



Richard Hopkins
Producing Artistic Director

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**IMPROV TROUPE, AVAILABLE CUPHOLDERS,
RETURNS TO SARASOTA FOR SPECIAL RESIDENCY**

(Sarasota, FL) —Florida Studio Theatre (FST) is proud to announce that Sarasota Improv Festival favorites, **Available Cupholders**, will return to the Gulf Coast the first weekend of June for a special residency. The Austin and Los Angeles-based improv comedy group is known for performing shows that combine Theater and Improvisation, frequently in formats that are challenging and ever-changing. During their time at FST, the group will perform two distinct improvised comedy shows on Friday, June 3, and Saturday, June 4, at 7:30PM each night in FST's Bowne's Lab. Tickets are \$20 and are now on sale at FloridaStudioTheatre.org or 941.366.9000. The group will also lead three workshops for students of all experience levels on Saturday, June 4, and Sunday, June 5. Enrollment is \$35 per workshop. Those interested in discovering their own creative spontaneity can register online at FloridaStudioTheatre.org, or by calling **Pamela Smith**, Education Administrator, at (941) 366-1350.

For almost twenty years, Available Cupholders have brought their distinct style of narrative improv to festivals and improvisational theatre companies around the world, including Boom Chicago (Amsterdam), Annoyance Theatre (Chicago), and Impro Theatre (Los Angeles). The group has never missed a **Sarasota Improv Festival** in the event's eleven-year history. Available Cupholders even founded the **Out of Bounds Comedy Festival** in their native city of Austin, TX.

"As we begin to build our Improv schedule back, the biggest hole this summer is the fact that, this year, there is no Sarasota Improv Festival," said **Will Luera**, FST's Director of Improv. "We know how much the festival means to our community and improv fans in the area, so we wanted to bring back a Festival favorite for a special weekend-long residency. We immediately thought of Available Cupholders—their quick wit and unpredictable sense of humor is openly welcomed and appreciated by Sarasota audiences."

On Friday, June 3, the group will perform **Fakespeare: Improvised Shakespeare**, a never-before-seen show in which four expert improvisers pit their theatrical training against their comedy training to improvise a full-length show in the style of the one-and-only William Shakespeare. All-new characters, dialogue, plots, and more will keep the performers on their toes. To make things more interesting, select audience members—from the comfort of their seats—will decide when each player switches into and out of Shakespearean performance style throughout the show.

On Saturday, June 4, the four members of Available Cupholders will have to draw on their decades of experience creating both award-winning comedy and theatre to improvise a full-length play—completely from scratch. Using only one suggestion of a made-up play title from the audience, the team will create a full world of rich characters, relationships, plots, dialogue, intrigue, dramatic glances, and all the comedic lip-biting tension one show can take.

During their residency, Available Cupholders will lead three special workshops focused on building stage presence, creating a powerhouse improv group, and learning how to set up scenes with exciting new twists. All three workshops are suitable for beginners who are interested in dipping their toes into the exciting, inventive world of improv as well as more advanced participants.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Special Performances

Fakespeare: Improvised Shakespeare with Available Cupholders

Friday, January 3 in FST's Bowne's Lab | 7:30PM

A quartet of expert improvisers pit their theatrical training against their comedy training to improvise a full-length show in the style of the one-and-only William Shakespeare. All-new characters, dialogue, plots, and more keep these artists on their toes. To up the challenge and the improvisation, select audience members (from the comfort of their seats) will select when each player switches into Shakespearean performance throughout the show, ensuring the performers will not be all be improvising in the same Shakespearean form at the same time. What does this mean? How will it work? Will it fall apart? Is this a good idea? (Trust us. It is.) There's only one way to find out!

Available Cupholders Present: An Improvised Play

Saturday, January 4 in FST's Bowne's Lab | 7:30PM

Four expert improvisers must draw from their years of creating both award-winning comedy and theatre to improvise a full-length play...completely from scratch. Using only the suggestion of a made-up play title from the audience, The Cupholders will create a full world of rich characters, relationships, plots, dialogue, intrigue, dramatic glances, and all the comedic lip-biting tension one show can take. If you adore the theatre, this show is for you. If you can't get enough comedy, this show is for you. If you love both, then you absolutely can't miss it.

Improv Workshops

Acting Chops for Improvisers

Saturday, June 4 | 11AM

Instructors: Michael Joplin and Jeremy Sweetlamb

Every great actor improvises, but the reverse is not always true. In this two-hour workshop, we will borrow techniques and exercises from the scripted acting world and smash them together with improv structures from the work of Keith Johnstone and others. We might use Meisner's Repetition, Boal's Great Game of Power, or a Cupholder original: improvising with scripts. You'll come away a

better listener, capable of holding a heavier stage presence, with a slightly better understanding of what is happening in those fleeting moments between you and your scene partner.

How to be Unstoppable

Saturday, June 4 | 2PM

Instructors: Kaci Beeler and Ace Manning

Have you ever blanked out on stage when you were improvising? Lost your joy? Felt the pressure to be funny and unique? Blamed yourself or maybe even your scene partners? Kaci and Ace of The Available Cupholders are here to bring some sparkle back to your 'prov. When you connect with your scene partners and with your higher self, using deep "Yes, And..." you become truly unstoppable on the improv stage. We'll use this fast-paced two-hour workshop to touch on some of our favorite exercises for creating powerhouse groups and ensembles as well as highly-watchable, engaging performers who have a BLAST when they improvise.

Participants Will Walk Away With Greater Ability To:

- Play with ANYONE and have a great time.
- Find the fun in ANY scene or game that you're in.
- Turn up the SHINE on a dull scene!

Rehearse with the Available Cupholders

Saturday, June 4 | 2PM

Instructors: Kaci Beeler, Michael Joplin, Ace Manning, and Jeremy Sweetlamb

You're invited behind the curtain and into the rehearsal room alongside the award-winning improvisers of Available Cupholders. In this guided environment, Kaci, Michael, Ace, and Jeremy will lead and play in improv games and exercises right alongside the participants. In this two-hour session, you'll jump into tried-and-true rehearsal favorites, scene set-ups with strange new twists, ridiculous warm-up games, and whatever else we feel like playing with and practicing!

ABOUT FLORIDA STUDIO THEATRE

Florida Studio Theatre (FST) is Sarasota's contemporary theatre. Founded in 1973, FST has grown to a village of five theatres located in the heart of Downtown, Sarasota. Each theatre is small in size and large in impact— providing intimate and engaging settings for high-quality, professional performances.

Today, FST has established itself as a major force in American Theatre. FST is the largest subscription theatre in the state of Florida and among the largest in the country, serving more than 230,000 live attendees each year across its diverse programs: Mainstage, Cabaret, Stage III, Children's Theatre, The FST School, New Play Development, and FST Improv.

Even with its growth, Florida Studio Theatre remains firmly committed to making the arts accessible and affordable to as many people as possible. Under the leadership of Producing Artistic Director Richard Hopkins, FST develops theatre that speaks to our living, evolving, and dynamically changing world. Hip and historical, entertaining and challenging, we are the theatre where the street meets the elite — where everyone is welcome to engage in the art of theatre.

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