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SIGNATURE THEATRE PRESENTS THE WASHINGTON AREA PREMIERE OF THE MUSICAL *SEE WHAT I WANNA SEE* BY 5-TIME TONY® NOMINEE MICHAEL JOHN LaCHIUSA

Performances April 7 – May 31 in Signature’s ARK Theatre

Signature Theatre presents the Washington area premiere of the innovative musical *See What I Wanna See*, a fascinating exploration of three stories of lust, greed, murder, faith, and redemption. Written by Michael John LaChiusa, considered one of today’s most intelligent and innovative musical theater composers, *See What I Wanna See* has been hailed for its cool, jazz-infused score and smart book and called “a little powerhouse of a show whose sheer intensity will knock you flat – and make you think” (*The Wall Street Journal*). The show was named one of the Best Musicals of 2005 by *New York Magazine* and nominated for nine Drama Desk Awards, including Best Musical. *See What I Wanna See* runs in Signature’s intimate 110-seat ARK Theatre from April 7 through May 31. Signature will also produce the world premiere of LaChiusa’s *Giant* in the MAX Theatre April 28 through May 31.

Based on short works by the Japanese writer Ryunosuke Akutagawa, the three part *See What I Wanna See* unfolds like a Japanese screen painting. The central story is “R Shomon” – also the inspiration for the classic film *Rashomon* – in which LaChiusa investigates a 1951 New York crime of passion and the witnesses’ contradicting versions of the event. In “Kesa and Morito” set in medieval Japan, two lovers sing of the ecstasy and torment of their affair and their individual determinations that it must end that night. The third section, “Gloryday,” set in present day New York, introduces a priest during a crisis of faith after a terrible tragedy strikes the city. In his disillusionment and anger, he plays a practical joke which ultimately brings other people to faith. *See What I Wanna See* asks the question, “what is truth?” A kaleidoscope of answers keeps appearing.

Directed by Helen Hayes Award-winner **Matthew Gardiner**, the cast includes **Rachel Zampelli** as Kesa, The Wife, and An Actress; **Tom Zemon** as Morito, The Husband, and A CPA; **Matt Pearson** as The Thief and A Reporter; **Bobby Smith** as The Janitor and A Priest; and **Channez McQuay** as The Medium and Aunt Monica. **Jon**

Kalbfleisch is musical director. Set design is by **Adam Koch**, costume design is by **Kathleen Geldard**, and lighting design is by **Mark Lanks**.

Tickets for *See What I Wanna See*, ranging in price from \$49 - \$77, are available by calling Ticketmaster at (703) 573-SEAT (7328) or visiting www.signature-theatre.org. The production includes mature themes and explicit sexual content and is not recommended for children. 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 is no performance on Tuesday, April 14. The press opening is Sunday, April 12 at 7:00 pm.

EDITORS: Photos for *See What I Wanna See* are available for downloading from http://www.signature-theatre.org/photo_downloads.htm. (Link for press only: please do not publish).

MICHAEL JOHN LaCHIUSA

Five-time Tony Award® nominee **Michael John LaChiusa** – composer, lyricist, and librettist – is a powerful presence on the American musical theater scene. He is the first recipient of Signature’s **American Musical Voices Project** to present a new work on Signature’s stage, this season’s *Giant*. Signature produced the world premiere of his work *The Highest Yellow* in 2004 and performed *First Lady Suite* in 1995.

LaChiusa first came to national attention by winning Off-Broadway’s 1993 Obie Award for his musicals *First Lady Suite* and *Hello, Again*. Six years later LaChiusa was represented on Broadway during the 1999-2000 season by two more musicals, *The Wild Party* and *Marie Christine*, which together received 12 Tony Award® nominations for the season – garnering LaChiusa two nominations for each production: Best Score and Best Book (along with George C. Wolfe on *The Wild Party*). He received his first Tony Award® nomination for Best Book (co-written with Graciela Daniele and Jim Lewis) for *Chronicle of Death Foretold*, produced on Broadway by Lincoln Center Theater Company in 1996.

