



THE FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY
FSU/ASOLO CONSERVATORY FOR ACTOR TRAINING

*****For Immediate Release*****

October 1, 2014

FSU/Asolo Conservatory for Actor Training
Awarded \$20,000 Grant by the Community
Foundation of Sarasota County

(SARASOTA, October 1, 2014) — The FSU/Asolo Conservatory for Actor Training today announced that it is the recipient of a \$20,000 grant from the Community Foundation of Sarasota County, provided by the Thomas and Lola Seligman Fund and the Lola G. Hanna Fund. This generous gift provides the final funding needed to fully upgrade the theatrical lighting system in the Jane B. Cook Theatre with cutting-edge equipment to enhance its numerous year-round artistic productions.

“Because of the world class training actors experience at the FSU/Asolo Conservatory for Actor Training, we are pleased to provide \$20,000 to ensure the tradition of quality education continues,” says Roxie Jerde, President and CEO of the Community Foundation of Sarasota County. “Thanks to their love of theater and the arts, the Thomas and Lola Seligman Fund and the Lola G. Hanna Fund’s generosity will continue the tradition of excellence in theater education at the Conservatory and benefit the arts community in Sarasota for years to come.”

Hailed as one of the top 10 actor training programs in America by the *U.S. News and World Report*, the Conservatory is a three-year graduate program. Each year an elite 12 students are selected out of more than 1,500 people. Graduates of the program have appeared on and off Broadway, in regional theatres, feature films, and on television.

“This gift from the Community Foundation of Sarasota is a real boon for our students and the work we are doing here,” says Greg Leaming, Director of the FSU/Asolo Conservatory. “It will allow us to upgrade our lighting system to meet industry standards and produce work that our students can be proud of and that our community can be proud of. This great generosity will allow our program to remain one of the top actor training programs in the country.”

The theater’s new system will decrease its lighting energy demands by 70 percent, saving a considerable amount of electrical and financial resources. The new equipment also provides an increased variety of special effects and overall better control of the accuracy of the stage’s lighting.

“This gift from the Community Foundation of Sarasota makes it possible for us to do the kind of upgrading that we’ve been needing here for the past decade,” says Chris McVicker, Production Manager and Technical Director of the FSU/Asolo Conservatory. “It’s going to be thrilling to step up our production levels. On stage, with the right light at the right time, anything is possible.”

The Conservatory kicks off its 2014-2015 season this November with Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright David Mamet’s *The Water Engine*, running November 4-23. It will be followed by William Shakespeare’s charming comedy *As You Like It*, running December 31 through January 18. The season continues with the Broadway hit musical *[title of show]*, running February 17 through March 8, and will end with Anton Chekhov’s timeless masterpiece, *The Cherry Orchard*, running April 7 through 26. Tickets can be purchased by phone at 941.351.8000, online at www.asolorep.org, or in-person at Asolo Rep’s Box Office at 5555 North Tamiami Trail in Sarasota.

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