

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 13, 2009

**CAPA PRESENTS *SPRING AWAKENING* COMPOSER
AND POP ARTIST
DUNCAN SHEIK**

With the Tony Award-winning Broadway musical *Spring Awakening*, composer Duncan Sheik has successfully accomplished what few other pop or rock artists before him have done—create original music that seems right at home on Broadway yet feels very much his own. Those efforts earned him a Grammy Award for Best Musical Show Album. The 1996 hit single, “Barely Breathing,” from his self-titled, Grammy-nominated debut album spent 55 weeks on Billboard’s Hot 100. Only three other singles in the history of the chart have ever topped that run.

CAPA welcomes Duncan Sheik to the **Southern Theatre** (21 E. Main St.) on **Saturday, March 7, at 8 pm. Tickets** are \$34.50 and \$29.50 at the Ohio Theatre Ticket Office (39 E. State St.), all Ticketmaster outlets, and www.ticketmaster.com. To purchase tickets by phone, please call (800) 745-3000 or (614) 469-0939. The Southern Theatre Ticket Office will open two hours prior to the performance. Students between the ages of 13-19 may purchase \$5 High Five tickets while available. Special guest will be singer/songwriter **Lauren Pritchard** who recently completed a 2-year run on Broadway as Ilse in *Spring Awakening*.

Duncan Sheik’s songs, with heartbreakingly poignant lyrics by poet-playwright Steven Sater, don’t try to move the story forward in the manner of a traditional musical, but refract the actions and emotions through a musical prism. That’s part of the strange and wonderful alchemy of the *Spring Awakening*. The adolescent characters occupy the late 19th century world of German playwright Frank Wedekind, but when the band starts to play, they turn their adolescent turmoil into emotionally charged and exuberant contemporary rock. The original cast recording, which Sheik produced, is very much an album that rewards devoted listening. It immediately becomes clear why fans of the show, grownups as well as teenagers, return to see it again and again.

While other singer-songwriters struggle to find their niche in a fractured marketplace, Broadway has had a revitalizing effect on Sheik’s career, and the transformative relationship has been reciprocal. As *New York Times* theatre critic Charles Isherwood put it in his stellar opening night review of *Spring Awakening*, “Broadway, with its often puerile sophistication and its sterile romanticism, may never be the same.”

Sheik's own second-act triumph has been a unique combination of hard work and happenstance. He'd found receptive ears within the music biz from the moment he graduated Brown University in 1993 and headed to Los Angeles, with vague plans and a cassette full of demos. For a meteoric minute after he'd released his 1996 self-titled debut album, produced by Englishman Rupert Hine, the handsome 26 year-old Sheik was cast into the role of swoon-worthy pop star. An unusually erudite and emotionally intimate hit single, "Barely Breathing," spent 55 weeks on Billboard's Hot 100; only three other singles in the history of the chart have ever topped that run.

Perhaps not as many radio listeners paid attention to his sophomore effort, *Humming*, but the critics continued to take notice. Stephen Holden's assessment of Sheik's 1998 album in *The New York Times* now reads like a harbinger of things to come: "Most pop nowadays is as disposable as a Big Mac wrapper. Hardly anyone is talking about 'art.' But Mr. Sheik's beautifully orchestrated meditations suggest that pop can still aspire to a lofty, searching classicism."

Sheik, a practicing Buddhist since his college days, met Steven Sater in 1999 at Soka Gakkai International, a lay Buddhist organization in New York City. Sater ran the group's arts division and asked Sheik if he'd consider writing a song for a play he'd been working on called *Umbrage*. At the time, Sheik was – and still is – inspired by English cult band Talk Talk and its lead singer Mark Hollis, who had embarked upon a solo career.

The result was *Phantom Moon*, well-regarded but commercially overlooked upon its release in 2000, but it sparked Sheik's and Sater's ongoing collaboration. Equally essential is the retrospective of Sheik's Atlantic/Nonesuch years, *Brighter/Later*, which traces Sheik's development as an artist and writer. The "*Later*" disc, which contains more introspective, moody and elegant pieces, is particularly impressive and often as emotionally affecting as the material on *Spring Awakening*.

Spring Awakening was developed through years of workshops, from the Sundance Theatre Lab to New York City's Roundabout Theatre. After a run at the Roundabout Theatre fell through, actor Tom Hulce (*Amadeus*) arranged for a one-night-only concert presentation of *Spring Awakening* at Lincoln Center to attract new investors. That led, in spring of 2006, to an off-Broadway run at the Atlantic Theatre Company, where good reviews and even better word-of-mouth led to sell-out nights.

In August, Sheik and Sater learned the show would be moving to Broadway, where it opened, after further revisions and preview performances, on December 10, 2006. *The New York Times* led the raves. Sheik explains, "I don't know much about this stuff, but not since *My*

Fair Lady has a show gotten so many unanimous good reviews -- it'd been 50 years since something like this had happened. At that point, the show started doing well and it started to make money – thank God. Then the Tonys happened and things went through the roof. Now it has a life of its own.” And so, as an artist, does Sheik, who garnered two Tony Awards of his own, as composer and arranger.

Sheik and Sater spent the summer working at New York City’s Public Theatre on *Nero* (Another Golden Rome), which has been in gestation for four years now. The pair has also been developing *The Nightingale*, based on the stories of Hans Christian Anderson.

In the meantime, Sheik has hit the road and the recording studio, playing live with singer-songwriter David Poe and some of the other musicians who accompanied him on 2006 solo album, *White Limousine*. Sheik says they’ve written a bunch of songs they’ve recently cut at Allaire Studios in New York’s Catskill mountains; he’s also hinted in interviews of an album of eighties covers and has already posted on his MySpace page a haunting, stripped-down version of Depeche Mode’s “Blasphemous Rumours.” Sheik, who composed the film score to Mary Stuart Masterson’s directorial debut, *The Cake Eaters*, also talks about a contemporized film musical version of Shakespeare’s *Twelfth Night* that he and Sater are plotting to make.

www.duncansheik.com

About Special Guest Lauren Pritchard

A 20-year-old singer-songwriter and Tennessee native, Lauren Pritchard boasts talent well beyond her years. She began playing piano at age 9, has performed in a funk band in LA, and enjoyed a 2-year run playing the role of Ilse in the 8-time Tony Award-winning Broadway musical *Spring Awakening*. Her biggest influences include Billy Joel, Aretha Franklin, David Gray, and CSNY. Lauren just completed a development deal under RCA/J records and currently writes for Sony/ATV Music Publishing. She is currently touring with Duncan Sheik.

<http://www.myspace.com/laurennicolepritchard>

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Owner/operator of downtown Columbus’ magnificent historic theatres (Ohio Theatre, Palace Theatre, Southern Theatre) and manager of the Riffe Center Theatre Complex (Columbus) and the Shubert

Theater (New Haven, CT), **CAPA** is an award-winning presenter of national and international performing arts and entertainment. For more information, visit www.capa.com.

CALENDAR LISTING

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Saturday, March 7, 8 pm

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