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**BACHARACH, BASKETBALL, AND ROMANCE  
FST OPENS THE SUMMER MAINSTAGE WITH *BURT & ME***

(Sarasota, FL) — The memorable melodies and charismatic charm of Burt Bacharach and Hal David’s music comes to center stage in FST’s first Summer Mainstage production, *Burt & Me*. Playing from May 31 through June 18 in the Gompertz Theatre, it’s filled with lively characters and summer fun. *Burt & Me* is the first production of the Summer Mainstage subscription. See three shows for as little as \$39. Subscriptions are available for purchase by calling the Box Office at (941) 366-9000 or online at [www.floridastudiotheatre.org](http://www.floridastudiotheatre.org).

Joe and Lacey, high school sweethearts, shared the love of basketball and the music of Burt Bacharach. When college separated them, history couldn’t overcome geography. After meeting years later, Joe comes up with an elaborate scheme to get Lacey back. A coming of age story featuring the music of Burt Bacharach as the soundtrack of generations, featuring songs such as “Raindrops Keep Falling on My Head,” “I Say A Little Prayer,” and “Wishin’ and Hopin’.” “*Broadway World* says it’s “Brilliant” and it “Sparkles.”

Directing this jiving jukebox musical is FST Associate Artist, Jason Cannon. Having also directing FST’s hit Mainstage show, *Million Dollar Quartet*, Cannon speaks to the appeal of this summer production stating, *Burt & Me* is a great summer show. It’s funny and romantic, quirky and breezy, with enough heart to make it meaningful. But of course, much like *Million Dollar Quartet*, it’s the music that will delight the audience. Shows like this one, which take well-known songs and re-contextualize them into a narrative, actually allow the audience to hear the lyrics in a whole new way.”

Cast in this production are returning company members, Nick Anastasia, Stacey Harris, Jillian Louis, and Savannah Sinclair. Anastasia previously performed in FST’s *Laughing Matters vol. 6*. Harris’ FST credits include *That’s Life* and *I love you, you’re perfect, now change*. Louis has performed in FST’s production of *A Murder, A Mystery, & A Marriage*. Audiences may remember Sinclair from her role in FST’s production of *Hairspray*.

Playing the role of Lacey, Louis speaks to Bacharach’s influence and broad talent stating, “It is always a huge gift to sing the music of such a prolific master as Burt Bacharach. His music is iconic - every age group can sing along. The genres, topics, and eras across which his music spanned and the list of legendary artists he collaborated with is jaw-dropping. I particularly love the influence of his jazz background, and his creativity with unique chord progressions, meters, and instrumentation.”

Cannon adds, “The music becomes incredibly fresh, so that rather than just a ‘greatest hits’ cd you find yourself constantly surprised by the depth and intricacy of Burt Bacharach’s melodies and Hal David’s lyrics.”

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Rounding out the cast and making their FST debuts are Jordan Ahnquist, Michael Marotta, and Matthew Scott Robertson. Ahnquist's credits include *Shear Madness* and *Urinetown*. Marotta previously performed in *Young Frankenstein* and *Gypsy*. Robertson's previous credits include *The Sound of Music* and *Chicago*.

Playing from May 31 through June 18 in the Gompertz Theatre, *Burt & Me* takes audiences along the soundtrack of Joe and Lacey's unforgettable journey through life and love. *Burt & Me* is the first production of the Summer Mainstage subscription. See three shows for as little as \$39. Subscriptions are available for purchase by calling the Box Office at (941) 366-9000 or online at [www.floridastudiotheatre.org](http://www.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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