



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**Two River Theater Company**  
presents

# A Midsummer Night's Dream

By **William Shakespeare**  
Directed by **Aaron Posner**

**October 20 – November 8, 2009**

**Red Bank, NJ**—Following a highly successful run at California Shakespeare Theater, **Two River Theater Co.** is proud to present Shakespeare's most magical and mischievous celebration of fools in love: ***A Midsummer Night's Dream***, directed by Two River Artistic Director Aaron Posner.

Says director Posner: "This play is a celebration of the follies and foibles of human beings. Love, sex, power, friendship and jealousy all mix together (with a little supernatural help) to make a magical, musical mess that is practically irresistible." Of his cast he adds, "It is one of the most dynamic and delightful casts I have ever seen. We worked closely together to match Shakespeare's playful and intoxicating spirit. We let that be our guide, and then just had a hell of a good time playing in the theatrical forest we created from our collective imaginations."

This dynamic between the cast has been commented on by reviewers and audience members alike: *The SFist* blog calls them "**a great and harmonious ensemble of a cast**". Nor has the spirit of the creative process gone unnoticed: The Daily Californian has called it "**a magical, creative, and continually**

**surprising production”**. This is Posner’s latest direction of Shakespeare since the widely acclaimed production of *Macbeth* co-directed by Teller in 2008. It is co-produced with California Shakespeare Theater in Orinda, CA. Two River audiences will remember cast members **Erin Weaver** (*Mary’s Wedding*), **Doug Hara** (*Our Town*), **Joseph Harrell** (*ReEntry*), **Richard Ruiz** and **Tara Giordano** (*Frog and Toad*). The cast also includes **Keith Randolph Smith**, **Pegge Johnson**, **Avery Monsen**, **Bradley Mott**, **Duane Noch**, **Lindsey Gates**, **Richard Thieriot**, and **Danny Scheie**.

***A Midsummer Night’s Dream*** begins previews on **Tuesday, October 20**, opens **Saturday, October 24**, and runs through **Sunday, November 8**.

### **Biographies**

**Aaron Posner, Director:** For nearly 20 years Aaron has worked as a director, playwright, teacher, and consultant in the American professional theater. As a co-founder and former artistic director of Arden Theatre Company in Philadelphia, he directed over 40 productions, taught dozens of classes, and created award-winning educational programs. As a freelance director, Aaron has worked at many of the country’s leading regional theaters including Actors Theatre of Louisville, The Folger Theatre, Seattle Repertory Theatre, Arizona Theatre Company, the Alliance, The Children’s Theatre Company and many more. In addition to directing, Aaron is a published playwright and has penned nearly a dozen adaptations of literature. Aaron’s most recent adaptations include *Mark Twain’s A Murder, A Mystery and A Marriage* with music by James Sugg; *My Name is Asher Lev* based on the novel by Chaim Potok; and *Sometimes a Great Notion*, based on the novel by Ken Kesey. Aaron has won Barrymore Awards for directing and playwriting, two Helen Hayes Awards for direction, and is an Eisenhower Fellow. He is originally from Eugene, Oregon and graduated from Northwestern University.

**Lindsey Gates\*, Helena:** Off-Broadway: *Legacy Codes* by Cherylene Lee. Regional: *Legacy Codes*, Hangar Theater; *Big River*, Music Theater of Wichita; West Coast premieres of *Far Away, I Have Loved Strangers*, and *Current Nobody*, Just Theater; and *Whisper From the Book of Etiquette* by Claire Chaffee, Playwrights Foundation. Lake George Theater Lab: *Kitchen Sink Play*, *OTMA*, *Belle of Amherst*, and the American premiere of *Performances* by Brian Friel. Television/Film: “Strangers with Candy”, Comedy Central; “Vamps”, Universal; “L.A. Firefighters”, Fox; “Steam” (written by her husband), and “Lost in Translation”. Ms. Gates is a proud graduate of NYU Tisch School of the Arts (Circle in the Square / Classical Studio).

