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SIGNATURE THEATRE PRESENTS KANDER & EBB'S FORGOTTEN MUSICAL *THE HAPPY TIME*, APRIL 1 – JUNE 1, 2008

The rarely performed 1968 musical is the second mainstage offering of Signature's Kander & Ebb Celebration

Arlington, VA – Signature Theatre continues its national Kander & Ebb Celebration with a new production of the Broadway greats' forgotten musical *The Happy Time*, performed in Signature's 110-seat ARK Theatre. The story of a worldly photographer's return to his small French-Canadian hometown in the 1920s, *The Happy Time* is part of a four-month celebration of the works of **John Kander & Fred Ebb**, the longest song-writing partnership in the history of the American musical theater. *The Happy Time* plays Tuesday, April 1 through Sunday, June 1, in repertory with *Kiss of the Spider Woman* in The MAX Theatre (through April 20), then *The Visit* (May 13 – June 22).

Headlining *The Happy Time* are three Broadway talents: **Michael Minarik** as Jacques, the charming but reckless photographer, **David Margulies** as his colorfully cantankerous father, and **George Dvorsky** as his brother, the stern father of an impressionable young boy, Bibi, played by young newcomer **Jace Casey**. *The Happy Time* is directed by **Michael Unger**, with music direction by **David Holcenberg** and choreography by **Karma Camp**. *The Happy Time's* book is by **N. Richard Nash**, based on a play by **Samuel Taylor**.

The Happy Time was originally produced on Broadway by David Merrick in 1968, just after Kander & Ebb's huge hit *Cabaret*. Directed and choreographed by Gower Champion and starring Robert Goulet, the production won them both Tony Awards®, and garnered another seven nominations. Signature Theatre is producing a revised version of *The Happy Time*, restoring four numbers from the Broadway production that had been cut following the Broadway run. The show tells the story of Jacques Bonnard, a world-traveling photographer, who returns

home to the small French-Canadian town of St. Pierre in search of his happy youth. Along the way, Bonnard fires up the romantic spirit of his hometown's inhabitants — including his old flame Laurie — and tempts his godson with dreams of escape. This classic tale of the prodigal son features a “lilting score” (*New York Times*) that is “melodious...in variety and scope” (*Newsday*).

The cast also includes **Tracy Lynn Olivera** as Suzanne, **Rob McQuay** as Louis, **Carrie A. Johnson** as Laurie, **Amy McWilliams** as Felice, and performing in the ensemble are **Kate Arnold, Emily Levey, Lauren Williams, and Rachel Zampelli**. **William Beech, Rafael Hernandez-Roulet, Jordan Moral, Matthew Nee, and Jordan Silver** play the schoolboys. The creative team is completed by costume designer **Kathleen Geldard**, scenic and projection designer **Todd Edward Ivins**, lighting designer **Mark Lanks**, sound designer **Matt Rowe**, and production stage manager **Katherine C. Mielke**.

Tickets to *The Happy Time* are \$45 - \$69 and are now on sale at Ticketmaster at (703) 573-SEAT (7328) or by visiting www.signature-theatre.org <<http://www.signature-theatre.org/>>

PHOTOS

EDITORS: PHOTOS ARE AVAILABLE for Signature's spring productions by downloading from www.signature-theatre.org/photo_downloads.htm (link for press only: please do not publish).

BIOS

Michael Minarik (Jacques) BROADWAY: *Les Misérables* (revival). FIRST NATIONAL BROADWAY TOURS: *Urinetown, Little Women*. OFF-BROADWAY: *Glimpses of the Moon*. REGIONAL: Papermill Playhouse: *Camelot*; NYSAF: *Dangerous Beauty*; The Cape Playhouse: *The Rink*; A.C.T San Francisco: *Urinetown*; West Va. Public Theater: *Jekyll & Hyde*; Marriott Lincolnshire: *Beauty and the Beast*. EDUCATION: James Madison University.

