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**YOUNG JEAN LEE'S *STRAIGHT WHITE MEN*
SHAKES THINGS UP AT FLORIDA STUDIO THEATRE**

(Sarasota, FL) —Florida Studio Theatre (FST) proudly presents *Straight White Men* by Young Jean Lee, the second production of its 45th Winter Mainstage Season. A regional premiere, *Straight White Men* is a comedic, yet ruthless, look at the classic father-son drama. Included in Christopher Isherwood's coverage of the "Best Theater of 2014" for *The New York Times*, Young Jean Lee's latest work pairs questions about identity, privilege, and gender with humor.

Straight White Men starts playing in FST's Keating Theatre December 12, and is part of a four-show subscription package, including the musical comedy *A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder*, the Tony and Olivier Award-winning *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*, and the WORLD PREMIERE of *Wednesday's Child*. Subscriptions for all four Winter Mainstage shows can be purchased for as little as \$69 at (941) 366-9000 or floridastudiotheatre.org.

"When I first encountered the play, I was expecting it to be an attack of straight white men," shared FST's Producing Artistic Director, Richard Hopkins. "I went into the theatre completely 'on guard' and prepared to dislike it. But when I left, I thought 'We have to do this play.' The playwright Young Jean Lee frames the play in a way that is refreshing and enlightening—it gives you a fresh view into the behavior and psyche of straight white men."

Straight White Men takes place during the Christmas holidays as Ed gathers his three adult sons at home to celebrate with matching pajamas, trash-talking, amusing antics, and Chinese takeout. All is well until a question they can't answer interrupts their holiday cheer, and each man is forced to confront their own identity. *Straight White Men* will show audiences a Christmas that no one is likely to forget.

"I like how this play humanely, humorously, and courageously addresses our changing world, our changing world view," shared Kate Alexander, FST's Associate Director At-Large and director of *Straight White Men*. "This play poses questions, and it doesn't give answers."

Lee is one of the most accomplished playwrights producing work in America today; in fact, she is the first Asian American woman whose work has been produced on Broadway. Called "The most adventurous downtown playwright of her generation" by *The New York Times*, Lee has written ten plays, earned two Obie Awards, and received several artistic and literary achievement awards. Her work, including *Straight White Men*, has toured internationally to venues in Germany, Greece, Canada, France, and Austria.

The New York Times finds Young Jean Lee's latest creation is "A compassionate and stimulating new play" that is "Undeniably powerful." Called a "Cutting but deeply human satire" and "Heart-wrenching" by *Variety*, *Straight White Men* probes difficult topics, such as privilege, masculinity, and expectations of ourselves and society at large. "This is a play that tackles challenging topics in an empathetic way,"

added Hopkins. "But be aware, it is not what our audiences would expect. And some people may be offended by the language."

FST's production of *Straight White Men* features Justin Adams as divorced banker Jake, Phil Clark as the family's patriarch Ed, Matthew Koenig as bestselling writer and professor Drew, and Jess Prichard as Matt, the family's down-on-his-luck visionary. Adams was last seen as Henry in FST's 2017 production of *Rich Girl*, and has performed at regional theatres across the country. Clark starred as Butch in FST's 2012 production of *Next Fall*, and recently appeared Off-Broadway in *Summer and Smoke* at Classic Stage Company. A former FST Acting Apprentice, Koenig served as a resident artist at the Pacific Conservatory Theatre for three years. Prichard has performed in *An Occupation of Loss* and *De Materie* at Park Avenue Armory.

Straight White Men is a sharp, funny family drama with an edge and runs from December 12 through March 1 in FST's Keating Theatre. Subscriptions for all four Winter Mainstage shows can be purchased for as little as \$69 at (941) 366-9000 or 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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