**Tara Giordano\***, *P.T. Quince*: is delighted to return to Two River Theater where she has appeared in *The Underpants*, *A Year with Frog and Toad*, and has taught for TRTC's educational programs. She has performed at Arena Stage, McCarter Theater, Kennedy Center, New York Theater Workshop, Theater Alliance (*Headsman's Holiday* dir. by Aaron Posner), and others. Recent credits include: Citizen Ruth at the Minetta Lane Theatre, Heidi in *Heidi* at Imagination Stage, *Is He Dead?* at Olney Theater, and a principal role in the independent feature film "YellowBrickRoad". She first studied and performed Shakespeare in high school with Shakespeare and Co. and continued at Middlebury College and beyond.

**Doug Hara\***, *Puck*: is a veteran ensemble member of Chicago's Lookingglass Theatre Company where he has participated in 16 productions including *The Brothers Karamazov*, *Metamorphoses*, *West*, *Eurydice*, *The Arabian Nights*, *Up Against It*, *The Master and Margarita*, and *Lookingglass Hamlet*. Recent credits include *A Prayer for Owen Meany* and *Something Intangible*, Arden Theatre; and *Our Town*, Two River Theater Company. Broadway credits: *Metamorphoses* and *The Boys of Winter*. Off-Broadway: *The Notebooks of Leonardo Da Vinci*, *Metamorphoses*, and *Lookingglass Alice*. Doug has worked with many regional theaters throughout the country including The Goodman Theatre (*Odyssey*, *Journey to the West*), About Face Theatre (*11 Rooms of Proust*), Jellyeye Drum Opera (*Blood Lotus*), The Huntington Theatre, Berkeley Repertory, Seattle Repertory, The Mark Taper Forum, McCarter Theatre, The Margaret Jenkins Dance Company, BAM, The Joyce Theatre, and Second Stage Theater.

**Joseph Harrell**, *Snout*: is honored to be working with Two River Theater Company once again. He received his AS from University of South Carolina and will finish his BS in management at Rutgers Business School in May of 2009. Joseph served in the United States Marine Corps from 1999-2008. He attended The William Esper School in Manhattan NY 2008 and HB Studios in 1997. Recent credits include *ReEntry*, Two River Theater Company; and *Time Remembered* and *The Servant of Two Masters*, University of South Carolina. Joe worked as a military movement coordinator on *ReEntry* as well as *Man=Man* at the Yale School of Drama. Current works include: *ReEntry* at Rutgers University, which will be performed this Veterans Day at Rutgers-Newark to educate faculty and students about combat veterans; and *Happy New Year*, an independent film in which he is a production associate, an actor, and a military advisor.

**Pegge Johnson\***, *Titania/Hippolyta*: Regional credits include: *Macbeth* (Lady Macbeth), *Richard III* (Queen Elizabeth), and *Romeo and Juliet* (Lady Capulet), Elm Shakespeare Company; *All's Well That*

*End's Well* (Mariana) and *Ghosts* (Regina u/s), Hartford Stage Company; *Jitney* (Booster's Woman), Crossroads Theatre/tour; *John Dory* and *Combination Skin*, Company One; Long Wharf Theatre, Syracuse Stage, Theater Works (Hartford), and The National Black Theatre Festival. She has worked in independent film, regional commercials, print, and voiceover. Other performance work include a one-woman historical performance piece based on the life of Rebecca Primus, commissioned by the CT Historical Society and the Hartford Black History Project; a multi-character, one-woman touring play about Prudence Crandall, produced by Young Audiences of CT and the Anti-Defamation League; and a decade-long association with The Performing Ensemble, a theater company dedicated to producing work of the African Diaspora and community education. She holds a BA in Theater. Many thanks to the muses!

