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FLORIDA STUDIO THEATRE EXTENDS ITS HIT *CABARET, GUITAR GIRLS, A THIRD TIME*

(Sarasota, FL)—Due to high audience demand, Florida Studio Theatre (FST) announces the third extension of *Guitar Girls*, which celebrates some of the past century's greatest female singer-songwriters, and is now playing through April 21. With powerful vocals and featuring songs from music legends like Joni Mitchell and Dolly Parton, audiences have called the production "A cannot miss," "Engaging," and "Exceptional." Tickets can be purchased online at floridastudiotheatre.org, or by phone at (941) 366-9000.

Written by Richard Hopkins, Rebecca Hopkins, and Catherine Randazzo with arrangements by Jim Prosser, *Guitar Girls* salutes the music and lives of the top female musicians who have made an enduring impact on the music industry and society at large. Audiences can't get enough of the cast's energized interpretations of such great hits as "Coal Miner's Daughter," "Ring of Fire," "9 to 5," and "Big Yellow Taxi."

"As we developed *Guitar Girls*, we found that humble beginnings were a reoccurring theme among some of the featured artists, like Loretta Lynn and Dolly Parton," explained Catherine Randazzo, Director of *Guitar Girls*. "As these women's songwriting and musical careers progressed, we discovered that they began to write about social issues that were not only affecting themselves, but the entire world. They began to write about things like abusive relationships, the treatment of women in the workplace, and environmental changes. And no matter what these artists were writing about, they used their music to paint pictures and tell stories of what was going on at that moment in time."

Critics have also been delighted by this FST original musical revue. The *Sarasota Herald-Tribune* praises the cast's "Radiant" and "Heartfelt" interpretations of female singer-songwriters' songs that are "Powerful," "Terrific," and "Rousing." According to *The Observer*, the Cabaret is "Brilliant as always" and "Magical." *Broadway World* says that *Guitar Girls* has "Impeccable solos" that make the production "Such a treat."

One reason that audiences have connected with *Guitar Girls* is that they have personally been inspired or impacted by the female artists highlighted in the Cabaret. The cast of *Guitar Girls* is no different. "I really admire that the women featured in *Guitar Girls* decided that they were going to create music professionally and not let anyone slow them down," shared Cat Greenfield, one of the cast members of *Guitar Girls*. "I'm truly inspired by some of these artists, who did not take the path that was set before them—[i.e. get married, settle down, and have children]—as the only shining example of femininity. I'm really thankful that they

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did that, because I was able to be raised as a kid who thought, 'What else would you do besides create music?'"

In addition to Greenfield, *Guitar Girls* features Joe Casey, Tamra Hayden, Jannie Jones, and Anna Stefanic. The show is directed by award-winning artist Catherine Randazzo.

This production is made possible thanks to support in part by Culture Builds Florida, the Gulf Coast Community Foundation, The Exchange, ABC7, and *Sarasota Magazine*.

Guitar Girls continues in FST's Goldstein Cabaret through April 21. Single tickets may be purchased online at floridastudiotheatre.org, or by phone at (941) 366-9000.

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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