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NATIONAL ALLIANCE
for MUSICAL THEATRE

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NATIONAL ALLIANCE FOR MUSICAL THEATRE
ANNOUNCES 8 NEW MUSICALS FOR
20TH ANNUAL FESTIVAL OF NEW MUSICALS

Presenting work by David Zippel, Glenn Slater and other award-winning writers

July 17, 2008 - The **National Alliance for Musical Theatre (NAMT)** has announced the official selections for its 20th Annual Festival of New Musicals to be held in New York City on **Monday, October 20** and **Tuesday, October 21, 2008**, which will include *Pamela's First Musical* the last work by Wendy Wasserstein and Cy Coleman, in collaboration David Zippel. Other Festival writers have won such awards as the Kleban, Richard Rodgers, and Jonathan Larson awards.

At **NAMT's Festival of New Musicals**, leading theatre producers from across the world come together for this industry-only event to discover eight new musicals over two days. Since 1989, the Festival has presented over 200 musicals and 300 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 2008 Festival of New Musicals selections are:

BARNSTORMER

Book & Lyrics by Cheryl L. Davis

Music by Douglas J. Cohen

SYNOPSIS- Before Amelia Earhart, there was Bessie Coleman -- the first Black aviatrix who rose from the cotton fields of Texas and the barbershops of Chicago to finally conquer the skies of France. Her brief but dynamic life inspired the disenfranchised to pursue their dreams, including her own nephew who became a Tuskegee Airman.

BEATSVILLE

Music & Lyrics by Wendy Leigh Wilf

Book by Glenn Slater

Based on the Roger Corman film "A Bucket of Blood"

SYNOPSIS - Greenwich Village, 1959—Playground of bohemians, beatniks and jazzbos. Tragically square Walter Paisley finds that his clay figures, sculpted nudes, and papier-mâché busts bring him the acceptance he desperately yearns for. But what if the world discovered that Walter's body of work consists of actual bodies? A bebop-inflected black comedy/satire.

THE CUBAN AND THE REDHEAD

By Robert Bartley and Danny Whitman

SYNOPSIS--Escaping the bloodshed of his native Island, a young Cuban boy sets sail on a turbulent journey that leads him all the way to Hollywood and into the arms of a fiery, redheaded movie star named Lucille Ball. At the climax of *The Cuban and The Redhead*, Desi and Lucy put their money, their trust and their dreams on the line in a gamble to save one thing—their marriage. They risk it all on an untested medium called television. Can these two star crossed lovers blaze a path that defies Hollywood and history to be together? (This work was formerly known as *Dance With Me*).

THE LEGEND OF STAGECOACH MARY

By Thomas Mizer and Curtis Moore

Synopsis--Ex-slave Mary Fields turns the idea of the real Wild West hero on its head when she travels to 1880's Montana to find freedom, adventure and her long-lost best friend. Along the way, she discovers a gaggle of square-dancing nuns and a town full of cowboys in need of a little lesson in the American Dream.

ORDINARY DAYS

By Adam Gwon

SYNOPSIS--When Deb loses her most precious possession—the notes to her graduate thesis—she unwittingly starts a chain of events that turns the ordinary days of four New Yorkers into

something extraordinary. Told through a series of intricately connected songs and vignettes, *Ordinary Days* is an original musical about growing up and enjoying the view.

PAMELA'S FIRST MUSICAL

Book by Wendy Wasserstein

Lyrics by David Zippel

Music by Cy Coleman

Based upon the book by Wendy Wasserstein, illustrated by Andrew Jackness

SYNOPSIS—Pamela is a young suburban girl who feels out of place. Her mother has passed away and she lives with her father and two brothers who don't understand her. Pamela's active fantasy life and infatuation with Broadway Cast CDs keeps her from being too lonely. On her 11th birthday, she learns that her father is about to re-marry. The rest of her family is thrilled which makes Pamela feel like even more of an outsider. Just when Pamela thinks her entire world is going to crash, her eccentric Aunt Louise arrives. Aunt Louise is a New York fashion designer who sweeps Pamela off to New York City and her first Broadway musical. She meets producers, writers, actors, directors and choreographers and discovers the off-stage and on-stage magic of Broadway Theater. As Aunt Louise says, "A Broadway Musical can cure anything." Pamela's trip to New York inspires her to write and direct her own musical and to "collaborate" with her blended family, which, ultimately, brings them all together.

Note: This was one of the final projects of Wendy Wasserstein and Cy Coleman.

