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Irreverent Slapstick Opens

Two River Theatre Co. Season

(RED BANK, NJ) A political satire written by one of the world's funniest men seems an appropriate tonic for the upcoming election season. Two River Theatre Company has selected for its opener the hit comedy *Accidental Death of an Anarchist*, by Nobel Prize-winner Dario Fo. The play, written in 1970, is based on an actual incident in which an anarchist railway worker falls from a window of police headquarters in Milan while being interrogated. In Fo's spoof, this "accident" is investigated by a lunatic-impersonator that pretends to be a police magistrate. The plot explodes into a slapstick kaleidoscope of Keystone Cops, Marx Brothers, and commedia dell'arte as the comic fool exposes the political corruption and cover-ups. The production runs from September 30 - October 17, 2004.

"This play jumps off the page as if it were written over the summer," said the production's director Dave Mowers. "It has it all: mention of terrorist bombings, kidnapping plots, commission reports, and 'Anarchist' protesters. I can't believe it's nearly thirty years old."

Dario Fo's talents as a clown, his gifts with satirical improvisation, and the use of up-to-the-minute political humor got him into some hot water with the Italian police, and even got him barred from performing in the United States during the Reagan Administration. However, in 1997, Fo received the Nobel Prize in Literature, for "[emulating] the jesters of the Middle Ages in scourging authority and upholding the dignity of the downtrodden."

Mr. Mowers has directed professional productions for NYC's Manhattan Theatre Club, Chicago's Second City Theater, the Actor's Gang in LA, and various major regional theaters, such as Delaware Theater Co., the Charlotte Rep., and the Georgia Shakespeare Festival.

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Heading the New York cast is Arnie Burton as "the Maniac," the character who exalts in impersonating priests, judges, and anyone else who's not in the room. Mr. Burton has appeared in the Broadway and National Tour companies of *Amadeus*, at the Circle Rep, is a company member of The Pearl Theatre Company, and was featured in the off Broadway Hit, *Last Sunday in June*. The maniac's comic foils are John Ahlin (the bumbling Superintendent of Police), Kevin Kelly (the corrupt Police Inspector), Jeff Galfer (the clueless cop); and, Alicia Roper as the fashion-conscious journalist. And finally, playing the straight man to all the comedians, is Lucas Caleb Rooney as Inspector Bertozzo, the bureaucratic milquetoast. Recently, Mr. Rooney appeared in *Henry IV* at the Vivian Beaumont Theatre.

Season subscriptions are \$77-\$135, and \$40 for full time students and patrons under the age of 26. TRTC is also offering the Two River Pass for \$135, which enables patrons to guarantee themselves tickets without having to commit to performance dates ahead of time. Single tickets are \$24 to \$40, with discounts for patrons over 65. Groups of ten or more are eligible for discounts. Performances are at the Algonquin Arts Theatre in Manasquan, NJ from September 30 through October 17, and are available online at [www.trtc.org](http://www.trtc.org), or by calling 732-345-1400.

A special Open Captioned performance of *Accidental Death of an Anarchist* will be offered Wednesday, October 13 at 1:00pm., tickets \$10.

For more information and up to date photos of TRTC's new Red Bank theater (opening in May 2005), visit: [www.trtc.org](http://www.trtc.org).

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