

ADDRESS
4200 Campbell Ave.
Arlington, Virginia
22206

BOX OFFICE
703 820 9771
ADMIN OFFICE
571 527 1860

FACSIMILE
703 845 0236
WEBSITE
www.signature-theatre.org

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR
Eric Schaeffer
MANAGING DIRECTOR
Maggie Boland

signaturenews

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: March 15, 2010
Contact: Suzanne Stephens, Publicist
(571) 527-1833 (office) / (202) 438-6234 (mobile)
stephenss@signature-theatre.org

Signature Theatre Presents the Washington Premiere of the Hit Musical Comedy *[title of show]*, April 6 – June 27 (NOTE CHANGE IN DATE)

**Directed by Helen Hayes-Winning Director Matthew
Gardiner and Starring Erin Driscoll, James Gardiner, Sam
Ludwig, and Jenna Sokolowski**

**“Hilarious! A fresh new musical worth cheering!” – *The
New York Times***

Arlington, VA – Signature Theatre, winner of the 2009 Regional Theatre Tony Award, presents the Washington premiere of the hit musical comedy *[title of show]*, winner of three Obie Awards and a Tony nomination. A zany take on two friends' decision to write a musical, *[title of show]* runs April 6 through June 27 in Signature's remarkably intimate 110-seat ARK Theatre.

When two struggling writers, Jeff and Hunter, decide to submit their own musical to a festival, they find the process of writing a musical itself more interesting than any play or movie they could adapt. So assisted by actress friends Susan and Heidi (and Larry on the piano), they chose their subject – two friends writing about what to write about. *[title of show]* puts the audience right in the middle of the creative process—dizzy, unpredictable, and uproarious. Helen Hayes Award-winner **Matthew Gardiner** directs this love letter to musical theater – a uniquely American art form – and to the joys of collaboration.

Performed in New York by show's writers Jeff Bowen (music & lyrics) and Hunter Bell (book), *[title of show]*'s cast in Arlington is headed by **James Gardiner** – in real life, the book writer for the musical *Glory Days* which itself had a short stint on Broadway. The cast also includes two Helen Hayes Award-winning actresses **Erin Driscoll** and **Jenna Sokolowski** as well as the exciting young actor/singer **Sam**

Ludwig. Gabriel Mangiante performs the role of the onstage pianist Larry and is music director for the show.

Working with Matt Gardiner on the creative team are Scenic Designer **Adam Koch**, Costume Designer **Kristopher Castle**, Lighting Designer **Mark Lanks**, and Sound Designer **Matt Rowe**.

PHOTOS

Editors: Photos of *[title of show]* will be available on March 16 for downloading from http://www.signature-theatre.org/photo_downloads.htm. (Link for press only: please do not publish).

TICKETS

Tickets for *[title of show]* range from \$52 - \$76 and are available by calling Ticketmaster at (703) 573-SEAT (7328) or visiting www.signature-theatre.org. Group discounts are available for parties of ten or more by contacting carlj@signature-theatre.org.

PERFORMANCE DATES

Performances of *[title of show]* run from April 6 through June 27, 2010 (please note date change). The press performance is Sunday, April 11 at 7:00 pm. Show times are Tuesday and Wednesday at 7:30 pm, Thursday and Friday at 8:00 pm, Saturday at 2:00 pm and 8:00 pm, and Sunday at 2:00 pm and 7:00 pm. There are no performances of *[title of show]* on Saturday, April 10 at 2:00 pm and Tuesday, April 13 at 7:30 pm.

AMENITIES – ALI'S BAR

Starting one hour before and extending for one hour after performances, patrons can visit Ali's Bar for outstanding wine, beer, mixed drinks, and chef-prepared light fare. The theater's much praised source of refreshment overlooking a tree-lined boulevard has been masterminded by wine expert Suzanne McGrath, the proprietor of Shirlington's acclaimed wine store, "The Curious Grape." Ticket purchase is not required to eat or drink at Ali's Bar.

CAST

Erin Driscoll (Heidi) SIGNATURE: *Sweeney Todd, Kiss of the Spider Woman, The Witches of Eastwick, Into the Woods, Assassins* (Helen Hayes Award, Best Musical), *Urinetown* (2006 Helen Hayes Award, Outstanding Actress). DC AREA: Ford's Theatre: *A Christmas Carol*; Olney: *Cinderella, Anything Goes*; Round House Theatre: *A Year with Frog and Toad*; Kennedy Center: *Regina* with Patti LuPone (Alexandra Cover). REGIONAL: Arden Theatre: *A Year with Frog and Toad, Candide*; John W. Engeman Theatre, Long Island: *Jekyll and Hyde*. EDUCATION: BM, James Madison University. AWARDS: 2006 Roger Sturtevant Award.