LaChiusa’s works also include *Send (who are you? I love you)*, written for Audra McDonald and commissioned by the Houston Grand Opera; *Tres Ninas* (written with Ellen Fitzhugh); *Bernarda Alba* (Lincoln Center Theater); *Lovers and Friends: Chautauqua Variations* (Lyric Opera of Chicago); *Little Fish* (Second Stage); and *Break/Agnes/Eulogy for Mister Hamm* (Playwrights Horizons). He is a recipient of the Gilman-Gonzalez-Falla Musical Theatre Award.

CAST

Channez McQuay (The Medium and Aunt Monica) SIGNATURE: *Les Misérables* (Ensemble), *Kiss of the Spider Woman* (Molina's Mother), *Into the Woods* (Stepmother), *My Fair Lady* (Mrs. Eynsford-Hill), *Nevermore* (Muddy), *Pacific Overtures* (Ensemble). DC AREA: Ford's Theatre: *Meet John Doe* (Betty); Studio Theatre: *The Gifts of the Magi* (City Her); Studio Theatre 2nd Stage: *Reefer Madness* (Mae), *Oil City Symphony* (Ginger); Olney: *Jacques Brel...*, *Rodgers and Hammerstein’s Cinderella* (Joy), *The Doll Makers Dilemma* (Gertrude); Rep Stage:

Falsettos (Charlotte); Toby's: *Ragtime* (Emma, Helen Hayes nomination), *Gypsy* (Rose), *Funny Girl* (Fanny), *Little Shop of Horrors* (Audrey), *Fiddler on the Roof* (Golde), *Pippin* (Berthe), *Beauty and the Beast* (Mrs. Potts); Catonsville: *Steel Magnolias* (Ouiser); Little Theatre: *Parade* (Fanny).

Matt Pearson (The Thief and A Reporter) DC AREA: Theatre J: *David in Shadow and Light* (David); MetroStage: *tick, tick...BOOM!*; Arena Stage: *Forever Ivor*. REGIONAL: Vineyard Theatre: *The Slug Bearers of Kayrol Island*; Ravinia Festival: *Sunday in the Park with George*; Chicago Shakespeare Theatre: *Hans Christian Anderson's The Little Mermaid*. EDUCATION: Northwestern University.

Bobby Smith (The Janitor and A Priest) BROADWAY: *Crazy for You*. OFF-BROADWAY: *Forever Plaid*, *The World Goes 'Round*, *Of Thee I Sing*. NATIONAL TOURS: *Brigadoon*, *The World Goes 'Round*. DC AREA: Studio Theatre: *A Class Act*, *The Long Christmas Ride Home*, *Caroline or Change*, *Grey Gardens*; Studio Theatre 2ndStage: *Reefer Madness: The Musical*, *Jerry Springer the Opera*; Ford's Theatre: *Elmer Gantry*; Roundhouse: *A Year with Frog and Toad*; MetroStage: *Girl in the Goldfish Bowl*, *Musical of Musicals*; Kennedy Center: *The Happy Prince*.

Rachel Zampelli (Kesa, The Wife, and An Actress) SIGNATURE: *December Divas*, *Anyone Can Whistle* in Concert, *The Happy Time*, *Saving Aimee*. DC AREA: Studio Theatre 2ndStage: *Jerry Springer the Opera*, *Reefer Madness: The Musical*; Ford's Theatre: *Shenandoah*; Folger: *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. REGIONAL: New Repertory Theatre: *Into the Woods*, *Romeo and Juliet*; Riverside Theatreworks: *Grease*, *Nunsense*; Black Swan Theatre (Special Appearance, Oregon Shakespeare Festival): *Breast Entanglements*. EDUCATION: Santa Clara University, Theater.

