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ASCAP NEW MUSICAL THEATRE WORKSHOP and Lied Center for Performing Arts New Musical Theatre Festival

Lincoln, NE – September 10 – 12, 2013

The Lied Center for Performing Arts is thrilled to announce the Lincoln premiere of the ASCAP New Musical Theatre Workshop. This exciting event, held annually in New York and Los Angeles, hits Lincoln September 10 – 12, 2013 and features staged readings of selected new works from across the United States. The Lied Center has developed a musical theatre festival to accompany this prestigious workshop, which includes master classes and a concert which will incorporate local talent and visiting Broadway guest artists.

Annually, composers and playwrights submit new musical theatre works for development at workshops hosted by the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP) in New York or Los Angeles. This year, ASCAP specifically invited the Lied Center for Performing Arts to host an additional New Musical Theatre Workshop in Lincoln. This event brings some of the finest emerging musical theatre writers to the Lied Center this fall.

Guest artists and Tony® Award nominees Matthew Sklar and Chad Beguelin will be honored guests at the workshop and festival. A Broadway guest artist, yet to be announced, will also join Sklar and Beguelin in conducting workshops, as well as performing in a concert alongside local talent, directed by Alisa Belflower, Associate Producer in Musical Theatre Development with the Lied Center for Performing Arts and Coordinator of Musical Theatre Studies in the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts. Michael Kerker, Director of Musical Theatre for ASCAP, is the Executive Producer.

“The entire festival will be free and open to the public,” says Lied Center Executive Director Bill Stephan. “Imagine a chance to see a brand-new musical as it is created, before it hits the streets of Broadway and becomes a smash-hit. This festival gives you that opportunity.”

The new works selected for workshop and presentation are: *CROSSING OVER* by Stephanie Salzman and Deborah Brevoort, *CROSS THAT RIVER* by Allan Harris and *THREADS* by Michael McLean. *CROSSING OVER* begins in the world of Amish hymn and ends in the world of Hip Hop, R & B and Pop. It centers around a young Amish woman as she embarks on Rumspringa, the time when Amish teenagers are released from the bonds of their daily life and allowed to enter into mainstream society. *CROSS THAT RIVER* is the story of Blue, a Louisiana slave who steals his master’s prize stallion and rides west to freedom, after witnessing the selling of his father and the brutal whipping of another slave. *THREADS* is a musical about women and clothes and what holds them together. A grandfather’s passionate desire to fill his granddaughter’s wardrobe throughout her life with perfect outfits, reveals that people are so much more than what they wear.

Both professional and advanced student singers and actors from the greater Lincoln region are encouraged to audition. Specific auditions dates will soon be announced and released to the public.

It is the Lied Center's objective to identify a new Broadway musical through the workshop process, which could be produced and presented at the Lied Center for Performing Arts.

"The Lied Center does so much more than present touring shows and community productions," says Stephan. "The Lied has a long history of commissioning new works."

The New Musical Theatre Workshop and Lied Center for Performing Arts New Musical Theatre Festival is an unprecedented opportunity for students, the Lied Center, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and the local community. It provides a chance to participate in the creative process with nationally renowned musical theatre writers and artists.

The ASCAP New Musical Theatre Workshop and the surrounding festival is made possible by generous support from the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts and the Hixson-Lied endowment, ASCAP (American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers) and the UNL Arts and Humanities Research Enhancement Program.

The **Lied Center for Performing Arts** is a state-of-the-art performing arts facility. The Lied Center, opened in 1990, is Nebraska's "Home for the Arts." The facility offers major regional, national and international events designed to attract, entertain and inspire a statewide audience. The Lied Center and its programs are made possible through the generous 2012/2013 season support of Christina Hixson and the Lied Foundation Trust, Friends of Lied, Ameritas and Union Bank.