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FLORIDA STUDIO THEATRE EXTENDS *THE THINGS THEY CARRIED*

(Sarasota, FL) — Due to audience demand, Florida Studio Theatre (FST) announces the extension of the regional premiere of *The Things They Carried*, the third and final production in this year's Stage III Series. Featuring a diverse range of challenging and socially-significant plays, Stage III is dedicated to presenting cutting-edge new work that pushes the boundaries of content and form. Based on the literary classic of the same name, *The Things They Carried* is the powerful telling of author Tim O'Brien's personal journey from his innocent years in rural Minnesota to the unforgiving jungles of Vietnam. *The Things They Carried* is written by Tim O'Brien and dramatized by Jim Stowell. This powerful drama will now run through April 22, 2018 in FST's Bowne's Lab Theatre. Tickets can be purchased online at www.floridastudiotheatre.org, by phone at (941) 366-9000, or by visiting the FST Box Office.

Over the course of ninety minutes, audiences meet the other men in Tim's platoon— Lieutenant Jimmy Cross (who feels guilty about every man he loses), Azar (an unbalanced man always armed with a sadistic joke), and Kiowa (Tim's Native American best friend and moral compass in difficult times). With quick, seamless changes in voice and body language, actor David Sitler embodies all of these characters and many more, including Tim's pre-teen daughter, to help tell this story of loss and redemption.

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. Audiences have been moved by the production, sharing: "It actually made me feel the emotions [the character Tim] was going through. Now I have the beginning of some understanding of the trauma those soldiers must live with when they returned home." Others find it "Thought-provoking," "Truly outstanding," and have left the theatre "Gob smacked."

Critics have also praised the play's emotional power—the *Sarasota Herald-Tribune* wrote that the production "Brings humanity into an inhuman situation" and is "Necessary." *The Observer* finds David Sitler's performance "Brilliant" and Jim Stowell's "Taut adaptation" to be "Truthful, gripping, and gutsy." *Sarasota Magazine* called it "A broader reminder of who pays the heaviest price whenever a nation goes to war."

Performing this one-man powerhouse drama is David Sitler, who was previously seen in FST's productions of *The Exonerated* (2005, 2017) and *In the Belly of the Beast* (2008). Sitler loves the intimate atmosphere of FST's Bowne's Lab Theatre. "I love being able to connect with an audience with the bare bones of the words and the bond we share," said Sitler.

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“Going on these difficult journeys with an audience and their willingness to go there with me and engage their imagination are the things I love about being part of the Stage III season here at FST.”

The Things They Carried continues in FST’s Bowne’s Lab Theatre through April 22. Single tickets may be purchased online at www.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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