

florida studio theatre



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### **A STORY OF BRAVERY AND ADVENTURE IN WORLD PREMIERE CHILDREN'S SHOW**

*Florida Studio Theatre opens the 2011 WRITE A PLAY Program with "Jack and the Enchanted Beanstalk"*

(Sarasota, FL)— Florida Studio Theatre's WRITE A PLAY season begins with the idea that everyone has the potential for greatness in the World Premiere children's play, **JACK AND THE ENCHANTED BEANSTALK** adapted by local playwrights **Beth Duda** and **Adam Ratner**. Performances of JACK begin in the Gompertz Theatre on Tuesday, September 27 and will play through November to more than 11,000 students from Sarasota and Manatee County schools.

Autumn mornings at Florida Studio Theatre begin with the sound of hundreds of young children clambering off of school buses and entering the Irish landscape of the new adaptation of the classic story of bravery, adventure, and enchantment in JACK AND THE ENCHANTED BEANSTALK. This presentation lights the path for young writers of the future, inspiring them to write plays of their own for submission in FST's annual Young Playwright's Festival in the Spring.

Jack, a young boy long considered "not very bright," embarks on a quest to discover the truth about his missing father and sister. Along the way, Jack encounters destiny, danger, an enchanted beanstalk and a terrifying giant. Jack learns along the way, everyone has the potential for greatness locked inside, and with care and nurturing our ordinary lives can become extraordinary. Jack's journey up the beanstalk allows him to experience the importance of perseverance, courage and self confidence.

Ms. Duda and Mr. Ratner collaborated on last year's PINOCCHIO and 2009's RUMPLESTILTSKIN. The playwriting duo, which calls Florida Studio Theatre their artistic home, are dedicated to presenting dynamic new work for young audiences with the world premieres right here at FST.

The cast of JACK includes FST debuts by members of the 2011-2012 Acting Apprentice Company. This includes **Corbin Puryear** as Jack; **Andy McCain** as the Narrator, Morham the Giant, and Father; **Sarah DeStefano** as Róisín and the Enchanted Harp; **Teresa Hancock** as Mother Maeve and Dierdra; and **Matthew Meckes** as the pianist. The production is directed by FST Associate Director, **Kate Alexander**, with Scenic and Costume Design by **Sara J. Hinkley** and assistance from FST Technical Director **Dan Yerman** as Lighting Designer.

JACK will begin September 27 in the Gompertz Theatre, and play Monday through Friday at 9:45am, 11:00am, and 12:15pm. Tickets are \$6 and can be purchased through the FST Box Office at 941.366.9000.

#### ABOUT WRITE A PLAY

Since 1991, WRITE A PLAY, an arts-in-education initiative, has introduced thousands of students to professional theatre and provided them with the skills and motivation to create original plays. High energy, interactive performances, workshops and long-term residencies inspire children's creativity, bolster their communication and literary skills, and instill in them an appreciation of the arts. Students are encouraged to write from their own point of view and in doing so, they create diverse plays such as *No War Can Tear Our Love Apart*,

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a touching tale of the love between a father and daughter, and *Oh La La! Jasper and Hedgy Get Married*, an absurdist tale of a friendly ghost and his darling hedgehog.

Now in its 20th year, the WRITE A PLAY program reaches over 55,000 students each year in Florida, Scotland, China, Russia and Israel. Since the inception of WRITE A PLAY, this unique program has impacted more than one million children. Teaching children to write, FST's WRITE A PLAY program has not only inspired young creative minds, it has also increased reading and writing scores in the program's participants.

The core of the WRITE A PLAY program is its three-play series: Pinocchio sets the example of a well-made play; the PLAYMAKERS Tour: Imagination Celebration, travels across the state of Florida during the winter months teaching children to write plays; and UNDER SIX: The Land of Yes!, the compilation of winning plays submitted to FST's Young Playwrights Festival.

The WRITE A PLAY year culminates with a celebration of all the young playwrights' hard work and creativity with the Young Playwrights Festival in May. Last year, more than 30 winning playwrights, ages 7-14, over 400 of their guests including 30 educators traveled from around Florida and as far away as Vladimir, Russia, Dunfermline, Scotland and Tel Mond, Israel to view a special presentation of their original plays and receive their awards. Some came from big sprawling campuses with hundreds of students and others came from small one-room schools. Many came from big cities and some from small towns.

#### ABOUT FLORIDA STUDIO THEATRE

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.

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*Interviews with the director, playwrights and cast are available by appointment.*