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***GYPSIES, TRAMPS, AND THIEVES:*
FST ANNOUNCES FIRST 2016-17 WINTER CABARET PRODUCTION**

(Sarasota, FL) — FST's 2016-17 Winter Cabaret season begins with the musical revue *Gypsies, Tramps, and Thieves*, highlighting some of the most beloved female solo singers of the last four decades. This production of powerhouse vocalists opens in the John C. Court Cabaret on October 7, 2016. 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.

Gypsies, Tramps, and Thieves celebrates the women who have captivated the world with their dynamic personalities and fierce vocals. From the 1970s to today, female artists have been pop pioneers, pushing boundaries and charting new musical territory. Featuring songs by powerhouse performers such as Cher, Tina Turner, and Reba McEntire.

Taking the FST stage for her sixteenth production is company member, Jannie Jones. Known by Sarasota audiences for her vibrant and soulful sound, Jones' previous FST credits include *The Prima Donnettes*, *Dancing in the Street*, and *His Eye is on the Sparrow*. Joining Jones is returning company member, Juliana Davis. Davis was previously seen in both of FST's productions of *Shear Madness*. Her other credits include *West Side Story*, *Oklahoma*, and *Aida*. New to the FST stage and rounding out the cast is Meredith Jones. Her previous credits include *Carousel*, *Blood Brothers*, and *Thoroughly Modern Millie*.

Directing this musical journey is FST Associate Artist and Literary Manager, Catherine Randazzo. According to Randazzo, "What makes the powerhouse female artists and songs of the era amazing to me is how catchy the melodies are. Yet the lyrics and stories are important to the strong female movement. These songs were often written by the women that performed them. It was inherent in the lyrics how much of their music mirrored their lives."

FST Managing Director and Lead Developer of the show, Rebecca Hopkins speaks to the inspiration for this production stating, "This show was created as a continuation of *The Prima Donnettes*. We have gone from the girl groups in *Prima* to the stand alone, powerful female solo artists from the second half of the twentieth century in *Gypsies*. They led the way and are not recognized enough in my view. They were truly original artists."

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"I have grown to appreciate this music even more today, especially Cher's music," said Randazzo. "Her versatility - from her unique performance style to her outrageously dynamic wardrobe - was an inspiration to me as a young woman growing up. She could do it all, TV, film, comedy, and then belt out an anthem to empower all walks of life."

This revue of full-bodied vocals and dynamic harmonies opens in the Court Cabaret on October 7 and runs through January 29. 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.

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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