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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 14, 2015

TWO RIVER THEATER CONCLUDES ITS 2014/15 SEASON WITH THE HIGHEST-GROSSING PRODUCTION IN ITS 21-YEAR HISTORY AND AN 18% INCREASE IN TICKET SALES REVENUE OVER THE PREVIOUS SEASON; HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR INCLUDE THREE WORLD-PREMIERE PRODUCTIONS, TWO OF WHICH THE THEATER COMMISSIONED

RED BANK, NJ—Two River Theater, under the leadership of Artistic Director John Dias and Managing Director Michael Hurst, has concluded its 2014/15 Season, which included the highest-grossing production in the theater’s 21-year history: Lerner & Loewe’s *Camelot*, directed by David Lee with music direction and orchestrations by Steve Orich and choreography by Mark Esposito. Performed with a streamlined book and with a stripped-down cast of eight actors and eight musicians, the production received critical raves; in the *Wall Street Journal*, Terry Teachout called it “the best *Camelot* I’ve seen, hands down.”

Other highlights of the past season include the following achievements:

- Two River produced three world premieres in its spring season of all-new work: *Guadalupe in the Guest Room* by Tony Meneses, directed by Daniella Topol, and two productions that the theater commissioned: *Your Blues Ain’t Sweet Like Mine*, written and directed by Ruben Santiago-Hudson, and *Be More Chill*, a new musical with music and lyrics by Joe Iconis and book by Joe Tracz, based on the acclaimed 2004 novel by Ned Vizzini, directed by Stephen Brackett with choreography by Chase Brock.
- Rounding out the season were two comedies: Molière’s *The School for Wives*, translated into English verse by Richard Wilbur, directed by Mark Wing-Davey; and Alan Ayckbourn’s *Absurd Person Singular*, directed by Jessica Stone.

- Total ticket sales revenue for the season increased 18% over the previous year and total attendance increased by 10%. *Be More Chill* attracted numerous new patrons and patrons under the age of 30 to the theater: 51% of paid single-ticket buyers were brand new to the theater, and 60% of tickets sold to patrons under age 30 were brand new to the theater. In her *Star-Ledger* review of *Be More Chill*, Ronni Reich noted that “for teens as well as adults looking for nostalgic, lighthearted fun from a talented team, it stands to have a bright future.” Overall, there was a 215% increase in tickets sold to patrons under age 30 throughout the season compared to the past four seasons.
- The Doris Duke Charitable Foundation awarded the theater a generous grant of \$125,000 to support *Be More Chill* and foster an ongoing relationship between the theater and the team of Iconis and Tracz with a commission for a new work. Two River was one of only five theaters in the country awarded this honor in through the DDCF’s new Theatre Commissioning and Production Initiative, which supports large-scale work by American playwrights and encourages long-term relationships between theaters and writers.
- In addition to Iconis and Tracz, the theater made new commissions to playwright Tanya Saracho and the team of composer/lyricist Daniel Maté and bookwriter Marshall Paillet. Other commissions currently in development include works by Madeleine George, Lisa Kron, Tony Meneses, and Martin Moran. Additional new-play development activities during the season included separate week-long artist residencies with Clubbed Thumb and NYU’s Graduate Musical Theatre Writing program.
- Two River’s Nosotros program, which fosters a closer relationship between the theater and its Latino neighbors through the support of the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation’s Building Demand for the Arts program, included seven community workshops with playwright Tanya Saracho and director Jerry Ruiz. Among the community participants were Red Bank High School’s Source Latina Girls’ Group and Casa Freehold, a non-profit that advocates for and works with day laborers in the local area.
- Also through Nosotros, Two River created new opportunities for Red Bank’s Latino community to attend the theater, offering Spanish-captioned performances of *Camelot*, *Guadalupe in the Guest Room* and *Your Blues Ain’t Sweet Like Mine*, and a free Spanish-language performance of its holiday show for young people, *The Very Hungry Caterpillar and Other Eric Carle Favorites*.
- In April, the theater continued its popular A Little Shakespeare program with a sold-out 75-minute version of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*—adapted and directed by Jason McDowell-Green, designed by professional artists, and performed by high school students from six area schools—that was performed on the Marion Huber stage. All of Two River’s Education initiatives, which also include Metro Scholars, TheaterWorks, No Seats Empty, and No Seats Empty 2.0, were augmented by opportunities for enhanced learning including curriculum support, in-school residencies, pre-show workshops, and/or post-show discussions.
- For the fifth consecutive year, Two River was awarded Major Arts Institution designation by the New Jersey State Council on the Arts for achieving the highest standard of excellence as recognized by its peers.

- During the season, Two River's Twitter following grew to more than 4500, its Instagram following to more than 1200, and its Facebook following to just under 10k. The theater's videos on Facebook had a combined total of nearly 250,000 views.

SPONSORSHIP

This season Two River Theater was 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 Greater Kansas City Community Foundation, The Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, The Shubert Foundation, Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, The Blanche and Irving Laurie Foundation, The Stone Foundation of New Jersey, Monmouth University, The Harold and Mimi Steinberg Charitable Trust, Durso Wealth Management Group at Morgan Stanley, The Mary Owen Borden Foundation, The Unterberg Children's Hospital, Monmouth Medical Center Foundation, Riverview Medical Center, Wells Fargo, Investors Bank, The Horizon Foundation for New Jersey, William T. Morris Foundation, Springpoint Senior Living Foundation at the Atrium at Navesink Harbor, US Trust, The Jorgensen Foundation, Brookdale Community College, and many other generous foundations, corporations and individuals. In-Kind support includes The Molly Pitcher Inn/Oyster Point Hotel and Courtyard Marriot.

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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 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 or call 732.345.1400.