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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: June 12, 2007

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Signature Theatre
by arrangement with Cameron Mackintosh LTD presents
The American Premiere of
The Witches of Eastwick

A musical comedy by John Dempsey and Dana P. Rowe
Based on the novel by John Updike and the Warner Bros. Motion Picture

Opening June 11, 2007

Previews begin June 5

At Signature's MAX Theater

Directed by Eric Schaeffer, the all-star Broadway cast features Marc Kudisch, Jacquelyn Piro Donovan, Christiane Noll, and Emily Skinner

On the 20th anniversary of movie *The Witches of Eastwick*, the musical has its American Premiere

Arlington, VA -- Signature Theatre presents the American premiere of *The Witches of Eastwick*, the satanically sensational musical based on the John Updike novel and the Warner Bros. Motion Picture. In the conservative New England town of Eastwick, three unhappy women innocently plot and conjure their ideal man. When he appears in the form of a brash but seductive newcomer all hell breaks loose, sexually and otherwise. Four Broadway stars take on iconic roles played exactly 20 years ago in the film: **Marc Kudisch** is the devilish Darryl Van Horne (Jack Nicholson), **Emily Skinner** is the would-be sculptress Alexandra (Cher), **Christiane Noll** is the uptight cellist Jane (Susan Sarandon), and **Jacquelyn Piro Donovan** is the tongue-tied newspaper reporter Sukie (Michelle Pfeiffer).

With book and lyrics by **John Dempsey** and music by **Dana P. Rowe** who paired up for Signature's *The Fix*, *The Witches of Eastwick* was a huge hit in London where it had its world premiere in 2000. Produced by Cameron Mackintosh of *Cats* and *Les Misérables* fame, it played in the 2,200-seat Theatre Royal Drury Lane in the West End. Signature's Artistic Director **Eric Schaeffer**, who staged the London original, gives this new production an edgier, sexier twist, tailored for American audiences and the 260-seat MAX. *The Witches of Eastwick* runs June 5 - July 15, with the official opening on June 11 and press opening on June 15. Tickets are \$38 to \$63 and are now on sale at Tickets.com (800) 955-5566 and online at www.signature-theatre.org. This production contains strong language and sexual themes and is recommended for mature audiences only (ages 14 and over).

Director Eric Schaeffer said, " *The Witches of Eastwick* is a truly American musical. When we had the world premiere in London, the British audiences really didn't get it all - references to Thom McCann shoes, gossiping over the clothesline, going to the diner. We're emphasizing different things in the American production, not only 'Americana,' but the darker, sexier, and more dangerous elements. I've always thought of *The Witches of Eastwick* as being 1/3 John Updike's novel, 1/3 Warner Bros. film, and 1/3 John Dempsey and Dana Rowe. In this production, we're going further into the novel's characters and tone, which is laugh-out loud funny and erotic, but somewhat darker and edgier at the same time. We have restructured the show, cut two songs from the London production, and added two new numbers as well."

Lyricist and book writer John Dempsey says, "This story contains all my favorites: small town setting, gossipy townspeople, religion, magic, and sex. New England is my favorite place in all America. It's ripe with tension and repression and music. The production in London took on an English eccentricity which, while wonderfully delicious on its own terms, undercut the blunt bloody American meat of the story. I look forward to going smaller now, to explore the humanity behind the grotesques and the broad strokes. That sounds like an awfully pretentious statement for a show that is essentially about a ménage-à-quatre. But lacking truth and heart, even an orgy fails to be interesting."

The Washington Post called Eric Schaeffer's London premiere, "Wicked fun... astonishing - the kind of beautiful, funny, glittery, joyfully stagey stuff that musical comedy dreams are made of." "A truly magical show," praised *The International Herald Tribune* and the London's *Mail on Sunday* saluted *The Witches of Eastwick* as "musical comedy heaven."

PHOTOS

Advance photos for *The Witches of Eastwick* are available for downloading by [clicking here](#).

