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NAMT Establishes National Fund for New Musicals

By Adam Hetrick

The National Alliance for Musical Theatre has announced the creation of the National Fund for New Musicals, a grant program to support the development and production of fresh works for the stage.

The National Fund for New Musicals will award three separate grants annually to non-profit NAMT member theatres.

The Early Collaboration Grant, which will be up to \$3,000, will "support a writer residency at a theatre with the goal of creating a draft and a few songs of a new musical," according to a press statement. NAMT's Project Development Grant will provide up to \$6,000 to support a workshop or reading of a new musical. The Production Grant, which ranges from \$10,000-\$20,000, will support a full production of a new musical at one or several theatre companies.

In a statement NAMT executive director Kathy Evans said, "We are thrilled to launch this very exciting initiative, which we believe could have a major impact on the field. In the past, musical theatre writers have sometimes seen their musicals follow an unpredictable path over many years of isolated readings, without a clear destination of a full production. And for theatres, the development and production of new musicals is an expensive and risky undertaking. I believe that the National Fund for New Musicals will help more musicals flourish by supporting small, mid-sized, and large theatres in their collaboration with each other and with writers, and by helping to keep a forward momentum for a new musical's journey toward a full production."

Application details will be available on the NAMT website in November. NAMT expects to announce the inaugural recipients of the grants in April 2009.

NAMT has so far raised \$100,000 for the fund, which is being supported by Stacey Mindich, the Shen Family Foundation, the Mackintosh Foundation, Dallas Summer Musicals, Theatre Under The Stars, Broadway Across America, Charlie Fink, Dominic Chianese, and the Lake Company Inc.

Founded in 1985 and based in New York City, The National Alliance for Musical Theatre is a national service organization dedicated exclusively to musical theatre. Kathy Evans is the executive director for the organization with members sprinkled throughout 33 states and six countries.

For more information visit www.namt.org.



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