Tom Zemon (Morito, The Husband, and A CPA) SIGNATURE: *Les Misérables* (Javert). BROADWAY: *Les Misérables* (Javert), *Scarlet Pimpernel* (Chauvelin). REGIONAL: *Sweeney Todd* (Sweeney Todd); Sundance Theatre Lab: *The Light In The Piazza* (Guiseppe); *Men* (Sebastian), *A Tale Of Two Cities* (Carton), *Elmer Gantry* (Gantry, Jeff Award nomination), *Assassins* (Booth, L.A. Premier), *Brigadoon* (Tommy, Robbie Award for Best Actor in a Musical); Hartford Stage Company: *Children*, *Pericles*, *Androcles And The Lion* (The Lion). TV: *Law And Order*, *All My Children*, recurring roles on *Guiding Light* and *One Life To Live* (Morgan Guthrie); TLC's *Broken Homes*, HGTV's *My First Place*, *Splurge and Save*.

Matthew Gardiner (Director) SIGNATURE: Director: *Singing Shakespeare*; Assistant Director: *The Little Dog Laughed*, *Les Misérables*, *The Lieutenant of Inishmore*, *ACE*, *The Visit*, *Witches of Eastwick*, *Into the Woods*, *Nevermore*, Resident Assistant Director 2006-present; Assistant Choreographer: *Kiss of the Spider Woman*, *Merrily We Roll Along*, *Saving Aimee*, *Urinetown*; BROADWAY: Assistant Director: *Glory Days*. DC AREA: Co-Director/Choreographer: Studio Theatre 2ndStage: *Jerry Springer The Opera*, *Reefer Madness* (2008 Helen Hayes Award for Outstanding Direction of a Musical); Director/Choreographer: MetroStage: *tick, tick, BOOM!*; Catholic University of America: *La Bohème*, *Candide*, Studio: *Grey Gardens*; Assistant Director: The Kennedy Center: *Cat on A Hot Tin Roof*. EDUCATION: Carnegie Mellon University, BFA.

Jon Kalbfleisch (Music Director) SIGNATURE (resident music director): *Les Misérables, Anyone Can Whistle in Concert, The Visit, Kiss of the Spider Woman, Merrily We Roll Along, The Witches of Eastwick, Into the Woods, Assassins, Pacific Overtures, The Highest Yellow, One Red Flower, Elegies, Allegro, Follies, 110 in the Shade, Grand Hotel, Putting It Together, Forum, A Stephen Sondheim Evening, Sweeney Todd, A Little Night Music, The Fix, Sunday in the Park with George, Passion, Cabaret, Wings, First Lady Suite, Company.* BROADWAY: *Les Misérables* (associate conductor). DC AREA: Kennedy Center, Wolf Trap, National Theatre, Warner Theatre, Washington Ballet, Studio Theatre, Shakespeare Theatre Company. REGIONAL: Mark Taper Forum: *Putting it Together; Martin Guerre, James Joyce's The Dead.* OTHER: Carnegie Hall, Lawton Philharmonic Orchestra, Capitol Hill United Methodist Church, The White House, National Building Museum, The Library of Congress, U.S. Supreme Court. TV: Good Morning America. AWARDS: Four Helen Hayes Awards and 22 nominations. EDUCATION: Master of Music, SMU.

ABOUT SIGNATURE

Under the leadership of co-founder and Artistic Director Eric Schaeffer and Managing Director Maggie Boland, 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 25 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, Stephen Sondheim. Signature has been nominated for 276 Helen Hayes Awards for excellence in the professional theater and has been honored with 59 Helen Hayes Awards, including Outstanding Musical in 1992, 1993, 1995, 1997, 2000, 2005, and 2006, and Outstanding Play in 1999.

Signature Theatre is supported by a grant from the Virginia Commission for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts.

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 www.signature-theatre.org.

Contact Information

Ticketmaster (703) 573-SEAT (7328)
Signature Administration (571) 527-1860
Signature Theatre
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