



'The All Night Strut' Jazz, Blues & Bebop Greats

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by Beau Higgins

Strut into Summer with Florida Studio Theatre

Florida Studio Theatre kicks off its 2007 summer season with a bright collaboration of jazz, blues, and bebop melodies entitled The All Night Strut. Beginning Wednesday, June 13th, 2007, the international hit including "Fascinating Rhythm" and "In the Mood" will delight Sarasota audiences with its revival, having played in FST's Goldstein Cabaret in 2000 with much success. The classic songs of Johnny Mercer, Duke Ellington, George Gershwin, Fats Waller, and other genius composers will echo throughout Sarasota until Sunday, July 1st.



When The All Night Strut played in 2000, The Longboat Observer commented that it "takes the audience on a sentimental journey, using music and four talented singers to recreate the magic of the era..." The catchy and familiar numbers trigger a rollercoaster of memories that celebrate an unforgettable era. The performers dance with wild abandon to a show that "pays tribute to the 30's and 40's, to the America that went through the Depression and World War II," according to Artistic Director Richard Hopkins.

In addition to celebrating and paying tribute to what many consider the greatest era of American music, The All Night Strut also contains an important message to a modern audience. Much of the music in the show was written and performed during or around World War II. However, not all of the music is about the war. The songs cover every topic from love and heartache to parties and poverty. The music of The All Night Strut illustrates that in spite of a great war, the American people move on and live their lives with optimism and purpose.

Perfecting the glorious harmonies in The All Night Strut will be four returning FST artists including Jennifer Johns, Sophia Hinshelwood, Joel Newsome, and [Jim Weaver](#). Hinshelwood, Newsome, and Weaver last 'strutted their stuff' at Florida Studio Theatre in the 2007 Cabaret production of Over the Rainbow: A Tribute to Harold Arlen. Miss Johns last performed at Florida Studio Theatre in My Way: A Tribute to [Frank Sinatra](#).

[Dennis Courtney](#), who directed this season's British Invasion (among many other FST productions) will direct The All Night Strut. He will be aided by Scott Wooley (Music Director) and FST Staff Member Marcella Beckwith (Scenic and Costume Design). Bruce Price and Colleen Jennings will design the lights.

The All Night Strut begins June 13th and runs through July 1st, 2007 at the Keating Mainstage.

Tickets are \$19-34 and may be purchased from the FST Box Office in person or by calling (941) 366-9000.

Florida Studio Theatre

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Currently spending his time between New York and Florida, Beau was born to a theatrical family in Brooklyn. He studied drama at the Lee Strasberg Theater Institute and at HB Studios. He studied theater singing with Julia Sperratore and Helen Gallagher. Beau later taught drama at the Lincoln Center Square for the Arts. It was at this time Beau began working with the Theater Development Fund and helped found New York's famed HALF PRICE TICKET BOOTH. Early in his career, Beau was screen tested and contracted for Warner Brothers. He co-hosted, an early cable variety series on Manhattan's Teleprompter channel. At this time he directed the Johnny Specca musical, SEX IS..? at the Lincoln Center Library Theater. Beau has performed Off-Broadway in FAT FELL DOWN, The Comic Strip Theater's LITTLE LULU AND THE INVISIBLE INK and WILL THE REAL ZOOPERMAN PLEASE STAND UP. Around the country he has delighted audiences with his performances in ANYTHING GOES, THE APPLE TREE, GUYS & DOLLS, and HELLZAPOPPIN! He sang for New York audiences at such cabarets as The Duplex and Upstairs at the Downstairs. He has had numerous television appearances but is most proud to have been a winning contestant on the game shows JACKPOT and THE \$20,000 PYRAMID.