David Margulies (Grandpere) BROADWAY: *Wonderful Town, 45 Seconds From Broadway, Angels in America, Conversations With My Father, The West Side Waltz, Comedians, Brighton Beach Memoirs, The Iceman Cometh*, and others. LOCAL: Kennedy Center: *West Side Waltz*, Folger: *Standup Shakespeare*. NEW YORK: The New Group: *The Accomplices* (2007 Richard Seff Award); New York Theatre Workshop: *All That I Will Ever Be* (2007 Richard Seff Award) and others. REGIONAL: Hartford Stage: *The Rivals*; Long Wharf: *The Price, Rocket to the Moon, She Stoops to Conquer*, McCarter: *Hamlet*, Mark Taper Forum: *Hysteria*, Centerstage: *The Murder of Isaac*, Buffalo Shakespeare: *King Lear*. FILM: *Ira and Abby, Ghostbusters, Ghostbusters 2, Ace Ventura Pet Detective, Dressed to Kill, All That Jazz, 9 Weeks, Running on Empty, A Jersey Tale*. TV: *The Sopranos* (eight episodes), *Law and Order* (four episodes), *Northern Exposure*.

George Dvorsky (Philippe) SIGNATURE: *Funny Girl* Concert. BROADWAY: *The Scarlet Pimpernel, Passion, Gentlemen Prefer Blondes, Marilyn: An American Fable, The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas*. OFF-BROADWAY: *Pete 'n' Keely, Dames at Sea, And the World Goes Round*. OTHER NEW YORK: Lincoln Center: *Cinderella, Brigadoon*. PBS: *Passion, Bernstein's Broadway*. REGIONAL: *A Wonderful Life, She Loves Me, Anything Goes, Seven Brides, The Full Monty, A Christmas Carol*. SOLO ALBUM: *In The Still of the Night*.

Jace Casey (Bibi) SIGNATURE: *Merrily We Roll Along* (u/s Frank, Jr.); *Saving Aimee* (u/s Rolf); Staged Readings: *Crossing, 365 Days/365 Plays*. LOCAL: Ford's Theatre: *A Christmas Carol* (Urchin Boy, Ignorance); *A Christmas Carol*, White House Performance. TELEVISION: PBS: *Music In The Schools* (student); *Friendly's Restaurant* Commercial. TRAINING: Viki Forde Studios (voice and piano); Bev Benda (voice coaching); Arlington Dance Theatre (Jr. Tap and

Jazz Co.); Broadway Artist's Alliance Musical Theatre Intensives (2007, 2008); Interlochen, Musical Theatre Division (2007).

John Kander (Music) and Fred Ebb (Lyrics) The John Kander and Fred Ebb collaboration of four decades has created what many would consider Broadway standards and contemporary classics. One of their first collaborations became a hit song for Barbra Streisand, "My Coloring Book," earning John and Fred a Grammy nomination. In 1965 the pair worked on their first Broadway show *Flora, the Red Menace*. Produced by Hal Prince and directed by George Abbott, *Flora* also introduced a rising new star - Liza Minnelli. Followed by: *Cabaret* (Tony Award for music and lyrics), *The Happy Time*, *Zorba*, *70 Girls 70*, *Chicago*, *The Act*, *Woman of the Year* (Tony Award for music and lyrics), *The Rink*, *Kiss of the Spider Woman* (Tony Award for music and lyrics) and *Steel Pier*. Their collaboration also transferred itself to movies and television as they wrote original material for the Academy Awards, "Liza with a Z" and HBO's "Liza Minnelli's Steppin' Out" (both Emmy winners), "Baryshnikov on Broadway," "Goldie and Liza Together," *Funny Lady*, *Lucky Lady*, *New York, New York*, *Steppin' Out* and *Chicago*, the movie. In 1985 their song "New York, New York" became the official anthem of New York City. At the time of the unfortunate death of Mr. Ebb, Kander and Ebb had several projects in different stages of completion waiting in the wings, *The Visit* which had a successful run at the Goodman Theatre in Chicago starring Chita Rivera, *All About Us* (a musical adaptation of Thornton Wilder's play *The Skin of our Teeth*) and *The Minstrel Show*. Currently running on Broadway: *Curtains*. **Life goes on.**

