

TWO RIVER THEATER

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TWO RIVER THEATER ANNOUNCES AN EXCITING AND VIBRANT LINEUP FOR ITS 2023/2024 30th ANNIVERSARY SEASON

Including the rock musical **HAIR** and August Wilson's **GEM OF THE OCEAN**,
Featuring Two River favorites **Crystal A. Dickinson** and **Brandon J. Dirden**;
plus
Two world-premiere productions,
Kate Hamill's THE SCARLET LETTER and **Tony Meneses' A THOUSAND MAIDS**;
and
A Little Shakespeare production of Shakespeare's comedy
LOVE'S LABOUR'S LOST

RED BANK, NJ – Two River Theater is pleased to announce its 2023/2024 30th Anniversary Season. This will be the first slate of programming at Two River for new Artistic Director Justin Waldman and Managing Director Nora DeVeau-Rosen. The season kicks off in September with the groundbreaking rock musical ***Hair***, with direction by Craig Noel Award winner **James Vásquez** (*Under a Baseball Sky*, *American Mariachi*) and original choreography by **Mayte Natalio** (*Love in Hate Nation*); followed by a world premiere by one of America's most produced playwrights, **Kate Hamill's** (*Pride and Prejudice*, *Little Women*) ***The Scarlet Letter***, based on the novel by Nathaniel Hawthorne, directed by **Shelley Butler** (*Beautiful: The Carol King Musical*, *A Doll's House Part 2*).

The season continues in the spring with the world premiere of ***A Thousand Maids***, by Two River favorite **Tony Meneses** (*The Hombres*, *Guadalupe in the Guest Room*), which will be his fourth production in Red Bank, directed by May Adrales (*Vietgone*). Concluding the season will be **August Wilson's *Gem of the Ocean***, the seventh installment in Two River's commitment to produce each play in August Wilson's The American Century Cycle. *Gem of the Ocean* will be directed by San Diego Theatre Critics Circle Award-winner **Delicia Turner Sonnenberg** (*Trouble in Mind*, *Skeleton Crew*), the first woman to direct an August Wilson production at Two River, with performances by Two River stalwarts **Crystal A. Dickinson** (*Clybourne Park*, *The Trees*) and **Brandon J. Dirden** (*Take Me Out*, *Jitney*). The season will also include the well-loved **A Little Shakespeare** series, this time presenting the comedy ***Love's Labour's Lost***, adapted and directed by **Tai Thompson** (*Warriors Don't Cry*).

"It is a distinct pleasure to celebrate Two River's 30th Anniversary with a dynamic lineup of spectacular and vital programming," said Artistic Director Justin Waldman. "A milestone like this is a joyous occasion and what better way to exalt the moment than with rock & roll, laughs, and old friends. In planning our first season in Red Bank, Nora and I wanted to honor the incredible artists and values that have made Two River such an indispensable part of this community while opening up our doors to new adventures in theatrical wonder. The talent on display is exemplary and will take us from musicals to world premieres and thrilling adaptations

to towering classics, all while telling stories that resonate and represent the rich tapestry of Monmouth County. As Two River launches into a new decade, optimism is high, the future is bright, and we cannot wait to share the thrill of live theatre.”

TWO RIVER THEATER 2023/2024 SEASON INCLUDES:

SEPT 30—OCT 22/2023

HAIR

The American Love-Rock Musical

Book and Lyrics by Gerome Ragni and James Rado

Music by Galt MacDermot

Directed by James Vásquez

Original Choreography by Matye Natalio

The Joan and Robert Rechnitz Theater

Let the sunshine in! During the Summer of Love, a group of young Americans dream of a beautiful future filled with harmony and understanding. The groundbreaking rock musical includes the Grammy Award™-winning hits “Aquarius,” “Good Morning Starshine,” and the title song’s ode to long, brilliant, beautiful “Hair!” Opening Two River Theater’s 30th anniversary season, Director **James Vásquez** (Old Globe Resident Artist, *American Mariachi*) and choreographer **Matye Natalio** (*Love in Hate Nation*) bring their 2021 staging from the Old Globe Theatre, which was hailed as “A first-class production. A *Hair* to seek out (*San Diego Story*).” Peace now, freedom now, *Hair* now!