LEAD BIOS

Marc Kudisch (Darryl Van Horne) SIGNATURE: *The Highest Yellow* (Helen Hayes nomination). BROADWAY: *The Apple Tree*, *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* (Tony® and Outer Critics Circle nominations), *Assassins* (Drama Desk nomination), *Thoroughly Modern Millie* (Tony®, Drama Desk, and Outer Critics Circle nominations), *Bells Are Ringing*, *The Wild Party*, *The Scarlet Pimpernel*, *High Society*, *Beauty & the Beast*, *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*. OFF-BROADWAY: Public Theatre: *See What I Wanna' See* (Drama Desk nomination); New York City Opera: *Pirates of Penzance*, *A Little Night Music*; City Center Encores!: *Broadway Bash*, *No Strings* (Mike Robinson), *The Thing About Men*. REGIONAL: Los Angeles Opera: *A Little Night Music*. NATIONAL TOUR: *Bye Bye Birdie*. TV: Lifetime Network: *Break It*, ABC: *Bye Bye Birdie*, HBO: *Sex & the City*. Directorial credits include *The Broadway Musicals of 1959* (2007), *The Broadway Musicals of 1930* (2006), and *The Broadway Musicals of 1963* (2004) in Scott Siegel's Broadway by the Year concert.

Jacquelyn Piro Donovan (Sukie Rougemont) SIGNATURE: *110 in the Shade* (Lizzie, 2004 Helen Hayes Award for Best Actress), *Nevermore* (Elmira), *Last Garage Hurrah*. BROADWAY: *Les Misérables* (only actor in Broadway history to portray both Cosette and Fantine), *Miss Saigon* (Ellen). NYC: City Center Encores!: *Sweet Adeline* (Nellie); York Theatre: *Suburb* (Alison); Zipper Theatre: Kathie Lee Gifford's *Under the Bridge* (Madame Calcet, also recording); 37 Arts: *The Ark* (Sarah, also recording); New World Stages...NYMF: *Have A Nice Life* (Jackie). FIRST NATIONAL TOURS: *Sunset Boulevard* (Betty Schaeffer w/ Petula Clark), *big* (originated Susan Lawrence), *Miss Saigon* (Ellen), *The Secret Garden* (Lily), *Les Misérables* (originated Cosette). READINGS: *The Witches of Eastwick* (Sukie, Dir. Eric Schaeffer); NYS&F @ Vassar: *Behind the Limelight* (Hedda Hopper); York Theatre: *Mrs. Lincoln* (Myra Bradwell); *Time & Again* (Kate, Dir. Susan Schulman), *Marty* (Mary, Dirs. Longbottom and Brokaw), *Winchell...The Musical* (June Wichell, Dir. Martin Charnin). FAVORITES: Goodspeed: *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers* (Millie, 2005 Connecticut Critics Award, Outstanding Actress); *Evita* (Eva), *She Loves Me* (Amalia), *Funny Girl* (Fanny), *Cabaret* (Sally Bowles). TV: *Another World*, *Broadway on Broadway*, CBS's *The Early Show*, final broadcast of *The Rosie O'Donnell Show*.

Christiane Noll (Jane Smart) BROADWAY/TOURS: *Urinetown*, *The Mambo Kings*, *It Ain't Nothin' But the Blues*, *Jekyll & Hyde*, *Grease*, *Miss Saigon*, *City of Angels*. OFF-BROADWAY: *A Fine and Private Place*, *Little By Little*, *Call the Children Home*; City Center Encores!: *The New Moon*. INTERN'L: *South Pacific* (Australia/Thailand). REGIONAL: *The Pirates of Penzance*, *Mack & Mabel*, *The Baker's Wife*, *Lizzie Borden, Kept, Into the Woods*, *Carousel*, *The Student Prince*. LOCAL: Washington National Opera: *Trilogy - The Merry Widow* w/ Placido Domingo; numerous appearances with The National Symphony Orchestra. FILM: *The King & I* (Singing Anna, Animated Feature). OTHER: Symphony Soloist with Marvin Hamlisch, Eric Kunzel, Don Pippin, Peter Nero and Skitch Henderson. RECORDINGS: *The New Moon*, *Jekyll & Hyde*, *King & I*, *Little by Little*, several Broadway compilations, *Christiane Noll - A Broadway Love Story*, *Live at the West Bank Café*, *The Ira Gershwin Album*.

