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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**TWO RIVER THEATER PRESENTS ITS FOURTH ANNUAL CROSSING BORDERS  
FESTIVAL OF NEW PLAYS BY LATINO WRITERS, CONVERSATIONS WITH ARTISTS,  
AND AN OUTDOOR NEIGHBORHOOD PARTY**

**Jerry Ruiz curates the four-day festival, which will run August 14-17 and include plays  
by Maria Alexandria Beech, Hilary Bettis, Raúl Castillo, and Tanya Saracho. All events  
are free; for information, patrons should call 732.345.1400 or visit [tworivertheater.org](http://tworivertheater.org)**

RED BANK, NJ— Two River Theater, under the leadership of Artistic Director John Dias and Managing Director Michael Hurst, announces the lineup for its fourth annual Crossing Borders festival of new plays by Latino writers. Over the course of the festival, which will run August 14-17, Two River will present readings of four plays, including one that will be read in both English and Spanish; live music and an outdoor neighborhood party; and conversations with artists. Reservations are encouraged; patrons should contact the Two River Theater box office at 732.345.1400 or visit [www.tworivertheater.org](http://www.tworivertheater.org).

Two River Theater launched the Crossing Borders festival in 2011 to create opportunities for Latino theater artists and foster a stronger relationship between the theater and Red Bank's Latino community. In addition to developing new plays that have gone on to full productions at Two River and elsewhere, the festival has helped spark other audience engagement initiatives, including Nuestro Barrio, an ongoing series of conversations and storytelling workshops created and led by playwright Tanya Saracho (whose work has been part of all four festivals) and curator/director Jerry Ruiz.

A company of writers, directors, and actors will be in residence at Two River throughout this year's four-day festival. All readings will take place in Two River's Marion Huber Theater. Each reading will be followed by a reception in Two River's Victoria J. Mastrobuono Library.

“This year’s collection of Crossing Borders plays boasts an impressive group of forceful Latina protagonists,” says festival curator Jerry Ruiz. “These characters are truly remarkable and compelling, as they are navigating and negotiating their identities within a cultural context that sometimes places women in restrictive, traditional roles. Our Crossing Borders heroines also give us something that has been absent far too often in American pop culture portrayals: strong Latin women that defy and shatter stereotypes, make bold decisions, and determine their own destinies.”

**Thursday, August 14 from 5:30-7:30 pm**  
**Outdoor Neighborhood Party on the Two River Plaza**

Two River Theater will kick off Crossing Borders with opportunities to meet the artists involved in the festival; live music; and food from local restaurants.

**Thursday, August 14 at 7:30 pm**  
**BETWEEN YOU, ME AND THE LAMPSHADE**  
**By Raúl Castillo**  
**Directed by Felix Solis**

Amparo, a Mexican woman, has been wounded while crossing the border illegally. When she drags herself into the trailer of Jesse, a tough and independent woman living in South Texas, Jesse surprises herself by taking Amparo in. As Amparo recuperates in Jesse’s closet, Jesse has to go to increasingly complicated lengths to hide her secret from the various people in her life, including a border protection agent with a crush and her web-addicted teenage son.

Raúl Castillo was born in Texas and grew up on both sides of the border. His play *Two Tears in a Bucket* was read in the first Crossing Borders festival. Also an actor, he now stars on HBO’s *Looking*.

**Friday, August 15 at 7:30 pm – English-language reading**  
**Sunday, August 17 at 3 pm – Spanish-language reading**  
**GOOD FRIENDS**

**By Maria Alexandria Beech**  
**Directed by Elena Araoz**

Gertrudis and Petra, mother and daughter, live together in a nice apartment on the Upper West Side of Manhattan. They’re spending the evening as they often do, chatting and complaining about the state of their lives, when their downstairs neighbors Josie and Rock stop by to introduce themselves. Over the course of a funny, slightly awkward night, they’ll see if they can navigate the transition from merely being people who live near each other to being friends.

Maria Alexandria Beech is a playwright, bookwriter, and lyricist. Born in Anaco, Venezuela, she is now based in New York. She translated Mexican playwright Bárbara Colio’s *Ropes* for last year’s Crossing Borders festival.

**Saturday, August 16 at 3 pm**  
**MALA HIERBA**  
**By Tanya Saracho**  
**Directed by Jerry Ruiz**

Liliana is seemingly living the good life. The beautiful trophy wife of a rich and powerful man, she's living in a big house in Texas with an ample closet and shiny new car, her family taken care of. But underneath the veneer of her sparkling life lurks a dark ugly reality. When an old friend arrives to offer her a different path, Liliana must find the balance between happiness, comfort, and survival.

Tanya Saracho was born in Mexico, spent her adolescence in South Texas, and made her name as a playwright in Chicago's theater scene. She now splits her time between Chicago and Los Angeles, where she writes for HBO's *Girls* and *Looking*. Her plays *Song for the Disappeared*, *Enfrascada*, and *El Nogalar* (a re-telling of Chekhov's *The Cherry Orchard*) were read in the first three Crossing Borders festivals.

**Saturday, August 16 at 7:30 pm**

**THE GHOSTS OF LOTE BRAVO**

**By Hilary Betis**

**Directed by Jerry Ruiz**

Poor factory worker Juanda lives in Juarez, Mexico, where hundreds of women have disappeared or been murdered in the past 20 years. When Juanda's daughter Raquel becomes one of the victims, Juanda becomes increasingly desperate to discover what happened. Despite warnings from her friends, Juanda sacrifices more and more to La Santa Muerte, the saint of death, to look into her daughter's past. What she discovers threatens to blow her world apart.

Hilary Bettis is a playwright and screenwriter. Her family settled in El Paso, Texas from Monclova, Coahuila, Mexico and Villa de Guadalupe, San Luis Potosí, Mexico. She grew up all over the United States and is now based in Brooklyn.

*Schedule subject to change; for additional information, visit [www.tworivertheater.org](http://www.tworivertheater.org).*

Two River Theater is supported in part by funds from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, a division within the Department of State and a partner agency of the National Endowment for the Arts, the Columbus Foundation, The Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, The Shubert Foundation, Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, The Stone Foundation of New Jersey, Monmouth University, The Blanche and Irving Laurie Foundation, Durso Wealth Management Group at Morgan Stanley, Monmouth Medical Center Foundation, Wells Fargo, Investors Bank, Brookdale Community College, The Horizon Foundation for New Jersey, William T. Morris Foundation, Springpoint Senior Living Foundation at the Atrium at Navesink Harbor, the New Jersey Council for the Humanities, and many other generous foundations, corporations and individuals.

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**Two River Theater**, under the leadership of Artistic Director John Dias and Managing Director Michael Hurst, creates great American theater performed by award-winning artists. We produce an eight-play season on two stages, including American and world masterpieces, and new plays and musicals. Two River Theater offers new-play commissions and artistic development activities that support the most adventurous artists in the American theater; invites its audience to be part of the creative process through readings and open rehearsals; and cultivates students and young people to participate in innovative arts-education programs and become a new generation of theatergoers. Founded in 1994 by Joan and Dr. Robert M. Rechnitz, Two River Theater is easily accessible by car, train, or bus, with great restaurants and shopping within walking distance of the theater. For more information, visit [tworivertheater.org](http://tworivertheater.org) or call 732.345.1400.