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**TWO RIVER THEATER ANNOUNCES ITS 2015/16 SEASON, WHICH WILL LAUNCH WITH AUGUST WILSON'S SEVEN GUITARS, DIRECTED BY BRANDON J. DIRDEN, AND STEPHEN SONDHEIM, BURT SHEVELOVE AND LARRY GELBART'S A FUNNY THING HAPPENED ON THE WAY TO THE FORUM, CHOREOGRAPHED BY DENIS JONES AND DIRECTED BY JESSICA STONE**

**ARTISTS WORKING AT TWO RIVER THEATER THIS SEASON INCLUDE BARBARA ANDRES, MARIA ALEXANDRIA BEECH, BÁRBARA COLIO, JACK CUMMINGS III, RINDE ECKERT, JONATHAN FOX, ROBERT RECHNITZ, LISA ROTHE, DAVID SCHWEIZER, AND KENNETH STUNKEL, AND PRESENTATION HOUSE THEATRE'S PRODUCTION OF MAURICE SENDAK'S WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE**

RED BANK, NJ— Two River Theater, under the leadership of Artistic Director John Dias and Managing Director Michael Hurst, announces the lineup of productions for its 2015/16 Season. The season will launch in September with August Wilson's *Seven Guitars*, directed by Brandon J. Dirden and will include the musical *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*, directed by Jessica Stone; a new music-theater production of Shakespeare's *Pericles* created by Rinde Eckert and David Schweizer; and the Transport Group's critically acclaimed production of *I Remember Mama*, directed by Jack Cummings III.

New works include the world premiere of *Lives of Reason* by Robert Rechnitz and Kenneth Stunkel, directed by Jonathan Fox, and the American premiere of Mexican playwright Barbara Colio's *Ropes*, translated into English by Maria Alexandria Beech and directed by Lisa Rothe.

Season Subscriptions are on sale now at 732.345.1400 or 21 Bridge Avenue, Red Bank, NJ. Subscribers save 25% on tickets, receive prime seating and a number of additional benefits. Visit [tworivertheater.org](http://tworivertheater.org) for more details. Ticket prices for individual shows range from \$15 to \$65.

“The 2015/16 season is built around the theme of family,” says Artistic Director John Dias. “Both in the content of the plays, which each deal with the complicated bonds between families—those you are born to and those you build within a community—and for Two River Theater itself. We are welcoming back several artists who are part of our family, and introducing several we have long wanted to bring into the fold. We have always believed that theater is a place for artists and audiences to come together and examine and celebrate the bonds that connect us as humans, and Managing Director Michael Hurst and I are proud that our season will be full of these rich opportunities.”

### TWO RIVER THEATER'S 2015/16 SEASON

**August Wilson's SEVEN GUITARS**

**Directed by Brandon J. Dirden**

**Rechnitz Theater**

**September 12-October 4, 2015**

**Press Opening: September 18**

Two River Theater opens its season with **August Wilson's *Seven Guitars***, Two River's third American Century Cycle production following its acclaimed productions of *Jitney* and *Two Trains Running*. *Seven Guitars* takes audiences to Pittsburgh, 1948, where local blues guitarist Floyd “Schoolboy” Barton sits on the edge of stardom. **Brandon J. Dirden** is making his directorial debut with this production. As an actor, Dirden has appeared at Two River in Ruben Santiago-Hudson's *Your Blues Ain't Sweet Like Mine*, *Topdog/Underdog* by Suzan-Lori Parks, and August Wilson's *Jitney*. On Broadway, he played Martin Luther King, Jr., opposite Bryan Cranston's Lyndon Johnson in the Tony Award-winning *All the Way*. His Off-Broadway credits include *The Piano Lesson*, for which he received Obie, Theatre World, and AUDELCO Awards, and Drama League and Lortel nominations. On television, he can be seen as Agent Aderholt in the FX series *The Americans*. *Seven Guitars* will feature cast members **Crystal Dickinson** (Broadway's *You Can't Take It With You* and *Clybourne Park*) as Louise and **Jason Dirden** (Two River's *Topdog/Underdog* and Broadway's *A Raisin in the Sun*) as Canewell.

**A FUNNY THING HAPPENED ON THE WAY TO THE FORUM**

**Music and Lyrics by Stephen Sondheim**

**Book by Burt Shevelove and Larry Gelbart**

Choreographed by Denis Jones  
Directed by Jessica Stone  
Rechnitz Theater  
November 14-December 13, 2015  
Press Opening: November 20

Director **Jessica Stone** returns to Two River, where she made her debut last season with Alan Ayckbourn's *Absurd Person Singular*, to direct ***A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum***, winner of the 1963 Tony Award for Best Musical. The production will be choreographed by Denis Jones (*Honeymoon in Vegas*). Inspired by Stone's acclaimed 2010 Williamstown Theatre Festival production, Two River's *...Forum* will feature an all-male troupe of actors led by **Christopher Fitzgerald** (Broadway's *An Act of God*, the original cast of *Wicked*, *Young Frankenstein*) as Pseudolus, a slave who tries to win his freedom by playing matchmaker for his innocent young master.