Michael Unger (Director) OFF-BROADWAY: Lambs Theatre: *Retribution*. NEW YORK: New York Musical Theatre Festival: *Behind The Limelight* (world premiere), *Caligula* (world premiere, Audience Favorite Award); Clurman Theatre: *La Gioconda*. REGIONAL: McCarter Theatre: *A Christmas Carol* (since 1998); Barrington Stage Company: *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* (world premiere); *Changes of Heart* (BRAVO Award); Cape Playhouse: Kander/Ebb/McNally's *The Rink* (revised version starring Leslie Uggams and Janet Metz); Prince Music Theatre: *Tiny Dancer*; St. Louis MUNY: *Meet Me In St. Louis*; Weston Playhouse: *Triumph of Love*, *School For Wives*; Asolo Conservatory: *Love's Fire*; Depot Theatre: *The Mikado*, *Kiss Me Kate*; Sarasota Opera Company: *Die Fledermaus*, *La Rondine*. OTHER: *Noises Off*, *On The Razzle*, *Haven* (world premiere), *Three Sisters*, *Buried Child*, *Dancing at Lughnasa*, *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*, *Steel Magnolias*. UPCOMING: *Crimes of the Heart*, *Dillinger: The Musical*, *Behind the Limelight*.

Karma Camp (Choreographer) SIGNATURE: *Kiss of the Spider Woman*, *Merrily We Roll Along*, *The Witches of Eastwick* (Helen Hayes nomination), *Into the Woods*, *My Fair Lady*, *Assassins*, *Urinetown* (2006 Helen Hayes Award), *Nijinsky's Last Dance* (Helen Hayes nomination), *Follies*, *110 in the Shade*, *Cabaret* (Helen Hayes nomination). BROADWAY: *The Graduate* w/ Kathleen Turner. OFF-BROADWAY: *Never the Sinner*. NATIONAL TOUR: *big*. REGIONAL: Kennedy Center/Sondheim Celebration: *Merrily We Roll Along*, Arena Stage: *Shakespeare in Hollywood* (Helen Hayes nomination), *Agamemnon*; Round House: *A Murder*, *A Mystery & A Marriage*. Additional Theatres: Shakespeare Theatre, Actors' Theatre of Louisville, McCarter Theatre, Woolly Mammoth, Prince Music Theatre, Tennessee Rep. OPERA: *Goya* w/ Placido Domingo; Washington Opera: *Vanessa*; Wolf Trap Opera Co.: Kurt Weill's *Street Scene*. TV: *The Sounds of WWII* (PBS), *All My Children* (ABC), over 22 international commercials. ADDITIONAL CREDITS: Disney: *Snow White*, *Twice Charmed*; 1992 Inaugural Gala for Al Gore (director/choreographer), *Remember the Children* w/ Kathie Lee Gifford, NSO Pops with Marvin Hamlisch. Ms. Camp is a Signature Theatre Artistic Associate.

David Holcenberg (Musical Director) BROADWAY: *Mamma Mia!*, *Seussical*, *Titanic*, *Show Boat* (music director), *Good Vibrations* (musical arrangements). OTHER: *The Glorious Ones*, *Dessa Rose* (Lincoln Center), *Ragtime* (US Premiere; LA Drama Critics Award, Distinguished Achievement in Musical Direction), *The Phantom of the Opera* (Toronto production). CONDUCTOR: Irish tenor Ciaran Sheehan (Carnegie Hall, PBS, recordings), The Cleveland

Pops, PBS Great Performances, *Bingo*, (writer with Ilene Reid and Michael Heitzman), *Mamma Mia!* (Associate Music Supervisor, North America, Moscow). TV: *Tony's*, *Letterman*, *Leno*, *The Today Show*, *Rosie*.

