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FST OPENS SCHOLARSHIP FUND IN HONOR OF THE LATE SAM MOSSLER, BELOVED ACTOR, PLAYWRIGHT, AND TEACHING ARTIST

(Sarasota, FL) – Florida Studio Theatre (FST) has established a new scholarship fund in honor of the late **Sam Mossler**, a beloved playwright, actor, and teaching artist who passed away unexpectedly on October 21, 2020. The **Sam Mossler Scholarship Fund** will give students in need the opportunity to learn, grow, and be inspired at **The Florida Studio Theatre School**—the same program where Sam himself discovered an artistic home, both in his youth and later as a Teaching Artist. Donations to the Sam Mossler Scholarship Fund can be made by visiting FloridaStudioTheatre.org or by calling **Melody Mora-Shihadeh**, FST’s Director of Individual Giving, at 941.366.9017 x326.

Samuel Arnold Mossler (1975-2020) began attending classes at The FST School at the age of 9, developing what would become a life-long love of theatre. He was a founding member of FST’s original **Kids Komedly Club**, a group of young artists writing and performing sketch comedy and improvisation. As a high school freshman, Mossler was one of the first-ever Young Playwrights Festival winners for his beatnik musical titled “Dating Tips from a Real Blowd in the Glass Cat.”

“Sam was the essence of Florida Studio Theatre,” shared **Kate Alexander**, FST’s Associate Director At-Large, who led Mossler’s early theatre training. “He was more than the philosophy, more than the actor on stage, and more than the teaching artist. He is part of the very fiber of what Florida Studio Theatre means—his heart, his courage, and his kindness. I have never met a kinder or more beautiful soul.”

After almost twenty years of professional work in theatre and film, Mossler returned to FST—his artistic home—in 2016 as a Teaching Artist. He then went on to perform in several FST Mainstage and Stage III productions: **How to Use a Knife** (Chef George, 2018), **Other People’s Money** (Lawrence Garfinkle, 2018), **The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time** (Voice #4 - Rev. Peters & Others, 2019), **The Nether** (Doyle, 2020), and **Kunstler** (William Kunstler, 2020). This summer, Mossler was engaged as a member of **FST’s Playwrights Project** and was commissioned to write brand new plays for young audiences. He was also a key member of FST’s growing sketch comedy program.

Sam touched the lives of so many at FST through his art on stage, in the classroom, as a playwright, and as an important member of the FST community. Through this scholarship fund, Sam continues to touch lives and inspire the next generation of artists through his favorite artistic medium.

“The really stunning thing that FST provides, which other arts programs might not, are the lessons in how to think, feel, and love like an artist,” shared Mossler. “If you learn at a young age how to tell endless stories, access and understand feelings, exercise your empathy, catch a thrilling wave when it presents itself, and, for less exciting times, to render the mundane into the profound and fascinating—you’re well on the way to living a life that may not always be oozing with elation, but will always be fulfilling. And that philosophy is pervasive in FST’s programs all these years later when I have had the great fortune to return as an actor and a teaching artist.”

Florida Studio Theatre (FST) has established a new scholarship fund in honor of the late **Sam Mossler**, giving young students in need the opportunity to learn, grow, and be inspired at **The FST School**. Donations to the Sam Mossler Scholarship Fund can be made by visiting FloridaStudioTheatre.org or by calling **Melody Mora-Shihadeh**, FST’s Director of Individual Giving, at 941.366.9017 x326.

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, Education, 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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