SEE ROCK CITY & OTHER DESTINATIONS

Book & Lyrics by Adam Mathias

Music by Brad Alexander

SYNOPSIS--Fueled by a brilliant pop-rock score, *See Rock City & Other Destinations* ventures to tourist destinations across America, mapping out stories of sightseers who need to get a little lost in order to find themselves. From Coney Island to Mt. McKinley, the Alamo to Niagara Falls—get ready to take the leap!

Note: SEE ROCK CITY & OTHER DESTINATIONS won the 2008 Richard Rodgers Award for Musical Theatre.

THE YELLOW WOOD

Book by Michelle Elliott

Music by Danny Larsen

Lyrics by Elliott and Larsen

SYNOPSIS—17-year-old Adam is frantically trying to memorize Robert Frost's poem "The Road Not Taken" before English, but because he didn't take his Ritalin, he can't get much farther than the "Two roads diverged in a yellow wood..." before a fantastic wood begins coming to life in his school. Desperate to prove he can turn his life around, Adam struggles to get beyond his ADD, his cultural heritage and his unique but unruly imagination. Adam is pulled deeper and deeper into the Yellow Wood, where he must face the reality of who he is and decide who he will ultimately become.

Regarding the 20th annual Festival of New Musicals, NAMT Executive Director Kathy Evans said, “Our NAMT member producing organizations, as well as the entire professional theatre industry attending the Festival, will see a lot of amazing talent. We look forward to celebrating our success stories from the past 20 years and are excited to help these amazing writers find new productions for their work.”

From last year’s Festival 2007, seven of the eight shows presented have found commercial options or regional productions:

THE BREAK-UP NOTEBOOK: THE LESBIAN MUSICAL by Lori Scarlett and Patricia Cotter – Commercial Option, 2008

CASEY AT THE BAT by Gordon Goodwin and Tom Child– Production at Brigham Young University 2008-2009

THE GYPSY KING by Randy Rogel and Kirby Ward – London production 2008-2009

KINGDOM by Aaron Jafferis and Ian Williams – Development at Weston Playhouse (VT) January 2008; 2008 Richard Rodgers Award for Musical Theatre.

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

TELL ME (f.k.a. The Chocolate Tree) by Marshall Paillet and A.D. Penedo – Full production at Actor’s Cabaret of Eugene (OR) 2008

TINYARD HILL by Mark Allen and Thomas M. Newman – Development through 3 NAMT theatres – The Human Race Theatre Company (OH), Goodspeed Musicals (CT), and Red Mountain Theatre Company (AL)

From Festival 2006: ***VANITIES, A NEW MUSICAL*** – Broadway opening Fall 2008.

EMMA – Full production at TheatreWorks (CA) August 2007; Cincinnati Playhouse (OH) and The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis (MO) Fall 2008.

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***, and ***Summer of ’42***; and regional hits like ***Ace, Children Of Eden, Harold and Maude, Honk!***, and ***Meet John Doe***.

The **FESTIVAL OF NEW MUSICALS** is funded 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 and closed to the general public.

[NOTE: Members of the media that wish to attend should contact NAMT press representative Keith Hurd at 212 589-5433 or keithhurdinc@aol.com to obtain festival credentials.]

NATIONAL ALLIANCE FOR MUSICAL THEATRE (NAMT)

Founded in 1985 and based in New York City, The National Alliance for Musical Theatre (NAMT), is a national service organization dedicated exclusively to musical theatre. NAMT membership includes not-for-profit and commercial theatres, presenting houses, universities, and independent producers. Located throughout 33 states and 6 countries, the 150 member organizations share a commitment to nurture the creation, production, and recognition of new musicals and classics. Last season, NAMT members cumulatively staged over 23,000 performances attended by over 17 million people and reached revenues over \$510 million. NAMT has presented its annual FESTIVAL OF NEW MUSICALS since 1989. The Festival, for “those-in-the-know” according to American Theater Magazine, brings together leading theatre producers and musical theatre writers, with the goal of furthering 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 supporting the mission to nurture the production of new musicals and classics:

The ASCAP Foundation, The Dramatists Guild Fund, Jamie deRoy & friends, Gilman & Gonzalez-Falla Theater Foundation, The Mackintosh 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 2008 FESTIVAL OF NEW MUSICALS

BARNSTORMER

Book & Lyrics by Cheryl L. Davis

Music by Douglas J. Cohen

CHERYL L. DAVIS-Cheryl’s work has been read and performed nationally, including at the Cleveland Play House, the Actors Theatre of Louisville, and the Kennedy Center. She is a co-recipient of the 2005 Kleban Award for her work as a librettist. Her play about the desegregation of the nation’s school system, *The Color of Justice*, received critical acclaim, including excellent reviews in the New York Times and Daily News, and is toured regularly by Theatreworks/USA. She has a degree in English and a Certificate in Theatre and Dance from

Princeton University, and was a Dramatists Guild Fellow in 2002. She is a member of the Dramatists Guild. She is a partner in the law firm of Menaker & Herrmann, LLP.

