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8 NEW MUSICALS ANNOUNCED FOR **NAMT'S 21ST ANNUAL FESTIVAL OF NEW MUSICALS**

Presenting new works by award-winning writers including Allen, Jarrow, and Weiner

July 1, 2009 - The **National Alliance for Musical Theatre (NAMT)** has announced the official selections for its 21st Annual Festival of New Musicals taking place on **Monday, October 19** and **Tuesday, October 20, 2009**.

At NAMT's Festival, New York City's longest-running musical theatre festival, leading theatre producers from across the world come together for this industry-only event to discover eight new musicals presented in 45-minute staged readings over two days. Since 1989, the Festival has presented over 225 musicals and 330 writers, and 80% of these shows have found subsequent developmental and full productions; tours; and licensing agreements as a direct result of the Festival.

This year's 2009 Festival of New Musicals includes works by five Jonathan Larson Award winners (Mark Allen, Gaby Alter, Susan DiLallo, Peter Mills and Stephen Weiner), two Obie Award winners (Kyle Jarrow and Stephen Weiner), a Fred Ebb Award Winner (Peter Mills), and a Richard Rodgers Award winner (Stephen Weiner).

The musicals selected for this year's Festival are:

BAND GEEKS!

Book by Tommy Newman & Gordon Greenberg

Lyrics by Gaby Alter & Tommy Newman

Music by Mark Allen, Gaby Alter & Tommy Newman

Concept by Tommy Newman

SYNOPSIS- *Band Geeks!* is a high-stepping tribute to high school marching bands and misfits everywhere. With just nine members and dwindling funds, the Cuyahoga High Marching Beavers are close to extinction. When a troubled athlete is relegated to their ranks, Elliott, the tuba-playing band captain and Laura, his best friend, must find a way to unite the band, overcome their pride and embrace their inner geek.

FACTORY GIRLS

by Creighton Irons and Sean Mahoney

SYNOPSIS - At the dawn of the American Industrial Revolution in 1844, Sarah Bagley leaves her New Hampshire farm to work, socialize, and write with thousands of young women in the growing textile mills of Lowell, Massachusetts. When conditions deteriorate, Sarah risks everything they have gained to fight the “soulless corporation.” With rock, funk and folk music, *Factory Girls* captures the passion and upheaval of a time in American history when, for better or worse, our country chose to leave the farm behind.

HOSTAGE SONG

Book by Clay McLeod Chapman

Music & Lyrics by Kyle Jarrow

SYNOPSIS-- Bound and blindfolded in a war-torn country, two hostages take refuge in music, memory and each other in this new indie-rock musical. But the further into their fantasy world the two of them go, the more the space between reality and escape blurs.

HOW CAN YOU RUN WITH A SHELL ON YOUR BACK?

by Michael Mahler & Alan Schmuckler

Synopsis-- After-school detention becomes an adventure when a stranger shows six students the power of a good story. The Tortoise and the Hare, The Ant and the Grasshopper, Androcles and the Lion... Aesop's timeless fables take an entertaining turn in this new musical that reveals universal truths through appealing, age-old allegories.

IRON CURTAIN

Book by Susan DiLallo

Music by Stephen Weiner

Lyrics by Peter Mills

SYNOPSIS-- New York, 1954: two hapless songwriters are kidnapped by the KGB, brought to Moscow, and forced to “fix” a Communist Propaganda musical. *Iron Curtain* is a madcap farce filled with divas and dominatrixes, secrets and spies, and mishaps and misdirects, as our heroes desperately try to get back home.

Note: *Iron Curtain* received a Jonathan Larson Award for its Book.

IT SHOULDA BEEN YOU

Book by Brian Hargrove

Music by Barbara Anselmi

Lyrics by Brian Hargrove and others

SYNOPSIS— In a world where nothing is what it seems - religions collide, plots are hatched, pacts are made, and secrets exposed - hope is found where you least expect it. Is it Iran? Is it Iraq? No, it's just the Steinberg Wedding. Come see the truth unveiled.

MEMORY IS THE MOTHER OF ALL WISDOM

Book & Lyrics by Sara Cooper

Music by Zach Redler

SYNOPSIS-- *Memory Is The Mother Of All Wisdom* is a two-person comic tragedy about the troubled relationship of a woman who has just been diagnosed with Alzheimer's and her estranged daughter who moves back home to take care of her.