**Bradley Mott\***, **Snug/Egeus**: Bradley is making his TRTC debut with *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. In fact, Bradley is a newly transplanted "New Jerseyonian", having spent the last 30 years working as an actor and educator throughout the Midwest and Los Angeles. Currently, he teaches acting to the NYU students at CAP21 Studios.

**Avery Monsen\***, **Lysander**: Regional: Sampson, Balthasar, and Peter in *Romeo and Juliet*; Manny Munroe in the workshop production of *The Pastures of Heaven*; ensemble member, *King Lear* at California Shakespeare Theater. Prior to that, he was seen in *Magic Forest Farm* at Marin Theatre Company, where he also appeared in the school tour of *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*. He is an artistic associate at Cutting Ball Theater, performing in their productions of *Victims of Duty*, *Endgame*, and *The Taming of the Shrew*. He recently graduated from Oberlin College, where he received his B.A. with high honors in theater. He has also trained at the Moscow Art Theater and with the Upright Citizens Brigade (L.A.).

**Duane Noch\***, **Flute**: Duane is thrilled to be returning to the TRTC stage. Previously, Duane has played in *Light Up the Sky*, *Machinal*, and *Salome*. Regional credits include: *Twelfth Night*, Virginia Stage Co.; *Almost, Maine*, Electric Theater Co.; *It's a Wonderful Life*, Stamford Center for the Arts; *The Laramie Project*, at both TheaterWorks, Hartford and New Jersey Repertory Co.; *Hamlet*, Cleveland Theater Project; and *I Hate Hamlet*, Cider Mill Playhouse. TV credits include guest starring roles on: "Law & Order"; "Third Watch" and "Another World". Duane has been in six commercials and in several independent films including: "The Sea", "Nippy Ray", "Night Falls Fast", "The Great Adventure" and

“Playing Doctor”. For the past two seasons, Duane has enjoyed creating scenery for Two River Theater Co. as the Master Carpenter.

**Richard Ruiz\***, **Starveling/Philostrate**: Off Broadway: Richard appeared as Antonio in *Two Gentlemen of Verona the Musical* for the Public Theater’s Shakespeare in Central Park. Some regional theatre favorites include Nicely-Nicely in *Guys and Dolls*, Long Wharf Theatre; Lady Enid/Nicodemus in *The Mystery of Irma Vep*, Seattle’s Intiman Theatre; Bergetto in *’Tis Pity She’s a Whore*, Baltimore Center Stage; and Hysterium in *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*, Arden Theatre in Philadelphia. National Tours include Herman in *Sweet Charity*, Officer Barrel in *Urinetown*, Sancho in *Man of La Mancha* and a European Tour of *Jesus Christ Superstar* as King Herod.

**Danny Scheie\***, **Bottom**: Regional: *Twelfth Night* (as Feste), *An Ideal Husband*, and *Pericles*, California Shakespeare Theater. Previous Cal Shakes credits include Arlecchino in *The Triumph of Love*, Foppington in *Restoration Comedy* (which he also performed at the Old Globe in San Diego), Mercutio in *Romeo and Juliet* (Dean Goodman Award), *The Merchant of Venice*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, and *Nicholas Nickleby*. This year he played Nero in Amy Freed’s *You, Nero* at South Coast Rep and at Berkeley Rep, where he previously appeared in *Cloud Nine* and *Fêtes de la Nuit*. He received Critics Circle awards for acting (the Magic and Rhino) and directing (Aurora). He has also acted/directed at Yale Rep, Trinity Rep, Pasadena Playhouse, Campo Santo, Asolo Rep, TheatreWorks, Marin, The Zephyr (L.A.), Seattle Shakespeare, A Noise Within, and, for 13 seasons, Shakespeare Santa Cruz (Artistic Director 1992-95). He joined Actors’ Equity as Damis in *Tartuffe* at the Los Angeles Theater Center and holds a PhD from Cal.

