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FST EXTENDS COMEDIC WHODUNIT,
SHEAR MADNESS, THROUGH JUNE 25

(Sarasota, FL) — Due to audience demand, Florida Studio Theatre (FST) announces the extension of its opening Summer Mainstage production, Shear Madness. Called “Downright Hilarious” by The Huffington Post and “Comic perfection” by The Boston Herald, Shear Madness is a comedic murder mystery where the audience helps solve the crime. Full of up-to-the-minute spontaneous humor, Shear Madness will now run in FST’s Gompertz Theatre for an additional week through June 25, 2023. Tickets are now on sale at FloridaStudioTheatre.org or 941.366.9000.

“We are thrilled that Shear Madness has been extended,” said FST Managing Director Rebecca Hopkins. “It’s the perfect way to kick off the Summer Season. Shear Madness has audiences laughing from start to finish. The show itself is an absolute delight, but this wonderful cast takes the comedy to a whole new level. We’re so excited to have the chance to share this show with even more people through this extension.”

Audiences are calling FST’s production of Shear Madness “Tremendous fun,” “Extremely funny,” “Incredibly well done,” and “A triumph.” Audience member Arlene K said, “This was our fifth time seeing Shear Madness—three times in Boston years ago and once at FST last time it was presented. This was the BEST production we’ve seen.”

Shear Madness is set in a local Sarasota hair salon, and everyone inside becomes a suspect when the old lady living above the salon is mysteriously “offed.” Two detectives arrive and collaborate with the audience to spot the clues, question the suspects, and identify the murderer. No two performances of Shear Madness are the same; parts of the play are improvised, specific references within the script are consistently updated, and each audience votes on who they believe is the true killer, with the outcome changing night to night.

"It is a combination of the two most popular forms of entertainment,” said show director Bruce Jordan. “It’s a comedy and a murder mystery. People love them both.”

FST’s production of this popular whodunit features a six-person cast, including three Shear Madness veterans. Jordan Ahnquist (The Play That Goes Wrong, 2022), Gil Brady (The Play That Goes Wrong and Laughing Matters, 2022), and Lisa McMillan (Perfect Wedding, 2012) have each been in multiple productions of Shear Madness across the country prior to FST’s production this summer. Shaun Memmel and Luis E. Rivera appeared in The Straz Center’s
production of the comedy this spring and are making their FST debuts with *Shear Madness*. This marks Gina Milo’s first time appearing in *Shear Madness* and at FST. Previously, she has performed at the Engeman Theater, Drury Lane Theatre, Pittsburgh Civic Light Opera, and Pioneer Theater.

The production’s creative team includes Bruce Jordan (Director), Gil Brady (Assistant Director), Isabel A. Curley-Clay and Moriah Curley-Clay (Scenic Design), Suzie Sajec (Costume Coordination), Andrew Gray (Lighting Design), and Thom Korp (Sound Design).

Due to audience demand, FST is extending the run of *Shear Madness* by an additional week. This comedic whodunit will now play in FST’s Gompertz Theatre through June 25, 2023.

FST’s production of *Shear Madness* is sponsored in part by the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Arts and Culture and the Florida Council on Arts and Culture, and the National Endowment for the Arts. The production is also supported by the Gulf Coast Community Foundation, The Shubert Foundation, and Sarasota County Tourist Development Tax Revenues. Thank you to our media sponsor, Herald-Tribune Media Group.

**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 230,000 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 the theatre where the street meets the elite — where everyone is welcome to engage in the art of theatre.

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