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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 9, 2025

TWO RIVER THEATER ANNOUNCES AN EXCITING AND VIBRANT LINEUP FOR ITS 2025/2026 SEASON

Featuring the THREE World Premieres
The new musical *Elephant Shoes*
Agatha Christie's *Murder on the Links*
and
THE MONSTERS: A Sibling Love Story

Including Co-Productions with
Manhattan Theatre Club and Deaf West Theatre

With two additional world classic productions,
Henrik Ibsen's *A Doll's House*
plus
A Little Shakespeare* production of Shakespeare's *As You Like It

RED BANK, NJ – Two River Theater is pleased to announce its 2025/2026 Season, featuring an impressive lineup of outstanding productions and talented artists.

The season will commence in September with the World Premiere of **Agatha Christie's *Murder on the Links***, stylishly reimagined by **Tony Award®-winning Director Darko Tresnjak** (*A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder*). When famed detective Hercule Poirot is summoned to a country chateau in France, he discovers a body on the golf course with a knife in its back and new clues dredge up old intrigue. This is followed by the World Premiere of a Two River Theater commission, ***THE MONSTERS: A Sibling Love Story***, written and directed by **Ngozi Anyanwu** (*Good Grief, The Homecoming Queen, The Last of the Love Letters*). This story about reunions, resentment, reconnection, and wrestling with demons is co-produced with **Manhattan Theatre Club** and will run at New York City Center Stage II following the engagement in Red Bank in January of 2026.

The winter season continues with the Henrik Ibsen classic, ***A Doll's House***, helmed by the critically acclaimed director **Justin Emeka** (*Sweat, Romeo and Juliet*) creatively incorporating black culture into the world of one of the greatest plays ever written, as well as Two River's most popular education program, **A Little Shakespeare**, back for its 13th year with the lively frolic, ***As You Like It***, adapted and directed by **Noelle Marion** (last season's A Little Shakespeare: *The Tempest*).

Concluding the 2025/2026 season will be the World Premiere Musical, ***Elephant Shoes***, Book by **Ivan Menchell** (*Bonnie and Clyde: The Musical*), Music and Lyrics by **Caroline Kay** (*Overnight, Tricks*), and Directed and Choreographed by **Tony Award® Nominee Jeff Calhoun** (*Newsies, Big River*). With a soaring, contemporary score and an immersive blend of American Sign Language, spoken English, and groundbreaking stage technology, this co-production between Two River and **Deaf West Theatre** will change the way you see—and hear—musical theater.

“This is going to be big!” says Artistic Director Justin Waldman. “The 2025/2026 Season is a shining example of the amazing artistry and exciting theater that Two River is known for both across the country and right here in Red Bank! Three World Premieres, two co-productions with major American theaters, a homegrown Two River commission, a thrilling reinvention of a world classic, and the 13th year of our beloved Little Shakes education program. What’s more, our World Premiere Musical, *Elephant Shoes*, will not only bring unprecedented access to theater through our co-production with Deaf West Theatre, but will be by far the largest and most ambitious production in Two River’s 31-year history. Big things are happening indeed, and it is our joy to make such a massive impact in our community.”

TWO RIVER THEATER 2025/2026 SEASON INCLUDES:

Agatha Christie's Murder on the Links

A World Premiere

Adapted and Directed by Darko Tresnjak

September 13 - 28/2025

Take a swing at cracking the case! When Agatha Christie's famed detective Hercule Poirot is summoned to a country chateau in France, he discovers a body on the golf course with a knife in its back – a hole in one indeed! New clues dredge up old intrigue in *Murder on the Links*, stylishly reimaged by Tony Award®-winning director Darko Tresnjak (*A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder*).

THE MONSTERS: A Sibling Love Story

Written and Directed by Ngozi Anyanwu

Co-produced by Two River Theater and Manhattan Theatre Club

November 1 - 23/2025

For a long time, LIL has been obsessed with fighting, and one fighter in particular: her older brother BIG, an aging but successful figure in the local Mixed Martial Arts circuit. But she's been doing it all from afar... until one day when she decides to show up on his doorstep. Written and directed by Ngozi

Anyanwu (*Good Grief, The Homecoming Queen, The Last of the Love Letters*) and co-produced by Two River Theater and Manhattan Theatre Club, *The Monsters* is a sibling love story about reunions, resentment, reconnection, and wrestling with demons.