**Keith Randolph Smith\***, **Oberon/Theseus**: Broadway: *Come Back Little Sheba*; *Salome*; *King Hedley II*; *Piano Lesson*. Off-Broadway: *First Breeze of Summer*, Signature Theatre; *Fabulation*, Playwrights Horizons; *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, NYSF/Delacorte; *Jitney*, Second Stage; *Holiday Heart*, Manhattan Theatre Club; *Speak Truth to Power*, Culture Project; *Before It Hits Home*, Public Theater. Regional: *Resurrection*, Philadelphia Theatre Co.; *The Dreams of Sarah Breedlove*, Goodman; *Tartuffe*, Hartford Stage; *Heliotrope Bouquet*, La Jolla Playhouse; *Coming of the Hurricane*, Arena Stage; *In Walks Ed*, Long Wharf; *Les Trois Dumas*, Indiana Rep; *Strike/Slip*, *The As-If Body Loop*, Actors Theatre of Louisville. Film/TV: Spike Lee’s *X* and *Girl Six*; *Path to Paradise* (HBO); *The Warrior Class*; *Fallout*; *Oreos With Attitude*; *Three Windows*; *Law and Order* (all three shows); *I’ll Fly Away*; *Cosby*; *NY Undercover*; *One Life*

*to Live; All My Children*. Training: American Academy of Dramatic Arts (NY).

**Richard Thieriot\***, *Demetrius*: is a graduate of UC Santa Cruz, the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Arts, and the National Theater Conservatory. NY credits include: the Traveling Salesman in *Eccentricities of a Nightingale*, Actors Company Theatre; Jody in *Lonely Planet*, Studio 12 Ensemble; Henry Harry in *Brilliant Traces* and Pyotr in *The Philistines*, New Bridge Productions; Westmoreland in *Henry IV I & II*, York Shakespeare Company; Astolfo in *Life is a Dream*, Columbia Graduate School. Regional credits include: Henry Carver in *Design for Living*, Shakespeare Theatre, DC; Elwood P. Dowd in *Harvey*, and Donald in *You Can't Take It with You*, Denver Theater Center; Florindo in *The Servant of Two Masters* and Marc Antony in *Julius Caesar* Colorado Shakespeare Festival; Sylvius in *As You Like It* and Angus in *Engaged*, Shakespeare Santa Cruz.

**Erin Weaver\***, *Hermia*: Previous shows include Mary in *Mary's Wedding*, Mary in *A Murder, A Mystery & A Marriage*, and Emily in *Our Town*, Two River Theater Company; Miranda in *The Tempest* and Thomasina in *Arcadia*, Folger Shakespeare Theatre; Marianne in *The Miser* and five holiday pantos, People's Light & Theater; Rapunzel in *Into the Woods*, Arden Theater; Anna in *Syncopation*, Act II Playhouse; and Cossette/Eponine in the First National Tour of *Les Miserables*. Ms. Weaver is an Honors Graduate from the University of the Arts with a BFA in Theater, a five-time nominee for Philadelphia's Barrymore Award, and a proud resident of Middletown, New Jersey.

*\*Denotes a member of Actors' Equity Association.*

The creative team is made up of **Brian Sidney Bembridge** (set designer) who was most recently at Two River Theater Co. designing *Melissa Arctic*, **Olivera Gajic** (costumes), who designed the costumes for *Heartbreak House* here at TRTC, **Peter West** (lighting designer) and **Andre Pleuss** (sound). **Domenique Lozano** (Vocal/Text Coach), **Philippa Kelly** (Production Dramaturg), and **Dave Maier** (Fight Director) from California Shakespeare Theater round out the company.

*A Midsummer Night's Dream* is scheduled to run **Tuesday, October 20** through **Sunday, November 8**. **Tickets are \$35 - \$61**. Get more information online at [www.trtc.org](http://www.trtc.org), call **732.345.1400**, or visit the **Two River Theater Company Box Office** in Red Bank, located at 21 Bridge Avenue. Box Office Hours: Monday-Saturday: 10am-6pm; Sunday: 12pm-5pm.

