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AMERICAN THEATRE WING'S
2014 JONATHAN LARSON® GRANTS RECIPIENTS
ANNOUNCED

PRESENTATIONS TO BE HELD ON APRIL 7th

New York, NY (March 14, 2014) – The **American Theatre Wing** announced today that the recipients of the 2014 **Jonathan Larson® Grants** are writing team **Sara Cooper** (lyricist/bookwriter) & **Zach Redler** (composer), receiving \$12,500 and the **Running Deer Residency**; and **Shaina Taub** (composer/lyricist), receiving \$12,500. The prestigious grants, totaling \$15,000 more than last year's grants, will be presented on Monday, April 7, 2014 at a private event at the WNYC Greene Space. The event will feature special performances of the recipients' work.

In addition to selecting this year's grant recipients, the expert panel, consisting of **Nell Benjamin**, **Maria Goyanes**, and **Peter Schneider**, will direct \$5,000 towards a new enhancement of the Larson Grant program: a mentorship component to further the recipients' artistic development in the year in which they receive the grant.

The grants, given annually to honor emerging composers, lyricists and book writers, help to continue Tony Award®-winning composer Jonathan Larson's dream of infusing musical theatre with a contemporary, joyful, urban vitality. Dedicated to celebrating excellence and supporting theatre, the American Theatre Wing awards the Larson Grants to artists to recognize and showcase their work with no strings attached - except to put it to the best use possible to help further the artists' creative endeavors.

Past recipients of the Larson Grants include **Benj Pasek & Justin Paul** (*A Christmas Story*), **Dave Malloy** (*Natasha, Pierre & the Great Comet of 1812*), **Tom Kitt & Brian Yorkey** (*Next to Normal*), **Chad Beguelin & Matthew Sklar** (*The Wedding Singer*), **John Buchino** (*A Catered Affair*), **Laurence O'Keefe** (*Bat Boy: The Musical*), **Michael Korie** (*Grey Gardens*), and **Amanda Green** (*Hands on a Hardbody*).

Sara Cooper is a bookwriter, lyricist, and playwright. With composer Zach Redler, Sara wrote *The Memory Show*, which was produced Off-Broadway by Transport Group and won a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts in 2013, and *Loving Leo*, which had its first workshop production this past summer at Weston Playhouse after winning the Weston Playhouse New Musical Award in 2012. *The Memory Show* was developed at the Graduate Musical Theatre Writing Program at New York University and also ran in Seoul, South Korea, was in the NAMT Festival of New Musicals, and had its world premiere at Barrington Stage Company as a part of William Finn's Musical Theatre Lab. Sara and Zach have also written several opera pieces and are currently writing their third full-length musical together, *Putting Off Goodbye*. Sara's other musicals have appeared in the NYMF

Next Link Project, in the New York International Fringe Festival, and at Theater for the New City. Sara's play *Things I Left On Long Island* has had several readings Off-Off-Broadway in the past year after winning a grant from the Queens Council on the Arts. As an educator, Sara has taught for organizations including New York University, City College, Theater for the New City, and Lincoln Center. <http://saracooper.weebly.com>

