



Sinatra Musical Revue at Sarasota's Florida Studio Theatre

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by Beau Higgins

The Goldstein Cabaret

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My Way

A Musical Revue Celebrating Ol' Blue Eyes

Opens Cabaret Season at Florida Studio Theatre



Frank Sinatra's career spanned more than 50 years, which is pretty phenomenal given today's fickle music industry. (And if it seems unremarkable, just imagine new mother Britney Spears 40 years from now, gyrating to some of *her* classic hits.) **My Way**, a musical revue crafted by David Grapes and Todd Olson, celebrates the music of the legendary crooner. The aptly named revue – taken from Sinatra's signature song – kicks off Florida Studio Theatre's 2005-2006 Cabaret Season October 25th.

"I was always taken by his ease, his albeit a cliché cool, his remarkable way with a simple lyric, his charisma, and the epic and in-your-face way that he chose to live his life," says co-creator Grapes. "But how could that be translated into an evening of theatre? The solution was obvious – the key was his music."

An ample selection of the singer's works, **My Way** includes well known classics such as "All of Me" to lesser known hits like "Dindi." But if you're expecting an imitation of Frank Sinatra, you won't find it in **My Way**.

"The goal of **My Way** has always been to construct a musical revue that recalls the essence of the man through the glorious music he sang. To celebrate Sinatra's mystique, and his myth, through the music he loved best – the American standard," says Grapes.

The man who would earn the nicknames "The Sultan of Swoon" and "The Chairman of Board" was born Francis Albert Sinatra in Hoboken, New Jersey. Hoboken in those days was a tough gig. The town was made up of Italian, Irish and Jewish immigrants and was a scrappy place for an only child. Sinatra fell in love with music early and pursued his dream of being a singer like

his idol Bing Crosby, despite his father's chiding that singing lessons were for sissies. He started out singing for smaller big bands and then bigger big bands, finally getting a break when he joined Tommy Dorsey's band in 1940.

Sinatra eventually parted ways with Dorsey – in a less than amicable split – and struck out on his own. This was quite a feat in a time when singers were often little more than an embellishment for the band. In 1942, Sinatra made his solo debut at the Paramount, where he was greeted by a throng of teenage fans. The screaming crowd wouldn't be an unusual sight to today's pop idols, but was unheard of in the 1940's.

What set Sinatra apart from other singers of his day was his voice, "the kind that made it OK for any blue-collar tough guy in America to sing a ballad to his girl. He was the rogue rose who made it fine for bad boys to be sentimental," writes John Moore of the *Denver Post*.

Sinatra's appeal is tied up in his voice, his music and the way he lived his life. "Everybody deep down wishes we could go back to that world where we could say what we wanted to say, and do what we wanted to do. Frank just didn't care. The reason there haven't been any tell-all books about him since he died is because there was nothing left to expose. He lived his life in the open, which is something people admire," says Grapes.

The cast of ***My Way*** features Stephen Hope, a face familiar to many FST audiences. Mr. Hope has appeared in a number of FST productions including *My One and Only Gershwin*, *Too Darn Hot*, *Showtune*, *The Rise and Fall of Western Civilization* and *The Exonerated*. Most recently, Mr. Hope donned a dress and high heels to play Sylvia St. Croix in the Summerfest production of *Ruthless! The Musical*.

Joining Mr. Hope are FST newcomers Kelly Atkins, Jennifer Johns and Michael Zahler. [Dennis Courtney](#) will direct the production, with assistance from FST staffers Michael Sebastian (Music Director), Jim Prosser (Pianist), Marcella Beckwith (Scenic & Costume Designer) and Allen L Mack (Lighting Designer).

My Way begins October 25, 2005 and runs through January 7, 2006 at FST's Goldstein Cabaret. Tickets are \$19-29 and may be purchased from the FST Box Office in person or by calling (941) 366-9000.

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.

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.

A constituent member of the Professional Alliance for the Performing Arts (PAPA), FST thanks the City of Sarasota and the County of Sarasota for generous grants that supported free performances in this community since 1977.

Florida Studio Theatre is grateful to Northern Trust Bank, the Woman's Exchange of Sarasota, Dale Berkowitz and Don & Janet Hevey for co-producing **My Way**.

My Way

Performance Schedule

October 25, 2005 – January 7, 2006

Tuesday October 25 7:30 p.m. Preview

Wednesday October 26 7:30 p.m. Preview

Thursday October 27 7:30 p.m. Opening

Friday October 28 7:30 p.m.

Saturday October 29 6:00 & 9:00 p.m.

Sunday October 30 2:00 & 7:30 p.m.

Tuesday November 1 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday November 2 7:30 p.m.

Thursday November 3 7:30 p.m.

Friday November 4 6:00 & 9:00 p.m.

Saturday November 5 6:00 & 9:00 p.m.

Sunday November 6 2:00 & 7:30 p.m.

Tuesday November 8 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday November 9 7:30 p.m.

Thursday November 10 7:30 p.m.

Friday November 11 6:00 & 9:00 p.m.

Saturday November 12 6:00 & 9:00 p.m.

Sunday November 13 2:00 & 7:30 p.m.

Tuesday November 15 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday November 16 7:30 p.m.

Thursday November 17 7:30 p.m.

Friday November 18 6:00 & 9:00 p.m.

Saturday November 19 6:00 & 9:00 p.m.

Sunday November 20 2:00 & 7:30 p.m.

Tuesday November 22 6:00 & 9:00 p.m.

Wednesday November 23 7:30 p.m.

Thursday November 24 Thanksgiving

Friday November 25 6:00 & 9:00 p.m.

Saturday November 26 6:00 & 9:00 p.m.

Sunday November 27 2:00 & 7:30 p.m.

Tuesday November 29 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday November 30 7:30 p.m.

Thursday December 1 7:30 p.m.

Friday December 2 6:00 & 9:00 p.m.

Saturday December 3 6:00 & 9:00 p.m.

Sunday December 4 2:00 & 7:30 p.m.

Tuesday December 6 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday December 7 7:30 p.m.

Thursday December 8 7:30 p.m.

Friday December 9 6:00 & 9:00 p.m.

Saturday December 10 6:00 & 9:00 p.m.

Sunday December 11 2:00 & 7:30 p.m.

Tuesday December 13 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday December 14 7:30 p.m.

Thursday December 15 7:30 p.m.

Friday December 16 6:00 & 9:00 p.m.

Saturday December 17 6:00 & 9:00 p.m.

Sunday December 18 2:00 & 7:30 p.m.

Tuesday December 20 6:00 & 9:00 p.m.

Wednesday December 21 6:00 & 9:00 p.m.

Thursday December 22 7:30 p.m.

Friday December 23 6:00 & 9:00 p.m.

Saturday December 24 6:00 & 9:00 p.m.

Sunday December 25 Christmas

Tuesday December 27 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday December 28 2:00 & 7:30 p.m.

Thursday December 29 7:30 p.m.

Friday December 30 6:00 & 9:00 p.m.

Saturday December 31 6:00 & 9:00 p.m.

Sunday January 1 2:00 & 7:30 pm..

Tuesday January 3 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday January 4 7:30 p.m.

Thursday January 5 7:30 p.m.

Saturday January 7 6:00 p.m.

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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.