



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
CONTACT: Lydia Baxter
Public Relations Associate
(941) 366 – 9017 ext. 338
Lbaxter@floridastudiotheatre.org
DATE: May 14, 2018

10TH ANNIVERSARY SARASOTA IMPROV FESTIVAL FULL LINEUP ANNOUNCED

(Sarasota, FL) —**Florida Studio Theatre (FST)** is proud to announce its lineup for the 10th Anniversary Sarasota Improv Festival, the pinnacle Festival of its kind in the Southeastern United States. With 20 of the best comedy ensembles traveling to the Gulf Coast from all over the country and from as far away as Spain and France, spontaneous creativity and hilarity will take over FST's campus for three days—July 12-14. Festival passes are now on sale—Three day passes are \$79, Two day passes are \$60, Friday or Saturday passes are \$55, and Thursday passes are \$29. All passes may be purchased by calling the Florida Studio Theatre Box Office at 941-366-9000, or by going online at floridastudiotheatre.org.

In celebration of this year's milestone, the 10th Anniversary Sarasota Improv Festival will feature an unprecedented three headliners – one for each night of the Festival. This year's headliners include **ImproMadrid** (Spain), **Baby Wants Candy** (Chicago), and **Impro Theatre** (Los Angeles). "This year's headliners are not only favorites from the first 9 years of the festival, but also showcase the diversity of the art form," shared FST's Director of Improvisation, Will Luera.

One of Spain's preeminent improv troupes, **ImproMadrid**, returns to Sarasota after three years. Founded over fifteen years ago, **ImproMadrid** performs over ten different types of shows, sometimes integrating audience participation, text, songs, and poems into their performances. In a recent show, *Jardines* (which means "Gardens" in Spanish), **ImproMadrid** asked audience volunteers questions about topics that the group is interested in, such as love, fear, and time management. Luera shared, "**ImproMadrid** blurs the lines of Improvisation and Scripted Theater while adding the emotional depth and storytelling technique that all of our international guests have brought with them."

A *New York Times*' Critics Pick, **Baby Wants Candy** listens to ideas from the audience, adds some instrumentation, and tops it all off with impromptu choreography. *The New York Times* says the group is "Truly Amazing" and *ThreeWeeks* says **Baby Wants Candy** "Will take your breath away." Luera explains, "Over the last decade we have seen the explosion of Musical Improvisation—not just nationally but on the FST stage as well. **Baby Wants Candy** is not only the pioneering group in this genre but continue to be the masters of it as well."

Impro Theatre is a Los Angeles-based improv company that improvises full-length plays in the styles of the world's top writers, such as Dorothy Parker, Anton Chekhov, and Stephen Sondheim. At the Festival, **Impro Theatre** will be performing *Tennessee Williams Unscripted*, a show where the "Passionate, smoldering secrets [that] lurk beneath the surface of genteel society...explode in a climax of accusation, confession and consequence." Luera said, "Like **ImproMadrid**, **Impro Theatre**

blurs the lines of Improvisation and Scripted Theater so well that you forget that what you are watching is completely unscripted." According to *American Theatre Magazine*, the members of **Impro Theatre** "Can write on their feet better than many writers can type at a desk." *Stage & Cinema* says that "Watching **Impro Theatre** make up plays is like watching *Cirque du Soleil* perform acrobatics — a feat that expands the definition of human potential."

Continuing to expand its reach past the limits of the Atlantic Ocean, this is the fourth year in a row that FST will welcome international improv groups—both **La Carpe Haute** (meaning "The High Carp" in English) and **ImproMadrid** are from Western Europe. FST's Will Luera toured through Spain with **Impro Madrid** for two weeks, describing it to be "A highlight of my career. Touring with them was like being an opener for The Rolling Stones. They were loved everywhere we went and their shows were unmatched in professionalism and hilarity."

