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# NAMT Announces Selections For 21st Annual Festival Of New Musicals, Held 10/19, 10/20

By BWW News Desk



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.

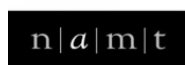
Other past Festival highlights include the Tony Award winners The Drowsy Chaperone and Thoroughly Modern Millie; off-Broadway successes such as I Love You Because, Songs for A New World, Striking 12, Summer of '42 and Vanities, A New Musical (opening off-Broadway at Second Stage this month); and regional 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](http://www.namt.org).



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