



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

CONTACT: Nicole Clayton  
Public Relations Associate  
(941) 366 – 9017 ext. 338  
Nclayton@floridastudiotheatre.org  
DATE: November 10, 2015

**GULF COAST COMMUNITY FOUNDATION AWARDS  
\$40,000 ART'S APPRECIATION GRANT TO FST**

(Sarasota, FL) — Florida Studio Theatre is delighted to announce that for the second consecutive year, Gulf Coast Community Foundation has issued a \$40,000 "Arts Appreciation" grant to FST. These funds will underwrite FST's 2015/16 Winter Mainstage and Cabaret seasons and also sponsor FST's Season fundraiser in February.

Gulf Coast's Senior Vice President for Philanthropy, Veronica Brady, speaks to the importance of supporting the arts in the Sarasota community and at Florida Studio Theatre. "The arts play a vital role not just in the cultural life of our community, but also in making real contributions to our regional economy," said Brady. "The quality and vision of leading arts groups here really sets our region apart, and that's why Gulf Coast Community Foundation consistently invests in partners like Florida Studio Theatre."

FST's Artistic Director Richard Hopkins shared his gratitude for the continued support of FST. "The grant from Gulf Coast Community Foundation helped us improve the quality of the work on our stages over the past year, and had a direct impact on our growth as a theatre. We now reach over 200,000 people a year, which was a direct impact from the support received. We look forward to continuing the valued relationship with Gulf Coast and seeing the impact of their generous support on our stages."

Through the backing supporters like the Gulf Coast Community Foundation, FST is able to continue with every new season to produce theatre that challenges with as much gusto as it entertains. The 2015/16 Mainstage and Cabaret seasons are no exception. From the Broadway hit *One Man, Two Guvnors* filled with dynamic, offbeat characters, the witty insightful history of *Butler*, the grooving sounds of the 60s and social revolution with *Yesterday*, to *Laughing Matters (vol. 5) Lock the Gates* which highlights the social and political satire of our world – it's proving to be a season of entertaining and transformative theatre.

Having given over 16 years of support to Florida Studio Theatre, 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.

-MORE-

### ABOUT GULF COAST COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

Together with its 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, it has become the philanthropic home of more than 600 families who have established charitable funds there and has invested over \$208 million in grants in the areas of arts and culture, health and human services, civic and economic development, education, and the environment. Learn more at [GulfCoastCF.org](http://GulfCoastCF.org).

### ABOUT FLORIDA STUDIO THEATRE

Known as Sarasota's Contemporary Theatre, Florida Studio Theatre was founded in 1973 by 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.

###