



The Keating Mainstage
The Goldstein Cabaret
The Gompertz Theatre

1241 North Palm Avenue
Sarasota, FL 34236
Administration: (941) 366-9017
Box Office: (941) 366-9000
Fax: (941) 955-4137
E-mail: fst@fst2000.org
Website: www.fst2000.org

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CONTACT: Amy Schafer
Director of Public Relations
(941) 366-9017, ext. 313
amy@fst2000.org

Media Site: www.fst2000.org/media.htm

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The Cast of *The Flip Side* Encourages You to Expect Nothing When You See Their Show at FST's Cabaret

If you have any expectations about what you might see in Florida Studio Theatre's newest Cabaret revue, drop them. At least that's what the cast of *The Flip Side*, which opens March 28, advises you to do.

"Come and don't expect anything," says Richie McCall, a frequent artist at FST who will appear in *The Flip Side*.

The Flip Side pays homage to the quirky side of life with a revue of songs by people as diverse as Jerry Reed, Shel Silverstein, Rick Moranis, and Ray Stevens. *The Flip Side* is an alternative way of looking at things in life, and each song is a story about a person who is a little less-than-ordinary.

"These people are not everywhere characters, but they're everyday characters," explains director Dennis Courtney. "They exist on our planet."

Lest you think *The Flip Side* is filled with freaks of nature, the cast and director are quick to point out that many of the songs describe or explore issues, themes or fears we all face. It's just taken to the "nth degree" in the show.

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“It’s as if these people are caught in very unusual circumstances and are asking themselves, ‘how did this happen to me?’” says cast member Stephen Hope.

The songs really are paeans to really interesting people doing really interesting things. “It’s about what happens to people and how it affects them,” says Courtney.

Themes run the gamut from social issues to just plain odd. In “I’m My Own Grandpaw,” an obsessed genealogist who spends so much time tracing his roots that he discovers he’s actually his own grandfather. “Vegematic,” a song written in the 1970s, will strike a chord with contemporary audiences with its subject matter. It’s an ode to a man who is obsessed with buying things from television. And “The Ballad of Sigmund Freud,” shows how “psychoses and neuroses were marketed and brought into the mainstream,” says Courtney.

The show really focuses on lightening the audience’s mood. “It’s about getting people to take things or themselves less seriously,” says Courtney. It’s also funny. Rehearsals have been so fun, according to the cast, that it’s more like play than work. And Resident Music Director Michael Sebastian reported that he was “literally laughing on the floor” because of the cast’s antics. “That’s never happened before,” says Sebastian.

In addition to Hope and McCall, FST newcomer Craig Laurie joins the cast of *The Flip Side*. Mr. Laurie just recently finished a run in *Forbidden Broadway: Special Victims Unit*.

At the core of *The Flip Side*, though, is truth in comedy. “The funniest things in life are always true,” says Hope. “You just can’t make this stuff up.”

The Flip Side begins March 28 and runs through June 10, 2006 at Florida Studio Theatre’s Goldstein Cabaret. Tickets are \$19-29 and may be purchased from the FST Box Office in person or by calling (941) 366-9000. The show was created in-house under the direction of Richard Hopkins. The development team included Rebecca Langford and Jim Prosser.

Known as Sarasota’s Contemporary Theatre, Florida Studio Theatre was founded in 1973 by 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 three theatre venues: the Keating Theatre, the Goldstein Cabaret and its newest space, the Gompertz Theatre.

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Even with its growth, Florida Studio Theatre remains firmly committed to making the arts accessible and affordable to a broad-based audience. Under Richard Hopkins, Artistic Director and CEO, 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.

Florida Studio Theatre is grateful to the Woman's Exchange for co-producing *The Flip Side*; Dennis & Graci McGillicuddy for underwriting the 2005-2006 Winter Cabaret Season; and to the Sarasota County Arts Council, a Tourist Development Funded Project, the Florida Arts Council, for sponsoring the Sarasota Festival of New Plays.

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Photos are available upon request.

Cast and director available for interviews as schedules permit.

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