



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

**Broadway Performers Rona Figueroa, Andy Kelso, Forrest McClendon, and Lindsay Mendez
Star in *Jacques Brel Is Alive and Well and Living in Paris* at Two River Theater Company,
Directed by Daniel Ostling; Opening Night is May 21, 2011**

RED BANK, NJ— Two River Theater Company, under the leadership of Artistic Director John Dias, announces the full company and creative team for its production of *Jacques Brel Is Alive and Well and Living in Paris*. Performances will begin at Two River Theater, 21 Bridge Avenue, on **Tuesday, May 17** and continue through **Sunday, June 5**. The opening night performance is **Saturday, May 21 at 8pm**. Tickets are available from www.trtc.org, over the phone from 732.345.1400, or at the Two River Theater Box Office, 21 Bridge Avenue. Single ticket prices start at \$35. Discounts are available for groups, seniors, students, and patrons aged 30 and under.

Originally produced at the Village Gate in Greenwich Village in 1968, the internationally celebrated musical revue *Jacques Brel Is Alive and Well and Living in Paris* was conceived by and has English lyrics and additional material by **Eric Blau** and **Mort Shuman**, based on lyrics and commentary by Jacques Brel. Two River's production will include changes made for the 2006 Off-Broadway Zipper Theatre production, and will be directed by **Daniel Ostling**, who replaces previously announced director Amanda Dehnert following her resignation for personal reasons. One of the country's pre-eminent scenic designers, Ostling has also designed this production. The choreographer is **Daniel Pelzig** and the music director is **Greg Brown**.

The company of *Jacques Brel* includes Broadway stars **Rona Figueroa** (*Miss Saigon*), **Andy Kelso** (*Mamma Mia*), **Forrest McClendon** (*The Scottsboro Boys*), and **Lindsay Mendez** (*Everyday Rapture*). The on-stage band includes **Greg Brown** (conductor and keyboards), **David Malachowski** (guitar), **Joshua Samuels** (drums/percussion) and **Joseph Wallace** (bass).

"I am thrilled to be producing *Jacques Brel* with this glorious cast and creative team, led by Dan Ostling," says Artistic Director John Dias. "Brel's songs take us deeply into a world view that is stunningly theatrical, each one telling a complete story and filled with deep human emotions. It's no wonder that they have been performed for more than three decades, yet they still feel fresh and new. We're excited to hear them interpreted by our great company of actors and our band, which will combine the qualities of classic 'chanson' with a contemporary pop-rock vibe."

Widely considered one of the greatest songwriters who ever lived, Jacques Brel was born in Brussels in 1929 and settled permanently in France in the mid-1950s. His story-songs (which include such standards as “Ne me quitte pas,” “Madeleine” and “Amsterdam,” all of which are included in this revue) combine poetry, wit and unexpected humor, and profoundly evocative and insightful descriptions of the human condition. Brel performed his own work in cabarets and music halls, and he released dozens of albums and singles. His songs have been covered by artists as diverse as Frank Sinatra, The Kingston Trio, Ray Charles, Judy Collins, and David Bowie. In 1974, Terry Jacks had a worldwide hit with “Seasons in the Sun,” a version of Brel’s song “Le Moribund” with English lyrics by Rod McKuen.

Jacques Brel is directed by **Daniel Ostling**, a scenic designer and ensemble member of Chicago’s Lookingglass Theatre Company since 1997 who is making his directorial debut with this production. He is a frequent collaborator with director Mary Zimmerman, including on *Metamorphoses* (for which he was nominated for a 2002 Tony Award) and the Metropolitan Opera’s productions of *Lucia di Lammermoor* and *La Sonnambula*. His other recent credits include this year’s Pulitzer Prize-winning play, *Clybourne Park* by Bruce Norris, at Playwrights Horizons. He is an Associate Professor at Northwestern University in Chicago.

The creative team for *Jacques Brel* includes costume designer **Jessica Ford**, lighting designer **Lee Fiskness**, and sound designers **Drew Levy** and **Zachary Williamson**. The casting is by **Janet Foster, C.S.A.** and the stage manager is **Pamela Edington**.

For complete biographies of the company, visit www.trtc.org.

Discussions and Events

Before Play: Before every performance of each subscription show at Two River Theater, an artistic staff member, artist, educator or community leader hosts a free discussion to give context and background about the show. Audience members interested in attending the **Before Play** discussion should arrive at the theater 45 minutes prior to their scheduled performance.

Post-Play Conversations: The audience is invited to stay for a discussion with a member of the artistic staff and members of the cast after the following performances:

Wednesdays: **May 25** at 8pm and **June 1** at 1pm

Sundays: **May 29** and **June 5** at 3pm

Accessibility: Two River Theater is fully wheelchair accessible and offers assisted-listening devices and large-print programs at every performance. To reserve wheelchair accessible seating or tickets for a performance listed below, patrons should call 732.345.1400.

An **audio-described performance** is scheduled for **Wednesday, June 1** at 1pm; tickets are \$15 for patrons needing audio description.

An **open-captioned performance** is scheduled for **Saturday, June 4** at 3pm; tickets are \$15 for patrons needing open captions.

Calendar

Tuesday, May 17 at 8 pm (Community Preview)
Wednesday, May 18 at 7 pm
Thursday, May 19 at 8 pm
Friday, May 20 at 8 pm
Saturday, May 21 at 8 pm (Opening)
Sunday, May 22 at 3 pm
Wednesday, May 25 at 1 pm and 8 pm (Post-play Discussion)
Thursday, May 26 at 10 am (Student Matinee) and 8pm
Friday, May 27 at 8 pm
Saturday, May 28 at 3 pm and 8 pm
Sunday, May 29 at 3 pm (Post-play Discussion)
Wednesday, June 1 at 1 pm (Audio Described and Post-play Discussion) and 8 pm
Thursday, June 2 at 1 pm at 8 pm
Friday, June 3 at 8 pm
Saturday, June 4 at 3 pm (Open Caption) and 8 pm
Sunday, June 5 at 3 pm (Closing Performance and Post-play Discussion)

Members of the press are invited to the opening-night performance of ***Jacques Brel Is Alive and Well and Living in Paris*** on **Saturday, May 21 at 8 pm**. 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, under the artistic leadership of John Dias, is dedicated to producing great classics from the American and world stage, creating new plays and musicals for the American theater, and serving its diverse and multigenerational community through unique partnerships and education programs. Founded in 1994 by Joan and Dr. Robert M. Rechnitz, Two River Theater is a member of the League of Resident Theaters (LORT), Theatre Communications Group (TCG), the New Jersey Theatre Alliance and ArtPride New Jersey.