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JUDGE CHARLES E. WILLIAMS AND GAELE BARTHOLD JOIN FLORIDA STUDIO THEATRE'S BOARD OF TRUSTEES

(Sarasota, FL) — Florida Studio Theatre is pleased to announce the appointment of Judge Charles E. Williams and Mrs. Gaele Barthold to its Board of Trustees. Both Williams and Barthold bring with them a wealth of knowledge, commitment, and passion for Florida Studio Theatre to this advisory team.

Born in North Carolina and raised in St. Petersburg, Judge Charles E. Williams currently serves as the Chief Judge of the 12th Judicial Circuit, which includes Sarasota, Manatee, and Desoto Florida counties. His recent awards and honors include the Community Service Award from the Manatee County Bar Association, the Manatee County NAACP Public Service Award, the Sarasota County NAACP 2014 Public Service Award, and the Sarasota County Branch NAACP's 2014 Lifetime Achievement Award. Williams is also the recipient of the C.L. McKaig Award, presented by the Sarasota County Bar Association in recognition and appreciation of his tireless dedication to promoting the ideals of equality, justice, and professionalism. In 2017, he joined the board of Embracing Our Differences. Williams is a graduate of Howard University in Washington DC and earned his law degree from the University of Florida.

Judge Williams joined in partnership with FST back in 2011 for the production *Race*, a provocative legal drama and investigation of guilt, sex, lies, and race produced by Florida Studio Theatre in 2011. His participation in the panel discussion around this show was only the first step toward what would be many years of facilitating post-show dialogue and leading the annual Forums Steering Committee. Judge Williams' most recent contributions include a *brownsville song* pre-show workshop, in which he spoke to Booker High School and Pine View students to help them understand the full context of the play they would be attending. Last year, he was recognized at FST's Fifties Shindig for his years of outstanding contribution to the art of Florida Studio Theatre.

"What struck me most about Judge Williams was his capacity to listen," states Producing Artistic Director Richard Hopkins. "He listens intently and he listens deeply to everything. Because of this, when he makes a comment, it's a fully informed comment. The kind of character he brings to the board is the kind of character we embody at Florida Studio Theatre. He's going to be a great board member."

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FST Associate Director At-Large, Kate Alexander adds, "I have worked closely with Judge Williams for the past 8 years on the FST Forums. He is the Steering Committee Chair and in this position, has been a beacon of light both in thought and deed, establishing a platform of emotional intelligence and intellectual insight on all of the components of the program. Whether it is deciding the question for the online Forums, personally going into high school classrooms to inspire students to think deeply on the plays issues' [*Thurgood, Best of Enemies, Butler, brownsville song (b-side for tray)*] or navigating the sensitive topics put forth between the panels and audiences, Judge Williams is a powerful and authentic force in this theatre."

Also joining the Board of Trustees after many years of generous and distinguished contribution is Gaele Barthold, a retired attorney whose practice specialization was appellate argument and appellate litigation. As the Philadelphia Deputy District Attorney for Law, a Philadelphia Assistant District Attorney, and a member of Cozen O'Connor, she argued and litigated many cases before the United States Supreme Court, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court and numerous federal and state appellate courts. Her law related activities included chairing the Pennsylvania Supreme Court's Appellate Courts Procedural Rules Committee, serving on various other Supreme and Superior Court Advisory Committees, sitting on the Philadelphia Bar Association Board of Governors, and serving as a Pennsylvania Deputy Insurance Commissioner. Mrs. Barthold was the recipient of the National District Attorney's award for outstanding legislative work during the 101st Congress. Currently, she is Chair and a longtime member of the Longboat Key Zoning Board of Adjustment. She has also served as a board member and co-chair of the former Longboat Key Public Interest Committee and as President of the Longboat Key Estates Homeowners' Association.

Mrs. Barthold's introduction to FST started in the Behind The Scenes class for the Stage III production of *The Goat, or Who is Sylvia?* After seeing the ins and outs of putting on a fully staged production, Mrs. Barthold's connection with FST continued to grow. She is an Underwriter of this season's Mainstage and Stage III series. Serving as the Chair of FST's Advocacy Leadership Committee, Mrs. Barthold's continues to serve FST's mission year after year.

"Gaele has been a true champion of FST," says Managing Director, Rebecca Hopkins. "From travelling with me to Tallahassee, to meeting with our local leaders, she is always on the front lines telling the story of the theatre's impact. In this aspect, she has not only proven herself invaluable to FST, but to the entire arts and cultural community. However, my favorite part of Gaele is her true love of the theatre. She is always excited to go behind the scenes and support our artists. Whether it is the first day of rehearsal meet and greet or hosting a closing night party for cast and crew, Gaele is committed to making our artists feel welcome and appreciated."

Welcoming Williams and Barthold onto the board are current trustees, Dennis McGillicuddy, Richard Hopkins, Jennifer Michell, Carol Poteat Buchanan, Georgia Court, Patricia Courtois, Jeff Hotchkiss, and Barbara Lupoff.

“We are absolutely delighted to have Judge Williams and Gaele join our Board,” says Board President, Dennis McGillicuddy. “The breadth of experience that each brings to our board, when coupled with their demonstrated commitment to the mission and values that drive our work here at FST, will further strengthen an already well-functioning and collegial team of Trustees.”

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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