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**FST PRESENTS NEW CABARET CELEBRATING  
BILLY JOEL & HIS ICONIC SONGBOOK**

(Sarasota, FL) — Florida Studio Theatre (FST) presents ***New York State of Mind – All the Hits of Billy Joel With The Uptown Boys***, a high-energy music revue created by Broadway veterans with over 40 years of cumulative experience in the industry. Featuring slick choreography and rich harmonies, this new Cabaret weaves together Billy Joel’s iconic songbook with the performers’ stories of love, life, and trying to make it in New York City. Created by **Alexander Aguilar** and **John De Simini**, *New York State of Mind* highlights many of Billy Joel’s biggest hits, including “Only the Good Die Young,” “Piano Man,” and “For the Longest Time.” *New York State of Mind – All the Hits of Billy Joel With The Uptown Boys* begins playing August 9 in FST’s Court Cabaret. Single tickets are now on sale at [FloridaStudioTheatre.org](http://FloridaStudioTheatre.org) or at 941.366.9000.

“The inspiration for this show came from our love of Broadway musicals as well as Billy Joel’s iconic songbook,” said John De Simini, one of the Cabaret’s co-creators. “We wanted to capture the energy and swagger from classic musical theatre, but add Billy Joel’s incredible music to it, giving audiences an exciting new show that is fun for all ages.”

Billy Joel is one of the best-selling musicians of all time, with over 160 million records sold worldwide. He has won five Grammy Awards, was inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame in 1999, and was honored by the Kennedy Center in 2013 for his invaluable contributions to American culture.

“Billy Joel wrote songs that capture the human experience,” said De Simini. “Not only are his songs full stories, but they are stylistically varied to connect with music lovers of all genres. Doo-wop, Pop, Folk, Rock & Roll...he did it all.”

Bringing this musical salute to the “Piano Man” to life are **Michael Fasano**, **Sergi Robles**, and **Hank Von Kolnitz**—all of whom are making their FST debut with this production.

Fasano was part of the national tour of *Jesus Christ Superstar* and was nominated for a Connecticut Critics Circle Award for Best Actor for his performance as Ren in *Footloose*. Robles has played Corny Collins in *Hairspray* (Symphony of the Seas), Bernard in *Death of a Salesman* (Ensemble Theatre Company - Santa Barbara), and Jinx in *Forever Plaid* (Southern

Colorado Rep). Von Kolnitz played Santa in the national tour of *A Christmas Story* as well as Riff in *West Side Story* and Pontius Pilate in *Jesus Christ Superstar*.

The creative team for FST's presentation of *New York State of Mind – All the Hits of Billy Joel With The Uptown Boys* includes **Catherine Randazzo** (Artistic Oversight), **Bruce Price** (Scenic Design), **Nadirah T. Harper** (Lighting Design), **Nicholas Christensen** (Sound Design), and **Jamie Thygesen** (Sound and Light Board Operator).

FST's presentation of *New York State of Mind – All the Hits of Billy Joel With The Uptown Boys* is sponsored in part by the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Arts and Culture and the Florida Council on Arts and Culture, and the National Endowment for the Arts. The production is also supported by The Shubert Foundation, Sarasota County Tourist Development Tax Revenues, and The Exchange.

### **ABOUT FLORIDA STUDIO THEATRE**

Florida Studio Theatre (FST) is Sarasota's contemporary theatre. Founded in 1973, FST has grown to a village of five theatres located in the heart of Downtown, Sarasota. Each theatre is small in size and large in impact— providing intimate and engaging settings for high-quality, professional performances.

Today, FST has established itself as a major force in American Theatre. FST is the largest subscription theatre in the state of Florida and among the largest in the country, serving more than 230,000 live attendees each year across its six core programs: Mainstage, Cabaret, Stage III, Children's Theatre, The FST School, and New Play Development.

Even with its growth, Florida Studio Theatre remains firmly committed to making the arts accessible and affordable to as many people as possible. Under the leadership of Producing Artistic Director Richard Hopkins, FST develops theatre that speaks to our living, evolving, and dynamically changing world. Hip and historical, entertaining and challenging, we are the theatre where the street meets the elite — where everyone is welcome to engage in the art of theatre.

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