#### LIVES OF REASON

By Robert Rechnitz and Kenneth Stunkel  
Directed by Jonathan Fox  
Marion Huber Theater  
January 9-February 7, 2016  
Press Opening: January 15

Set at an English Department faculty party, ***Lives of Reason*** exposes the challenges of intellectual life—and what happens when one woman's secret passions explode and her authentic self is revealed. This world premiere is written by Two River founder **Robert Rechnitz** and **Kenneth Stunkel**, and directed by former Two River Artistic Director **Jonathan Fox**, who currently serves as Executive Artistic Director of the Ensemble Theatre Company of Santa Barbara. The cast will include **John Ahlin** (Off-Broadway's *Orson's Shadow*, Two River's *Charlotte's Web*) and **Maureen Silliman** (Two River's *The Beauty Queen of Leenane* and *The Glass Menagerie*). This production will be sponsored by Monmouth University.

#### ROPES

By Bárbara Colio  
English Translation by Maria Alexandria Beech  
Directed by Lisa Rothe  
Marion Huber Theater  
February 20-March 20, 2016  
Press Opening: February 26

In this beautiful and universal story about forgiveness, love, and loss, three brothers rendezvous at an airport to meet the father who abandoned them as children, and who is now the most famous tightrope walker of all time. Written by **Bárbara Colio**, one of Latin America's leading contemporary playwrights, *Ropes* will be directed by **Lisa Rothe** (*Hold These Truths* at Epic Theatre Ensemble), Director of Global Exchange at the Lark Play Development Center in New York. Two River Theater will present select performances of *Ropes* in Spanish as part of its ongoing Nosotros program, which is dedicated to engaging Monmouth County's Latino community and furthering the work of Latino theater artists.

## PERICLES

By William Shakespeare

Original Music and Additional Lyrics by Rinde Eckert

Directed by David Schweizer

Rechnitz Theater

April 16-May 8, 2016

Press Opening: April 22

Shakespeare's thrilling and epic tale of adventure, shipwreck and romance will be brought to new life with original songs by Pulitzer Prize-finalist **Rinde Eckert**, who will also appear in the production, directed by **David Schweizer**. Eckert and Schweizer's previous collaborations include *And God Created Great Whales*, an Obie Award-winning operatic adaptation of *Moby-Dick*. In connection with its production of *Pericles*, Two River will produce "A Little Shakespeare," a 75-minute version of *Pericles* performed by high school students. Performances will be presented in Two River's Marion Huber Theater in December 2015.

## I REMEMBER MAMA

By John Van Druten

Directed by Jack Cummings III

Rechnitz Theater

June 4-26, 2016

Press Opening: June 10

Ten veteran powerhouse actresses (led by **Barbara Andres** as Mama) will perform all 25 roles in John Van Druten's beloved classic about a working-class Norwegian family in turn-of-the-century San Francisco. The Transport Group's production of *I Remember Mama*, directed by **Jack Cummings III**, was celebrated as one of the best theater productions of 2014 in *The New York Times* and *The New Yorker*.

## WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE

Based on the Book by Maurice Sendak

Directed by Kim Selody

Produced by Presentation House Theatre, Vancouver, Canada

Originally Adapted for the Stage by Tag Theatre of Glasgow

June 9-12, 2016

Adapted from Maurice Sendak's landmark children's book, *Where the Wild Things Are* is an intimate "guided play" experience for kids ages 3 to 7 and their adults. Max's bedroom is transformed into the various landscapes of his adventures, from a rolling ocean to a forest. The audience then becomes the Wild Things as each child is each given a mask and encouraged to "let the Wild Rumpus start!"

*Plays, artists, dates, and ticket prices are subject to change.* For additional information, visit [tworivertheater.org](http://tworivertheater.org).

### Ticket Information

Season Subscriptions are on sale now; prices range from \$83.25 to \$292.50. Subscribers save 25% on tickets, receive prime seating and a number of additional benefits. Visit [tworivertheater.org](http://tworivertheater.org) for more details.

Ticket prices for all productions except *A Little Shakespeare: Pericles* and *Where the Wild Things Are* range from \$37 to \$65, with discounts available for groups, seniors, and U.S. military personnel, their families, and veterans. A limited number of \$20 tickets are available for every performance; \$20 tickets may be partial view. Tickets for patrons under 30 are \$20 and include the best available seats at every performance.

Ticket prices for *A Little Shakespeare: Pericles* are \$20 for adults and \$15 for children under age 12. Tickets for *Where the Wild Things Are* are \$25.

### Sponsors and Supporters

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

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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](http://tworivertheater.org) or call 732.345.1400.