



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Press Contact:

Deeksha Gaur,
Director of PR and Marketing
dgaur@trtc.org
732.345.1400 x1830

Box Office: 732.345.1400
www.trtc.org

Two River Theater Company
presents

CHARLOTTE'S WEB

By Joseph Robinette
Adapted from the book by E. B. White
Directed by Matt Pfeiffer

December 7, 2010 – January 2, 2011

Red Bank, NJ—Two River Theater Co. is proud to present its annual family show this holiday season, *Charlotte's Web*, a play based on the beloved classic by E. B. White.

Following the rousing success of *You're A Good Man Charlie Brown* last holiday season, Two River Theater is proud to uphold its tradition of producing shows for the whole family with its production this year of *Charlotte's Web*. The production will once again be helmed by director **Matt Pfeiffer**, who delighted kids and grown-ups alike with his production of *Charlie Brown*. "I'm thrilled to be back at Two River Theater," said Pfeiffer. "The family show at this theater is always a celebration of the holiday spirit: of family and friendship. With this highly accomplished cast and creative team, I look forward to celebrating this very special friendship—between Charlotte and Wilbur and all the characters in E. B. White's world—with our audiences."

Pfeiffer will be re-joined by **Doug Hara**—who delighted audiences last season as Charlie Brown, as well as Puck in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*—this time as Templeton the rat. He will be joined by cast mates **John Ahlin, Aysan Celik, Zach Kleinsmith, Garrett Neergaard, Nancy Rodriguez, Lindsay Smiling, and Maureen Torsney-Weir**.

The cast also features two local children, **Rachel Brudner** of Howell as Fern, and thirteen-year-old **Matt Hughes** of Rumson as Avery.

The production features puppetry by **Aaron Cromie**, who Two River audiences will remember for his puppet work in the theater's production of *Our Town*.

Charlotte's Web begins previews on **Tuesday, December 7**, opens **Saturday, December 11**, and runs through **Sunday, January 2, 2011**.

Biographies

Matt Pfeiffer, Director: Matt was most recently at Two River Theater Company as the director for *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown*. Matt is based out of Philadelphia where he works as the Associate Artistic Director of Theatre Exile. For Exile, Matt has directed *Shining City*, *American Buffalo*, *Bug*, and *Glengarry Glen Ross*. Other credits include: Arden Theatre, Walnut St. Theatre, Delaware Theatre Co., Lantern Theatre, 1812 Productions, Brat Productions, Orlando Shakespeare Theatre, Flashpoint Theatre, and 14 seasons with the Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival. Matt is a five-time Barrymore nominee and recipient of the F. Otto Haas Award for an Emerging Theatre Artist. Later this season he will direct *A Moon for the Misbegotten* (Arden Theatre) and *The Lieutenant of Inishmore* (Theatre Exile).

E(Iwyn) B(rooks) White, Author: Born July 11, 1899, in Mount Vernon, New York. Beginning in 1925 and continuing through the six decades until his death in 1985, he was a contributor to *The New Yorker* magazine. The author of poetry, humor, essays and nonfiction, he is best known for his children's books, which include *Stuart Little*, *The Trumpet of the Swan* and his classic *Charlotte Web*, published in 1952. This work is one of the most popular children's books of all time; the Children's Literature Associate called it "the best American children's book of the past 200 years." Among his many honors, White was awarded a Pulitzer Prize Special Citation and the Presidential Medal of Freedom. White died on October 1, 1985, at his farm home in North Brooklin, Maine. He was buried beside his wife, Katharine Angell, at the Brooklin Cemetery.

