



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DATE: September 10, 2018

### FST ANNOUNCES ITS 2018-2019 WINTER MAINSTAGE AND CABARET SEASONS

(Sarasota, FL)- Florida Studio Theatre (FST) is proud to announce its lineup for the 2018-2019 Winter Mainstage and Cabaret Seasons. On the Mainstage, FST presents its largest marquee season in over a decade with two multi-Tony Award winners, an Obie-Award-winning playwright, a play fresh off Broadway, and a World Premiere. In the Cabaret, three original FST productions bring the music of male harmony groups, female singer-songwriters, and The Baby Boomer generation to life.

"This year the season is first and foremost very contemporary," explained FST's Producing Artistic Director, Richard Hopkins. "It deals with the world of today, the issues of today, and most importantly, the season deals with the people of today. I think the audience will recognize themselves and their neighbors [in the productions], while also being introduced to people who are different that they may be meeting for the first time."

The four-time Tony Award-winning musical, ***A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder***, opens FST's 45<sup>th</sup> Mainstage season. The Broadway hit follows main character Monty Navarro, who after discovering that he is a distant heir to a large family fortune, works to speed up the line of succession by using a great deal of charm...and a dash of murder. Next on the Mainstage is ***Straight White Men***, a comedic father-son drama by Obie Award-winning playwright Young Jean Lee, which just closed after its successful run on Broadway. Continuing the Mainstage season is the British blockbuster play, ***The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*** by Simon Stephens, which swept up five Tony Awards and 7 Olivier Awards, including Best Play. FST's 45<sup>th</sup> Mainstage season concludes with the World Premiere of ***Wednesday's Child*** by Mark St. Germain, a dramatic new play about a police investigation into the murder of a young surrogate mother, and the thin line between right and wrong.

In the Cabaret, FST's 2018-2019 Season celebrates the music that defined 3 generations in contemporary America. Opening the season is ***Unchained Melodies***, celebrating male harmony groups starting with doo-wop and continuing with the swingin' musical styles that serenaded listeners through the 50s and 60s, featuring songs by The Drifters, The Platters, and many more. Next up, FST highlights the significant musical contributions of female singer-songwriters, like icons June Carter-Cash, Joni Mitchell, Janis Joplin, and Dolly Parton, in ***Guitar Girls***. FST's Winter Cabaret Season concludes with a journey through the Boomer Years in ***The Wonder Years: The Music of the Baby Boomers***, a fun, quirky show mixing elements of television and music to tell the story of America's "first teenagers."

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With its mission to make theatre accessible to the broadest possible audience, FST offers all four Mainstage shows for as little as \$69, and all three Cabarets for as little as \$49. Subscriptions are now on sale at [floridastudiotheatre.org](http://floridastudiotheatre.org) or through the Box Office at (941) 366-9000.

## **SEASON AT A GLANCE**

### **MAINSTAGE:**

***A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder*** – November 7 – December 30, 2018  
(Gompertz Theatre)

A distant heir to a family fortune sets out to speed up the line of succession by using a great deal of charm...and a dash of murder. This Broadway hit is filled with unforgettable music, nonstop comedy, and a scene-stealing role for one actor who plays all eight of the doomed heirs. Can Monty Navarro juggle his fiancé and his mistress, knock off all eight of the heirs without being caught, and become the ninth Earl of Highhurst? See this knock 'em dead Tony Award winner for Best Musical to find the answers.

***Straight White Men*** – December 12, 2018 – March 1, 2019 (Keating Theatre)  
REGIONAL PREMIERE. Obie Award-winning playwright Young Jean Lee takes a hilariously ruthless look at the classic American father-son drama. It's Christmas Eve, and Ed has gathered his three adult sons to celebrate with matching pajamas, trash talking, amusing antics, and Chinese takeout. But when a question they can't answer interrupts their holiday cheer, each is forced to confront their own identity. It's a funny family Christmas that no one can forget.

***The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*** -January 23 – March 17, 2019  
(Gompertz Theatre)  
Winner of Five Tony Awards and 7 Olivier Awards including Best Play. Christopher Boone is exceptionally intelligent, but ill-equipped to interpret everyday life. He sets out to investigate the bizarre death of a neighbor's dog, inspiring a series of events that expose far greater mysteries. As the clues fall into place, they reveal a community of disparate characters, a family with secrets, and a gifted mind in a complicated relationship with the world. This international hit takes you inside the extraordinary mind of a boy who views the world as most of us can only imagine.

***Wednesday's Child***– April 3 – May 24, 2019 (Gompertz Theatre)  
WORLD PREMIERE. Susan and Martin Merritt are unable to have a child on their own, so they hire Becca Connor to serve as a surrogate. When Becca is found dead, a police investigation explodes the lives of everyone who knew her. As Detectives Valez and Dixon begin to put the pieces together, secrets surface, alibis weaken, and lies are uncovered. This dramatic new play explores motherhood, passion, and the thin line between right and wrong.

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## **CABARET:**

***Unchained Melodies*** – October 3, 2018 – February 3, 2019 (Court Cabaret)

Under the streetlamps of East Coast cities, doo-wop emerged, bringing tight harmony to the soundtrack of the 1950s. Beginning with doo-wop groups like The Drifters and The Platters, *Unchained Melodies* celebrates the swingin' harmonies of the '50s and '60s. Featuring songs like "Blue Moon," "16 Candles," "Save The Last Dance," and "Working My Way Back To You."

***Guitar Girls*** – November 28, 2018 – March 31, 2019 (Goldstein Cabaret)

A celebration of female singer-songwriters. Icons like June Carter-Cash, Joni Mitchell, Janis Joplin, Dolly Parton, and Carly Simon have proven that a girl with a guitar can make an undeniable impact. Featuring songs like "Coal Miner's Daughter," "Jolene," "Big Yellow Taxi," and "I Will Always Love You."

***The Wonder Years: The Music of the Baby Boomers*** – February 6 – June 9 (Court Cabaret)

Take a musical ride through the Boomer Years! From the early days of Howdy Doody through the rebelliousness of The Beatles singing "She Loves You" on Ed Sullivan, television helped shape and reflect the Boomer journey. Featuring the greatest hits from Boomers' experience, including "Jailhouse Rock," "I Can't Get No Satisfaction," and "Stayin' Alive."

## **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 then acquired the former Woman's Club building, becoming the first permanent venue. Shortly after Producing Artistic Director Richard Hopkins arrived, the building was purchased and 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 Parisian style Goldstein Cabaret and 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. 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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