DOUGLAS J. COHEN—Doug is a composer/lyricist of the Broadway bound *The Big Time*, which debuted at NYMF with a book by Douglas Carter Beane and directed by Christopher Ashley, and will have a major workshop this fall. He won two Richard Rodgers Awards and the Gilman & Gonzalez-Falla Theatre Foundation Award for writing the book, music, and lyrics to *No Way to Treat a Lady* (optioned for a New York revival and produced twice off-Broadway—Outer Critics Circle nomination Best Revival, York Theatre Co.) and *The Gig* (Goodspeed, Manhattan Theatre Club Stage II, Sacramento Music Circus, NAMT Fest 1994, and now on Jay Records). Nominated for a 2005 Drama Desk Award for Outstanding Lyrics for *Children's Letters to God* (Lamb's Theatre), Doug is composer of *Glimmerglass* (Goodspeed, Spirit of Broadway, NAMT Fest 2000), composer-lyricist and co-librettist of *The Opposite of Sex* (Williamstown Theatre Festival, Magic Theatre), and contributed original songs to the off-Broadway show, *Boozy*, written and produced by the Obie Award-winning Les Freres Corbusier.

BEATSVILLE

Book by Glenn Slater

Music & Lyrics by Wendy Leigh Wilf

Based on the Roger Corman film "A Bucket of Blood"

GLENN SLATER—was nominated for a 2008 Tony Award (Best Score) for *The Little Mermaid*. Recent work: Disney's animated Western, *Home On The Range*; MTC's Obie Award-winning revue *newyorkers*. Upcoming: *Sister Act* (Lyricist, West End, 2009) and *Leap of Faith* (Lyricist/Co-Librettist, Broadway, 2009) with Alan Menken; *Phantom of the Opera II* (Lyricist/Librettist, West End, 2009) with Andrew Lloyd Webber; and *The Hudsucker Proxy* (Lyricist/Librettist, Broadway, 2010) with Stephen Weiner. Awards: Kleban Award for Lyrics, ASCAP/Richard Rodgers New Horizons Award, Jonathan Larson Award. Glenn lives in NYC with his wife, composer/lyricist Wendy Leigh Wilf, and sons Benjamin and Daniel.

WENDY LEIGH WILF—is a composer, lyricist and jazz musician. Her theatre music has been performed in NYC (*That Time of the Year*, York Theatre), The Berkshires (*Many Moons*), and at the Inge Festival in Independence, Kansas (*Splendor in The Grass*), where she served as Artist-In-Residence. Her songs have been recorded by numerous artists, most recently Susan Egan (on her album *Winter Tracks*). As a performer, Wendy has played in jazz clubs worldwide. She is a graduate of Northwestern University, a BMI Workshop Alumnus, and she holds an MM from the Manhattan School of Music.

THE CUBAN AND THE REDHEAD

By Robert Bartley and Danny Whitman

ROBERT BARTLEY--With Danny Whitman, Robert created *Broadway Backwards*, for which he serves as writer/director/choreographer. Robert recently directed a concert staging of *The Cuban and The Redhead* in the Festival of New American Musicals in Los Angeles, and a presentation at the York Theatre which also hosted "Sailing Against the Current: the songs of Bartley and Whitman." Robert and Danny have been featured in the York's first *NEO* concert,

The Music of Broadway: The Next Generation, SPF Composer Exposure concert, and Broadway's *Gypsy of the Year*. As a Director, Robert was represented last season by *The Family Fiorelli* (NYMF), *The Tales of Custard the Dragon* (Algonquin Theatre), and *Hair* in Peculiar Work's Obie-winning sequel *Off Stage: East Village Fragments*. www.BartleyWhitman.com.