Joseph Robinette, Adaptor: The author of 51 published plays and musicals, including *The Fabulous Fable Factory*, written with composer Thomas Tierney, and *Charlotte's Web*, adapted from the novel by E.B. White, two of the most widely produced children's plays in the United States. He has also dramatized the authorized stage versions of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, *The Paper Chase*, and *A Rose for Emily*. The recipient of numerous playwriting awards, Robinette was presented the 1976 Charlotte Chorpenning Cup, given annually by the Children's Theatre Association of America to "an outstanding writer of children's plays who has achieved national recognition." In 2002, as professor of theatre at Rowan University, he received the Lindback Distinguished Teaching Award for Demonstrated Excellence in the University Classroom. In 2004, he received the American Association for Theatre and Education's best play award for his adaptation of *Sarah, Plain and Tall*, and in 2006, he was awarded the Children's Theatre Foundation of America Medallion "...for his body of dramatic works for children and young people in the United States and beyond." He currently resides in New Jersey.

John Ahlin*, Mr. Zuckerman: John appeared at Two River Theater Company in *The Accidental Death of an Anarchist* and *Waiting for Godot*. Most recently John was seen in *All's Well That Ends Well* with The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey. Broadway credits: *Waiting for Godot* (with Bill Irwin, Nathan Lane and John Glover), *Journey's End* (2007 Tony Award Best Revival), *The Lieutenant of Inishmore*, *Voices in the Dark*, *One Mo' Time*, *Whoopie!* and *Macbeth*. Off-Broadway John portrayed Orson Welles in *Orson's Shadow*. TV credits: *Law & Order: SVU*, *Third Watch*, *As the World Turns*, *The Education of Max Bickford*.

Regional experience includes Pittsburgh Public Theater, Actors Theatre of Louisville, Old Globe, Goodman Theatre, Centerstage Baltimore and the Goodspeed Opera House.

Rachel Brudner, Fern: This is Rachel's debut performance at Two River Theater Company. Recent performances: *The Sound of Music* (Louisa), *Fiddler on the Roof* (Shprintze), *Willy Wonka* (ensemble) at Main St Theatre, *Story Theatre* (8 different characters) and *Brundibar* (Sparrow) at Duncan Smith Theatre. She appeared in Nickelodeon's pilot for *Dora the Explorer Live: Dora's Pirate Adventure!* (Isa). Television credits include Sesame Street and Mother Goose Club. Voicework for children's online books, Little Fox. School and camp performances of *Oliver!* (Nancy), *Jungle Book* (Baloo), *Grease* (Rizzo), *Annie* (Daddy Warbucks), and *Peter Pan* (Smee).

Aysan Celik*, Charlotte: Off Broadway: *The Black Eyed* (New York Theatre Workshop); *Pericles* (Red Bull); *Faust* (Target Margin/Classic Stage); *Spinning the Times* (1st Irish Festival/59E59); *Turn of the Screw*, *Richard III*, and *Murder By Poe* (The Acting Company). Other NYC includes: *Hater* (Ohio Theatre); *Let Me Ascertain You* (The Civilians/Joe's Pub); *Medea* and *Araihsak* (Theater Mitu); *Paris Commune* (The Civilians/The Public Lab); *Twelfth Night* (The Queen's Company); *Attempts On Her Life* (Soho Rep). Regional highlights: *This Beautiful City* (The Civilians/ Studio Theater); *9 Parts of Desire* (Actors Theatre of Louisville); title role in *Antigone* (American Repertory Theatre). Film: *The Brooklyn Heist*.

Doug Hara*, Templeton: Previous Two River productions include *A Midsummer Night's Dream*; *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown*, and *Our Town*. Doug is a veteran ensemble member of Lookingglass Theatre Company where he has participated in 16 productions since 1991 including *Metamorphoses*, *West*, *Arabian Nights*, *Up Against It*, *The Master and Margarita*, *Lookingglass Hamlet* and *The Brothers Karamazov*. Recent credits include *The Threepenny Opera* and *Something Intangible* at the Arden Theatre. Broadway credits: *The Boys of Winter* and *Metamorphoses*. Off-Broadway: *The Notebooks of Leonardo Da Vinci* and *Lookingglass Alice*. Doug has performed at many regional theatres including The Goodman Theatre, About Face Theatre, Jellyeye Drum Opera, Huntington Theatre, Berkeley Repertory, Seattle Repertory, Mark Taper Forum, the Alliance Theatre, Syracuse Stage, Margaret Jenkins Dance Company, Brooklyn Academy of Music, and Joyce Theatre.