A Little Shakespeare:

As You Like It

By William Shakespeare

Adapted and Directed by Noelle Marion

January 17 - 25/2026

The Forest of Arden is full of possibilities! Banished by her uncle and disguised as a boy, Rosalind and her beloved cousin Celia journey into the woods and discover new friends, love letters, music, and ultimately, themselves. Director Noelle Marion (last season's A Little Shakespeare: *The Tempest*) returns to helm this lively frolic through the forest. Now in its 13th year, A Little Shakespeare engages young artists with the work of the Bard in an adaptation directed and designed by professional artists, and performed and supported backstage by high school students.

A Doll's House

Written by Henrik Ibsen

Directed by Justin Emeka

February 21 - March 15/2026

Nora should be happy. She has a doting husband, beautiful children, and is preparing their gorgeous home for the holidays. She also has a secret – and if it gets out, she will lose everything. Now Nora must ask, "What is worth saving?" Critically acclaimed director Justin Emeka (*Sweat, Romeo and Juliet*) envisions *A Doll's House* through a contemporary lens creatively incorporating black culture into the world of one of the greatest plays ever written.

Elephant Shoes

A World Premiere Musical

Book by Ivan Menchell

Music and Lyrics by Caroline Kay

Directed and Choreographed by Jeff Calhoun

Co-produced by Two River Theater and Deaf West Theatre

June 4 - 28/2026

Cy is on the verge of revolutionizing communication! His brilliant invention instantly translates spoken English into American Sign Language (ASL), and vice versa. But his breakthrough means nothing if he cannot connect with the one person he longs for — Roxy, a whip-smart coder, and an integral part of turning their tech dream into reality. As they work side by side, Cy finds himself falling in love, only to

watch his best friend, Chris, sweep Roxy off her feet. A modern-day 'Cyrano' tale, *Elephant Shoes* asks: Can love transcend language or will it forever be lost in translation?

With a soaring contemporary score and an immersive blend of spoken English, ASL, and groundbreaking stage technology, this World Premiere co-production between Two River Theater and Deaf West will ignite your senses and change the way you experience musical theatre. *Elephant Shoes* is produced in special arrangement with **Deaf West Theatre** (DJ Kurs and Jeff Perri), **Kevin Ryan** and **Diane Scott Carter**.

TICKET INFORMATION

2025/26 subscriptions are now on sale! Renew or purchase at <https://tworivertheater.org/season-subscriptions/> or by calling the Box Office at 732.345.1400. Single tickets for *Murder on the Links* and *The Monsters* will go on sale in June 2025. *A Doll's House* and *Elephant Shoes* single tickets will go on sale in Fall 2025. Ticket onsale dates for *A Little Shakespeare: As You Like It* will be announced at a later date.

CO-PRODUCERS

Manhattan Theatre Club (Co-Producer, *THE MONSTERS*) is a not-for-profit theatre that has been under the leadership of Artistic Director Lynne Meadow since 1972. In 2023, Chris Jennings became her partner, joining MTC as Executive Director and replacing Barry Grove, who co-led the company for 48 years. Meadow, Jennings and MTC's first-rate staff produce seasons of innovative, entertaining and thought-provoking new plays and musicals at our Samuel J. Friedman Theatre on Broadway and off-Broadway stages at New York City Center. In the 2023-24 season, all three of our Broadway shows were nominated for the Tony Award for Best Play, representing three of the five nominees in the category. For over 50 years, MTC has been acclaimed for identifying, fostering and supporting talented artists at all stages of their careers in the creation of new work, and the hallmark of Meadow's long tenure has been the quality, range and originality of the theatre's repertoire. In that time, we have produced more than 600 premieres, which include nearly 20% of all of the new plays on Broadway since we opened the Friedman in 2003. Our work has gone on to be mounted around the country and the world, contributing a proud legacy to the American theatrical canon. To date, MTC productions have garnered 30 Tony Awards; 51 Drama Desk Awards; 49 Obie Awards; and seven Pulitzer Prizes for Martyna Majok's *Cost of Living*, Lynn Nottage's *Ruined*, David Lindsay-Abaire's *Rabbit Hole*, John Patrick Shanley's *Doubt*, David Auburn's *Proof*, August Wilson's *The Piano Lesson* and Beth Henley's *Crimes of the Heart*. Artistic Development at MTC includes both public and private readings, workshops, fellowships, dramaturgical support and other resources for playwrights and other artists. MTC's playwriting commission program is one of the largest in the country. MTC is committed to sharing the work on our stages with the widest possible audience. Along with a robust slate of ticket access initiatives to make our productions broadly accessible, we strive to engage audiences of all ages and backgrounds. We also aim to help them build deep connections with our work through our Beyond the Stage programming and our gold standard Learning and Community Engagement program, which has been in operation since 1989 and serves over 2,500 learners of all ages annually: in high school classrooms throughout the NYC area, nationwide and