DANNY WHITMAN--Musicals include *The Tales of Custard the Dragon* (The Kennedy Center, 2002; NYMF Festival, 2006; Tour, Light Keeper Productions, 2006; Algonquin Theatre, 2008); *Only a Girl* about Holocaust rescuer, Irene Opdyke, (tour, Light Keeper Productions), *Broadway Backwards* (Co-creator, producer, special material); *The Cuban and The Redhead* (Festival of New American Musicals; York Theatre Company development series; 2008 finalist for Eugene O'Neill Music Theatre Conference). Additional credits include the York Theatre's *NEO* concert and *NEO Spotlight Series*, MAC/ASCAP Songwriters' Showcase, 2008 SPF Composer Exposure concert, and *The Music of Broadway: The Next Generation* and has been performed by Tonya Pinkins, Rachel York, Nancy Opel, Tony Yazbeck, Tituss Burgess, Jen Colella and Karen Mason among others. www.BartleyWhitman.com.

THE LEGEND OF STAGECOACH MARY

By Thomas Mizer and Curtis Moore

Curtis Moore was commissioned by the Williamstown Theater Festival to write the score for *Triangle*, which was further developed at the O'Neill Music Theatre Conference in 2006. He wrote and performed songs in Todd Solondz' film, "Palindromes". With Thomas Mizer, Matthew Brookshire, and Amanda Green he wrote the critically acclaimed musical, *For the Love of Tiffany*. He arranged music for Lincoln Center's *The Coast of Utopia*, was the associate composer for their recent production of *Cymbeline*, and orchestrated *Saved* at Playwrights Horizons. Curtis is a member of BMI, and a founding member of the Northwestern University Entertainment Alliance.

Thomas Mizer wrote the book and lyrics for *The Legend of Stagecoach Mary*, *The House of the Seven Gables* (ASCAP Workshop) and *The Bus to Buenos Aires* (Ensemble Studio Theater Marathon 2006), and he co-wrote the book for the New York Fringe Festival hit *For the Love of Tiffany*. In 2005, he was commissioned by the Williamstown Theater Festival to write the lyrics for *Triangle*, which was subsequently directed by Robert Longbottom at the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center. An honors graduate of Northwestern University, he is proud to have been a part of the BMI Lehman Engel writing workshop.

ORDINARY DAYS

By Adam Gwon

Adam Gwon is a composer and lyricist recently named one of "50 to Watch" by The Dramatist magazine. His musicals include *Ordinary Days*, *Bernice Bobs Her Hair* (w/ librettist Julia Jordan), *Ethan Frome* (w/ bookwriter Michael Ruby), and *Lulu*. His work has been seen at Primary Stages, the York Theatre, New Dramatists, NYMF, American Music Theatre Project, the ASCAP/Disney Musical Theatre Workshop, and many others. He is currently at work on a commission from Signature Theatre in Arlington, VA. Adam was a 2006-07 musical theater fellow at the Dramatists Guild, and is a graduate of NYU/Tisch. Adam Gwon received the Shen Family Foundation Commission for a new piece at Signature Theatre. Visit www.adamgwon.com

PAMELA'S FIRST MUSICAL

Book by Wendy Wasserstein

Lyrics by David Zippel

Music by Cy Coleman

WENDY WASSERTEIN- Her play *The Heidi Chronicles* won the 1989 Pulitzer Prize, Tony Award, and Susan Smith Blackburn Prize; the New York Drama Critics Circle, Drama Desk, and Outer Critics Circle Awards; and earned her a grant from the Kennedy Center Fund for New American Plays. For *The Sisters Rosensweig*, she received the 1993 Outer Critics Circle Award, a Tony Award nomination, and the William Inge Award for Distinguished Achievement in American Theatre. Her other plays include *Third*; *Old Money*; *An American Daughter*; *Uncommon Women and Others*; *Isn't It Romantic*; a musical, *Miami* (with Jack Feldman and Bruce Sussman); *Waiting for Philip Glass*, included in *Love's Fire*; and *Welcome to My Rash*. Her books include the novel *Elements of Style*, the essay collections *Shiksa Goddess (Or How I Spent My Forties)* and *Bachelor Girls*, and *Sloth*. She started The Open Doors Program, which brings New York City Public High School students to plays accompanied by professional theatre artists. The program is run by the Theatre Development Fund in New York.

