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FST PRESENTS THE WORLD PREMIERE OF *HONOR KILLING*

(Sarasota, FL) — Florida Studio Theatre concludes its 44th Winter Mainstage season with the world premiere production of *Honor Killing* by Sarah Bierstock, a challenging and provocative new play that tackles timely themes like cultural division and women’s issues. In addition to challenging content, the play brings exciting artistic and technical challenges. This riveting drama runs from April 6 to May 25 in FST’s Gompertz Theatre. Single tickets range from \$35-39 and may be purchased online at www.FloridaStudioTheatre.org, by phone at (941) 366-9000, or by visiting the Box Office.

In this Mainstage finale, Allisyn Davis, an American reporter for *The New York Times*, heads to Pakistan to cover the honor killing of a young woman. Through a series of cultural collisions, candid interviews, and dangerous encounters, Davis learns the details behind the event that is making headlines around the globe. Along the way, Davis is forced to confront her own demons and judgments as one culture mirrors another, inspiring questions about forgiveness, self-worth, and justice.

Honor Killing made its FST debut last year as part of the 2016 Sarasota Festival of New Plays as a staged reading. After an additional year of development, the play is returning to Sarasota’s Contemporary Theatre, this time on the Mainstage. Those who attended the staged reading last May called it “Refreshing,” “Fearless,” and “Brilliant.” Others found it a “Poignant” and “Powerful” reminder that “Sometimes we get caught up in our ‘American bubble’ and people from other cultures don’t always share our values.” Playwright Sarah Bierstock says, “It was always very important to me that the play demanded that we look back at our own culture.”

Playing the role of Allisyn Davis is one of FST’s most beloved performers, Rachel Moulton, who went almost immediately from playing Georgie Burns in FST’s *Heisenberg* to the rehearsal room for *Honor Killing*. When asked how she feels about starting her seventh production at FST, Moulton shared, “I feel insanely lucky to have found a theatre that has welcomed me with such open arms. The creative opportunities I have been given here, especially in the past year alone—with *Grounded* (2017), *Heisenberg* (2018), and now *Honor Killing*—are astonishing. I actually do not quite have the words to express how honored I am to have been entrusted to bring these courageous, stunning characters to life. It is a gift, especially for a woman in the theatre.”

Joining Moulton on the Gompertz Mainstage are Devon Ahmed, Maria Couch, Michael Sweeney Hammond, William Langan, and J Paul Nichols—all newcomers to FST. Playing the incredibly-driven journalist Ben Adams, Hammond has performed in *In the Heat of the Night* (LA Theatre Works), *His Girl Friday* (La Jolla Playhouse), *Torchbearers* (Williamstown Theatre Festival), and *Solid Gold Cadillac* (Studio Theatre). Recently in *The Invisible Hand* at Cleveland Play House and the national tour of *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*, Nichols will be playing multiple characters in *Honor Killing*. With several television credits and extensive experience with Shakespeare, Langan will be playing Edward Evans, the Bureau Chief of the *New York Times*.

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Producing Artistic Director Richard Hopkins and playwright Sarah Bierstock will be working closely with the rest of the creative team and cast to bring this compelling new drama to life. In addition to playwriting, Bierstock is an established actress who has performed in *Chess* at Lincoln Center, and in almost every state in the United States.

Hopkins is directing *Honor Killing* and is eager to collaborate with Bierstock as they delve into such rich, complicated material. The play begins with an honor killing, “but then it backs up quickly to the issues that Allisyn has [as a result of] her own experience as an American, giving the audience a connection between both [American and Pakistani] cultures,” said Hopkins. Audience members will also forge connections between what is discussed onstage and what is forming headlines across the country. Hopkins adds, “It is a fascinating time to present this play, because of the #MeToo movement, which is changing everyone’s perception of the role women play in our society. As the role of women is evolving and changing in Pakistan and Middle Eastern countries, it is also progressing here in the United States.”

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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 venues: the Keating Theatre, the Gompertz Theatre, the Parisian style 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. 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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