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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Two River Theater Company
presents

The Underpants

By Carl Sternheim • Adapted by Steve Martin
Directed by Jackson Gay
May 2 – May 27, 2007

Red Bank, NJ – From May 2 through May 27, Two River Theater Company will present **Steve Martin's** outrageously funny adaptation of **Carl Sternheim's** German classic farce *The Underpants*. *The Underpants* recounts the trials that befall a young housewife after her underpants fall down before the townspeople at a procession of the king. The incident incites a public scandal and awakens the passions of some determined new suitors—much to the dismay of her suspicious husband. Originally scheduled to run through May 20, *The Underpants* was extended for an extra week (through May 27) of performances months ago due to early interest and ticket sales volume.

Steve Martin is a celebrated writer, actor and performer. His film credits include *Roxanne*, *Father of the Bride*, *Parenthood*, *L.A. Story* and *Bowfinger*, for which he also wrote the screenplay. He's won Emmys for his television writing and two Grammys for comedy albums. In addition to a play, *Picasso at the Lapine Agile*, he has written a best selling collection of comic pieces, *Pure Drivel*, and a bestselling novella, *Shopgirl*. His adaptation of *The Underpants* has been hailed by *The New York Times* as "an ambitious amalgam of comic book and social commentary, made out of sex jokes, slamming doors, and sophisticated repartee...Valiantly eccentric...Martin shares the time-honored belief in the seriousness of silliness."

The director of *The Underpants*, **Jackson Gay**, (*Stay at Rattlestick Playwrights Theater*, *Tock Tick* for Prospect Theater, *Master Disaster* and *The Intelligent Design of Jenny Chow* for Atlantic Theater Company) talks about her take on the show: "I'm a big fan of early 20th Century German theater. I enjoy the dark, ferocious humor and the theatricality of the era. The opportunity to direct Steve Martin's adaptation of the Sternheim play was just too delicious to believe. His light, sexually playful, irreverent sensibility was refreshing. While Martin never strays from the story, he lightens the original, providing us with a more sublime treatment of the one common theme that concerned them both—the all too human desire to overcome a haunting kind of emptiness through status and fame, and through the intense desire to be known. And it's very funny."

The cast of seven will be led by **David B. Heuvelman** (Off Broadway: *Treason*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *Hamlet*) and **Tara Giordano** (*When the World Was Green*, *Roald Dahl's Willy Wonka*) portraying husband and wife, Theo and Louise Maske. Louise's suitors will be played by **Erik Lochtefeld** (Mary Zimmerman's *Metamorphoses*, *The Glass Menagerie* with Rita Moreno) and **Cody Nickell** (regional: *The Pillowman*, *Crime and Punishment*, and *Outrage*). **Geddeth Smith** (TRTC's *A Delicate Balance*) returns to TRTC to play Klinghoffer. **Marcia Saunders** (two time Emmy Award winner, 30 year company member of People's Light & Theatre Company) will play nosy neighbor Gertrude Deuter. Rounding out the cast is Rumson resident **Joe Russo** who will play the King. **Russo**, a visual and performing arts teacher at Red Bank Regional High School recently named Teacher of the Year, will be making his TRTC debut.

The creative team includes scenic designer **Aleksandra Maslik**, costume designer **Jessica Ford**, lighting designer **Matthew Richards** (TRTC's *Arms and the Man*, *Old Wicked Songs*, and *Salome*), and sound designer/composer **Dr. Greg Wilder**.

The Underpants begins previews on **Wednesday, May 2**; opens **Saturday, May 5**; and runs through **Sunday, May 27**. **Tickets are \$30 - \$54** and are available by calling the TRTC Box Office at **732.345.1400**, online at www.trtc.org or by visiting the Box Office at 21 Bridge Avenue in Red Bank.

Before Play, TRTC's **free, pre-show discussion series**, is scheduled 45 minutes prior to every performance. This window into the creative process will be hosted by two members of *The Underpants* cast who will be talking about comic acting – how to be funny while staying true to the character and the story.

Post-show discussions are scheduled following the 8pm performance on Wednesday, May 9 and following the matinees on Sunday, May 13 at 3pm and Wednesday, May 16 at 1pm. A **student matinee performance** is scheduled at 10am on Tuesday, May 8. **Discounted group rates** are available through the Box Office or by calling TRTC's Director of Sales Sydney Mehrlander at 732.345.1400 ext 813.

TRTC is accessible to people with disabilities, including wheelchair accessibility, assisted 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 RELATED TO THE UNDERPANTS:

Wednesday, May 2 – Community preview performance sponsored by Zager, Fuchs PC. More than 80 local teachers will be treated to the first public performance of *The Underpants*.

Wednesday, May 2; Thursday, May 3; and Friday, May 4 – TRTC will participate in Red Bank's Paint the Town Pink promotion to help raise awareness and funds for cancer research.

Tuesday, May 8 – Student matinee performance at 10am. A post-show discussion with the cast will follow the performance. Tickets are \$9 per student and may be reserved by calling Kate Cordaro at 732.345.1400 ext 814.

Sunday, May 13 – TRTC will be **celebrating Mother's Day** at the 3pm matinee performance. Patrons will attend Before Play, be treated with champagne and petit fours, see the performance of *The Underpants*, and then stay after the performance for a post-show discussion with the cast. Call 732.345.1400.

Thursday, May 17 – An **audio-described performance** is scheduled at 8pm. Tickets are \$10 for those needing audio description. Call 732.345.1400.

Friday, May 25 – In conjunction with the New Jersey Theatre Alliance, TRTC will host **Theatre Rocks!** following the 8pm performance. For \$25, young professionals (must be 21 years) will see the show then stay for a **Dance Your Pants Off!** party. Affair 2 Remember DJ's will provide the music and catering is by 2Senza.

Friday, May 25 – An **American Sign Language Interpreted performance** is scheduled at 8pm. Reservations required. Call 732.345.1400.

WHERE:

Two River Theater Company
21 Bridge Street
Red Bank, NJ 07701

WHEN:

May 2 – May 27, 2007

Members of the reviewing press are invited to the opening night performance on Saturday, May 5 at 8pm. Please schedule tickets through Jayme Powers by phone at **732.345.1400 ext. 830** or via email at jpowers@trtc.org.

WHO:

Written by **Carl Sternheim**
Adapted by **Steve Martin**
Directed by **Jackson Gay**
Scenic Design by **Aleksandra Maslik**
Costume Design by **Jessica Ford**
Lighting Design by **Matthew Richards**
Sound Design / Composition by **Dr. Greg Wilder**

CAST:

Tara Giordano – Louise Maske
David B. Heuvelman – Theo Maske
Erik Lochtefeld – Benjamin Cohen
Cody Nickell – Frank Versati
Joe Russo – The King
Marcia Saunders – Gertrude Deuter
Geddeth Smith – Klingelhoff

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