FST ANNOUNCES PUBLIC WORKS SARASOTA, A COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM

(Sarasota, FL) – Florida Studio Theatre (FST) announces Public Works Sarasota, a new community engagement program that gets the public directly involved in the theatre-making process. FST has partnered with CreArte Latino Cultural Center, The Desoto Boys & Girls Club, Girls Inc., and The Haven to bring a series of workshops and live performances to these partner sites this summer.

Made possible through funding from the National Endowment for the Arts, Public Works Sarasota was created to bring the performing arts to members of underserved populations in the surrounding community. FST chose Off the Charts!, a family-friendly music revue celebrating the universal language of music, to be at the core of the program because FST’s robust Cabaret program has brought thousands of new audience members into the theatre. Through this new initiative, FST will share this beloved art form with younger audiences throughout the Sarasota region.

“One of FST’s mission points is to make ‘theatre affordable and accessible to as many people as possible,’” said Caroline Saldívar, FST’s Director of Children’s Theatre. “Public Works Sarasota is one way for us to remove the barriers that prevent members of the community from connecting with the theatre. This initiative blurs the line between ‘artist’ and ‘audience’ by having the public join the creative process, learning about all that goes into putting together a show.”

As part of this program, FST Teaching Artists will travel to each partner organization to lead a six-week series of workshops exploring topics of acting methodology, singing, and movement. During these workshops, each organization will select one section of Off the Charts! that they will memorize and learn. At the end of the summer, participants will perform their selected portion of the show alongside professional actors for an invited audience on their organization’s campus.

This summer serves as a pilot program/version of Public Works Sarasota, which FST hopes to expand in the future.

“FST has always been committed to accessibility and inclusion and Public Works Sarasota is another way that the theatre is working to embody this commitment,” said Saldívar. “We launched this first year by working with community partners that we’ve worked with in the past, but we’re looking forward to connecting with even more members of the community going forward.”

Off the Charts! will also tour to Sarasota County libraries and give free public performances on Saturday mornings through July 22, 2023. A full list of these free public performances follows this release.
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 200,000 live attendees each year across its diverse programs: Mainstage, Cabaret, Stage III, Children’s Theatre, The FST School, New Play Development, and FST Improv.

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 where everyone is welcome to engage in the art of theatre.

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FREE PUBLIC PERFORMANCES AT SARASOTA LIBRARIES
Saturday, July 1 at 11AM – Fruitville Library
Saturday, July 8 at 11AM – Selby Library
Saturday, July 15 at 11AM – Venice Library
Saturday, July 22 at 11AM – Gulf Gate Library