Zach Redler is a composer, pianist, vocal coach, music copyist, musicologist, a member of ASCAP and Local 802 and a graduate of Tisch's Graduate Musical Theatre Writing Program, at which he met bookwriter/lyricist Sara Cooper. Zach's research and study of Auschwitz victim Marcel Tyberg's life and music has culminated in eight world premieres and two distinguished grants. Zach is currently preparing and editing Tyberg's entire body of works for Boosey & Hawkes. In addition to vocal coaching at New York University's Steinhardt School of Education, Zach is adjunct faculty teaching courses at both the Tisch School of the Arts and Steinhardt. Zach's first musical, *Perez Hilton Saves the Universe* written with Tim Drucker and Randy Blair, won Best Musical Fringe Festival 2008 and Best Musical in the Talkin' Broadway 2008 Summer Theatre Festival Citations. Zach and Sara Cooper's first musical together, *The Memory Show*, began as their thesis project at Tisch in 2009. After the world premiere production at Barrington Stage (2010) and a nine-month run in Seoul (2012), last spring Transport Group produced it at the Duke Theater in New York for which they won an NEA Grant. Readings with the Adirondack Theater Festival (2010), Sharon Playhouse (2011) and Contemporary Traditionalists (2011) helped shape Zach and Sara's *Loving Leo*. In 2012, *Loving Leo* won the Weston Playhouse Award and The Weston Playhouse produced its first workshop production this past summer. Zach and Sara's operatic works include a set of six monodramas (*Windows*) and four chamber operas (*Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner* and *Male Identity*) that were created in part at the Virginia Arts Festival (2011), NYU (2012) and through a two year Van Lier residency with American Opera Projects (2011-13). Zach has also written many sets of art songs with texts by 19th century American poets. This spring, Opera Memphis will premiere his and librettist Jerre Dye's monodrama *Movin' Up in the World* (part of *Ghosts of Crosstown*) and an excerpt from Zach and librettist Mark Campbell's new opera about Susan Smith will be performed at the Virginia Arts Festival. Currently, in addition to writing their third musical, *Putting Off Goodbye*, Zach and Sara are crowd sourcing for *The Memory Show* cast album that Grammy nominated Michael Croiter of Yellow Sound Label will produce this summer. www.zachredler.com

Raised in the green mountains of Vermont, **Shaina Taub** is a songwriter and performer. Her band, the Shaina Taub Trio, plays regularly in New York. Shaina was Ars Nova's 2012 Composer-in-Residence, and her debut album, *What Otters Do*, was featured on NPR/WNYC's Best of 2011 list. She's currently writing the scores for two new musicals: *There's A House*, with playwright Kim Rosenstock, commissioned by the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, and *Robin*, with playwright Jen Silverman, commissioned by Ars Nova. She recently signed a publishing deal with Razor & Tie and Ghostlight /Sh-K-Boom records, as the first artist in their new joint venture to represent songwriters that fuse theatrical and pop music. Her original soul-folk opera, *The Daughters*, has been developed by the Yale Institute of Music Theatre and was a finalist for the Richard Rodgers Award. She recently played Princess Mary in *Natasha, Pierre & The Great Comet of 1812*, and is currently performing in A.R.T.'s upcoming new production of Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. She has received fellowships from the MacDowell Colony, the Yaddo Colony and the Sundance Institute, and is an alum of NYU'S Tisch School of the Arts.

Running Deer Musical Theatre Lab was created with the understanding that as a producer, it's difficult to find the space to allow your creative team to do their best work. Founded and operated by a Broadway producer, the Musical Theatre Lab is designed specifically to provide writers a space free from scrutiny and distractions to create new musicals. Located outside Portland, Oregon at Running Deer Ranch, the ranch provides a spectacular setting to work (and play)! This year's Running Deer Residency was donated by **Brisa Trincherro**.

The **American Theatre Wing** (William Ivey Long, Chairman, Board of Trustees; Heather Hitchens, Executive Director) is dedicated to advancing artistic excellence and nurturing theatre's next generation: on stage, behind the scenes, and in the audience.

For nearly a century, the Wing has pursued this mission with programs that span the nation to invest in the growth and evolution of American Theatre. Traditionally, the Wing has encouraged members

of the theatre community to share their off-stage time and talent directly with the theatre audience at large--whether it was singing for the troops in the Stage Door Canteen of the 1940's, or sharing their stories on a podcast today.

As the founders of The Tony Awards®, the American Theatre Wing has developed the foremost national platform for the recognition of theatrical achievement on Broadway. Yet the Wing's reach extends beyond Broadway and beyond New York. The Wing develops the next generation of theatre professionals through the SpringboardNYC and Theatre Intern Group programs, incubates innovative theatre across the country through the National Theatre Company Grants, fosters the song of American theatre through the Jonathan Larson Grants, and illuminates the creative process through the “Working in the Theatre” program and media archive.

Visitors to americantheatrewing.org can get inspired and gain insight into the artistic process through the Wing's extensive media collection, and learn more about its programming for students, aspiring and working professionals, and audiences.

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