James Gardiner (Hunter) SIGNATURE: *21/24 Workshop: The Boy Detective Fails* (Fenton), *Les Misérables* (Helen Hayes Award, Outstanding Ensemble), *Anyone Can Whistle* in Concert (George), *Kiss of the Spider Woman* (Gabriel), *Merrily We Roll Along* (Tyler, perf. Franklin Shepard u/s), *The Witches of Eastwick* (Michael Spofford), *Saving Aimee*. BROADWAY: *Glory Days* (book writer). DC AREA: Library of Congress: *West Side Story*. 50th Anniversary Concert; Olney: *Call of the Wild* (Buck); Woolly

Mammoth/UM: *The Distance From Here* (Darrell); Kennedy Center: *The Phantom Tollbooth* (Mathemagician), *The Brand New Kid* (Lazlo); Round House: *A Prayer for Owen Meany* (Buzzy); Studio: *Dog Sees God* (Beethoven). REGIONAL: Williamstown Theatre Festival: *Home Free!* (Lawrence), *This is a Chair*. FILM: *Boys* (Kellogg Curry Jr.). EDUCATION: University of Maryland, BA, Theatre; Overtures 2003, 2004.

Sam Ludwig (Jeff) SIGNATURE: *Sweeney Todd* (Tobias), *Show Boat*, *The Hollow* (21/24 Workshop) (Ichabod), *A Fox on the Fairway* Workshop (Justin), *Partial Eclipse*, *Curveball* Workshop (Ludwig), *Les Misérables*. DC AREA: Olney: *Big River* (Huck), *1776* (Courier); Theatre J: *The Playdoh Golem* Workshop (Sam); Toby's: *La Cage Aux Folles* (Jean-Michele), *Titanic the Musical* (Barrett).

Jenna Sokolowski (Susan) SIGNATURE: *Urinetown* (2006 Helen Hayes Award), *Allegro*. DC AREA: Woolly Mammoth Theatre: *Antebellum*, *She Stoops to Comedy*; Round House Theatre: *Eurydice*; Studio Theatre: *Grey Gardens*, *Ivanov*, *Prometheus Bound*; Olney Theatre: *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Cinderella*; Everyman Theatre: *Candida*; Folger Theatre: *The Clandestine Marriage*; Shakespeare Theatre: *The Rivals*; Theatre of the First Amendment: numerous productions, including: *Odyssey of Telemaca*, *Lift: Icarus and Me*; The Kennedy Center: numerous productions, including: *The Teddy Roosevelt Musicals*, *Chasing George Washington*, *As You Like It*. REGIONAL: Totem Pole Playhouse: *You Say Tomatoes*, *I Hate Hamlet*; Lime Kiln Theatre: *Fair and Tender Ladies*. EDUCATION: Syracuse University, BFA Musical Theatre, Magna Cum Laude.

CREATIVE TEAM

Jeff Bowen wrote the music and lyrics and co-starred in the Broadway musical *[title of show]*. He was awarded an OBIE for his work on *[title of show]*, and has composed music for several shows at PS 122, including *Avant Garde-a-Rama In Sparklevision* and *Hello, My Name Is Avant Garde-a-Rama*. Also, *Sparklefest 2000* at Dixon Place, *The A Train Plays* and the film *Boat Mime*. His onstage credits include *The Who's Tommy*, *The Diviners*, *The Doctor In Spite Of Himself*, *Of Thee I Sing*, *The Sandbox* and *On The Twentieth Century*, among others. Jeff is a proud member of the National Audubon Society and the American Birding Association.

Hunter Bell wrote the book and co-starred in the Broadway musical *[title of show]*. He received an OBIE Award and Tony Award and Drama League nominations for *[title of show]*. Writing credits include, *Silence! The Musical* (book writer/Overall Excellence Award—Outstanding Musical 2005 Fringe NYC). *Stuck By Epcot* (playwright/Manhattan Theatre Source), *A Train Plays* (lyricist/Neighborhood Playhouse), *Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus* (writer 2007 Circus). He contributed material for Counts Media Inc.'s interactive billboard project, was a 2003 finalist in Warner Bros. Television Comedy Writers Workshop, and has developed new works at the Dramatist Guild, Irish Rep, PS 122, Goodspeed/Chester, CanStage, MTC, Ars Nova, and the O'Neill Center. As an actor, Hunter made his Broadway debut in *How The Grinch Stole Christmas*. He appeared in *Taming Of The Shrew*, *...Forum*, *Gypsy* (St. Louis Rep), *She Loves Me*, *The Most Happy Fella* (Cincinnati Playhouse), *Anything Goes* (Great Lakes Theatre Festival), *Godspell* (MUNY), *Little Me* (North Shore), *The Tempest* (Dallas Shakespeare Festival), *Side Show* (Cleveland Playhouse), *Romeo And Juliet*, *The Boys From Syracuse* (Alliance Theatre), *Jumbo*,

Oh, Boy! (York), *South Pacific* (Carnegie Hall), *The Last Night Of Ballyhoo* (Coconut Grove), *Rags* (Paper Mill), *Promises, Promises* (Stages), *Me And My Girl* (Goodspeed Opera House, CT: Outer Critics Award— Best Actor in a Musical). TV: *Out of the Box* (Disney Channel), *Guiding Light*. BFA Webster University.