TRTC's Artistic Department and actor Danny Scheie (Bottom) will lead **Before Play**. This **pre-show discussion series** is scheduled 45 minutes prior to every performance and will offer an in-depth look at the production. **Post-show discussions** are scheduled following the 8pm performance on **Wednesday, September 23** and following each of the **Sunday matinees: September 20, 27 and October 4** at 3pm, as well as **Wednesday, September 30** at 1pm. There are five **student matinee performances** scheduled on **October 27** at 10am (SOLD OUT), **November 3** at 10am (SOLD OUT), and on **November 10, 11, and 12** at 10am. **Discounted group rates** are available through the Box Office.

TRTC is accessible to people with disabilities, including wheelchair accessibility, assistive listening devices and large print programs at every performance. Accessible seating is available by reservation. For more information call the Box Office at **732.345.1400**.

#### **CALENDAR NOTICE**

##### **Events for *A Midsummer Night's Dream*:**

**Tuesday, October 20** – Community preview performance. More than 150 volunteers from Monmouth County Arts Council, Breast Friends Forever, Jackson Ice Hockey Club, and the American Cancer Society will be treated to the first public performance.

**Saturday, October 24** – Opening Night performance of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and post-show celebration.

**Sunday, October 25** – **FYI Series**: TRTC and Monmouth University collaborate to host a series of interactive scholarly conversations. These panel discussions with scholars, experts and artists are designed to ignite passionate and thought-provoking dialogue, discourse and further investigation.

**Wednesday, October 28, 8pm; Sunday, November 1, 3pm; Wednesday, November 4, 1pm** – **Post-show discussions** led by a member of the artistic staff will follow each performance.

**Tuesday, October 29, 7pm**: Free screening of Aaron Posner and Teller's *Macbeth*. Reservations encouraged. RSVP to the box office at 732.345.1400.

**Wednesday, November 4** – An **audio-described performance** is scheduled at 1pm. Tickets are \$14 for those needing audio-description. Call 732.345.1400.

**Sunday, November 8** – “**So What Was That?**” Brand new this season, join TRTC Executive Producer Robert Rechnitz for wine, cheese, and a lively exploration of the play. Whether you were amazed or confused, enthralled or appalled, this is the conversation for you.

Members of the press are invited to the opening night performance of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* on **Saturday, October 24 at 8pm**. Please schedule tickets through Sean P. Murphy, Marketing Manager, by phone at **732.345.1400 ext. 834** or via email at [smurphy@trtc.org](mailto:smurphy@trtc.org).

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**TWO RIVER THEATER COMPANY** is a professional not-for-profit regional theater company providing outstanding plays and educational programs for audiences of central New Jersey and beyond. TRTC was founded in 1994 by Robert and Joan Rechnitz and over the past 15 seasons has grown into one of the most vital and dynamic arts organizations in the region. Since opening its new theater in May of 2005, TRTC has hosted a number of luminaries and award winners, including Bruce Springsteen, Philip Seymour Hoffman, Stephen Colbert, Olympia Dukakis, Jackson Browne, Jon Bon Jovi, Edward Albee, Sheldon Harnick, and the African Children’s Choir. The company received “Theatre of the Year” awards from the New Jersey Theatre Alliance in 2006, and from *The Star-Ledger* in both 2006 and 2008. At the July 2009 meeting of the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, TRTC was designated as a Major Impact Organization. TRTC is supported in part by grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, the New Jersey State Council on the Arts/Dept. of State, a partner agency of the National Endowment for the Arts, and contributions from hundreds of local and national corporations, foundations, businesses and individuals. Two River Theater Company is a member of Theatre Communications Group (TCG), the national organization for the American theatre. TRTC is a member of LORT (League of Resident Theatres) and the New Jersey Theatre Alliance.