RIPPER

by Duane Nelsen

SYNOPSIS— In this Victorian thriller, the PennyWise Music Hall is home to an illusionist who saws women in half while real murders are taking place on the streets outside. Reporter Chester Talbot sets out to unravel the story, but what he sees may not be what it seems.

Regarding the 21st annual Festival of New Musicals, **NAMT Executive Director Kathy Evans** said, "It's hard to believe we are embarking on our 21st Festival. We are honored to present these talented writers and over 100 musical theatre actors, directors, and musicians to the top producers in the world."

The 21st annual Festival of New Musicals is overseen by General Manager Lisa Dozier and Festival Artistic Director and NAMT New Works Director Branden Huldeen. The location for this year's Festival will be announced shortly.

From last year's Festival 2008, five of the eight shows have found commercial options or regional productions:

BARNSTORMER – will be presented this January at Red Mountain Theatre Company (AL)

BEATSVILLE – has been optioned

THE CUBAN AND THE REDHEAD – will have a developmental reading at The Village Theatre (WA)

ORDINARY DAYS— will be presented at Adirondack Theatre Festival (NY), Roundabout Theatre Company (NY), South Coast Rep (CA) and The Human Race Theatre Co. (OH), and the writer Adam Gwon won a 2008 Fred Ebb Award

SEE ROCK CITY & OTHER DESTINATIONS—had a reading in conjunction with their 2008 Richard Rodgers Award at The Transport Group (NY) and will have a concert production at Baldwin Wallace College (OH).

From Festival 2007:

THE BREAK-UP NOTEBOOK: THE LESBIAN MUSICAL– Commercial Option

THE GYPSY KING– Full Production at The Village Theatre (WA) in 2009

KINGDOM– Development at Weston Playhouse (VT) January 2008; 2008 Richard Rodgers Award for Musical Theatre, readings at Queens Theatre in the Park (NY), The Public Theater (NY). Productions at The Old Globe (CA) and ReVision Theatre (NJ).

THE STORY OF MY LIFE by Neil Bartram and Brian Hill – Commercial option 2007, Broadway opening 2009

TINYARD HILL– Development through 3 NAMT theatres – The Human Race Theatre Company (OH), Goodspeed Musicals (CT), and Red Mountain Theatre Company (AL), leading to the world premiere at TheatreWorks Silicon Valley this summer.

Other past Festival highlights include the Tony Award winners *The Drowsy Chaperone* and *Thoroughly Modern Millie*; off-Broadway successes such as *I Love You Because*, *Songs for A New World*, *Striking 12*, *Summer of '42* and *Vanities, A New Musical* (opening off-Broadway at Second Stage this month); and regional hits like *Ace*, *Children Of Eden*, *Emma*, *Harold and Maude*, *Honk!*, and *Meet John Doe*.

The **FESTIVAL OF NEW MUSICALS** is funded entirely by contributions to the **National Alliance for Musical Theatre**, a not-for-profit organization, and is supported in part by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts, which believes that a great nation deserves great art, and by public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts, a State agency.

Admission to the FESTIVAL OF NEW MUSICALS is by invitation only for the industry. The general public can obtain free, stand-by tickets the day of the Festival.

NATIONAL ALLIANCE FOR MUSICAL THEATRE (NAMT)

Founded in 1985, the National Alliance for Musical Theatre (NAMT) is a national service organization dedicated exclusively to musical theatre. Our 150+ members, located throughout 31 states and 8 countries, include theatres, presenters, universities, and independent producers who share our commitment to nurture the creation, production, and recognition of new musicals and classics. Last season, NAMT members cumulatively staged over 26,000 performances attended by 15 million people. NAMT has presented its annual FESTIVAL OF NEW MUSICALS since 1989. The Festival is “for those in the know” and makes “a major impact on the world of musical theatre,” according to American Theater Magazine, and brings together leading theatre producers and musical theatre writers. NAMT’s other programs include conferences, new works summits, and a granting initiative, the National Fund for New Musicals, which supports the development and production of new musicals. For more information, visit www.namt.org.

