



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Nicole Clayton  
Public Relations Associate  
(941) 366 – 9017 ext. 338  
Nclayton@floridastudiotheatre.org  
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### COME TO THE EDGE WITH FST'S STAGE III SERIES

(Sarasota, FL) – Bringing audiences out of their comfort zone and to the edge, Florida Studio Theatre is pleased to announce its Stage III subscription series for the 2017-18 season. This three show subscription begins with the gritty drama, *How To Use A Knife*. The second production will be the searing *Constellations*, followed by the poignant and provocative story, *The Things They Carried*. All performances will take place in Bowne's Lab Theatre.

A subscription to all three Stage III shows may be purchased for as little as \$39. Tickets can be purchased online at [www.floridastudiotheatre.org](http://www.floridastudiotheatre.org) or by calling the Box Office at (941) 366-9000.

Kicking off the Stage III season is the fast-paced and authentic, *How To Use a Knife*, by Will Snider, opening on January 19. In the chaotic hustle and bustle of a Wall Street restaurant, Chef George gets a fresh start when he takes over this melting-pot-of-a-kitchen. Two rowdy Guatemalan line cooks, a wet-behind-the-ears busboy and a reserved African dishwasher serve up drama nightly. But the heat really turns up when immigration sneaks in, looking for a wanted man. Fast paced and gritty, *How to Use a Knife* explores both the personal and moral questions that arise when the ugliness of the past boils over. *Talkin' Broadway* says it's filled with "Surges of non-stop energy." *Philadelphia Magazine* agrees calling it a "Marvelous production." *Broad Street Review* sums up calling it "An explosive taut 100-minute thrill ride."

Second in this stirring series is *Constellations*, by Nick Payne opening on February 23. Can one word alter the course of your life? A simple encounter between a man and a woman leads to a spellbinding journey across time and space. Science and romance collide in this unusual love story of infinite possibilities and the difference between choice and destiny. "If fits so beautifully in Bowne's Lab," says Producing Artistic Director Richard Hopkins. "This show is not linear, there are time-jumps within the play. The challenging aspect of this production comes more from the format of the piece, jumping from different realities and times." Critics have weighed in on this thrilling two-hander. *The New York Times* calls it "A magnificent work" and "A supremely articulate play." The *Chicago Tribune* says it's "Remarkable" and "A beautiful look at love out of time." *Variety* calls it "Haunting" and "Devilishly clever."

Rounding out the Stage III series is *The Things They Carried*, based on the classic book by Tim O'Brien, opening on March 23. This riveting production chronicles the personal journey of O'Brien's innocent years in rural Minnesota, to the jungles of Vietnam. A one-person tour-de-force this play explores the lines between truth and reality as fact and fiction blur in this unforgettable soldier's journey.

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"I read it and was blown away," says Hopkins. "When you read it, you realize it could be set anywhere – Korea, the Middle East, etc. It's the personal experience of people in war; the true horror of war and what it does to the individual. It has the power to bring human beings closer to those raw and real animal instincts."

All performances will take place in Bowne's Lab Theatre. Producing Artistic Director, Richard Hopkins speaks to why this space lends so well to the Stage III series. "FST leans toward minimalism. We believe that spectacle is the lowest thing actually happening on stage. The writing, acting, lighting, and directing are at the forefront. Bowne's Lab is a space designed for these types of productions. It allows us to engage the audience's imagination. Every person in each theatre seat will create their own set and visual experience of these shows. Bowne's Lab makes it possible to show the emotional capacity of this edgier work, and our audiences are more than willing to see something that truly challenges them!"

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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 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.