

EXCLUSIVE: Benjamin Walker and Reeve Carney Part of *American Psycho* Musical Workshop

By ADAM HETRICK
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Benjamin Walker is taking a stab at Wall Street in the new Duncan Sheik-Roberto Aguirre-Sacasa musical adaptation of *American Psycho*, which is having a private Manhattan workshop this week, Playbill.com has learned.

Tony Award-winning Spring Awakening composer Sheik and playwright Aguirre-Sacasa, who stepped in to rework the book to Broadway's *Spider-Man Turn Off the Dark*, are collaborating to bring Bret Eaton Ellis' novel about a murderous investment banker to life as a stage musical. The novel and subsequent film, with a backdrop of 1980's Wall Street greed and excess, remain timely. It has music and lyrics by Sheik and a book by Aguirre-Sacasa.

Director Rupert Goold (*Enron*, *Macbeth*, *Decade*) is helming the workshop, which features *Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson* star Walker as suit-wearing slasher Patrick Bateman.

Also participating in the workshop are *Spider-Man* star Reeve Carney, John Behlmann (*The 39 Steps*), Christopher Hanke (*How to Succeed...*), Bryce Pinkham (*Bloody Bloody...*) and Johnny Wright as fellow Wall Street businessmen; with Phoebe Strole (*Spring Awakening*), Libby Winters (*American Idiot*), Kacie Sheik (*Hair*), Isabel Keating (*Spider-Man*), Sara Chase (*The First Wives Club*) and singer-songwriter Nii Bertino as the women who figure into Patrick's moonlit escapades.

David Johnson and Jesse Singer, of Act 4 Entertainment, as well as Aaron Ray and Nate Bolotin produce the project.

As previously reported, Sheik and Aguirre-Sacasa are embracing the satirical tone of Bret Eaton Ellis' original novel. "It's brutal, obviously, but it's also brutally funny... And that's a slippery thing to capture," Aguirre-Sacasa said. "It's got big, flashy numbers, big ideas, big themes. It's Patrick Bateman and his world... New York at the end of the 1980s, populated by the very rich, the very poor, the masters of the universe, the faceless, nameless, homeless. It's sort of apocalyptic and big."

Aguirre-Sacasa, who has also written for the comics "*Marvel Knights 4*" and "*Sensational Spider-Man*," was part of a new creative team who stepped in to reshape the troubled multi-million dollar Broadway production of *Spider-Man*. He is

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known for his plays *Based on a Totally True Story*, *Say You Love Satan* and *Doctor Cerberus*. In addition to revamping the classic Charles Strouse-Lee Adams musical *It's a Bird... It's a Plane.. It's Superman*, he is also among the co-producers/writers of "Glee" and is at work on a remake of the Stephen King classic "Carrie" for the screen.

Sheik, a Grammy-winning singer-songwriter, penned the score to the Tony Award-winning musical *Spring Awakening*, which has book and lyrics by Steven Sater. The musical earned Tonys for Best Score, Best Book and Best Musical. Sheik's musical projects include *The Nightingale* and *Alice By Heart* (with Sater), as well as *Whisper House* (with Kyle Jarrow).