

# SIGNATURE THEATRE • COMPANY

**SIGNATURE THEATRE COMPANY**  
ANNOUNCES THE CREATION OF **SIGNATURE CENTER**,  
A STATE-OF-THE-ART PERFORMING ARTS COMPLEX  
AT THE WORLD TRADE CENTER SITE

**Signature Theatre Company**, under the direction of Founding Artistic Director James Houghton and Executive Director Kathryn M. Lipuma, announces the creation of a Performing Arts Center that will make a significant contribution to Lower Manhattan's revitalization by establishing a world-class cultural destination designed by renowned architect Frank Gehry. *Signature Center* will reflect the diversity and vitality of downtown and New York at large with exciting programming throughout the year in a multi-stage community center. A home for playwrights as well as artists of multiple disciplines, including dance, music, film, and visual arts, *Signature Center* will include performance venues, a café, a bookstore, classrooms, and additional community spaces that offer a broad array of events, creating a vibrant cultural hub for New Yorkers and visitors alike.

*"It is a tremendous honor for Signature Theatre Company to be a part of the revitalization of this vastly important site," said James Houghton. "This new cultural complex will allow Signature to expand its artistic scope by welcoming theatre artists from all over the world and build a thriving community center year-round. We are thrilled to continue working with Governor Pataki, Mayor Bloomberg, John Cahill, John Whitehead, Gretchen Dykstra, Stefan Pryor, and the Boards and staffs of World Trade Center Memorial Foundation and LMDC to build a Performing Arts Center that will make a powerful contribution to the World Trade Center site."*

**Proposed Facility:**

**MULTIPLE PERFORMANCE VENUES** – The Signature will offer two theatres that range in size from 199-499 and two studios for rehearsals and performances. In addition to Signature's programs, these state-of-the-art spaces will also accommodate other art forms and disciplines.

**BOOKSTORE, CAFÉ AND LOBBY** – The public will enter the center through a spacious lobby incorporating a café, a bookstore, a coffee bar, lounges, and galleries - a welcoming environment that encourages interaction between artists, audiences, and visitors.

**COMMUNITY SPACE** – The performance venues and additional event spaces will serve as an unparalleled community resource for a wide range of activities including arts festivals, business and educational seminars, conferences, student performances, and other community events throughout the year.

**Proposed Programming:**

Each day and evening, visitors will participate in a wide variety of events, from a casual lunchtime reading in the bookstore or café, to a recital in the lobby, to an evening world premiere production by a Signature artist. The center will draw the very best

collaborating theatre artists from all around the world and will attract diverse audiences to gather and experience productions of the highest quality. Major initiatives include:

**MASTER PLAYWRIGHTS PROGRAM** – Signature is deeply committed to our ground-breaking, original Playwright-in-Residence program, an intensive residency that celebrates one writer with an established body of work each year. (See background information below for list of Signature writers.)

**EMERGING PLAYWRIGHTS PROGRAM** – This bold new program will bring early to mid-career writers to Signature for a multi-year rotating residency and will provide them with a supportive environment to build a body of work. The program will produce world premiere plays from each writer-in-residence.

**THE LEGACY PROGRAM** – Signature maintains a strong ongoing relationship with its resident writers and will continue producing work from alumni of both the Master and Emerging Playwrights programs. This program will include two main components. The Premiere Series is modeled after Signature's 2000-2002 10th Anniversary Season and will include World and New York premiere productions. The Signature Series will feature celebrated *signature* works by our distinguished roster of previous resident writers for a new generation of audiences.

**EXCITING COLLABORATIONS** – The thoughtful design of the center will allow artists and audiences to experience performances in unparalleled intimacy and comfort. Signature will invite other theatre companies to utilize all spaces. In addition to theatrical presentations, the spaces will host other programming including a range of dance forms and styles, solo music performances or concerts, and film festivals and screenings, offering exciting new opportunities for designers, directors, actors, dancers, choreographers, composers, and musicians from all over the world.

*"I find it very exciting that the World Trade Center Site will now include Signature Theatre Company," said playwright Arthur Miller, upon Signature's selection.*

*"They have made and continue to make a significant contribution to the American Theatre. Their record as a production company is in my view unmatched for its intelligence and inspired selections of artists whose works they have revived or initiated. It will be a great thing for downtown to have such a vibrant and original company active there."*

**Background Information about Signature Theatre Company:**

Founded in 1991, Signature Theatre Company is the only theatre in the world dedicated to producing season-long explorations of the work of a single Playwright-in-Residence. This singular mission has distinguished the theatre as one of New York's most celebrated and this country's most respected arts organizations.

The Company's past Playwrights-in-Residence include some of America's most renowned writers such as Edward Albee, Lee Blessing, Horton Foote, Maria Irene Fornes, John Guare, Bill Irwin, Adrienne Kennedy, Romulus Linney, Arthur Miller, Sam Shepard, Paula Vogel, and Lanford Wilson.

As a direct result of the Company's work, Signature, its productions and its resident writers have been recognized with the Pulitzer Prize, Lucille Lortel Awards, OBIE Awards,

and Drama Desk Awards, among many other distinctions. In November 2003, Signature was recognized as the Outstanding National Theatre of the Year by the National Theatre Conference.

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