FEB 3—25 / 2024

World Premiere

THE SCARLET LETTER

By Kate Hamill

Based on the novel by Nathaniel Hawthorne

Directed by Shelley Butler

The Joan and Robert Rechnitz Theater

Hester Prynne dares to strive for a better life for herself and her daughter. **Kate Hamill** (*Pride and Prejudice*, *Little Women*), one of American theater’s most celebrated contemporary playwrights, reimagines Nathaniel Hawthorne’s classic tale of courage. This world premiere, directed by **Shelley Butler** (*Beautiful: The Carol King Musical*, *A Doll’s House Part 2*), showcases the strength of a woman who will not let the rules of an unjust society define her.

MARCH 1-10/2024

A LITTLE SHAKESPEARE: LOVE’S LABOUR’S LOST

By William Shakespeare

Adapted and Directed by Tai Thompson

The Marion Huber Theater

The King of Navarre and his classmates have sworn an oath to hit the books and swear off dating for three years. Can their vow survive the arrival of the brilliant Princess of France and her charming friends? Back for the 11th year as Two River’s most popular education program, **A Little Shakespeare** presents an abridged

version of Shakespeare's comedy. This raucous celebration of head versus heart is directed and designed by theater professionals, and performed and supported backstage by high school students.

APRIL 6—28 / 2024

World Premiere

A THOUSAND MAIDS

by Tony Meneses

Directed by May Adrales

The Marion Huber Theater

Cordelia's stuck. Cordelia needs to design a maid's costume, but she can't stop thinking about *The Help* and *Maid in Manhattan* and *Gone with the Wind* and *As Good As It Gets* and... and... and... How can she find a way to show these women for who they really are? Two River favorite **Tony Meneses** (*The Hombres*, *Guadalupe in the Guest Room*) returns with this world premiere comedy, directed by **May Adrales** (*The Electric Baby*, *Vietgone*).

JUNE 8—20 / 2024

AUGUST WILSON'S GEM OF THE OCEAN

Directed by Delicia Turner Sonnenberg

The Joan and Robert Rechnitz Theater

Citizen Barlow is looking for peace. To get it, he'll knock at Aunt Ester's door every day if that's what it takes. Set in 1904, the opening installment in **August Wilson's** The American Century Cycle includes the playwright's most fantastical journey, where the secrets of the past point towards future liberation. Featuring beloved Two River artists **Crystal A. Dickinson** (*Wine in the Wilderness*, *A Raisin in the Sun*) and **Brandon J. Dirden** (*Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*, *Topdog/Underdog*), *Gem of the Ocean* is the seventh production in the theater's commitment to stage all ten of Wilson's visionary epics.

Bios and photos of all participants can be found at www.tworivertheater.org.

TICKET INFORMATION

Subscriptions to the 2023/2024 season are now available! Two River Theater is currently offering both 3-play and 4-play packages. Renewing subscribers are encouraged to complete their renewals before June 30th in order to keep their seats. Visit <https://tworivertheater.org/season-subscriptions/> or call 732.345.1400 to purchase subscription tickets. Single tickets for *Hair* will go on sale in July. A Little Shakespeare: *Love's Labour's Lost* is not part of the subscription series.

SPONSORSHIP

Two River Theater's 2023/2024 30th Anniversary Season Sponsor is Hackensack Meridian *Health*/Riverview Medical Center.

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Two River Theater produces American and world classics, new plays and musicals, programs for young people, and festivals of new work. Each year, we serve over 20,000 students, families and community members through our 4-6 show season, and 40+ events that reflect our diverse community of Monmouth County. Two River produces work on two stages—the 350-seat Joan and Robert Rechnitz Theater, and the flexible 110-seat Marion Huber Theater. In 2020 we expanded our campus to 80,000 square feet with the opening of the Center for New Work, Education and Design. Two River Theater has commissioned and premiered original projects including *Be More Chill* by Tony Award nominee Joe Iconis and Joe Tracz (the theater's first Broadway production) and *Hurricane Diane* by former Playwright-in-Residence Madeleine George (which won an Obie Award for its Off-Broadway run), and in June 2019, Two River was nationally recognized by USA TODAY as one of "10 great places to see a play." Two River Theater is led by Artistic Director Justin Waldman and Managing Director Nora DeVeau-Rosen.