

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: October 19, 2011

Contact: Peter Eramo, Jr., Publicist

(571) 527-1833

eramop@signature-theatre.org

Signature Theatre to Honor Patti LuPone with 3rd Annual Stephen Sondheim Award at Gala Benefit April 16, 2012

Arlington, VA, October 19, 2011 – The Tony Award®-winning **Signature Theatre** will honor esteemed stage actress **Patti LuPone** with the company's third **Stephen Sondheim Award**. The award, established in 2009 in honor of America's most influential contemporary musical theater writer and composer, will be presented at a black-tie Gala Benefit on April 16, 2012 at the **Embassy of Italy** in Washington, DC. Signature Theatre Artistic Director **Eric Schaeffer** said, "I am thrilled that Patti LuPone will be this year's recipient of the Stephen Sondheim Award. With her wonderful performances in *Gypsy*, *Sweeney Todd*, *Company*, *Passion*, and more - she has had an amazing connection to Steve's words and music. It's wonderful to add her name to the distinguished honorees Angela Lansbury and Bernadette Peters. We look forward to saluting Patti and her extraordinary talents in April."

LuPone, a two-time Tony Award®-winner, has appeared in numerous Sondheim works, including *Sunday in the Park with George*, *Sweeney Todd*, and most recently in *Gypsy* in 2008, where she garnered a Tony Award®, Drama Desk Award, Outer Critics Circle Award, and Drama League Award for her portrayal of Rose. She returns to the Broadway stage this November in *An Evening with Patti LuPone and Mandy Patinkin*.

Stephen Sondheim stated, "There are few performers who can play both Mrs. Lovett and Fosca, Evita and Reno Sweeney, Nancy in *Oliver!* and Cora Hoover Hooper in *Anyone Can Whistle*, and still create roles for David Mamet. In fact, there's only one. Versatility of such a high caliber is rare indeed, and therefore it couldn't be more appropriate that the recipient of this year's Signature Theatre Sondheim Award is going to the best tuba player on Broadway: Patti LuPone."

PATTI LUPONE BIO

Patti LuPone's most recent stage credits include creating the role of Lucia in the musical *Women on the Verge of A Nervous Breakdown* (Tony Award® nomination) and appearing as Joanne in the New York Philharmonic's concert production of Stephen Sondheim's *Company*. In May 2011, Miss LuPone made her debut with the New York City Ballet in their production of Weill and Brecht's *The Seven Deadly Sins*. She swept the 2008 theatre awards winning the Tony®, Drama Desk and Outer Critics Circle Awards for Best Actress in a Musical and the Drama League Award

for Distinguished Performance for her performance in the classic Jule Styne/Stephen Sondheim/Arthur Laurents musical *Gypsy*.

In 2007, Miss LuPone made her debut with the LA Opera in Weill and Brecht's *Mahagonny* (directed by John Doyle), and the next year starred in the world premiere of Jake Heggie's new opera *To Hell and Back* (with San Francisco's Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra). She also starred as Mrs. Lovett in John Doyle's award-winning Broadway production of Stephen Sondheim's *Sweeney Todd* (which earned her a Tony® Award nomination), the title role in Marc Blitzstein's *Regina*, a musical version of Lillian Hellman's *The Little Foxes* (at Washington D.C.'s Kennedy Center), and a multi-city tour of her solo theatrical concert *Matters of the Heart*.

Patti LuPone's other recent New York stage appearances include performances as La Mome Pistache in the Encores! production of Cole Porter's *Can-Can*, The Old Lady in the New York Philharmonic's concert production of Leonard Bernstein's *Candide*, and performances on Broadway in the revival of Michael Frayn's *Noises Off*, David Mamet's *The Old Neighborhood*, Terrence McNally's *Master Class* and in her own concert *Patti LuPone On Broadway*. Over six consecutive summers, she's appeared in the Ravinia Festival's Sondheim series, starring as Mrs. Lovett in *Sweeney Todd*, Desiree in *A Little Night Music*, Fosca in *Passion*, Cora Hoover Hooper in *Anyone Can Whistle*, Rose in *Gypsy* and was featured in two different roles in *Sunday in the Park with George*.

