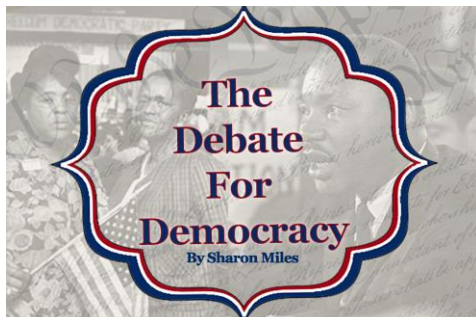




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New Stage Theatre Announces Arts-in-Education Touring Production for January & February 2022

JACKSON, MISS.—New Stage Theatre, a professional theatre located in Jackson, Mississippi, announces its production for its Arts-in-Education statewide touring program available to schools, libraries, and community centers during January and February of 2022.

This season, New Stage will present *The Debate for Democracy* as a touring production. This show will be performed for Mississippi schools by professional actors from the Metro Jackson area.

For more than three decades, New Stage's Governor's Award Winning Education program has brought LIVE performances to the doorsteps of schools in Mississippi. We are so excited to finally be able to do that again after a long (COVID) hiatus!

In January and February 2022, New Stage will present *The Debate for Democracy* centering on the work of FANNIE LOU HAMER, MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., and ELLA BAKER as they work with the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party. Dive into history with us as we explore this dynamic story of civil rights, Mississippi history, and the fight for democracy. This 57-minute show features themes of civil rights and Mississippi history. This show is best suited for middle and high school audiences, and is available for performances in January and February 2022.

The fight for democracy will always be led by the oppressed. During the monumental civil rights movement, national, and local leaders were unwavering in their belief that the promises foretold in the U.S. Constitution should apply to all its citizens. While the mission was unified, there was often heated debate about the best approach to change. In August 1964, a coalition of grassroots activists from Mississippi challenged the racially-exclusive political system of America. Mississippi Blacks seeking the right to vote were subjected to violence and intimidation.

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Therefore, when barred from participating in the state's Democratic Party, The Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP) was founded. *The Debate for Democracy* documents this landmark activism that questioned the morals and ethics of America. Explore behind-the-scene conversations, decisions, and the meeting that led MFDP delegates to decline President Lyndon B Johnson's two seat compromise. *The Debate for Democracy* examines the position of national civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., renowned community organizer Ella Baker, and Mississippi's own Fannie Lou Hamer.

Directed by Sharon Miles, Education Director at New Stage, *The Debate for Democracy* will be performed by Ashia Benford, K. Devin Hunter, and Sharon Miles.

New Stage is offering the tour to schools and communities for \$600 - \$800, depending on travel distance. The price includes the performance and a post-performance question and answer session with the company. A comprehensive study guide for teachers is provided prior to the performance. Various workshops for students and teachers are available with or without a performance. Past workshops have included *Creative Drama*, *Basic Acting*, *Stand Up with Shakespeare*, *Dramatizing Stories*, *Playwriting 101*, and *Stage Combat*. Teacher Workshops are available for schools as professional development as well.

New Stage has a strong reputation for presenting quality performances and has been touring successfully to high school and middle schools since 1990. The tours travel throughout the state, from Clarksdale to New Albany to Gautier and most of the public school districts New Stage visits are to underserved audiences.

Winner of the 2019 Governor's Award for Excellence in the Arts, New Stage Theatre was chartered as a not-for-profit organization in 1965, producing its initial season in the winter/spring of 1966. Founded by Jane Reid-Petty with the assistance of the American National Theatre Academy and Actor's Equity Association, dedication to professional excellence in theatre arts was part of the theatre's original mission. New Stage's education department was founded in 1989 and received the Governor's Award for Excellence in the Arts in 1995 for its efforts to introduce tens of thousands of young Mississippians to live theatre.

The New Stage Arts-in-Education touring program is sponsored by Entergy Mississippi, The Chisholm Foundation, and the Fountain Family Foundation.

For pricing, more information or to schedule a tour or workshop please contact Education Director Sharon Miles at 601-948-3533 ext. 232 (office), 601-467-5333 (cell) or smiles@newstagetheatre.com.

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