

NEWS RELEASE

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TWO MUSICALS WIN COMPETITION

New York, March 20, 2007 - Winners of the 2007 Richard Rodgers Awards competition for musical theater were announced today by the American Academy of Arts and Letters, which administers the awards.

They are:

Calvin Berger by BARRY WYNER

Main-Travelled Roads by PAUL LIBMAN and DAVE HUDSON

Calvin Berger and *Main-Travelled Roads* were awarded stage readings.

The intent of the Richard Rodgers award is to nurture the careers of talented composers and playwrights, and to offer them the opportunity to further develop their work by having them produced in New York City. Former award recipients include MAURY YESTON (*Nine*), JONATHAN LARSON (*Rent*), JULIE TAYMOR and ELLIOT GOLDENTHAL, (*Juan Darien*), LYNN AHRENS and STEPHEN FLAHERTY (*Lucky Stiff*), JEANINE TESORI and BRIAN CRAWLEY (*Violet*). Since 1980, sixty-one awards have been given.

This year's jury included Stephen Sondheim (chair), Lynn Ahrens, John Guare, Sheldon Harnick, Jeanine Tesori, and John Weidman.

Calvin Berger, loosely based on *Cyrano de Bergerac*, is set in a public high school. Calvin, a lovable guy with a big nose and high hopes for romance, traverses the road of adolescence, fraught with the complexities of friendship, insecurity, lust, and longing.

Main-Travelled Roads, based on a short story collection by Hamlin Garland, features two love stories, set against the backdrop of American farm life in the 1800s.

Richard Rodgers, elected to the Academy in 1955, endowed these awards in 1978. The awards provide financial support for productions, studio productions, or stage readings by nonprofit theaters in New York City.

The American Academy of Arts and Letters was established in 1898 for the furtherance of the arts and gives numerous annual awards in literature, painting, sculpture, architecture and music composition. The Academy's membership is limited to 250 persons, elected for their outstanding work in architecture, art, literature, or music composition. The Richard Rodgers Awards are the Academy's only awards for which applications are accepted. **Applications for the Richard Rodgers Awards may be obtained by sending a self-addressed, stamped envelope to the American Academy of Arts and Letters, 633 West 155 Street, New York, NY 10032 or downloaded from www.artsandletters.org.**

BIOGRAPHIES

BARRY WYNER, author of *Calvin Berger*

BARRY WYNER (music, lyrics, and book) has written the musicals *Sugar Plum*, *Kelleher Was Dumbstruck*, and *Something To Say*, and has composed incidental music for BBC radio and many theater productions (including world premieres by Israel Horowitz and Terrence McNally). He was the original arranger and music director of *Gutenberg! The Musical!* at UCB Theatre. He received the Jerry Bock Award for Outstanding Achievement in Musical Theatre and an Independent Reviewers of New England nomination for Best New Musical. He is an alumnus of UNC-Chapel Hill, Queens College, and the BMI Workshop.

PAUL LIBMAN and DAVE HUDSON, authors of *Main-Travelled Roads*

PAUL LIBMAN (music) and DAVE HUDSON (book and lyrics) have collaborated for five years and have produced a new musical for each of those years. This is their second Richard Rodgers stage reading award. Their musical *Dust & Dreams: Celebrating Sandburg* won in 2005. They are members of the Musical Writers' Workshop at Theatre Building Chicago. Their newest musical, *A Cabin with a View*, will premiere this summer at the American Folklore Theatre in Wisconsin. Libman and Hudson are both members of ASCAP.