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---For Immediate Release---

Ralph Kerwineo & the Refining Influence of Skirts—World Premiere at Inspiration Studios

Referencing "*The Girl Who 'Married' a Girl*" (Washington Post, May 10, 1914) and "*Girl-Man' Taken Into Custody in the Cream City*" (Racine Journal News, March 31, 1915), this story made for sensational headlines in the 1910s. How could pretty Cora Anderson deceive the world and live amongst the public as Ralph Kerwineo? The extraordinary tale sold many newspapers, but Cora's lived experience as a man of color was buried in the wave of publicity. His story goes largely untold to this day.

Set in the early 1900s, ***Ralph Kerwineo and the Refining Influence of Skirts*** explores the relationship between two women who endure sexual exploitation as nurses and racial discrimination as persons of color during the early 1900s. To combat these cultural barriers to success, Cora Anderson decides that living life as a man—a married man(!)—would be simpler and more lucrative. But the legal implications of such an arrangement become overwhelming.

October 7-23, **Emerald Condor Productions** brings this true story to the stage for a World Premiere. Showtimes are 7:30pm on Fridays/Saturdays; 2:30pm on Sundays. An Industry Night performance will take place Monday, October 10. All performances take place at Inspiration Studios in West Allis.

Playwright **Chris Holyo**da explains the origins of this project. "*Matt Prigge is a Milwaukee historian and friend of mine, and he gave me the research materials that formed the foundation for the script. History provided the over-arching story for the script, but much of the excitement came from writing historical fiction to fill in the gaps in the record. The challenge was to honor the past, as well as Ralph himself, while developing new scenes and dialogue.*"

Though the script is rich with history, the play is much more than a historical piece; it is a mirror to the present that reevaluates a century's worth of societal change.

Director **Jarvell Williams'** experience as an actor, playwright, and director of works, spanning *The Crucible* to *Excerpts of Being Colored*, gave him the necessary background to inject the lifeblood into the story and imbue it with his own vision, which is both conceptually expansive and precise in detail. Having developed a deep and visceral understanding of Mr. Kerwineo, his trials and tribulations, his conflicts with the world around him, and his experience as a queer man of color, Williams is guiding the cast in developing profound and meaningful connections to the characters they portray, and to the historical context in which those characters lived.

A diverse and talented cast will bring these emotional connections to the stage. It features **Jesse Kaplan, Jaleesa Joy, Zoe Osk, Manuel Angel, Randall Tranowski, Scott Sorensen, and Mack Bates.**

Emerald Condor Productions' World Premiere of ***Ralph Kerwineo and the Refining Influence of Skirts*** runs October 7-23 (7:30pm on Fridays/Saturdays and 2:30pm matinees on Sundays) at Inspiration Studios, 1500 S. 73rd Street in West Allis. Tickets are \$20. Early Bird tickets (\$17) are available online at www.inspirationstudiosgallery.com through September 18. An Industry Night performance will take place Monday, October 10, with a \$10 admission.

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