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GULF COAST COMMUNITY FOUNDATION AWARDS \$45,000 ARTS APPRECIATION GRANT TO FST

(Sarasota, FL) — Florida Studio Theatre is delighted to announce that Gulf Coast Community Foundation has issued a \$45,000 “Arts Appreciation” grant to FST. These funds will underwrite FST’s 2018/19 Winter Mainstage and Cabaret seasons and also sponsor FST’s annual fundraising event on February 25.

President and CEO of Gulf Coast Community Foundation, Mark Pritchett, speaks to the importance of supporting the arts in the Sarasota community and at Florida Studio Theatre. “Our Board recognizes how much arts organizations like FST contribute to our quality of life and our regional economy. Many of our donors also invest in FST, so this grant leverages community support for a cornerstone cultural group. We can’t wait to see what artistic innovations Richard Hopkins and his team bring to our community this season.”

Producing Artistic Director Richard Hopkins shared his appreciation for the continued support of FST. “We pride ourselves in producing high-quality, contemporary theatre that is affordable and accessible to as many people as possible,” shared Hopkins. “This year we have three plays fresh from Broadway and one World Premiere. And this year, our 45th Mainstage season, the Gulf Coast Community Foundation’s generosity will enable us to produce high-quality work for a vast audience at a fraction of the standard price. This grant will also allow us to continue to produce challenging and entertaining original music revues in our ever-expanding Cabaret program. Without our partnership with the Gulf Coast Community Foundation, we would not be able to reach over 215,000 attendees every year.”

This year, the “Arts Appreciation” grant will underwrite FST’s 2018/19 Winter Mainstage and Cabaret seasons and also sponsor FST’s annual fundraising event on February 25. The contributions of Gulf Coast Community Foundation have played an integral role in the growth of FST, fostering theatre that speaks to a living, evolving, and dynamically changing world. Hopkins concludes stating, “These community relationships are vital to FST and indeed to all of the arts. I am happy to report that our partnership with Gulf Coast is one that continues to grow and evolve as we begin the most exciting and challenging Winter Season in our 45 year history.”

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ABOUT GULF COAST COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

Together with our donors, Gulf Coast Community Foundation transforms our region through bold and proactive philanthropy. Gulf Coast is a public charity that was created in 1995 through the sale of the Venice Hospital. Since then, we have become the philanthropic home of more than 700 families who have established charitable funds here, and we have invested over \$300 million in grants in the areas of health and human services, civic and economic development, education, arts and culture, and the environment. Learn more at GulfCoastCF.org.

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. As FST grows and expands, it continues to provide audiences with challenging, contemporary drama and innovative programs.

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