PRODUCTION DETAILS

In The ARK

THE HAPPY TIME

Music by John Kander

Lyrics by Fred Ebb

Book by N. Richard Nash

Based on a play by Samuel Taylor

Directed by Michael Unger

Schedule

April 1 - June 1, 2008

Press Opening: Sunday, April 6 (7pm) and Monday, April 7 (8pm)

Show times: Tuesday and Wednesday at 7:30pm, Thursday and Friday at 8pm, Saturday at 2:00pm and 8:00pm, and Sunday at 2:00pm and 7:00pm

Exceptions: There is no 2:00pm matinee performance on Saturday, April 5, no 7:30pm performance on Tuesday, April 8, and no matinee and evening performances on May 17.

KANDER & EBB CELEBRATION

From March through June, Signature Theatre — one of America's leading forces in innovative musical theater — is saluting the great Broadway songwriter team John Kander and Fred Ebb. In addition to *Kiss of the Spider Woman*, the celebration will feature the East Coast premiere of *The Visit* starring Chita Rivera and George Hearn, and the rarely produced 1968 musical *The Happy Time*. Additional performances include Tony®-nominated artist Karen Akers' cabaret show *First You Dream: The Songs of Kander & Ebb*, *Kander & Ebb Overtures Cabaret*, *Bowen McCauley Dances Kander & Ebb*, *Kander & Ebb at the Movies*, *One on One with John Kander*, *Colored Lights – The Kander & Ebb Gallery*, and *The Kander and Ebb Gala*. John Kander and Fred Ebb, whose musicals *Cabaret* and *Chicago* are staples of the American musical theater canon, were the longest-running songwriting partnership in Broadway musical history, working together from 1965 until Ebb's death in 2004.

ABOUT SIGNATURE

Signature is a non-profit professional theater company dedicated to producing contemporary musicals and plays, reinventing classic musicals, and developing new work. To date, Signature has presented over 20 world premiere productions and commissions and is renowned for combining Broadway-quality productions with an intimate playing space, and frequently using live orchestras with unamplified performers. In addition to the finest talent from the DC metropolitan area and New York, Signature has been a home to such theater luminaries as Cameron Mackintosh, Terrence McNally, John Kander and Fred Ebb, and, of course, Stephen Sondheim, the company's signature.

In 2007, Signature moved into a new two-theater complex in Arlington, Virginia, located just ten minutes by car from downtown Washington, DC. Of Signature Theatre's new space, Charles Isherwood of *The New York Times* wrote "the company must find the sleek, new campus — with a large bar, two lobbies and two theaters — positively swanky,"....stating that "The Signature's flexible Max Theatre....recalls the beloved Cottesloe at the National Theater in London."

Under Co-Founder and Artistic Director Eric Schaeffer, Signature has been nominated for 238 Helen Hayes Awards for excellence in professional theater to date and has been honored with

54 Helen Hayes Awards, including Outstanding Musical in 1992, 1993, 1995, 1997, 2000, 2005, and 2006, and Outstanding Play in 1999.

Directions

Signature Theatre is situated at the head of Arlington's Shirlington Village. The new theater complex is located at 4200 Campbell Avenue (22206) off I-395 at the Shirlington exit, just follow the blue signs. For directions visit www.signature-theatre.org <<http://www.signature-theatre.org>>. Online mapping systems like mapquest.com and GPS systems do not recognize Signature Theatre's address, as Campbell Avenue is a new street. Free parking is available in the adjacent public garage.

Contact Info

Ticketmaster 703-573-SEAT (7328) and www.ticketmaster.com <<http://www.ticketmaster.com/>>
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