NAMT is very grateful to the following foundations and government agencies for providing major support for our mission to nurture the production of new musicals:

The ASCAP Foundation Irving Caesar Fund, The Dramatists Guild Fund, Gilman & Gonzalez-Falla Theater Foundation, The Mackintosh Foundation, The Mindich Family Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, New York State Council on the Arts, The Rodgers and Hammerstein Foundation, The Shen Family Foundation, and The Shubert Foundation.

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHIES OF NAMT'S 2009 FESTIVAL OF NEW MUSICALS

BAND GEEKS!

Book by Tommy Newman & Gordon Greenberg

Lyrics by Gaby Alter & Tommy Newman

Music by Mark Allen, Gaby Alter & Tommy Newman

Concept by Tommy Newman

GABY ALTER is a 2008 Jonathan Larson Grant recipient, and winner of the San Francisco Theater Critics' Circle and New York Fringe Festival Songwriting Awards. Projects include *Reality!* with Itamar Moses (Cape Cod Theatre Project 2008), and the pop song cycle *29* (NYU Steinhardt Spring Musical, 2007). Songs have appeared at the Public Theater, Barrington Stage Company and Lincoln Center Library. Gaby has also written songs for PBS TV's *Kids Block* and music for public radio's *Backstory*. MFA, Musical Theatre Writing, NYU Tisch. He can be found on the web at www.gabyalter.com.

MARK ALLEN is winner of a 2009 Jonathan Larson Award. He has been a published songwriter and musician since he was ten. A studio vocalist and an award-winning actor, director and film composer, Mark has been a part of theatre his whole life. Mark is a graduate of Samford University and NYU's Tisch School of the Arts Graduate Musical Theatre Writing Program, where he was the winner of the 2005 ASCAP Max Dreyfus Award for Excellence in Musical Theatre Writing. Mark wrote *Tinyard Hill*, (NAMT Festival 2007) with Tommy Newman. He can be found on the web at www.markallenmusic.com.

GORDON GREENBERG: recent directing credits: *Working* (revised with Stephen Schwartz and Lin Manuel Miranda – Old Globe, Asolo), *Jacques Brel...* (Zipper Theatre – Drama Desk, Drama League, Outer Critics Award noms), *Pirates! Or Gilbert & Sullivan Plunder'd* (Conceived with Nell Benjamin – Huntington, Goodspeed, Paper Mill), *The Baker's Wife* (revised with Stephen Schwartz & Joe Stein – Paper Mill, Goodspeed), *Happy Days* (redeveloped with Garry Marshall – Goodspeed, Paper Mill, National Tour), *The Citizens Band* (Spiegelworld, Henry Street Settlement), *Edges* (professional premier, by Pasek and Paul – Capital Rep.), *1776* (Paper Mill) Education: Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, Stanford University, NYU Film, Lincoln Center Director's Lab. www.gordongreenberg.com

TOMMY NEWMAN is a book writer/composer-lyricist and a commissioned songwriter. He is a graduate of Troy University and NYU's Tisch School of the Arts GMTWP. He has been recognized by the American College Theatre Festival at the Kennedy Center and received a fellowship at the Eugene O'Neill Theatre Center. Composed original scores for a number of regionally produced plays and independent films. Recent projects include *29*, with Gaby Alter, *Tinyard Hill* (NAMT Festival 2007) with Mark Allen (TheatreWorks Silicon Valley,

Red Mountain Theatre, Birmingham, AL) and *Band Geeks!* He can be found on the web at www.tommynewman.com.

FACTORY GIRLS

by Creighton Irons and Sean Mahoney

CREIGHTON IRONS is a composer/lyricist from beautiful Chapel Hill, NC. His musicals include *aliveinsignificance* (2001), *Ran Together* (2003), and *Soul Notes* (2005), and his original songs have been presented by William Finn at Barrington Stages and performed across the region. *Factory Girls*, written with collaborator Sean Mahoney, has been workshopped at the American Conservatory Theater (with Young Conservatory and MFA students) and at Goodspeed Musicals' "Festival of New Artists." Irons received his BA from UNC-Chapel Hill (Morehead Scholar, 2005) and his MFA from NYU-Tisch's Musical Theater Writing Program (2008).

