



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DATE: May 10, 2017

## FST CELEBRATES COUNTRY MUSIC LEGEND WITH *ALWAYS...PATSY CLINE*

(Sarasota, FL) — Florida Studio Theatre (FST) kicks off its 28<sup>th</sup> Summer Mainstage Season with *Always...Patsy Cline*, a musical homage to the legendary country music icon. *Always...Patsy Cline* by Ted Swindley is a tribute to Cline's perseverance and the power of music to connect us all. *Always...Patsy Cline* is part of a 3-show Summer Mainstage subscription package, which can be purchased for as little as \$39. This package also includes *Murder for Two*, a musical mystery whodunit with Book and Lyrics by Kellen Blair and Book and Music by Joe Kinosian, as well as *Other People's Money*, an Off-Broadway hit exploring ethics and money by Jerry Sterner. Subscriptions as well as single tickets are available by calling the FST box office at (941) 366-9000 or at [www.floridastudiotheatre.org](http://www.floridastudiotheatre.org).

Patsy Cline was a pioneer in country music, and her distinct sound continues to move audiences today. *Always...Patsy Cline* tells the story of Cline's rise from humble beginnings to legendary stardom as seen through the eyes of her biggest fan, Louise Seger. Featuring such hits as "Walking After Midnight," "I Fall to Pieces," "Crazy," "Sweet Dreams," and more, this Summer Mainstage opener will follow Cline's ground-breaking career, from her performances in honky-tonks to the Grand Ole Opry.

Directing this heartwarming musical is FST Associate Director At-Large, Kate Alexander. Alexander felt an instant connection to the songstress the first time she heard Patsy Cline sing. "She sang out from chambers of her soul...Her songs of joy or sorrow are the siren songs of a woman fully possessed of herself," explained Alexander. "She [Cline] courageously took us to places of love and loss we never knew we possessed. Patsy Cline knew her power, transcended her own time and is for all of us."

Cast in this production are returning FST company members, Meredith Jones as Patsy Cline and Susan Greenhill in the role of Louise Seger. Jones previously performed in FST's Winter Cabaret *Gypsies, Tramps, and Thieves* (2016-2017), which celebrated female artists who captivated the world with their dynamic personalities and fierce vocals. "Patsy Cline was always an icon for me growing up, especially with my love for country music. I'm incredibly excited but also nervous to take on playing this amazing woman. I just want to do her justice," said Jones. "I knew that the feeling she emoted when she sang was something incredibly special. The kind of song that gives you goose bumps and you don't even realize it's happening."

Susan Greenhill portrays Louise Seger, Patsy's biggest fan, who repeatedly called her local Texas radio station to hear Cline's music. Greenhill's FST credits include *The Exonerated*, *Becoming Dr. Ruth*, *Chapatti*, *Shirley Valentine*, *LA is Burning*, *Molly Sweeney*, and *Don't Dress For Dinner*. Greenhill earned an SRQ Award for playing Karen in FST's 2002 production of *Dinner With Friends*. "What I love about Patsy's music is that it is the complete opposite of 'Big Girls Don't Cry,'" explains Greenhill.

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"In Patsy's world, big girls and big boys cry and wail and yell and have tons of emotions. And nobody ever sang about it better than Patsy."

The live band featured in *Always...Patsy Cline* includes several musicians who are no stranger to FST. The production's Music Director, Justin Cowan, will play piano alongside Skip Ellis (steel and rhythm guitar), Chuck Davis (bass guitar) and Tony Bruno (drums). Davis was last seen rocking out on bass guitar in FST's hit cabaret *Piano Men* (2016-2017), and Bruno has played drums for ten previous FST productions, including *Hairspray* (2014-2015), *Spamalot* (2013-2014), and *Smokey Joe's Café* (2012-2013).

Playing from May 30 through June 17 in FST's Gompertz Theatre, *Always...Patsy Cline* is a touching tribute to the woman whose music is as relevant today as it was half a century ago. *Always ...Patsy Cline* is part of a 3-show Summer Mainstage subscription, which can be purchased for as little as \$39. Subscriptions as well as single tickets are available at 941.366.9000 and [floridastudiotheatre.org](http://floridastudiotheatre.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 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 Goldstein Cabaret, the renovated Gompertz Theatre, 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 and CEO, 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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