – the performance includes blackouts, loud noises and scary moments.*

For additional information, please go to: <https://www.firststage.org/events-tickets/2021-22-season/amplify-bipoc-short-play-series/> or call **(414) 267-2961**.

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### **About First Stage**

First Stage is one of the nation's leading theaters for young people and families. First Stage touches hearts, engages minds and transforms lives by creating extraordinary theater experiences through professional theater productions that inspire, enlighten and entertain. Its Theater Academy, the nation's largest high-impact theater training program for young people, fosters life skills through stage skills and serves nearly 2,000 students each year. As Wisconsin's leader in arts-integrated education in schools, First Stage's dynamic Theater in Education programs promote literacy, character building and experiential learning throughout the curriculum, serving over 20,000 students each year. First Stage was selected to participate in the Partners in Education program of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts (2012) and was the recipient of the Milwaukee Business Journal's Eureka Award, recognizing creativity and innovation in business, education and the arts for its Next Steps program for students on the autism spectrum (2013, 2015). First Stage is a member of TYA/USA, the American Alliance for Theatre and Education, the Wisconsin Alliance for Arts Education, Milwaukee Arts Partners and is a cornerstone member of the United Performing Arts Fund (UPAF). [firststage.org](https://www.firststage.org).