SEAN MAHONEY is a composer, lyricist, and bookwriter. He is also a professional DJ, guitarist, educator, and independent record producer. His work has been performed at Goodspeed, Joe's Pub, ACT-San Francisco, Ars Nova, and Barrington Stage. He lives in the East Village with his wife Emily and son Tee.

HOSTAGE SONG

Book by Clay McLeod Chapman

Music & Lyrics by Kyle Jarrow

CLAY MCLEOD CHAPMAN is the creator of the rigorous storytelling session "The Pumpkin Pie Show". He is the author of *rest area*, a collection of short stories, and *miss corpus*, a novel -- both published by Hyperion books. He teaches writing at The Actors Studio MFA Program at Pace University.

KYLE JARROW writes for the stage, film, and television and plays in the rock bands The Fabulous Entourage and Super Mirage. His plays include *A Very Merry Unauthorized Children's Scientology Pageant* (Obie Award), *Armless* (currently being made into a feature film), *Love Kills*, and *Gorilla Man* among others. Upcoming: *Whisper House*, a collaboration with Duncan Sheik, at The Old Globe Theatre. You can find more info on Kyle at www.landoftrust.com.

HOW CAN YOU RUN WITH A SHELL ON YOUR BACK?

by Michael Mahler & Alan Schmuckler

ALAN SCHMUCKLER has contributed music and lyrics to *What U Will* (La Red Productions); *Plus One* (Duplex); and *The Out-of-Towners* and *Performers for Peace* (Triad). His songs have been featured in NAMT's 2005 New Works Summit and 2007 Songwriters' Showcase, and in Chicago's Monday Nights, New Voices series. Projects in development include *The Emperor's New Clothes* (with David Holstein) for Chicago Shakespeare Theater; an adaptation of Charles L. Mee's *Summertime* (with Jessica Redish) for La Red Music Theatre; and *Boyfred*, a musical TV series (with Michael Mahler, Jarrod Zimmerman and Blake Silver). More at alanschmuckler.com.

MICHAEL MAHLER is the Chicago-based composer/lyricist of *How Can You Run With A Shell On Your Back?* and *Knute Rockne: All-American* (with David H. Bell and Buddy Farmer). He has contributed to *The American Dream Songbook* (Next Theater); *What U Will* (La Red Productions) and others. His musical reviews *5 to 9* and *Moving Forward, Looking Back* have been performed at The Beechman in NY, Northwestern University, and St. Olaf College. His songs have been featured in NAMT's 2005 New Works Summit and 2007 Songwriters' Showcase, in MAC/ASCAP songwriter showcases in NY and Chicago, in The New Composer Project at CCM in Boston, in *Ballads. Also, Uptempos* at Ars Nova, and in Chicago's Monday Nights, New Voices series. Projects in development include an adaptation of *The 9/11 Report* (with Jessica Redish) for La Red Music Theatre; and *Boyfred*, a musical TV series (with Alan Schmuckler, Jarrod Zimmerman and Blake Silver).
www.michaelmahler.com

IRON CURTAIN

Book by Susan DiLallo

Music by Stephen Weiner

Lyrics by Peter Mills

SUSAN DILALLO won a Jonathan Larson Award for her book to *Iron Curtain*. Other credits include: book and lyrics for *Once Upon a Time in New Jersey* (Richard Rodgers Award; Global Search for New Musicals Competition winner, Cardiff); book and lyrics for the Clear Channel/Mattel production of *Barbie Live! In Fairytopia*; book and lyrics for *Pinocchio* (winner, KIDDSTUFF New Play Competition); libretto for *Wild About Harry*, commissioned by the New York Musical Theatre Festival; lyrics for *That's Life* (Outer Critics Circle nominee) and the new libretto for the classic Dorothy Fields/Arthur Schwartz musical, *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*. She is a recipient of the coveted Kleban Award.

