



FLORIDA THEATRE'S ATTENDANCE RANKS 6TH IN NATION *Historic, Nonprofit Theatre #56 Overall, Surpassing All Jacksonville Venues*

Jacksonville, Fla. – *Pollstar*, a trade publication reporting on the concert industry, has released its 2018 year end charts. It ranks the historic, nonprofit Florida Theatre's attendance, during 2018 as among the Top 100 theatres worldwide. With attendance of 134,053, the Florida Theatre was #56 overall on the Top 100 Theatre Venues chart, and #6 for theatres under 2,000 seats.

The Florida Theatre's attendance surpassed all other Jacksonville venues, including Veteran's Memorial Arena, which ranked #134 on the arena chart with attendance of 120,255; Daily's Place, which ranked #53 on the amphitheater chart with attendance of 102,466; and the Moran Theatre at the Times-Union Center, which ranked #90 on the theatre chart with attendance of 91,020.

"We work to build a schedule that touches every corner of Jacksonville. Our mantra is great live performances, by the greatest performing artists, in an intimate and historic setting," said Florida Theatre President Numa Saisselin. "It's wonderful that Jacksonville and North Florida continue to respond to this philosophy."

The only North Florida venue that hosted more people this year was the St. Augustine Amphitheatre, which ranked #46 on the amphitheater chart with attendance of 150,669. The Florida Theatre seats 1,918. Veteran's Memorial Arena seats 15,000. Daily's Place seats 5,500. The St. Augustine amphitheater seats 4,100, and The Moran Theatre at the Times-Union Center seats 2,979.

"There are a couple of things that are interesting about these numbers. One is that all of these venues have seating capacities far in excess of the Florida Theatre," said Saisselin. "The other interesting thing is that for theatres under 2,000 seats, the Florida Theatre ranks #6 nationwide, but this year's chart included the Walter Kerr Theatre on Broadway, where Springsteen on Broadway played for the entire year. It's not comparable to what the rest of the chart measures, and if you don't include it, the Florida Theatre maintained its #5 nationwide ranking for theatres under 2,000 seats."

Saisselin continued, "The last interesting thing is that we're on a chart with prestige venues in major markets such as Radio City Music Hall, the Royal Albert Hall and the Fox Theatre in Atlanta. Yet Jacksonville continues to prove that they love live performances as much, possibly more, than many markets."

Overall *Pollstar* reports that the concert industry is healthy, even though fewer tickets were sold this year. According to *Pollstar*, in 2018, total tickets from the Top 100 (tours) reached 59,811,438, an 11.1 percent decrease from last year. Ticket prices, however, were higher this year on average. In 2017 the average ticket price was \$84.63, yet this year's average is \$94.31, an 11.9 percent increase.

“Everybody has a Florida Theatre story and it’s our mission to continue creating those stories,” said Kevin Stone, Vice President of Programming. “Whether it’s a young comedian like John Mulaney, a family- friendly program like Kidz Bop, a country artist like Jamey Johnson, or a classic punk rock band like Pixies, our goal is to continue bringing live entertainment for all ages to Northeast Florida so every member of our community can feel like the Florida Theatre is ‘THEIR’ theatre. This *Pollstar* ranking indicates that we are on the right track to achieve this goal.”

The Top 10 grossing tours of 2018 were Ed Sheeran, Taylor Swift, Jay Z and Beyonce, Pink, Bruno Mars, Eagles, Justin Timberlake, Roger Waters, U2 and the Rolling Stones. Each grossed more than \$100 million, and collectively more than \$2 billion, playing to millions of fans, but Saisselin sees some parallels with the Florida Theatre.

“Every decade from the 1960s through the 2000s is represented in the Top 10 tours, and that is representative of the Florida Theatre’s schedule as well. In the last year we promoted more than 100 performances,” said Saisselin. “About one-third were acts that were new to us, and two-thirds were artists we have a continuing relationship with. Part of our success is keeping the schedule’s balance correct, but another part is the historic theatre we manage. Anyone can promote a concert, and you can call an open field a venue, but there’s only one Florida Theatre. It’s a great venue.”

The Florida Theatre’s 2017 season is sponsored by Community First Credit Union. For a complete list of upcoming season events, visit floridatheatre.com.

Florida Theatre : From ballet and opera to contemporary pop, jazz, rock, country and blues the nonprofit Florida Theatre offers 200 cultural and entertainment events annually for every taste and age. More than just an entertainment center, The Florida Theatre is also home to graduations, awards ceremonies, lectures, business meetings and charity events that support the community’s schools, churches, hospitals and civic groups. As an anchor to downtown development along the beautiful St. Johns River, The Florida Theatre draws 250,000 people to Jacksonville’s center each year. The magnificently restored Florida Theatre is recognized as one of the finest concert venues in the Southeast. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Florida Theatre holds special memories for four generations. From the Vaudeville acts and silent films of its earliest days to today’s blend of performances of all kinds, The Florida Theatre has served as Jacksonville’s premier entertainment center since 1927.

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