DAVID ZIPPEL-- David Zippel's lyrics have won him the Tony Award, two Academy Award Nominations, two Grammy nominations and three Golden Globe nominations. With composer Cy Coleman and bookwriter Larry Gelbart he made his Broadway debut with *City of Angels*, for which he received the Tony Award, New York Drama Critics Award and Drama Desk Award, London's Olivier Award and Evening Standard Award. With composer Alan Menken, he wrote the songs for Disney's animated feature film "Hercules" and was nominated for an Academy Award and a Golden Globe. With Matthew Wilder, he wrote the songs for Disney's animated feature "Mulan", which earned him his second Academy Award Nomination, his second Grammy nomination and his third Golden Globe Nomination. David wrote the lyrics to Andrew Lloyd Webber's music for *The Woman in White* and was nominated for 5 Olivier 2005 Awards including Best Musical and a 2006 Tony Nomination for Best Score. His Broadway show, *The Goodbye Girl*, with music by Marvin Hamlisch and a book by Neil Simon, received a Tony nomination for Best Musical and earned him a Nomination for the Outer Critics Circle Award for Best Lyrics. With composer Matthew Wilder and librettists Bill and Cheri Steinkellner, Zippel conceived and wrote the lyrics to the musical *Princesses*, which was presented at the 2003 NAMT Festival of New Musicals and subsequently presented at The 5th Avenue Theatre in Seattle, WA. A graduate of Harvard Law School, he is delighted not to practice law.

CY COLEMAN--(June 14, 1929 - November 18, 2004) Coleman's Broadway shows include *Wildcat*, *Sweet Charity*, *Seesaw*, *On The Twentieth Century*, *Barnum*, *Welcome to the Club*, *City of Angels*, *The Will Rogers Follies* and *The Life*. In addition, he composed scores for memorable television specials for Shirley MacLaine, Bob Hope, and Peggy Lee. Coleman has received numerous awards including: Grammy's (3 wins, 13 nominations), Tony's (4 wins, 11 nominations), Emmy's (3 wins, 5 nominations), Oscar (1 Nomination for *Sweet Charity*), Songwriters Hall of Fame inductee, Johnny Mercer Award (Songwriter's Hall Of Fame), and the Richard Rogers Award for Lifetime Achievement in American Musical Theater (ASCAP)

SEE ROCK CITY & OTHER DESTINATIONS

Book & Lyrics by Adam Mathias

Music by Brad Alexander

BRAD ALEXANDER wrote the music for Theatreworks USA's *Just So Stories*, *Lilly's Big Day* and the upcoming *Click Clack Moo: Cows That Type*, directed by John Rando. His songs have been featured on VH1 (*Celebrity*), Showtime (*The L Word*) and Sony Records. He and Adam Mathias received the 2007 Jerry Bock Award and 2008 Richard Rodgers Award for *See Rock City & Other Destinations*. Brad is a member of The BMI Advanced Musical Theatre Workshop, National Academy of Popular Music, and The Dramatists Guild.
www.bradalexander.com

ADAM MATHIAS conceived and co-wrote book and lyrics for *The Passion of George W. Bush* (2004 NY Fringe; Joe's Pub) and composed the score for Bakerloo Theatre Project's *The Tempest* (Summer 2008). His work has been performed at Birdland, The Triad, The Duplex, The Laurie Beechman, Raw Impressions, Prospect Theater Company, Chicago Dramatist Workshop, and Musicals Tonight by artists including Anthony Rapp, Sarah Ramirez, Gavin Creel, Christian Borle, and Malcolm Gets. Adam is a graduate of The Theatre School at DePaul University and NYU's Graduate Musical Theatre Writing Program and is a member of the BMI Musical Theatre Writing Workshop.

THE YELLOW WOOD

Book by Michelle Elliott

Music by Danny Larsen

Lyrics by Elliott and Larsen

DANNY LARSEN-- (Composer/Lyricist) is a graduate of NYU's Graduate Musical Theatre Program. Danny also holds Bachelors of Arts degrees in Music and Theatre Education from Brigham Young University. He won the ACTF Kennedy Center Composition award for his music and lyrics for *Soft Shoe*, a new musical which premiered at BYU in 2002. He also won the Excellence in Music Award for *The Yellow Wood* at the New York Theatre Musical Theatre Festival in 2007. Danny has done an extensive amount of arranging, orchestration, and composing and is also a director, music director and performer.

MICHELLE ELLIOTT- (Bookwriter/Lyricist) graduated from NYU's Graduate Musical Theatre Program in 2005, where she was the recipient of the Tisch Achievement Award. Michelle has a Master's in Directing from the University of Wisconsin – Superior, where she received the Excellence in Directing Award, and a B.A. in theatre performance from UW-Eau Claire. Michelle was the co-founder and Artistic Director of Frontier Theatre in Minneapolis, where she wrote, directed and produced six original musicals, including the critically acclaimed Minnesota Fringe Festival show, *When Pop Stars Attack!*