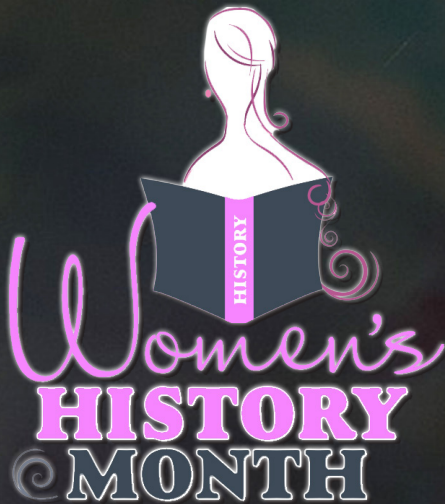


FLORIDA Women™ MAGAZINE

MARCH 2024

Central Florida Edition



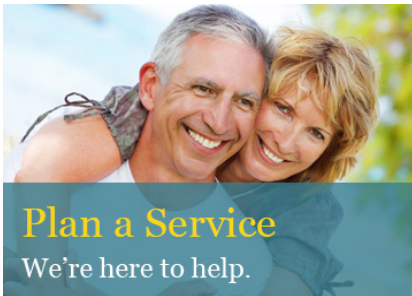
ELEVATING
Women Playwrights
VOICES



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FLORIDA Women™ MAGAZINE

FLORIDA WOMEN MAGAZINE (FWM), is published monthly reaching women from all walks of life, from entrepreneurs and established businesses to women who make a difference in our community throughout Hernando, Hillsborough, East and West Pasco, Polk and Pinellas Counties and surrounding areas in Central Florida.

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Left To Right: 1st Photo: The Voices of Women Theatre Festival debuted in 2021, featured was L'Artiste, *It's French* by Joi Banks. A fully digital festival in 2023 was held, because they were losing their theatre. In 2024, it is a combination of live-in-theatre at USF and digital. 2nd Photo: *Legal Gringa* by Angela Page in 2022. 3rd Photo: *my body. my voice.* by Deborah Bostock-Kelley in 2022.

Elevating Voices

Powerstories' ChangemakHER Network Celebrates Women Playwrights in the 4th Annual Voices of Women Theatre Festival.

In recognition of Women's History Month this March, Powerstories Theatre is launching the ChangemakHER network, a pioneering initiative for female business entrepreneurs. Twenty-four forward-thinking women business owners are invited to sponsor Powerstories' Voices of Women Theatre Festival at USF's theatre, providing a platform for the original works of 12 talented women playwrights and addressing the stark underrepresentation of women in playwriting.

Fran Powers, Theatre Founder, says, "Get ready to be excited because these original plays by female playwrights bring a fresh and diverse perspective to the stage. It's not just about great storytelling; it's about experiencing stories that might not have had their moment before. These plays offer a unique lens on life, relationships, and the human experience that everyone can connect with. It's about celebrating talented women storytellers and enjoying a richer, more inclusive tapestry of theater that reflects the vibrant diversity of our world."

From March 21-30 the groundbreaking festival will showcase the voices of female playwrights, local, national, and international, through live theater and online performances. The Voices of Women Festival began during the heart of the pandemic to connect isolated patrons and the theatre when the stage was dark. The festival was so popular it continued as part of the annual season of shows. Now in its fourth year, The Voices of Women Theatre Festival has seen its debuting playwrights continue to leave their mark on performances across the country. With a tagline of EmpowerHER. InspirHER. AmplifiHER., the festival aims to give women a safe and inclusive place to tell their stories.

This year, Powerstories features live-in-theatre 10-minute self-produced productions, three live-in-theatre 60-minute performances selected and produced by Powerstories, and 60-minute digital submissions.

Featured plays are:

- I'm (Not) Okay by Kimberly Schwartz (Florida) – 10-minute live
- High Occupancy Detour by Karen Campion (Florida) – 10-minute live
- Rose by Janet Scaglione (Florida) – 10-minute live
- The Memories We Keep by Ada Cheng (Illinois) - 10-minute live
- Color Theory by Aurora Peugh (Florida) - 10-minute live
- The First Step by Kathleen Maule Holen (Kansas) – 60-minute live
- The Wives; A Post-Roe American Abortion Odyssey by Alli Hartley-Kong (District of Columbia) – 60-minute live
- Too Woke Too Book by Krystle Dellihue (Michigan) – 60-minute live
- Purdah by J.Loïs Diamond (New York) – 60-minute digital
- Diary of a Bastard Child by Nikki Luellen (Texas) – 60-minute digital
- Diversifications by Natalie Ekberg (United Kingdom) – 60-minute digital
- Beholden by Susan Lily Jackson (California) – 60-minute digital

Powerstories is proud to give women playwrights a voice, and ChangemakHERs was developed to highlight the importance of women championing women. As part of the ChangemakHER network, female sponsors can make a significant impact by celebrating these gifted women. By becoming a ChangemakHER, their commitment reflects their dedication to empowering women and supporting the arts.



Above, Janice Creniti's *My Year of Saying No.*

Powers explains, "I encourage female business owners to become sponsors of the Voices of Women Theatre Festival because it's more than just supporting the arts; it's a unique opportunity for mutual empowerment. By sponsoring, you not only contribute to the success of the festival but also elevate your brand. It's a win-win – supporting creativity, inclusivity, and leaving a lasting impact on Women's History Month."

Participating in the ChangemakHER network means joining an exclusive community of like-minded women entrepreneurs committed to making a positive impact.

Powerstories' inaugural ChangemakHER, Michele Mauzerall, and Maryellen Keenan, co-owners of The SteriCUBE, explain their participation.

Mauzerall says, "Supporting women playwrights in the Voices of Women Theatre Festival is essential for breaking down gender barriers and fostering inclusivity in the arts. The Voices of Women Theatre Festival allows women to share their unique stories and perspectives on their own terms. This empowerment extends beyond the stage, inspiring future generations of women to pursue careers in playwriting and other creative fields where their voices may have been historically marginalized."

Keenan adds, "By championing these voices, we not only address gender disparities and the stark underrepresentation of women in playwriting but also contribute to a more enriched cultural narrative, encouraging women to contribute their unique perspectives. This support catalyzes change, inspiring future generations and creating a platform where we are ultimately shaping a more equitable and vibrant theatrical landscape."

Powerstories invites women business owners to be one of the 24 ChangemakHERs and leave an indelible mark on Women's History Month. Embrace the ChangemakHER spirit and join in celebrating and elevating the voices of women, amplifying their impact for a more inclusive stage.

Powers says, "Our annual festival featuring only women playwrights is important because it tackles the long-standing issue of the lack of women's voices in playwriting. Giving these writers a dedicated platform says, 'Hey, your stories matter.' Plus, it shakes up the status quo, allowing for diverse voices and stories that might've been overlooked. It's not just about plays; it's about encouraging more women to join the playwriting scene and letting them know their voices are heard and valued."

Powerstories' fourth annual Voices of Women Theatre Festival will be at USF Theatre, USF College of the Arts, 3837 USF Holly Drive, Tampa 33620, on March 21-24 live in theatre 7:30pm and digitally on March 25-30. For further information on the Voices of Women Theatre Festival and to join the ChangemakHER network, please visit powerstories.com/VOW-2024 and powerstories.com/changemakhers-festival-sponsorship.