Matthew Gardiner (Director) SIGNATURE: Director: *See What I Wanna See*, Choreographer: *Sweeney Todd, Dirty Blonde*, Assistant Director: *Les Misérables, Little Dog Laughed, The Lieutenant of Inishmore, The Visit, The Witches of Eastwick, Into the Woods, Nevermore*; Resident Assistant Director 2006-present; Associate Choreographer: *Show Boat*; Assistant Choreographer: *Kiss of the Spider Woman, Merrily We Roll Along, Saving Aimee, Urinetown*. SIGNATURE CABARET: Director: Signature Sings: 1995-1999 (featuring Natascia Diaz & Euan Morton), *December Divas II, Singing Shakespeare*. NEW YORK: Director: NYMF: *The Greenwood Tree*, Assistant Director: Circle in the Square: *Glory Days*. DC AREA: Co-Director/Choreographer: *Studio Theatre: Jerry Springer: The Opera, Reefer Madness* (2008 Helen Hayes Award for Outstanding Musical and Direction of a Musical), Director/Choreographer: Everyman Theatre: *Let Me Sing And I'm Happy*, MetroStage: *tick, tick...BOOM!*; Catholic University of America: *La Bohème, Candide*; Choreographer: Studio Theatre: *Grey Gardens, Adding Machine*, Assistant Director: Kennedy Center: *Cat on A Hot Tin Roof*. EDUCATION: Carnegie Mellon University.

Gabriel Mangiante (Music Director, Larry) SIGNATURE: Signature Sings: 1995-1999; *Dirty Blonde; The Boy Detective Fails; Partial Eclipse; LaChiusa's Ladies; Ricky, Joe, and Michael John; December Divas; Lost Songs of Broadway Volumes I and II; Revenge of the Understudies I and II; Giant* (keyboard); cabarets with Emily Skinner, Will Gartshore, Natascia Diaz, and others. DC AREA: Studio: *Reefer Madness* (Helen Hayes Award for Outstanding Resident Musical), *This Beautiful City*, Catholic University: Music Director and Vocal Coach: *Thoroughly Modern Millie, Sunday in the Park With George, Sweeney Todd, Cole, Evita, Grand Hotel, Jacques Brel: A Composer's Concert, Statues and Stories, Myths and Hymns: The Works of Adam Guettel, Ned Rorem's Our Town*.

ABOUT SIGNATURE

Recipient of the 2009 Regional Theatre Tony Award®, Signature Theatre is a non-profit professional theater company dedicated to producing contemporary musicals and plays, reinventing classic musicals, and developing new work. Under the leadership of co-founder and Artistic Director Eric Schaeffer and Managing Director Maggie Boland, Signature has presented 26 world premiere productions and is renowned for combining Broadway-quality productions with intimate playing spaces. In addition to the finest talent from the DC metropolitan area and New York, Signature has been a home to such theater luminaries as John Kander and Fred Ebb, Cameron Mackintosh, Terrence McNally, and the company's signature composer, Stephen Sondheim. Since its founding in 1989, Signature has been nominated for 276 Helen Hayes Awards for excellence in the professional theater and has been honored with 69 Helen Hayes Awards, including Outstanding Musical in 1992, 1993, 1995, 1997, 2000, 2005, 2006, 2008, and 2009, and Outstanding Play in 1999.

Signature is partially supported by a grant from the Virginia Commission for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts and by a gift from Arlington County through

the Arlington Commission for the Arts and the Cultural Affairs Division of the Department of Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Resources.

Directions

Signature Theatre is just nine minutes from downtown Washington, DC in Arlington's Shirlington Village. The new theater complex is located at 4200 Campbell Avenue (22206) off I-395 at the Shirlington exit. After the exit, blue Signature signs mark the way to the Theatre. Free parking is available in two adjacent public garages. Please note that Campbell Avenue is a new street and some GPS online mapping systems do not yet recognize Signature Theatre's address. For directions visit <http://signature-theatre.org/map.htm>.

Contact Information

Ticketmaster (703) 573-SEAT (7328)
Signature Administration (571) 527-1860
Signature Theatre
4200 Campbell Avenue
Arlington, VA 22206
<http://www.signature-theatre.org>

#