PETER MILLS received the 2007 Fred Ebb Award for emerging songwriters, 2005 Drama Desk Award nominations for his show *THE PURSUIT OF PERSEPHONE*, and a 2002 Jonathan Larson grant. As a composer/lyricist, his shows include *ILLYRIA*, *THE FLOOD*, *THE ROCKAE* and *GOLDEN BOY OF THE BLUE RIDGE*. He holds an M.F.A. in Musical Theater Writing from NYU and a degree in English/Dramatic Literature from Princeton University. Peter is a founding member of Prospect Theater Company. www.pcmills.com

STEPHEN WEINER has composed scores to *Rocket Science* (Book by Patricia Cotter, Lyrics by Jason Rhyne), *The Hudsucker Proxy* and Obie Winner *newyorkers* (Book & Lyrics by Glenn Slater), *Once Upon A Time in New Jersey* (Book & Lyrics by Susan DiLallo), and *Spittin' Image* (Book by Karin Kasdin, Lyrics by Laura Szabo Cohen). Proud recipient of the Richard Rodgers Award, The Jonathan Larson Performing Arts Foundation Award, The ASCAP Richard Rodgers New Horizons Award and The Global Search for New Musicals Award.

IT SHOULDA BEEN YOU

Book & Lyrics by Brian Hargrove

Music by Barbara Anselmi

Additional Lyrics by Jill Abramovitz, Carla Rose Arnone, Michael Cooper, Ernie Lijoi and Will Randall

BARBARA ANSELM: *The Orphan Train* (book and lyrics by Susan Nanus published by Samuel French). She also composed the music for an adaptation of *A Christmas Carol* for The Acting Company Salon Series. A proud

participant in the York Theater's NEO 2 concert, The Songwriter's Showcase for NAMT, Monday Night New Voices and Musical Mondays. Her music has been performed at benefits and concerts in New York and throughout the country. Her song "All Join Together" raised over \$40,000 for the New York Times 9/11 Fund. Member of the BMI Lehman Engel Musical Theater Workshop (advanced).

BRIAN HARGROVE was a writer on the television shows "*Dave's World*", "*Caroline in the City*", "*Holding The Baby*", and "*Maggie*". He co-created the show "*Titus*", which ran over three years on Fox, where he also executive produced "*Wanda at Large*". He created the sit-com "*Nora*" for TBS. He wrote the book My Life as a Dog a mock-ography of Moose, the dog that played Eddie on *Frasier* - which he later turned into a television movie for NBC. He also co-wrote a new narration for Camille Saint-Saëns' "*Carnivale of the Animals*" performed at the Hollywood Bowl.

MEMORY IS THE MOTHER OF ALL WISDOM

Book & Lyrics by Sara Cooper

Music by Zach Redler

SARA COOPER is a member of The Dramatists Guild of America, Inc., and a graduate of NYU Tisch's Graduate Musical Theatre Writing Program. Recent productions: *Memory Is The Mother Of All Wisdom* (reading, Barrington Stage Company); *The Yehuatl* (short musical, Lee Strasberg Institute at NYU, music by Jaime Lozano); *A Corpse in the Kitchen* (short play, Theater for the New City); *EMERGENCY CONTRACEPTION!: THE MUSICAL* (Theater for the New City, music by Chris Shimojima); *We Love You, Johnny Hero* (NY Fringe Festival, music by Chris Shimojima); and *Terrorism & You* (short musical, 13th Street Repertory Company, music by Chris Shimojima).

ZACH REDLER is an active composer, pianist, arranger, copyist, musicologist and musical director in and out of New York City. Recent productions: *Memory Is The Mother Of All Wisdom* (reading, Barrington Stage Company); *May Day* (GMTWP Reading); *Adeyete* (short musical, GMTWP Reading); *Perez Hilton Saves the Universe* (Best Musical Fringe Festival 2008 and Best Musical in the Talkin' Broadway 2008 Summer Theatre Festival Citations). He is a member of ASCAP, Local 802 and recent graduate of NYU Tisch's Graduate Musical Theatre Writing Program.

RIPPER

by Duane Nelsen

DUANE NELSEN worked as composer-in-residence for off-Broadway's Equity Library Theatre before starting his own music production company in 1988, scoring national TV spots for McDonald's, Kellogg's, Disney, Pillsbury and many others. *Ripper* was presented at the 2004 STAGES festival, and received it's first commercial reading in New York in March 2007. Other shows include *The Last Charade*, *Division Street* and the new musical comedy *Spa*. His concert music has been performed by orchestras here and abroad. Professional affiliations: ASCAP, SAG, Dramatists Guild. He lives in Chicago with his wife, Catherine Hug, and their two sons.