Emily Skinner (Alexandra Spofford) BROADWAY: *The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas* (Actor's Fund), *Side Show* (Tony® nomination, Drama League Award), *Jekyll & Hyde*, *James Joyce's The Dead*, *The Full Monty*, *Dinner at Eight* (Outer Critics Circle nomination). NATIONAL TOUR: Disney's *On the Record*. OFF-BROADWAY: City Center's Encores: *No Strings*, *Pardon My English*, *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*, *Broadway Bash*; leading roles at the WPA Theater, Playwright's Horizons, Manhattan Theater Club, York Theater, The Paramount Theater at Madison Square Garden. REGIONAL: The Kennedy Center, McCarter, Long Wharf, The Old Globe, Ford's Theater, St. Louis MUNY, TheaterVirginia. IN CONCERT: Broadway By The Year (director and performer), New York Pops at Carnegie Hall, Pittsburgh Symphony, Virginia Symphony, Jerusalem Symphony, Merkin Hall, Avery Fisher Hall, Symphony Space. RECORDINGS: countless cast albums and audio books, *Duets*, *Unsuspecting Hearts*, *Skinner/Ripley Raw at Town Hall* (all with Alice Ripley), *Elegies for Angels*, *Punks and Raging Queens*, *The Stephen Sondheim Album*, *Wall to Wall Sondheim*, *Believe: The Songs of The Sherman Brothers*, *The Stephen Schwartz Album*, animated feature *Anastasia*, and her self-titled solo CD (fynsworthalley.com).

DETAILS

Cast (in order of appearance)

Raymond Neff Jeremy Benton
Rebecca Barnes Brianne Cobuzzi
Toby Bergman Matt Conner
Joe Marino David Covington
Sukie Rougemont Jacquelyn Piro Donovan
Jennifer Gabriel Erin Driscoll
Marge Perley Ilona Dulaski
Brenda Parsley Sherri L. Edelen
Michael Spofford James Gardiner
Felicia Gabriel Karlah Hamilton
Darryl Van Horne Marc Kudisch
Greta Neff Amy McWilliams
Jane Smart Christiane Noll
Little Girl Brittany O'Grady
Frank Ogden Diego Prieto
Gina Marino Tammy Roberts
Ed Parsley Thomas Adrian Simpson
Alexandra Spofford Emily Skinner
Fidel Scott J. Strasbaugh
Clyde Gabriel Harry A. Winter

Design & Direction

Director Eric Schaeffer
Music Director Jon Kalbfleisch
Choreographer Karma Camp
Set Designer Walt Spangler
Costume Designer Alejo Vietti
Lighting Designer Chris Lee
Sound Designer Matt Rowe
Orchestrations Bruce Coughlin
Production Stage Manager Kerry Epstein

Schedule

June 5 - July 15, 2007

Press Opening: Friday, June 15, 2007

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

Exceptions: There is no 2 pm matinee performance on Saturday, June 9 and no performance on Tuesday, June 12.

Tickets

Tickets are \$38 to \$63 and sold through Tickets.com (800) 955-5566 and online at www.signature-theatre.org Discounts are available for students, seniors (60+, military, and groups of ten or more. The Signature Box Office is open Monday through Friday from 10 am to 6 pm and during performances.

ABOUT SIGNATURE

Signature is a non-profit professional theater company dedicated to producing contemporary plays and musicals, reinventing classic musicals, and developing new work. To date, Signature has presented more than 20 world premiere productions and commissions. The works of Stephen Sondheim, however, are the Theatre's "signature." Signature is renowned for combining Broadway-quality productions with an intimate playing space, and using live orchestras with unamplified performers. In addition to the finest talent from the D.C. metropolitan area as well as 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. In January 2007, Signature moved into its new \$16 million two-theater complex in the Shirlington Village area of Arlington, Virginia.

In its 17 years under Co-Founder and Artistic Director Eric Schaeffer, Signature has been nominated for 216 Helen Hayes Awards for excellence in the professional theater 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's new location is just five miles from downtown Washington, DC at 2800 S. Stafford St. in Arlington, Virginia's Shirlington Village immediately off I-395 at the Shirlington exit.

Contact Info

Tickets.com (800) 955-5566
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Administration (571) 527-1860
www.signature-theatre.org

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