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DATE: November 16, 2017

**FST ROCKS THE GOLDSTEIN CABARET WITH  
*BLUE SUEDE SHOES***

(Sarasota, FL) —Florida Studio Theatre continues the 2017-18 Winter Cabaret season with *Blue Suede Shoes*, taking audiences back to the birth of rock and roll with legendary greats such as Chuck Berry, Carl Perkins, and Elvis Presley. Created by Richard Hopkins, Rebecca Hopkins, and arrangements by Jim Prosser, this rocking revue opens in the Goldstein Cabaret on December 1, 2017. Subscriptions for all three Winter Cabaret shows are available for as little as \$39. Subscriptions may be purchased online at FloridaStudioTheatre.org, by phone at (941) 366-9000, or by visiting the Box Office.

In the 1950s, Rock 'N' Roll took America by storm. With its roots in rhythm and blues, country western, swing, and doo-wop, this new sound would forever change the world of music. From the father of Rock 'N' Roll, Chuck Berry, to The King himself, Elvis Presley, this revue celebrates the birth of rock and roll with such great hits as "Rock Around the Clock," "Blue Suede Shoes," "Mustang Sally," and "Johnny B. Goode."

Lead Developer, Rebecca Hopkins, describes the inspiration behind creating this eclectic production of story and song, "Two words: Elvis Presley. I spent three years exploring rock and roll of the '60s and '70s. In researching those shows, the one consistent influence for those artists was Elvis Presley. Now I'm an Elvis fan. How can you not be? So I was excited to get into his music, but I also wanted to look at the space his music lived in. Why was he such an inspiration to others and who inspired him? That really led me on a fantastic journey."

Returning company member Jannie Jones, known for her powerful and commanding vocals, shares her own inspiration and excitement of performing these legendary hits. "When I hear Rock and Roll, I immediately see Little Richard wilding out on the piano, packed full of energy," says Jones. "I see the pretty young ladies dancing in the Elvis Presley's movies. I would daydream about being one of those girls someday. There's a sense of freedom, laying all of your woes down for a while and just having a fantastic music party." Audiences will recognize Jones from her many FST productions including *Gypsies, Tramps, and Thieves*, *Dancing in the Street*, and *The Prima Donnettes*.

Rocking out alongside Jones will be returning audience favorite, Joe Casey, most recently seen on the Gompertz stage as Johnny Cash in *Million Dollar Quartet*. No stranger to the Goldstein stage, Casey previously performed in *Poems, Prayers, and Promises* and *American Pie*.

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“Rock n roll means freedom,” says Casey. “Freedom to be yourself and say what you want or need to say. Plus, I believe rock n roll encompasses every style. As a singer/songwriter I classify my style as acoustic punk. I grew up in the 80s after all. But rock n roll encompasses all those stylistic classifications. There's a punk beat in that early Elvis rockabilly.”

Making their FST debuts are cast members Gabe Aronson, Hannah Benitez, and Nygel Robinson. Aronson's previously performed in *Million Dollar Quartet* at Harrahs Las Vegas. Benitez's credits include *Fiddler on the Roof* and *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*. Robinson was previously seen in *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* and *Smokey Joe's Café*.

Hopkin's concludes, “Many think of the '60s rock and roll as the soundtrack of the cultural revolution. What became clear to me was that it was music of the '50s that helped to make the '60s possible.”

Join this dynamic cast as they rock the Goldstein Cabaret. *Blue Suede Shoes* runs from December 1 through April 1. Subscriptions for all three Winter Cabaret shows are available for as little as \$39. Subscriptions may be purchased online at [FloridaStudioTheatre.org](http://FloridaStudioTheatre.org), by phone at (941) 366-9000, or by visiting the Box Office.

#### 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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