

eric schaeffer  
artistic director

sam sweet  
managing director

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**May 8, 2006**

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**CONSTRUCTION DELAYS WITH SIGNATURE'S NEW TWO-  
THEATRE COMPLEX RESULT IN 2006/07 SEASON CHANGES**

- ***My Fair Lady* to be presented in Signature's current space**
- **New building opens in January 2007 with *Into the Woods***

Arlington, VA — Signature Theatre was informed last week that the organization will not be able to move into its new two-theatre complex this summer as previously announced. Construction, even though well underway, is currently running about six weeks behind schedule. The cause of the delays are similar to what all construction projects are facing across the country — shortages of steel, cement, electrical components, and manpower due not only to the building boom in the D.C.-metro region but also due to resources diverted to the Gulf Coast following Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. The building's new completion date, although only a few weeks behind schedule, does not allow enough time to move in and properly prepare for Signature's first production in a brand new space.

Signature had announced a September 2006 grand opening of the new building with a production of Stephen Sondheim's *Into the Woods*. Selected by Artistic Director **Eric Schaeffer** as the ideal show to inaugurate the expanded facility, *Into the Woods* has been rescheduled as the second show in Signature's 2006/07 season to give audiences the spectacular site-specific production Schaeffer envisions. The season will open with Lerner and Loewe's classic musical, *My Fair Lady* presented in Signature's current converted-garage space. Signature's staff will move into its new home on October 16, 2006, and will open the doors of the new building with *Into the Woods* in January.

"As often happens with projects of this magnitude, there have been construction delays," said Schaeffer. "Of course it's frustrating and disappointing, but it's not something we can control. But a year from now we'll all be saying 'What was the big deal?' because the new building will definitely be worth the wait. In the meantime, Signature will continue to make magic in a converted garage for a few months more — just as we have for the last 17 years."

Eric Schaeffer is now directing all the musicals in Signature's upcoming season, including the recently announced American premiere of *The Witches of Eastwick*. **Jeremy Skidmore** has been announced as the director of *Crave*. Due to the compressed season time table, Schaeffer will no longer be directing the world premiere of *Susanna Cox*; a new director is to be announced.

**REVISED 2006/07 SEASON SCHEDULE**

**In Signature's Current Theatre on S. Four Mile Run Dr.**

**MY FAIR LADY**

Book and Lyrics by Alan Jay Lerner  
Music by Frederick Loewe

Adapted from George Bernard Shaw's play and Gabriel Pascal's motion picture *Pygmalion*  
Directed by Eric Schaeffer

**September 26 – November 19, 2006**

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— MORE —

**In Signature's New Building in The MAX Theatre  
INTO THE WOODS**

Music and Lyrics by Stephen Sondheim  
Book by James Lapine  
Directed by Eric Schaeffer  
**January 12 – February 25, 2007**

**In Signature's New Building in The ARK Theatre  
CRAVE**

By Sarah Kane  
Director Jeremy Skidmore  
**January 30 – April 1, 2007**

**In Signature's New Building in The MAX Theatre  
SAVING AIMEE**

Book and Lyrics by Kathie Lee Gifford  
Music by David Pomeranz and David Friedman  
Directed by Eric Schaeffer  
**April 10 – May 13, 2007**

**In Signature's New Building in The ARK Theatre  
SUSANNA COX**

By Bathsheba Doran  
Director TBA  
**April 24 – June 24, 2007**

**In Signature's New Building in The MAX Theatre  
THE WITCHES OF EASTWICK**

Book and Lyrics by John Dempsey  
Music by Dana P. Rowe  
Based on the novel by John Updike and the Warner Bros. Motion Picture  
Directed by Eric Schaeffer  
**June 5 – July 15, 2007**

**SIGNATURE'S NEW TWO-THEATRE COMPLEX**

Arlington County's invitation for Signature Theatre to join them in becoming an economic and cultural anchor is the first public-private partnership in county history. Signature's new complex is part of the Village at Shirlington expansion. Heralded as "Arlington's new downtown," the area is developing into a vibrant urban village with condominiums, residential-retail buildings, 800 new parking spaces, and entertainment — with the new Signature Theatre at the center of the dynamic scene. In a new four-story building, a branch of the county library will occupy the first floor, and Signature will occupy the second, third and fourth floors. Located on South Stafford Street, a new street under construction at the end of South 28<sup>th</sup> Street, the new theatre/library complex will open onto an art-filled, public plaza. It will be adjacent to a free public parking garage. The County is currently constructing the shell and providing the infrastructure with a total investment of \$5.5 million. Signature is in the final stages of a capital campaign raising an additional \$7.6 million, of which \$6.8 has been raised to date, for the build-out and equipping of its interior space.

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Signature’s new theatre complex will feature state-of-the-art equipment, expansive office space, and top-notch technical facilities. Most importantly, it will have two fully-equipped, flexible-seating black box theatres, providing for ever-greater opportunities for artistic achievement and community service. Under Eric Schaeffer’s leadership, Signature’s new home will nurture its artistic and organizational expansion while maintaining the uniquely intimate environment that artists and audiences have come to value. The new Signature will still be daring and surprising, but with room for the Signature spirit to grow and thrive.

Signature’s new facility reflects the theatre’s energy and creativity. “Audiences are going to love the parking, flexibility, convenience and comfort of the new building,” said Managing Director **Sam Sweet**, “but Signature’s ongoing spirit of intensity and intimacy will ultimately define the new spaces.” The building itself — a focal point of Shirlington — will have a stunning glass façade attracting the public by making theatergoers visible from the street and plaza below. The interior space will express Signature’s personality:

- **Two intimate performance areas** — **The MAX**, a 299-seat black box mainstage and **The ARK**, a smaller 99-seat black box space, both sharing a dramatic lobby.
- **The MAX will house a vestibule**, replicating Signature’s current hallway that leads patrons from the reality outside in the lobby to the magic that waits within the theatre itself.
- **Flexible stages and seating** in both theatres will allow for innovative and unexpected theatrical experiences — a Signature trademark loved by both artists and audiences.
- **State-of-the-art technical capabilities and acoustics** will enhance productions on both stages.

The rest of the theatre complex is designed to accommodate:

- Three rehearsal/classroom spaces
- Scenery and costume shops
- Full-service dressing rooms
- Administrative offices and meeting spaces
- A dramatic, welcoming, full-service lobby
- A street-accessible box office

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### **Signature Theatre**

Signature Theatre is a non-profit professional theater dedicated to producing contemporary plays and musicals and to the development of new work. Now in its 16<sup>th</sup> season under Artistic Director Eric Schaeffer, Signature has been nominated for 209 Helen Hayes Awards for excellence in the professional theater and has been honored with 50 Helen Hayes Awards, including Outstanding Musical in 1992, 1993, 1995, 1997, 2000, 2005, 2006 and Outstanding Play in 1999. Signature Theatre is a member of the Theatre Communications Group, The League of Washington Theatres, the Cultural Alliance of Greater Washington, the Arlington Arts Alliance, the Arlington Chamber of Commerce, and the Greater Washington Board of Trade.

### **Contact Info**

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