Matt Hughes, Avery: At 13, Matt makes his second appearance at Two River Theater Company. He previously performed in "Life in the Middle" as an uptight middle school student named Derek. Matt has appeared in NYC at the Metropolitan Playhouse in "The Return of Peter Grimm" and has held leading roles in local community theater productions including Pinocchio and Oliver!. Most recently Matt appeared on television in an episode of "Celebrity Ghost Stories" for the Biography Channel. A skilled pianist and keyboard player, he has performed in NJ on the Count Basie stage multiple times with RockIt for Kids.

Zach Kleinsmith*, Lurvy: Regional credits include: Antony and Cleopatra, Much Ado About Nothing, and Shakespeare 4 Kids (Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival), A Nice Family Gathering (Dixie Theatre, FL) and Peter Pan (Actors Theatre of Louisville). New York credits include: The Harvard Project (Unnatural Acts, Actor, Co-Writer, www.harvardproject.org), Waiting For Lefty, Camino Real (Columbia Stages) and The

Fabulous Kane Sisters (FringeNYC). Film: Paper Cut, The Sublet, and The Most Important Meal of Your Day. Additional credits: Otterbein College, BFA.

Garrett Neergaard*, **Wilbur**: New York Theatre: *Apparition* (Connelly Theater); *Goldstar, Ohio* (Lincoln Center Theater *Director's Lab*), *Spin Moves* (SPF '04), *The Seagull* (Blue Heron Theater). Regional: *The Matchmaker*, *Washed Up on the Potomac*, *Hidden in this Picture*, *Trouble in Mind* (Baltimore Centerstage) *The House in Hydesville* (Geva); *Trouble in Mind* (Yale Rep); *Fraulein Else* (La Jolla Playhouse); *Fallen Angels* (Dorset Theatre Festival); Film/TV: *The Laramie Project* (HBO); *Law & Order; After You Left; Goldstar, Ohio*.

Nancy Rodriguez*, **Mrs. Arable**: Credits include: *Cymbeline* (Lincoln Center Theater). *Edgardo Mine* (Guthrie), *The Tempest*, *The Cherry Orchard*, *Romeo & Juliet*, *Antony & Cleopatra*, *As You Like It*, *Playboy of the West Indies*, *Life Is a Dream*, *Two Sisters and a Piano* (Oregon Shakespeare Festival), *Julius Caesar*, *Antony & Cleopatra* (Shakespeare Theatre) *For Colored Girls...* (Portland Center Stage), *Two Sisters and a Piano* (Studio Theatre), *London Cries* (Irondale), *The Last of Bernarda*, *Blind Alley* (Puerto Rican Traveling Theatre), *Picasso at the Lapin Agile* (Syracuse Stage), *HELP!* (Schoolhouse Theater), *Animus* (INTAR) *Donna Morelli* (New York Stage & Film). Film/ TV: *Law & Order: CI and SVU*, *Mercy*, *Detachment*, *Indigo*, *Into Me See*. BFA, Boston University.

Lindsay Smiling*, **Mr. Arable**: Credits include: *Macbeth* (Wilma Theater), *Blue Door* (Victory Gardens Theater), *Defiance* (Bristol Riverside Theatre), *His Daddy* (Ensemble Studio Theatre), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Shakespeare on the Sound), *The Winter's Tale* (Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey), *Twelfth Night* (Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival), *Lobby Hero* (Walnut Street Theatre), *Richard III* (Lantern Theater), *Of Mice and Men* (Walnut Street Theatre), *The Mojo and the Sayso* (ACT/The Hansberry Project), *Take Me Out* (Mixed Blood Theatre & Human Race Theatre), Mr. Smiling received his B.S from Illinois State University and a M.F.A from Temple University.

