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**signature**news

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## Signature Theatre Presents AMVP: Next Generation Honorees Showcase

Joshua Schmidt and Joshua Rosenblum  
To Debut Selections on December 4<sup>th</sup>

Will Gartshore, Lauren Worsham, Natascia Diaz, Susan Derry,  
Sam Ludwig and Others to Perform

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Arlington, VA, November 17, 2011 – In July 2010, Signature Theatre continued its dedication to supporting new voices in the theater by awarding special Next Generation “honoree grants” to composers **Joshua Schmidt** (*Adding Machine, A Minister’s Wife*) and **Joshua Rosenblum** (*Einstein’s Dreams, Fermat’s Last Tango*) to develop new works for the theatre – and on **December 4<sup>th</sup> at 8:00pm**, both Mr. Schmidt and Mr. Rosenblum will be sharing selections from projects they are currently working on from their commissions. Joshua Schmidt will present songs from *Portraits* (a stand-alone series of songs written with Jan Tranen), as well as songs from his project entitled *Stockholm* (with librettist Royce Vovrek). Joshua Rosenblum will present songs from his new musical *The Haunted Hotel* (with lyrics by Joanne Sydney Lessner and Mr. Rosenblum). Musical direction is by **Zak Sandler**.

“As a continuation of our steadfast commitment to the development of new musical theater works, we are extremely proud to present this very special showcase” said Signature’s Artistic Director **Eric Schaeffer**. “Joshua Schmidt and Joshua Rosenblum are two accomplished, talented composers and we look forward to hearing their newest works.”

An impressive array of singers will be performing to the songs of Mr. Schmidt and Mr. Rosenblum, including **Will Gartshore** (*Show Boat, Urinetown* at Signature), **Lauren Worsham** (*Candide* at New York City Opera and *Where’s Charley* at NY City Center Encores!), **Susan Derry** (*Sunset Boulevard, Show Boat* at Signature), **Natascia Diaz** (Signature’s *Kiss of the Spider Woman*), **Sam Ludwig** (*The Hollow, [title of show]* at Signature), **Brian Cali** (Broadway’s *Master Class*), **Bayla Whitten** (*Chess, Merrily We Roll Along* at Signature), **Tim Rogan** and **Paul Scanlan**.

Tickets are \$20 for the general public and free for ‘Friend of Signature’ donors of \$120 or more. Tickets can be purchased through Ticketmaster (703/573-SEAT) or at the Signature Box Office (703/820-9771). Please visit <http://www.signature-theatre.org/shows/next-generation-honorees-showcase> for more information.

## **About the American Musical Voices Project (AMVP)**

Signature Theatre's **American Musical Voices Project** is the largest single musical theater commissioning and producing initiative of any U.S. theater. Founded in May 2006 and funded by **The Shen Family Foundation**, the AMVP demonstrates Signature's commitment to producing full productions of world premiere musical theatre works. Through the AMVP, **Musical Theater Composer Grants** have been awarded to **Ricky Ian Gordon, Michael John LaChiusa, Joseph Thalken, Adam Guettel** and **Jeanine Tesori**. Each of the grants includes a commission to create a new full-length musical, with a commitment for full production as part of Signature Theatre's mainstage season. In April 2009, *Giant* by Michael John LaChiusa received its world premiere at Signature Theatre. Ricky Ian Gordon's *Sycamore Trees* premiered in May 2010, and Joseph Thalken's musical, *And the Curtain Rises* premiered in March 2011.

As part of the AMVP, **Musical Theater Leadership Awards** have been made to four individuals in recognition of their extraordinary influence on and contribution to the advancement of new musical theater, orchestrator Bruce Coughlin, composer Adam Guettel, singer/actress Audra McDonald, and director/musical director/orchestrator Ted Sperling.

In June 2008, the AMVP added **The Next Generation** program. That year, emerging composers Matt Conner, Adam Gwon, & Gabriel Kahane each received a commission to write new musicals for Signature Theatre and honorees Peter Foley and Marisa Michelson were given grants for the development of their musical ideas. In July 2009, the Theatre launched the "21/24 Signature Lab," three weeks of rehearsal & performances of new works by **The Next Generation** composers. Also announced as part of The Next Generation segment of the AMVP were two additional musical commissions awarded to Peter Foley and Marisa Michelson, as well as honoree grants given to Chris Miller and Scott Davenport Richards for the development of future musical ideas. In 2010, Miller and Richards were awarded commissions through **The Next Generation** program, and **Joshua Schmidt** and **Joshua Rosenblum** were named honorees. In August 2011, the AMVP Next Generation program saw two of its early commissions come to fruition with the historic AMVP Repertory Series, featuring full productions of Conner's *The Hollow* and Gwon's *The Boy Detective Fails* in rotating repertory. The AMVP Repertory Series – the first of its kind in the American theater – launched Signature's 22<sup>nd</sup> season.

## **SIGNATURE'S 2011-12 SEASON TICKET INFORMATION**

The remaining line-up for Signature Theatre's 2011-2012 season features the Tony Award®-winning shows *Hairspray* and *God of Carnage* and the Washington DC premiere of the cult classic musical *Xanadu*. Signature is also home to the world premiere works *Brother Russia*, and *Really Really*. In addition to the mainstage shows, Signature is presenting a special limited engagement of the world premiere musical *A Second Chance* (playing November 15<sup>th</sup> through December 11<sup>th</sup>). Discount subscription packages (starting at 3 shows) are available by calling the Signature Box Office at (703) 820-9771 or visiting [www.signature-theatre.org](http://www.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 36 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 (#6). 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>

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