

NEWS RELEASE

Media Contact: Andrew Flack, Buzz, Inc. 800-362-1273

WHO: Shapiro & Smith Dance
WHAT: *ANYTOWN*
WHERE: Southern Theater
WHEN: Wednesday-Saturday, August 18-21, at 8 pm; Sunday, August 22, 2 pm
TICKETS: \$23 regular
BENEFIT: "PSA in the USA" to support the work of Us TOO Prostate Cancer Education & Support Network. Call 612-626-7265
BOX OFFICE: (612) 340-1725

The Music of Bruce Springsteen, Patti Scialfa and Soozie Tyrell Gives Shape to Place in Shapiro & Smith's ANYTOWN

The Boss gives local choreographers permission to use his music in original dance piece

Twin Cities audiences invited to attend "World Preview"

MINNEAPOLIS, MN (May 18, 2004)—In a move that has surprised and delighted two local choreographers, rock and roll legend, **Bruce Springsteen**, has agreed that Twin Cities-based **Danial Shapiro** and **Joanie Smith** can feature his music in their new show, *ANYTOWN*, set to preview this August at the Southern Theater.

The music of the Boss' wife, **Patti Scialfa**, and E-Streeter **Soozie Tyrell**, will also be used to explore *ANYTOWN*'s themes, inspired by the struggles of the American working-class during those years between World Wars I and II.

"We were told not to get our hopes up," says choreographer Danial Shapiro, half of the Shapiro & Smith creative team. "'Nice idea, kids, but forget it,' we were prepared to hear. So you can imagine when Bruce said yes, and then Sony Music said yes. Well, it's just been an incredible gift." Shapiro and his partner-in-life, Smith, did have one ace up their sleeve, since Joanie's sister is Soozie Tyrell, longtime best friend of Patti Scialfa - Mrs. Bruce Springsteen - and both E-Streeters.

"Danny and I have known Patti for more than 20 years," says Smith. "When we all lived in New York, Patti and Soozie would be out singing on the street and then come over for dinner. After dinner we'd roll up the rugs, they would sing and we would dance. That was years before she was involved with Bruce." Fast forward to post 9/11, 2001; Bruce is writing the songs for *The Rising* album, Soozie is living on the Springsteen's farm and is invited to add her voice and violin to the E-Street Band's sound, and then to join the tour.

But then came a major blow for Shapiro & Smith in October 2002 when Danial was diagnosed with prostate cancer. While forcing them to focus on the priorities of getting well, it also guided their hand to the work they felt compelled to do. Since they had long dreamt of a project using the music of Soozie, Patti and Bruce, their course was set.

“It was during this time that we visited Soozie at the farm and the idea for ANYTOWN was born,” says Joanie. “The songs on Soozie’s album, *White Lines*, really inspired us in the way that they seem to be pulled through time—songs rooted in the American experience about loss and the longing for innocence.” “All three artists write from their personal experience,” says Danial, “but they lift the umbrella high enough so that it’s not just about them. We’re looking for the same kind of thing.”

“ANYTOWN marks not only the most exciting collaboration of our careers, but also celebrates survival on a very personal level,” says Joanie. “Getting out of bed and going back into the studio has given extra purpose to our waking moments and shown us that our strength as artists has helped us in this fight for our lives.” Danial says, “At the heart of ANYTOWN is the importance of family—the actual family you are born into and the family you create. Dancing to Soozie, Bruce and Patti’s music makes this project the thrill of a lifetime.”

Having the work seen for the first time in the Twin Cities is also of key significance for Shapiro & Smith. “We’ve had the privilege to be part of the Twin Cities dance community for almost ten years,” says Joanie, “and previewing ANYTOWN here will provide the feedback we’ll need to take the piece to the next level.” “It’s a very sophisticated audience, and it’s also a community of friends,” says Danial. “People participate by telling you what they think. There is emphasis on quality and excellence, as well as process.” The world premiere of ANYTOWN will take place at the Count Basie Theater in Red Bank, New Jersey, before it tours widely.

“We’ll give it its first legs here in Minnesota, take it out on the road, and then return with the seasoned, polished version,” says Danial. “In a way, that’s how the E-Street Band does it, starting out in a local high school, touring the world, and then bringing it back to the Meadowlands or Giant’s Stadium.” Joanie laughs. “Yea, we’ll come back and play the Target Center.”

###