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SIGNATURE THEATRE ADDS AMERICAN PREMIERE OF THE WITCHES OF EASTWICK TO 2006/2007 SEASON

Arlington, VA — Artistic Director Eric Schaeffer is pleased to announce the recent addition of *The Witches of Eastwick* to Signature Theatre’s 2006/2007 Season. A testament to Signature’s national reputation as one of the leading producers of musical theatre, Signature has been selected as the venue to present the musical’s American premiere. Schaeffer, who will direct, originally developed *The Witches of Eastwick*, based on the novel by John Updike and the Warner Bros. motion picture, with book writer and lyricist **John Dempsey**, composer **Dana P. Rowe** and producer **Cameron Mackintosh** — the same creative team behind the American premiere of *The Fix* presented at Signature in 1998. Schaeffer directed *The Witches of Eastwick* world premiere in London’s West End at the Theatre Royal Drury Lane and Prince of Wales theatres to great critical acclaim. The show has since been produced in Russia, Japan, and Australia.

Schaeffer has wanted to bring the musical to Signature audiences since the London production, however the theatre in Signature’s current converted garage space could not accommodate the production’s technical needs — an issue resolved by Signature’s new building. This fall Signature’s staff moves into a new \$12.5 million two-theatre complex in the Village at Shirlington, and in January the doors open to the public. *The Witches of Eastwick* will run **June 5 – July 15, 2007** in The MAX, Signature’s new 299-seat, double-height theatre.

“*The Witches of Eastwick* — despite its various English, Russian, Japanese, and Australian productions — is an American musical,” stated collaborators Dempsey and Rowe. “How wonderful it is then to be bringing it to American soil at long last. In deciding upon a national premiere, we could think of no greater launching pad than the Signature Theatre, having had such a wickedly good time there doing *The Fix* a few seasons back. We hope the Signature audiences enjoy dancing with the devil as much as we enjoyed dreaming up the dance.”

Tickets will go on advance sale to subscribers only on June 1.

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— MORE —

American Premiere Musical

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

In the tiny New England town of Eastwick, Rhode Island, three unhappy women innocently plot and conjure for their perfect man over a heady brew of brownies and weak martinis. When their longings are made flesh in the arrival of one Darryl Van Horne, all hell breaks loose. Quite literally. The devilishly good *Witches of Eastwick* flies into Signature for its American premiere courtesy of the same creative team who brought us *The Fix*. 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.**"

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 16th 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.

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