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**signature**news

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: January 12, 2012

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## **SIGNATURE THEATRE'S 'SIGNATURE IN THE SCHOOLS' CELEBRATES 17<sup>TH</sup> YEAR BY PRESENTING *UN-AMERICAN*, AN ORIGINAL PLAY BY JOE CALARCO**

**Arlington High School Students Work as Actors and Technicians,  
Alongside Professional Playwright, Actor, and Designers**

**Public Performances at Signature on  
February 6<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> at 7:30pm**

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Arlington, VA, January 12, 2012 – **Signature Theatre's** flagship Education Program '**Signature in the Schools**' will present local high school students performing in *Un-American*, a world premiere work by award-winning playwright **Joe Calarco**. The play, directed by Signature's Education Associate **David Zobell**, marks Calarco's sixth Signature in the Schools script. Inspired by the infamous events surrounding the House of Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) led by Senator Joseph McCarthy, *Un-American* focuses on themes of diversity, integrity, and national identity. Set in the present day, two rival high schools are neck-and-neck in the final rounds of a local TV game show. As tension escalates between the teams and the game nears its end, answers come in a way that none of the students ever expected – a surprise interrogation conducted by HUAC. The students, now trapped in one of America's darkest eras, are each confronted with critical questions as they must now cope with accusations of being *Un-American*.

Guest artist **Jason Lott** joins the cast of students as Tom Toppleman, a HUAC Committee member. Lott is a DC favorite who has performed at The Kennedy Center, Studio Theatre, Theater Alliance, Folger Theatre, among others. The professional design team consists of **Andrew Scharwath** (lighting design), **Leslie Cook** (costume design), **Matt Rowe** (sound design), and **Kerry Epstein** (production stage manager).

Students participating in *Un-American* attend Wakefield High School, Yorktown High School, and H.B. Woodlawn High School. Student-performers include Khaliun Amarburen, Sean Balick, Adrian Cardenas, Karl Green, Chloe Laird, Arami McCloskey, Cameron Mellin, Jose Rodriguez,

Morgan Shotwell, Amanda Smith, Ariel Cadby Spicer, and Page Tazewell. Students working together with professional artists and designers are Marwa Awadbahr, Madeline Buchanan, Jack Dobbins, Joseph Escobar-Artica, Maya Giacobbe, Emily Hambridge, Cassandra Kendall, Madeline McGill, Max Rosenberg, and John Urbano.

## **PUBLIC PERFORMANCES**

Funders Opening Night performance on Monday, February 6<sup>th</sup> at 7:30pm  
Additional public performance on Friday, February 10<sup>th</sup> at 7:30pm  
Student matinee performances on February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, and 9<sup>th</sup> at 10:00am  
Signature's MAX Theatre

Tickets are free, but reservations are required. For ticket information, please call the Signature Box Office at (703) 820-9771 or visit <http://www.signature-theatre.org/>.

## **CREATIVE TEAM BIOS**

**Joe Calarco** (*Writer*) is thrilled to be back with Signature in the Schools having previously written *Image is Everything*, *My Vacation In Paris*, *Eve of Destruction*, *Civil Wars*, *Aftershock*, and *Shakespeare, Will*. Signature has also premiered his plays *Walter Cronkite is Dead* and *in the absence of spring*. He is the recipient of 4 Helen Hayes Awards, the Barrymore Award, and the Lucille Lortel Award.

**Jason Lott** (*Guest Artist*) is honored to make his Signature Theatre debut. He has appeared with many regional theatres, including The Kennedy Center TYA, Folger Theatre, Studio Theatre, Studio Theatre 2ndStage, Olney Theatre Center, Everyman Theatre, Theater Alliance, Longacre Lea Productions, Forum Theatre, Rorschach Theatre Company, The Hub Theatre, and Imagination Stage. He has also performed at the Edinburgh Festival Theatre Fringe in Scotland. Jason will appear next in *The 39 Steps* at Olney Theatre Center.

**David Zobell** (*director*) is directing for Signature in the Schools for the first time this year. DIRECTING: *Man to Man* (premiere), *Apologies*, *Shakespeare, Will* (Signature in the Schools premiere, assistant director), *Walter Cronkite is Dead*, (premiere, assistant director), *Dancing at Lughnasa* (assistant director.) TEACHING: Signature Theatre, Adventure Theatre, Brigham Young University, The Rainbow Company (2010 Children's Theatre Association of America Medallion Winner.) EDUCATION: MA, Brigham Young University.

## **ABOUT SIGNATURE IN THE SCHOOLS**

Founded in 1995, Signature Theatre's education program **Signature in the Schools** uses theater to open the minds and broaden the viewpoints of local teens while engaging them in a positive and creative experience. Led by Education Director **Marcia Gardner**, The program also reinforces the Virginia's Standard of Learning curriculum. A recipient of *The Washington Post's* prestigious **Community Service Award**, Signature in the Schools reaches approximately 750 students annually through theatre workshops, in-class discussions, an after-school program and the production of an original play.

The annual production of an original play is one of the **Signature in the Schools** program's key components. Students are given the unique opportunity to be part of the process of developing a new play with a professional playwright. They are able to work with a professional director and professional designers on the production. In addition to their public performances, the student-actors also perform five matinees for local students who are bussed in from schools throughout Arlington County. Each student attending a performance receives an in-depth resource guide. Most also receive classroom visits where students explore the worlds of history and theatre and have the chance to rehearse and perform a scene from the play.

Past productions have explored such vital historical topics such as the American Civil War, the Russian Revolution, the Tudor era, World War I, the Holocaust, and the turbulent 1960's.

This season's donors to Signature in the Schools include: John Andelin and Virginia Geoffrey, Arlington Community Foundation, Bank of America, Mike Blank, Barbara and Herman Bluestone, Toni and Skip Burger, William W. and Jane Campbell, Tim Carlton and Jill Walling, Casey Family Fund, Clark-Winchcole Foundation, Dominion, David and Kimberly Durand, Margaret M. Gaffen, Anita H. Gardiner, Ruth Goltzer and Jim Kohlmoos, Shirley and John Gunning, Robert E. Hebda, Deborah Hill and Henry Dunbar, Mr. and Mrs. Edward Hiltz, Virginia Joslyn and Tony Root, Andi Kasarsky, M. Elieen Kenna, Robert L. Kimmins, Judy Thibault Klevins, Steve Kruse, David Martin, Tina M. Martin and Mita M. Schaffer, Faith Miller, Brenda Pommerenke and Larry George, Wendy and Richard Rahm, Share Fund, David S. Shrager Foundation, Sprint, Ellen Spolter in honor of Leila Spolter, Robert J. Steele, Wachovia-Wells Fargo, Washington Forrest Foundation, The Whittaker Family Fund of the Arlington Community Foundation

### **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 / PROXIMITY TO WASHINGTON, DC**

Located in Arlington, Virginia and complete with free parking, Signature Theatre is just 5 miles from the Washington Monument, an estimated 10-15 minute drive according to [googlemaps.com](http://googlemaps.com). Using public transportation, Signature can be reached by the 7, 25 and 25A buses from Pentagon Metro Station or via a \$12 taxi ride from the Pentagon City Metro stop (on both the Blue & Yellow lines) with a taxi stand located in front of the Ritz Carlton Hotel.

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. 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

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