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CONSTRUCTION DELAYS WITH SIGNATURE'S NEW TWO-THEATRE COMPLEX RESULT IN 2005-2006 SEASON CHANGE

- **Assassins to replace previously announced *Into the Woods* as fourth show of 2005-2006 season**
- **Signature to open new theatre in 2006-2007 season with *Into the Woods***

Arlington, VA — Signature Theatre was recently informed that the organization will not be able to move into its new two-theatre complex by the originally scheduled date of May 2006. Sigal Construction, Arlington County's contractors who are overseeing the exterior construction of the building, have pushed back its completion date by eight weeks, prohibiting Signature's team from finishing the theatre in time for the last two shows of the season.

Signature had announced a mid-season move to the new building with a grand opening production of Stephen Sondheim's *Into the Woods*. Selected by Artistic Director Eric Schaeffer as the ideal show to inaugurate the new larger theatre space, Signature must reschedule *Into the Woods* for Signature's 2006-2007 season to give audiences the site-specific production as Schaeffer envisions. In its place, Signature is excited to offer a bold, powerful production of Sondheim's *Assassins*. Giving new meaning to the phrase "killer musical," this gripping, provocative show is a riveting look at the lives, loves, and lunacy of nine infamous American assassins — from John Wilkes Booth to John Hinckley. With music ranging from folk to ragtime to big, Broadway ballads, this musical is one Sondheim's most inventive and exquisitely scored shows. *Assassins* recently enjoyed a critically-acclaimed Broadway run, winning the 2004 Tony Award® for Best Revival of a Musical.

"As often happens with projects of this magnitude, there have been unfortunate delays," explained **Artistic Director Eric Schaeffer**. "I can't deny that the news isn't disappointing to everyone at Signature, but I do promise that the new building will be worth the wait. In the meantime, Signature will continue to make magic in a converted garage for a few months more—just as we have for the last 16 years."

Signature Theatre's new schedule for the final two shows of the current 2005-2006 season is for *Assassins* to run **March 28 to May 14, 2006**. The voyeuristic comedy *The Sex Habits of American Women* will run **June 6 to July 16, 2006**. Both productions will be in Signature's current location at 3806 South Four Mile Run Drive.

During the summer of 2006, Signature will move into its new home and will open its doors to audiences with a grand opening production of Sondheim's *Into the Woods* in September.

Arlington County's invitation for Signature Theatre to join them in becoming an economic and cultural anchor is the first public-private partnership in county history. Signature's new complex is part of the Village at Shirlington expansion. Heralded as "Arlington's new downtown," the area is developing into a vibrant urban village with condominiums, residential-retail buildings, 800 new parking spaces, and entertainment — with the new Signature Theatre at the center of the dynamic scene. In a new four-story building, a branch of the county library will occupy the first floor, and

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Signature will occupy the second, third and fourth floors. Located on South Stafford Street, a new street under construction at the end of South 28th Street, the new theatre/library complex will open onto an art-filled, public plaza. It will be adjacent to a free public parking garage. The County is currently constructing the shell and providing the infrastructure with a total investment of \$5.5 million. Signature is in the midst of a capital campaign raising an additional \$7 million for the build-out and equipping of its interior space.

Signature’s new theatre complex will feature state-of-the-art equipment, expansive office space, and top-notch technical facilities. Most importantly, it will have two fully-equipped, flexible-seating black box theatres, providing for ever-greater opportunities for artistic achievement and community service. Under Eric Schaeffer’s leadership, Signature’s new home will nurture its artistic and organizational expansion while maintaining the uniquely intimate environment that artists and audiences have come to value. The new Signature will still be daring and surprising, but with room for the Signature spirit to grow and thrive.

Signature’s new facility reflects the theatre’s energy and creativity. “Audiences are going to love the parking, flexibility, convenience and comfort of the new building,” said **Managing Director Sam Sweet**, “but Signature’s ongoing spirit of intensity and intimacy will ultimately define the new spaces.” The building itself — a focal point of Shirlington — will have a stunning glass façade attracting the public by making theatergoers visible from the street and plaza below. The interior space will express Signature’s personality:

- **Two intimate performance areas** — a 299-seat black box Mainstage Theatre and a smaller 99-seat black box Stage Two Theatre will share a dramatic lobby.
- The **Mainstage Theatre will house a vestibule**, replicating the current hallway that leads patrons from the reality outside to the magic that waits within the theatre itself.
- **Flexible stages and seating** in both theatres will allow for innovative and unexpected theatrical experiences — a Signature trademark loved by both artists and audiences.
- **State-of-the-art technical capabilities and acoustics** will enhance productions on both stages.

The rest of the theatre complex is designed to accommodate:

- Three rehearsal/classroom spaces
- Scenery and costume shops
- Full-service dressing rooms
- Administrative offices and meeting spaces
- A dramatic, welcoming, full-service lobby
- A street-accessible box office

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Signature Theatre

Signature Theatre is a non-profit professional theatre 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 191 Helen Hayes Awards for excellence in the professional theatre and has been honored with 42 Helen Hayes Awards, including Outstanding Musical in 1992, 1993, 1995, 1997, 2000, 2005 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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