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MCBROOM AND CARNELIA TO SERVE AS MASTER TEACHERS FOR 2nd ANNUAL AMTP/JOHNNY MERCER "THE POWER OF THE AMERICAN POPULAR SONG"

EVANSTON, Ill. --- Following the success of last year's inaugural program, The American Music Theatre Project (AMTP) at Northwestern University, in association with the Johnny Mercer Foundation will host the 2nd annual "The Power of the American Popular Song."

Held on Northwestern's Evanston campus from August 12 through 18, the weeklong program will feature some of America's most prominent songwriters working in the tradition of the legendary Johnny Mercer. These guest artists will serve as faculty for a weeklong educational program of master classes and workshops for a jury-selected group of young composers. The master teachers will also give musical performances of their own material and discuss their work as songwriters during evening cabaret presentations throughout the week. The program will culminate in a gala concert celebrating the legacy of Johnny Mercer.

This year the program is pleased to welcome back Grammy-award nominated singer/songwriter Amanda McBroom ("The Rose") as a master teacher. With a career that has spanned Hollywood, Broadway and cabaret, audiences and program participants alike were thrilled with McBroom as both teacher and performer during the first annual program.

According to McBroom, "My experience with the Mercer Foundation Songwriter's Program at Northwestern was uplifting and truly inspiring. It was beautifully produced. The range and talent of the students, the enthusiastic faculty and total support of the staff all made this conference one of the best I have participated in. They are doing something wonderful here. The world of songwriting needs more programs like this one."

This year McBroom will be joined by two time Tony-nominated songwriter Craig Carnelia ("Working", "Sweet Smell of Success"). While this is Carnelia's first time as a master teacher with the Johnny Mercer Program he is well known to local audiences as the artistic director of the ASCAP Musical Theater

Workshop in Chicago, and as a collaborator on Studs Terkel's "The Good War" at Northlight Theatre with Northwestern Professor David H. Bell.

In addition to McBroom and Carnelia, additional master teachers and guest artists will be announced at a later date.

AMTP is currently seeking talented songwriters or writing teams, age 18-30, from all popular music genres to participate in the festival's workshops and master classes. Through the generosity of the Johnny Mercer Foundation there is no fee for this workshop for the approximately 12 writers/writing teams selected, and stipends will be offered to cover travel and lodging expenses. Applicants will be required to submit three songs for adjudication. For an application and more information visit the American Music Theatre Project Web site at <www.amtp.northwestern.edu> or call (847) 467-0333.

Last year's program included emerging songwriters from all over the country representing the worlds of music theatre, pop, folk and country. Two of the program's highest profile participants were rising music theatre stars Benj Pasek and Justin Paul ("Edges").

According to Pasek and Paul, "We found the Johnny Mercer workshop to be amazingly helpful in learning about songwriting and craft. But even more valuable was the opportunity to meet fantastic professional writers who have now become mentors and friends, and bond with other writers who are our peers, allowing us to build a strong network of people within the industry. We are really grateful for the entire experience."

One of America's most influential and prolific songwriters, Johnny Mercer (1909-1976) wrote some of the most enduring standards of the 20th century including "Accentuate the Positive," "You Must Have Been A Beautiful Baby," "I Remember You," "Come Rain Or Come Shine," "One For My Baby," "Hooray for Hollywood" and "Moon River." He wrote songs for 90 motion pictures, won four Academy Awards and wrote six Broadway shows, including "St. Louis Woman" and "Li'l Abner." Mercer discovered and nurtured artists including Margaret Whiting, Jo Stafford, Peggy Lee, Frank Sinatra and Nat King Cole.

The American Music Theatre Project at Northwestern University is dedicated to the development of new musicals and the creation of exciting educational opportunities in the field of musical theatre.

The Johnny Mercer Foundation is dedicated to the preservation of the American Popular Song and the continuation of the tradition of Johnny Mercer's artistry and generosity. For more information on the foundation, visit <www.johnnymercerfoundation.com>.

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