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**Fairfield Arts &
Convention Center**

Press Release

For Immediate Release:

The Stephen Sondheim Center for the Performing Arts Announces the Auditions for the Encore Players

The Encore Players, Iowa's Only Professional Musical Theatre Touring Company, Set Dates for Open Auditions

The Encore Players, Iowa's first professional touring musical theatre company, announces auditions for its "second" year. In 2006, the Encore Players were founded and granted the fourth professional performance rights to "*The Musical of Musical, (the Musical!)*" which toured throughout Iowa.

Since their formation, The Encore Players are now the official professional touring group for The *Stephen Sondheim* Center for the Performing Arts in Fairfield, Iowa. As the most celebrated living Composer-Lyrist for American Musical Theatre, Mr. Sondheim with more Tonys & Oscars and a Pulitzer Prize, has only given his name to one other theatre located in England. The Stephen Sondheim Center is currently under construction.

Mr. Sondheim is allowing the Encore Players to create a new Sondheim review that will celebrate his work. The Encore Players will be touring with music from such Sondheim shows as "West Side Story", "Gypsy" and "Do I Hear A Waltz" for which he wrote the lyrics, and "Company", "Follies", "A Little Night Music", "Sweeney Todd", "Merrily We Roll Along", "Pacific Overtures", "Into The Woods", "Sunday in the Park with George", "Passion" and "Bounce" for which he wrote the music and lyrics. Other works of Mr. Sondheim include music and lyrics for the teleplay "Evening Primrose", as well as the songs for the movies "Reds" and "Dick Tracy", winning the Oscar for best song.

"The Encore Players" will be directed and choreographer by Randal West, collaborating with Encore's Musical Director, Justin Hill to produce this exciting review of Sondheim's work. West and Hill worked together previously to create the Old Creamery Theatre's summer musical last season, "Broadway Serenade", their Christmas season musical "Christmas Cheer", as well as their own musicals "Music Most Foul" and "A Time Out of Rhyme".

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Auditions for the Encore Players

“We are looking to cast twelve Encore Players, 6 males and 6 females to perform 6 per cast which gives us more flexibility to book shows,” stated West. “Last year, we were able to get exclusive rights to “Musical of Musical” and this year thanks to Stephen Sondheim’s generosity, you will only be able to hear the Encore Player’s celebration of Sondheim by coming to see us perform.”

Rehearsals will be held in Fairfield, Iowa. To accommodate performers who want this opportunity, and being sensitive to busy schedules, we will attempt to rehearse around busy schedules when the cast is available. However, if you choose to audition you need to have some flexibility with your personal schedule. Performances will mostly be held on weekends. Each performer is paid per show, plus travel and expenses. “It’s a great experience and a lot of fun,” said West. The Encore Player Company, besides performing when booked through December, will be featured along with special guest artists from Iowa and Broadway at the Gala Opening in The Sondheim Center. The new 520 seat theatre is scheduled to open December 7th, 8th and 9th.

Any questions regarding the Encore Players can be directed to Randy West, Artistic Director at 641-472-2000 or email Randy at rwest@sondheimcenter.com. Those wishing to audition should attend the open auditions at either 2:00pm Sunday May 13th or 7:00pm Tuesday May 15th at 51 Court Street, (the old Emerald Gallery), on the square in Fairfield and be prepared to sing two contrasting songs from any source. A pianist will be provided.