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**FST'S ETHEL WATERS: HIS EYE IS ON THE SPARROW
EXTENDS INTO 7TH WEEK**

(Sarasota, FL) —Due to audience demand, Florida Studio Theatre (FST) announces the extension of its Summer Mainstage production, *Ethel Waters: His Eye is on the Sparrow* by Larry Parr, starring popular FST artist Jannie Jones. Featuring such hits as “Am I Blue?” and “Stormy Weather,” this uplifting play tells the rags-to-riches story of legendary actress and singer Ethel Waters. Parr’s powerful musical biography depicts how Waters’ determination, spirit, and unique voice enabled her to cross racial barriers and achieve Hollywood and Broadway stardom. *Ethel Waters: His Eye is on the Sparrow* has been held over through Saturday, August 10 in FST’s Keating Theatre. Tickets range from \$29-39 and are now on sale at floridastudiotheatre.org, or by calling (941) 366-9000.

Audiences and critics have championed Jannie Jones’ portrayal of the legendary musical and film icon. Audiences are calling Jones’ depiction of Waters “The single most impressive performance we have ever seen.” Critics agree, calling it “A bravura performance” (*Talkin’ Broadway*) and “Exceptional” (*Total Theater*). *Sarasota Magazine* writes that “Jones’ vividly conveys [Waters’] spirit” and the *Sarasota Herald-Tribune* calls Jones’ performance “Vibrant, rousing, and moving.”

“I am very excited for new audiences to be engulfed in Ethel’s incredible story,” shared Jones. “I still stand on Ethel’s shoulders, and I have the deepest gratitude for all of the struggles she endured. She fought hard to play roles other than maids, or minor characters with inconsequential lines. Because of Ethel and other African Americans of that era, I have been able to perform on Broadway.”

Jones is joined onstage by Jim Prosser, FST’s Resident Pianist, who provides musical accompaniment as Jones chronicles the uplifting story of Ethel Waters’ life.

Now extended through August 10 in FST’s Keating Theatre, *Ethel Waters: His Eye is on the Sparrow* honors the Broadway and Hollywood icon who continues to inspire audiences today. Tickets range from \$29-39 and are now on sale at floridastudiotheatre.org, or by calling (941) 366-9000.

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ABOUT FLORIDA STUDIO THEATRE

Known as Sarasota's Contemporary Theatre, Florida Studio Theatre was founded in 1973 by Artist Jon Spelman. Starting out as a small touring company, FST traveled to places such as migrant camps and prisons. The company eventually settled down into a permanent home, acquiring the former Woman's Club building – now renamed the Keating Theatre. In the years that followed, Florida Studio Theatre established itself as a major force in American Theatre, presenting contemporary theatre in its five theatre venues: the Keating Theatre, the Gompertz Theatre, the Goldstein Cabaret, the John C. Court Cabaret, and Bowne's Lab Theatre.

Even with its growth, Florida Studio Theatre remains firmly committed to making the arts accessible and affordable to a broad-based audience. Under Producing Artistic Director Richard Hopkins, FST develops theatre that speaks to our living, evolving, and dynamically changing world. As FST grows and expands, it continues to provide audiences with challenging, contemporary drama and innovative programs.

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