La Carpe Haute will be journeying from Strasbourg, France to Sarasota for the first time. "They [**La Carpe Haute**] will probably be one of the most physical ensembles Sarasota audiences have ever seen," said Luera. The group captures the French theatrical aesthetic by utilizing elements of physical theatre, mime, and object work. Another newcomer to the Festival is **Orange Tuxedo**, a husband and wife team from Los Angeles, both of whom have impressive careers. Husband Craig Cackowski is one of the nation's leading improv teachers and wife Carla has toured all over Europe and the Caribbean with The Second City, America's legendary home of sketch comedy and improv.

Returning for the Festival are several favorites, including **North Coast**, **Parallelogramophonograph**, **ImprovBoston**, **STACKED**, and **Available Cupholders**. In addition to all of these performances, there will be over 15 workshops held during the day on Saturday, July 14 for those who want to learn from improv's best and brightest. The Festival finale is the highly popular **All Play**, where all of the Festival artists play on stage at the same time. Audience members have no idea what will unfold in front of their eyes, and improvisers are unaware of what suggestions their fellow performers will make.

Now in its 10th year, the Sarasota Improv Festival has become a destination event. Last year's 9th Annual Festival attracted over 3,600 attendees over the three-days. 32% of those attendees came from outside of Sarasota, Manatee, Desoto and Charlotte counties.

Rebecca Hopkins, FST's Managing Director, founded the Annual Sarasota Improv Festival in 2009, and is pleased with the festival's growth. "I am very proud of how the festival has become such an integral part of the Summer Arts Season in Sarasota," said Hopkins. "It has introduced Sarasota to the very best artists in the art form from around the country, and now the world. It has become an important part of the Improv field nationally, and has put not only Sarasota, but Florida as a whole on the map within the industry."

For the complete list of groups and bios, please visit <https://www.floridastudiotheatre.org/10th-anniversary-sarasota-improv-festival>. Festival passes are now on sale—Three day passes are \$79, Two day passes are \$60, Friday or Saturday passes are \$55, and Thursday passes are \$29. Festival passes may be purchased by calling the Florida Studio Theatre Box Office at 941-366-9000, or by going online at floridastudiotheatre.org.

-MORE-

PRICING:

Three Day Pass - Thursday, Friday, AND Saturday - \$79
Two Day Pass - Friday AND Saturday - \$69
Single Day Pass - Saturday - \$55
Single Day Pass - Friday - \$55
Thursday Night Pass - \$29
Single tickets - \$10
Single tickets for Headliner - \$25
Workshops are \$35 each for each 2-hour session, or \$90 for 3 sessions.

PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE:

Thursday, July 12

7:00pm – FST Improv
8:30pm – Impro Theatre

Friday, July 13

6:00pm – Florida Showcase
6:00pm—Improv Boston
7:00pm – North Coast
7:00pm – Orange Tuxedo
8:00pm – Baby Wants Candy
8:00pm – Available Cupholders
8:00pm – La Carpe Haute
9:00pm – Dad’s Garage
9:00pm – STACKED
9:00pm – Parallelogramophonograph
10:00pm – ImproMadrid

Saturday, July 14

5:00pm – Florida Showcase
5:00pm – Hawk & Wayne
5:00pm—La Carpe Haute
6:00pm – Available Cupholders
6:00pm – Big Bang Improv
6:00pm – STACKED
7:00pm – All Star & Friends
7:00pm – Dad’s Garage
7:00pm – Impro Theatre
7:00pm—Improv Boston
8:00pm – Orange Tuxedo
8:00pm – Parallelogramophonograph
8:00pm – SAK Comedy Lab
9:00pm – Baby Wants Candy
10:30pm – All Play

-MORE-

WORKSHOP SCHEDULE—Saturday, July 14

9:00-11:00 am

Fresh Out of the Womb
See It, Feel It, Reach to It
Looking for the End
A French Lesson in Physicality
Beginner Musical Improv
Reinventing Short-Form
It All Matters

11:30 am-1:30 pm

Improvise Like a Married Couple
Here and Now
Deft Theft
Getting to Know Will
Musical (All Form)

2:00 pm-4:00 pm

Improvised Hip Hop
Caring About Stuff
Short Form Tune Up
Mime and Object Work

###