

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**SIGNATURE THEATRE ANNOUNCES NEW ARTISTIC LEADERSHIP POSITION. RICK DESROCHERS HIRED AS ASSOCIATE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR.**

Arlington, VA — Signature Theatre announces the addition of a vital new position to the organization’s artistic leadership. Signature is pleased to have **Rick DesRochers** join the Theatre in the role of **Associate Artistic Director**, a position created to oversee Signature’s ancillary artistic programs, ultimately allowing the opportunity for expanded programming.

**Rick DesRochers** will direct a mainstage production each season along with the popular *Signature in the Park* concert. He will also oversee dramaturgy, new play development, and *Stages*, Signature’s free reading series of new works currently in development at the Theatre.

“Signature is very lucky to have Rick on board,” stated Artistic Director **Eric Schaeffer**. “His expertise in new play development is exactly what I was looking for as Signature continues its commitment to being a national leader of creating and producing new works for the American theatre. Rick is also just the person we need to take the Theatre’s community outreach programming to the next level as we look towards the move into the our new complex in 2006.”

Before coming to Signature, DesRochers served as Literary Director of The Goodman Theatre, Literary Manager of the Joseph Papp Public Theater/New York Shakespeare Festival, and as Artistic Director of Boston’s New Theater, Inc. Rick has had the pleasure of working with such playwrights as Craig Lucas, Rinne Groff, Tracey Scott Wilson, Luis Alfaro, Christopher Walken, Nilo Cruz, Alice Tuan, Jordan Harrison, and Suzan-Lori Parks. Rick has directed and produced plays in theatres nationwide, including the Joseph Papp Public Theater, New York University’s Tisch School of the Arts, Ensemble Studio Theatre, Circle Repertory Theatre and Rude Mechanicals all in New York City; The Goodman Theatre, The Playwrights’ Center of Minneapolis, The Boston Center for the Arts, and the Soho Theatre of London. He has taught directing, performance, and playwriting at New York University, New School University, University of Massachusetts at Amherst, DePaul University, and Roosevelt University. Rick is the author of *Playing Director*, and a new music theater piece, *Faust: A Play For The Music Hall Every Evening and Matinees on Sunday*.

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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 15<sup>th</sup> season under Artistic Director Eric Schaeffer, Signature has been nominated for 176 Helen Hayes Awards for excellence in the professional theatre and has been honored with 37 Helen Hayes Awards, including Outstanding Musical in 1992, 1993, 1995, 1997, 2000, 2004 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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