Maureen Torsney-Weir*, **Mrs. Zuckerman**: Maureen most recently appeared as Old Lady in *Sunday in the Park...* ,and Mrs. Lintott in *History Boys* at the Arden, Signora Nacarelli in *Light in the Piazza* at PTC, and Lizzie Cherry in *Cherry Bomb 1812*. Working as an actor in New York for many years she was noted for such roles as Grace in *Faith Healer*, and Ouisa in *Six Degrees of Separation* among many others. Maureen Torsney-Weir is a Barrymore winner for Best Supporting Actress in *Angels in America*, and as part of the ensemble for *Equus* with Mum Puppettheatre. Next up at the Kimmel Center, Sarah Bernhardt in a new musical *The Passing Wind*.

*Denotes a member of Actors' Equity Association.

The creative team is made up of **David P. Gordon** (set designer), who was most recently at Two River Theater Company with *You're a Good Man Charlie Brown* , **Lisa Zinni** (costumes), **F. Mitchell Dana** (lighting designer), who most recently designed *Barefoot in the Park* at Two River Theater, **Aaron Cromie** (puppets) who designed the puppets for Two River Theater Company's renowned production of *Our Town*, **Chris Colucci** (sound) and **Justin Smiley** (projections).

Charlotte's Web is scheduled to run **Tuesday, December 7** through **Sunday, January 2, 2011**. **Tickets start at \$24 for kids and \$43 for adults**. Get more information online at www.trtc.org, call **732.345.1400**, or visit the **Two River Theater Company Box Office** in Red Bank, located at 21 Bridge Avenue. Box Office Hours: Monday-Saturday: 10am-6pm; Sunday: 12pm-5pm.

Post-show discussions are scheduled following *every* performance.

There are **six student matinee performances** scheduled on Tuesday December 7 (**SOLD OUT**), Wednesday December 8, Thursday December 9, Tuesday December 14, Wednesday December 15, and Thursday December 16, all at 10am. **SCOUT DAY** will be held on Saturday, December 18 and Sunday December 19 at 12pm (**both dates SOLD OUT**), where members of area girl and boy scout troupes come see the show, play games, meet the cast, and earn a special interest badge. **Discounted group rates** are available through the Box Office.

Two River Theater Company is accessible to people with disabilities, including wheelchair accessibility, assistive 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 for *Charlotte's Web*:

Saturday, December 11, 7pm – Opening Night performance of *Charlotte's Web* with a pre-show party for the family, and a post-show hot chocolate toast with members of the acting company.

Saturday, December 18 and Sunday, December 19, 12pm – SCOUT DAY is a fun day for Girl and Boy Scouts from across the state, and includes games, a backstage tour, the show, and a special interest patch! Tickets are \$30. Both Scout Days are now officially sold out. However, group rates are still available for

Tuesday, December 21, 7pm – A **sign-interpreted performance** is scheduled at 7pm. Tickets are \$15 for those using this service. Call 732.345.1400.

Members of the press are invited to the opening night performance of *Charlotte's Web* on **Saturday, December 11 at 7pm**. Please schedule tickets through Deeksha Gaur, Director of PR and Marketing, by phone at **732.345.1400 ext. 1830** or via email at dgaur@trtc.org.

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TWO RIVER THEATER COMPANY is a professional not-for-profit regional theater company providing outstanding plays and educational programs for audiences of central New Jersey and beyond. Two River was founded in 1994 by Joan and Robert Rechnitz and over the past 16 seasons has grown into one of the most vital and dynamic arts organizations in the region. The theater has co-produced plays with theaters around the country and received "Theatre of the Year" awards from the New Jersey Theatre

Alliance and The Star-Ledger. Two River is a member of the League of Resident Theaters (LORT), Theatre Communications Group (TCG), The New Jersey Theatre Alliance and ArtPride New Jersey.