



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 8, 2010

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NEW YORK PRODUCER AND PUBLIC THEATER ALUM JOHN DIAS—A LEADING ADVOCATE FOR NEW-PLAY PRODUCTION—ANNOUNCED AS NEW ARTISTIC DIRECTOR OF NEW JERSEY’S TWO RIVER THEATER CO.

Red Bank, NJ—The Board of Trustees of Two River Theater Company announces the appointment of John Dias—a producer and dramaturg who is a leading advocate for bold new American plays and has worked extensively on notable productions of the classics—as the theater’s new Artistic Director.

“The Board couldn’t be more excited to welcome John to Red Bank as the Artistic Director of Two River,” commented Board President Todd Herman. “He has come to us from New York, where he had an illustrious career at The Public Theater, as a Broadway Producer, and as the founder and Artistic Director of an off-Broadway theater company. It is a testament to our organization that we were able to attract a person with John’s extraordinary talent and stature in the national theater community. We look forward, under John’s leadership, to making significant contributions to the American theater landscape, to welcoming the finest artists from New York and around the country to our theater, and to continuing a deep and engaging dialogue with our audience and community.”

Founded in 1994 and now based in Red Bank, New Jersey, Two River produces classics, contemporary plays and innovative education programs in a state-of-the-art theater complex that opened in 2005.

“John Dias and I share a dream,” says founder and Executive Producer, Robert M. Rechnitz. “When building our new theater six years ago, my goal was to create a space where the lights would always be on. The young men and women whose hearts ache for meaning and whose minds hunger for direction would make a home here. John’s vision for the theater is one in which every space, every room, every hallway is buzzing with the creative energy of artists. I am certain that his dream for the artist, and mine for the audience, will fuse and blossom in his hands.”

Managing Director Tom Werder notes, “John has a strong and exciting vision for the theater. His desire to make Two River an artistic home for playwrights, directors, actors, and designers is exciting, and I am equally thrilled that his passion for creating a deep and abiding relationship with this theater’s audience and community mirrors a core value for Two River. I look forward to a long and fruitful partnership dedicated to the theater’s continued growth.”

Dias comes to Two River Theater from Affinity Collaborative Theater, a production company he co-founded, which is dedicated to bringing daring new works from around the world to New York. Prior to that, he was a founding artistic director of Playwright's Realm, an off-Broadway theater company dedicated to producing new plays by emerging artists. He was also a producer of Lisa Kron's *Well* on Broadway.

For 12 seasons, he worked in a variety of capacities—including as Associate Producer and Associate Artistic Director—at The Public Theater/New York Shakespeare Festival, where he worked with both Producer George C. Wolfe and Artistic Director Oskar Eustis. During his tenure at The Public, he was responsible for all aspects of play production on the theater's six stages and the Delacorte Theater in Central Park. He also ran the theater's literary department, overseeing new-play workshops and productions of classics by Shakespeare and other writers, and developed and taught in the Shakespeare Lab, a professional actor training program. Before coming to New York, Dias was Dramaturg at Hartford Stage Company in Connecticut, under Artistic Director Mark Lamos.

Dias has been a Tony Award nominator, a consultant for the National Endowment for the Arts and numerous other organizations, and has taught and lectured at New York University, Yale University, and Columbia University. He received his BA from George Washington University and his MFA from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

Says Dias of his appointment: "I am eager to work with the Board and staff of Two River Theater Company and to begin leading this wonderful theater, which has one of the most beautiful performance spaces in the region. I am truly excited about engaging with this community: our donors, subscribers, patrons, and friends. Two River is an extraordinary institution and I look forward to carrying on its tradition of producing the classics in dynamic and powerful re-imaginings, as well as to being an incubator for daring new work. I want to make this theater a home for talented emerging and established artists—those who live in and around New York and many others who will come here from across the country to work with us—as we produce great plays and build the theater's national reputation."

Dias's first official day will be on August 16, 2010, though he will be spending time at the theater prior to this date, getting to know the organization and meeting the local community. He is excited to produce the upcoming season, which was planned before his appointment. He has relationships with many of the artists involved in next season and looks forward to welcoming them to Red Bank. He is equally eager to begin planning the 2011-2012 Season, the first under his artistic programming.

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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.