After completing her training with the first class of the Drama Division of New York's Juilliard School, she began her career in 1972 as a founding member of John Houseman's The Acting Company. She made her Broadway debut in 1973 as Irina in the play *The Three Sisters*. Her subsequent New York dramatic credits include Dario Fo's *Accidental Death of an Anarchist*, David Mamet's *The Water Engine*, *Edmond* and *The Woods* and Israel Horowitz' *Stage Directions*. Miss LuPone's memorable performances on the New York musical stage include Vera Simpson in the Encores! production of *Pal Joey*, Reno Sweeney in *Anything Goes*, (Tony Award® nomination), *The Cradle Will Rock*, Nancy in *Oliver!*, *Evita* (1980 Tony Award® winner), *Working* and Rosamund in *The Robber Bridegroom* (her first Tony Award® nomination, 1975).

In London, she created the role of Fantine in the RSC production of *Les Miserables*, a role she subsequently played on the West End. For that performance, as well as the reprise of her performance in the London production of *The Cradle Will Rock*, she won an Olivier Award for Best Actress in a Musical. Miss LuPone created the role of Norma Desmond in *Sunset Boulevard* (1994 Olivier nomination), and recreated her Broadway performance of Maria Callas in the West End production of *Master Class*.

While best known for her work on the stage, LuPone also enjoys an impressive list of film credits including *City By The Sea*, David Mamet's *Heist*, *State and Mair*, *Just Looking*, *Summer of Sam*, *The 24 Hour Woman*, *Family Prayers*, *Driving Miss Daisy*, and *Witness*. Her television work includes appearances on *Glee*, *30 Rock*, *Ugly Betty*, *Will & Grace*, *Law & Order*, *Remember WENN*, HBO's *Oz*, ABC's *Life Goes On* and the TV films *Monday Night Mayhem* (TNT), *A Godfather's Story* (Showtime), *Her Last Chance* (NBC), and *LBJ: The Early Years*. She has twice been nominated for an Emmy Award® – for the TV movie *The Song Spinner* and for her guest appearance on the comedy series *Frasier*.

She was the recipient of two Grammy Awards® in 2009 for her work on Weill-Brecht's *Mahagonny*. In addition to her original and Broadway cast recordings, LuPone has recorded the solo albums *Patti LuPone Live*, *Matters of the Heart*, *The Lady with the Torch*, *The Lady with the Torch...Still Burning*, and *Patti LuPone at Les Mouches*.

She is the author of the *New York Times* best-selling autobiography, *Patti LuPone: A Memoir*. Miss LuPone returns to the Broadway stage this November opposite her former *Evita* co-star Mandy Patinkin in *An Evening with Patti LuPone and Mandy Patinkin*.

THE SONDHEIM AWARD

In 2009, Signature Theatre inaugurated The Stephen Sondheim Award in recognition of the importance of Sondheim's work to Signature and to theater in general. In April 2010, the first Award was given to stage, screen and television actress Angela Lansbury and Bernadette Peters received the Award in April 2011. The Award is given annually to an individual for his or her career contributions to interpreting, supporting, and collaborating on Stephen Sondheim's music works. Signature has produced 20 productions of the works of Stephen Sondheim, more than any other theater in the United States. In 2002, Signature's Eric Schaeffer was the Artistic Director of *The Sondheim Celebration* at the Kennedy Center. The Sondheim Award Gala helps to benefit Signature Theatre's numerous artistic, education, and community programs.

For more information about sponsorship opportunities for the 2012 Sondheim Award Gala and ticket information, please contact Mari Chin, Development Coordinator at (571) 527-1828 or email events@signature-theatre.org.

ABOUT SIGNATURE

Recipient of the 2009 Regional Theatre Tony Award®, Signature Theatre is a non-profit professional theater company in Arlington, Virginia 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 35 world premiere productions and is renowned for combining Broadway-quality productions with intimate playing spaces.

In addition to hosting the finest talent from the DC metropolitan area and New York, Signature has been home to such theatre luminaries as Chita Rivera, George Hearn, Hunter Foster, Emily Skinner, Marc Kudisch, Judy Kuhn, John Kander and Fred Ebb, Cameron Mackintosh, Terrence McNally, and the company's signature composer, Stephen Sondheim. Since its founding in 1989, Signature has won 72 Helen Hayes Awards for excellence in the Washington, DC region's professional theater and has been honored with 293 nominations.

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 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

Subscriptions/Groups: (703) 820-9771
Single Tickets: Ticketmaster (703) 573-SEAT (7328)
Signature Administration (571) 527-1860
Signature Theatre • 4200 Campbell Avenue • Arlington, VA 22206
<http://www.signature-theatre.org>

#