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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**SAUGATUCK'S MASON STREET WAREHOUSE  
PRESENTS WORLD PREMIERE OF *WICKED CITY***

**New Musical Comedy by Award-Winning Team  
Gloriously Spoofs Classic Film Noir**

Saugatuck, MI (August 4, 2004) -- One of the newest theater companies to spring up in the Midwest, the Mason Street Warehouse (MSW) in Saugatuck, Michigan, will present a world premiere in August by the award-winning young musical comedy team of Chad Beguelin and Matthew Sklar. *Wicked City*, with book and lyrics by Beguelin and music by Sklar, is a send-up of the great film noir classics of the 1940s and 50s. The musical, which receives its world premiere August 18 through September 5, captures the snappy dialogue, steamy romance and atmospheric moodiness of films such as *Mildred Pierce*, *Double Indemnity* and *The Maltese Falcon* while it lovingly pokes fun at the genres' dramatic plot twists and campy characters. The play is directed by Tom Mullen, one of MSW's two Artistic Producing Directors, and stars Nicholas Dalton and Susan Spencer.

*Wicked City* is the first full-length work to emerge from the Beguelin-Sklar team since winning the *Gilman and Gonzalez-Falla Musical Theater Award* last December. The prestigious award is annually given to a gifted artist who is creating new works for the American Musical Theatre. The team was also a recipient of the *Jonathan Larson Performing Arts Foundation Award*, named for the late composer/lyricist of the Broadway hit *Rent*. In addition, Beguelin received the Edward Kleban Award for Outstanding Lyric Writing and Sklar is currently working as the associate conductor for the acclaimed Broadway musical *Caroline or Change*. The duo is now at work on musical adaptations of two film hits: *The Wedding Singer*, for Margo Lion and New Line Entertainment, and *Get Shorty* for Clear Channel and MGM.

"We are thrilled to be performing the world premiere of a new Baguelin-Sklar musical," said Tom Mullen. "I had the honor of working with this incredibly talented team in Washington, D.C. on *The Rhythm Club*, one of their earlier shows, and I knew then that they were destined to be huge stars. *Wicked City* shows off their talents beautifully – the music is terrific, the lyrics are incredibly clever and the dialogue is a riot. It's just a wildly entertaining show and we know that our audiences are going to love it."

*Wicked City* was initially developed at Musical Theater Works in New York City where it was performed as a 60-minute one-act show. Following its brief run, the composer and lyricist further developed the play into a full-fledged, two-act show with 17 songs and a cast of seven. More than 1,000 actors tried out for the parts at auditions held in Chicago and New York last winter.

Performing the leads in *Wicked City* are **Nicholas Dalton** and **Susan Spencer**, both currently residing in New York, though Dalton is a native of South Haven, a lakeshore neighbor of Saugatuck's. Dalton was most recently seen in a European tour of *Hair* and has also appeared in New York productions of *Soar Like an Eagle*, *The Glory of Richard Rodgers* (Lincoln Center) and *Tribute to Adolph Green* with Stephen Bogardus and Melissa Errico. Spencer was last seen on Broadway in the final cast of *Les Miserables*. She also performed with Sarah Brightman at Radio City Music Hall in *The Music of Andrew Lloyd Webber* and has starred as Grizabella in *Cats*, Eva Peron in *Evita* and Nellie in *South Pacific*.

Other cast members include two who return to MSW following celebrated performances in last summer's production of *Dirty Blonde*: **Norm Boucher** of Chicago and **Beth Glover** of New York. Supporting roles are also played by **Lisa Whitley** of Grand Rapids; **Nancy Jane Nelson** of Chicago (the spouse of Norm Boucher); and **Larry Young** of Cedar Springs, MI.

**Mason Street Warehouse** was founded as a not-for-profit organization in 2003 and presented its first three plays last summer. It is the cornerstone tenant in the recently founded Saugatuck Center for the Arts, located in a former pie factory in the heart of Saugatuck's downtown. MSW was founded by **Tom Mullen** and **Kurt Stamm**, two theater director/producer/choreographers who had worked extensively in New York, Chicago and other metropolitan areas of the United States. Seeking a more convivial lifestyle, the team decided to launch their fledgling theater company in the beautiful Lake Michigan community of Saugatuck, which was founded as an artist's colony in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Though long a visual arts center, the area did not have an active performing arts component. MSW is committed to offering the finest theater productions of brand new, recently produced or newly classic theater works. *Wicked City* is the company's first world premiere and the fourth and final show of the 2004 season.

**Tickets** to *Wicked City* are available through StarTicketsPlus at 800.585.3737 or by calling the box office 269-857-4898 or visiting [www.masonstreetwarehouse.org](http://www.masonstreetwarehouse.org). Tickets are \$27.50 (\$25 for seniors/students) on Tues., Wed., Thurs and Sun. Tickets are \$30 (\$27 for seniors/students) on Fri. and Sat. Groups discounts are also available. The theater is closed on Mondays. Mason Street Warehouse is located at 400 Culver Street in Saugatuck, inside the Saugatuck Center for the Arts.

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