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**LET THE GOOD TIMES ROLL AT FST'S FIFTIES SHINDIG
ON FEBRUARY 27**

(Sarasota, FL) — On February 27, it's time to let the good times roll at Florida Studio Theatre's Fifties Shindig. Travel with us to the era of vinyl records and join us in celebrating our 43rd season with the music of Rock 'n' Roll legends. This retro evening full of fun, will start with a 50s themed cocktail party and pre-show entertainment. This will be followed by a special one-time only show in the Gompertz Theatre featuring favorite performers from FST. The night concludes with dinner in the Court Cabaret and Bowne's Lab Theatre. Tickets are \$250 per person. To reserve a seat, please call Steve Turrisi, Development Associate at (941)-366-0932.

The Shindig proceeds will go toward the completion of the Kretzmer Artist Housing Project. In its completion, there will be five new townhouses built to help fill the pressing need for quality housing that is safe, accessible, and within close proximity to downtown.

Producing Artistic Director, Richard Hopkins speaks to the importance of this project stating, "The greater that artistic home, the greater sense of commitment the artist has. More importantly, it's not only about the commitment, it's about a relaxed, safe environment. I'm not just talking about being safe from crime. I'm talking about a work environment that is safe to be yourself, a work environment that is comfortable, and has all the safeties that we all take for granted. It is an emotionally safe place to work in. It is psychologically a safe place to work in. It's one of those things at Florida Studio Theatre that we looked at very, very hard for many years to make it a great artistic home for everybody who works here."

During the Shindig, FST will present the prestigious Spelman Award. Named in honor of Florida Studio Theatre's founding Artistic Director, Jon Spelman, the Spelman Award has been presented to an individual or a corporate sponsor who has demonstrated extraordinary leadership by providing FST with spiritual, financial, and/or in-kind support. This year's recipient is Carol Poteat-Buchanan.

Currently serving as a Board Member of FST, Buchanan shares her appreciation and passion for the theatre. "In 1992, when my husband and I moved to Sarasota to enjoy the weather, the arts, and the good medical care (our three requirements for a retirement town), we subscribed to every arts program we could find," stated Buchanan. "We felt there was something special about what was happening at the little theatre on the corner of Cocconut and Orange. We liked the intimacy, the quality of the plays and the performances and, of course, the ticket prices. But there was something more. FST was not afraid to bring plays which were not being shown anywhere else – plays about a range of issues, involving a range of ethnic groups – plays which made you laugh, made you angry, but also made you think. We were hooked and have never had cause to waver in our admiration of

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the theatre, of its leadership and its hard working staff. There is an integrity I find which makes me feel very comfortable. I am honored to receive this award. It means a great deal to me.”

Chairing the Shindig is long-time FST supporter, Marie Kropp. Kropp has collaborated on many FST events over the years including the charming Bags and Baubles luncheon and last year’s groovy Sixties Shindig. Sponsored by the Gulf Coast Community Foundation, this event will feature the presentation of The Spelman Award, live entertainment, and a seated dinner.

Additional sponsors for the 50s Shindig include C. Alan Anderson, Ed & Judy Christian, Patricia and Roger Courtois, Kelly and Anita DeVine, Elaine Keating, Maria G. Kropp, Barbara Lupoff, Dennis & Graci McGillicuddy, Jennifer Michell, Gail and Skip Sack, Betty Schoenbaum, Lois Stulberg, Dorothy Waldron, and Tom Wilson & Patrick Crimmings.

Complete with 50s style entertainment, hula hoops, and maybe even an Elvis sighting or two, the Fifties Shindig will bring together artists and supporters to celebrate the artistic home that is FST. Tickets are \$250 per person with proceeds supporting the ongoing work of FST. To reserve a seat, please call Steve Turrisi, Development Associate at (941)-366-0932.

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 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. 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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