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WORLD PREMIERE! A Murder, A Mystery & A Marriage: A Mark Twain Musical Melodrama By Award-Winners Aaron Posner & James Sugg

For Immediate Release: March 28, 2006

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Delaware Theatre Company will culminate its 27th season, and its 20th year on the Riverfront, with the world premiere of *A Murder, A Mystery & A Marriage: A Mark Twain Musical Melodrama*, by Aaron Posner and James Sugg. The musical, done in a toe-tapping bluegrass style, is a co-production with Round House Theatre in Bethesda, Maryland. Directed by Aaron Posner, *A Murder, A Mystery & A Marriage* begins previews Wednesday, April 26; opens Saturday, April 29; and runs through Sunday, May 14. Tickets are \$25-\$45 and may be purchased by calling the DTC box office at 302.594.1100 or in person at 200 Water Street, Wilmington. Tickets may also be purchased online at www.delawaretheatre.org. *A Murder, A Mystery & A Marriage* is proudly sponsored by Wilmington Trust.

Written and composed by the award-winning pair of Philadelphia artists Aaron Posner and James Sugg, *A Murder, A Mystery & A Marriage* depicts the loves, hopes and foibles of small-town America with the use of bluegrass music. The musical is an adaptation of Mark Twain's short story of the same name, which was written while he was in the midst of writing *Huckleberry Finn* in the mid-1880s. It uses Twain's unique blend of sentiment and irony, and was conceived to be "friendly, informal, straight-from-the-hip and a little bit folksy, very much in keeping with the tone of Twain's narrators," says Posner. "Nothing fancy, nothing too highfalutin'. Just a good tale, well told."

The inspiration for the music in *A Murder, A Mystery & A Marriage* was the unique dynamic of a jug band Posner saw at the Oregon County Fair. "The joy of the playing was first and foremost in their minds," says Posner. "We hope to capture this infectious and playful energy in our production, where the whole cast will be part of the band and will simply step forward to tell the story at hand."

While this is not the first world premiere for DTC, it is the first world premiere musical the company has staged. "We are so pleased to present the world premiere of *A Murder, A*

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Mystery & A Marriage at DTC," says Producing Director Anne Marie Cammarato. "It is vital to my vision for DTC that we contribute regularly to the creation of new American plays, and this piece celebrates American humor and music in an exciting and unique way." This is also the first co-production between DTC and Round House Theatre, its sister theatre in Bethesda, Maryland, which Cammarato feels "represents a great collaboration." Once the show closes on May 14 in Wilmington, it will immediately travel to Round House Theatre where it will run for three weeks beginning May 31.

As it is a co-production, the show's cast is split between the two theatres' areas. The cast includes Ben Dibble (Philadelphia); Sherri Edelen (Laurel, MD); Scott Greer (Philadelphia); Tony Lawton (Philadelphia); Dan Manning (Ellicott City, MD); Thomas Adrian Simpson (Fredericksburg, VA); and Erin Weaver (Philadelphia). The musicians include Jay Ansill, Larry Cohen, Wanamaker Lewis and Andrew Nelson.

Aaron Posner and James Sugg, well-known to the Philadelphia community, are both Barrymore Award winners: Posner for Best New Play for his adaptation of *The Chosen* (1999), and Sugg for Outstanding Sound Design (four-time winner). Posner, an Eisenhower Fellow, is Co-Founder and Resident Director of Philadelphia's award-winning Arden Theatre Company, and freelance director at such theatres as The Folger Shakespeare Theatre, the Actors Theatre of Louisville, Seattle Rep and the Alliance Theatre. In October 2005, Sugg, a member of Pig Iron Theatre Company, was awarded the F. Otto Haas Award for an Emerging Philadelphia Theatre Artist, given to a Philadelphia theatre artist who shows outstanding promise in his or her field and is dedicated to working in the Philadelphia theatre community.

The artistic team behind Posner and Sugg is set designer Tony Cisek; costume designer Kate Turner-Walker; lighting designer James Leitner; choreographer Karma Camp; music director Jay Ansill; and stage manager Sara Tantillo.

A Murder, A Mystery & A Marriage: A Mark Twain Musical Melodrama runs April 26–May 14, 2006. Opening Night is Saturday, April 29. Evening performances are Wednesday through Saturday at 8PM (except 5/5); matinee performances are Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday at 2PM (except 4/26 and 4/29); and a special Friday Early Show on May 5 at 6:30PM. Tickets are \$25–\$45, depending on the performance day and time, with special discounts for students, seniors, and groups of 10 or more. DTC also offers its Bring a Teen program: every adult that purchases a regular ticket can receive one free ticket to bring a teenager (ages 13-19) to the performance. Bring a Teen tickets must be purchased in person at the box office (teenager must be present at time of purchase) one hour prior to the performance.

For more information or to purchase tickets, contact the DTC Box Office at (302) 594-1100 or visit our website: www.delawaretheatre.org.

DTC's 2005 – 2006 Season. Some things you just gotta see! Delaware Theatre Company's 2005-2006 season is sponsored by JPMorgan Chase. Corporate Co-Producer for *A Murder, A Mystery & A Marriage* is Wilmington Trust. Artist transportation provided by Amtrak. This program is made possible, in part, by grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Delaware Division of the Arts, a state agency committed to promoting and supporting the arts in Delaware. The Delaware Division of the Arts provides technical and financial assistance to artists and arts programs and serves as a clearinghouse for information on the arts.