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## **LOCAL WRITERS SCORE BIG WITH CINDERELLA STORY**

**Musical chosen for full production by NY Musical Theatre Fest (NYMF)**

*Partners looking for tax-deductible community support*

**"Having a show in the New York Musical Theatre Festival  
is equivalent to getting an independent film into Sundance."**

--Rob Kendt, *Newsday*

Rochester, NY – Local composer, producer and arranger, **Casey Filiaci**, may still be putting on the finishing touches to his first-ever musical theatre score, but it's already a hot property by industry standards. That's because ***Plagued – A Love Story***, with music by Filiaci, and book and lyrics by fellow Rochester native **Vynnie Meli** (now of Atlanta), is one of only 12 shows chosen for full production by the prestigious **New York Musical Theatre Festival (NYMF)**'s Next Link Project this October.

"I didn't even realize how huge this was at first," admits Filiaci, who is a two-time Emmy Award nominee for his HBO compositions, and runs a local music production studio called The MusicMaker Company. "But in the past few weeks, I've met with a lot of experienced Broadway professionals who keep asking me, 'Do you have any idea how lucky you are?'"

Filiaci has created music for national jingles, films and albums for everyone from NBC to Disney to Atlantic Records, but had never attempted to write for musical theatre until his old high school friend, Meli, contacted him out of the blue.

"She asked if I'd be interested in collaborating on a musical about Cinderella and Prince Charming – 20 years after the original fairy tale ends," explains Filiaci. "When she described her story, characters and ideas, I knew it had amazing potential and jumped at the chance."

Over the next three years, Filiaci and Meli communicated mostly via phone and email, prevailing upon Rochester vocal students and performers to help hone a demo of their work. This past February, Meli submitted it and the show's rough book to NYMF on a whim.

Only five years old, NYMF is an annual three-week (Sept. 28 – Oct. 18) showcasing event with an amazing track record: it has already resulted in seventeen additional productions on Broadway, Off-Broadway, in more than 35 states and around the world. 2005 NYMF alum, ***Next to Normal***, just won three Tony Awards, while **[title of show]** received a Tony nomination for Best Book. Hailed by major media as "the Sundance for musical theatre," this year's panel of discerning judges, who chose from thousands of submissions, included composer/lyricist **Jason Robert Brown** (*13, Songs For a New World, The Last Five Years, Parade, Urban Cowboy*).

(more)

*(Cinderella story, continued)*

Most of *Plagued's* production team has been chosen following a recent whirlwind of interviews arranged by NYMF, and includes Samuel Buggeln, Director (NYMF '08: *Bedbugs*) and Kim Vasquez, Exec. Producer (Gen. Mg. Associate: *Ragtime, In the Heights*). Casting will occur in the next week or two.

"Because Actors' Equity has a special contract with NYMF, and actors are eager to get in on the ground floor of a prospective hit, we get to choose from some of NYC's best talent," explains Filiaci.

However, though NYMF's Next Link Project provides all of the production basics as well as industry introductions and festival exposure, the non-profit organization does not pay for Filiaci and Meli to travel to and stay in NYC during the rehearsal process, nor does it allow for added production values which would help *Plagued* to further stand out from its competition.

To that end, the partners are reaching out to theatre lovers, well wishers and community supporters to make tax-deductible, secure on-line donations to NYMF, which allows contributors to designate a specific production as recipient. **Interested parties should visit [www.nymf.org](http://www.nymf.org) and click on Support NYMF.**

"We would be very grateful for any extra help in taking full advantage of this incredible opportunity. We will make Rochester very proud of this show," vows Filiaci.

There will be six performances of *Plagued – A Love Story* at TBG Theater (The Barrow Group Theater, 212 W. 36th St.) from Oct. 9 – 18:

Friday, October 9, 8 p.m. (Opening night)

Saturday, October 10, 1 p.m.

Tuesday, October 13, 4:30 p.m.

Wednesday, October 14, 1 p.m.

Thursday, October 15, 8 p.m.

Sunday, October 18, 1 p.m. (Closing, also last day of festival)

Tickets are available at [www.nymf.org](http://www.nymf.org).

Media, please note: High-resolution photos of local recording sessions are available, as well as headshots. Interviews and photo/footage opportunities may be arranged.

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