abroad; in partnerships with other local not-for profit organizations and their community members; and in our offices and theatres. MTC is an anti-racist organization that respects and honors all voices, and upholds the values of community and equity.

Deaf West Theatre (Co-Producer, *Elephant Shoes* - DJ Kurs, Artistic Director, Jeff Perri, Managing Director). Committed to innovation, collaboration, training, and activism, **Deaf West** is the artistic bridge between the Deaf and hearing worlds. Founded in Los Angeles in 1991, **Deaf West** engages artists and audiences in unparalleled theater and media experiences inspired by Deaf culture and the expressive power of sign language, weaving ASL with spoken English to create a seamless ballet of movement and voice. Recent and past productions include a new production of *Green Day's American Idiot*, in a co-production with Center Theatre Group; the groundbreaking production of Beethoven's only opera *Fidelio* with the Los Angeles Philharmonic conducted by Maestro Gustavo Dudamel; a new play adaptation of *Oedipus* at the Getty Villa Museum directed and adapted by Jenny Koons; *The Solid of Life of Sugar Water* by Jack Thorne; *Our Town*, in a co-production with the Pasadena Playhouse; Edward Albee's *At Home at the Zoo*, in a co-production with the Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts; *Spring Awakening the Musical*, which transferred from Inner-City Arts to the Wallis and then to Broadway (three Tony Award® nominations including Best Revival of a Musical); *American Buffalo* (Los Angeles Times "Critic's Choice"); *Cyrano*, a co-production with the Fountain Theatre (Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle Award for Outstanding Production); *Big River the Musical* (Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle and Backstage Garland awards for Best Musical in its L.A. premiere, a Tony Award® nomination, and four Drama Desk Awards on Broadway); *Pippin*, produced at the Mark Taper Forum in a co-production with Center Theatre Group; *Sleeping Beauty Wakes*, also a co-production with Center Theatre Group, presented at the Kirk Douglas Theatre; *Oliver!* (Ovation Award for Best Musical) and *A Streetcar Named Desire* (Ovation Award for Best Play). In 2005, **Deaf West Theatre** was selected to receive the Highest Recognition Award by the Secretary of Health and Human Services for its "distinguished contributions to improve and enrich the culture lives of Deaf and hard of hearing actors and theater patrons." To learn more visit deafwest.org

Kevin Ryan (Co-Producer, *Elephant Shoes*) is a three-time Tony, Drama Desk and Olivier award-winning producer. Broadway: *Gypsy*, *The Outsiders*, *Merrily We Roll Along*, *Parade*, *Good Night, and Good Luck*, *Into the Woods*, *The Piano Lesson*, *Ohio State Murders*. London: *Dear England*, *Standing at the Sky's Edge*. Off-Broadway: *Here We Are* and Gavin Creel's *Walk on Through*. Ryan co-founded one of Broadway's largest charity events, the Sleep Out, to help end youth homelessness.

Diane Scott Carter (Co-Producer, *Elephant Shoes*) is a Tony, Drama Desk and Olivier award-winning producer of color. Select Broadway: *Gypsy*, *Parade*, *The Piano Lesson*, *Suffs*, *Once Upon a Mattress*. West End: *Dear England*; *People, Places & Things*. Off-Broadway: *Islander*. Diane advocates for diversity in theatre at all levels.

SPONSORSHIP

Two River Theater's 2025/26 Season Sponsor is Hackensack Meridian Riverview Medical Center.

Two River Theater is funded in part by public support through the National Endowment for the Arts, the State of New Jersey, the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, the New Jersey Council for the Humanities, funding through a grant from the New Jersey Department of State, Division of Travel & Tourism and the Monmouth County Board of County Commissioners. Private support includes Citizens Philanthropic Foundation, Courtyard by Marriott, Edgerton Foundation, Grunin Foundation, Merrill G. & Emita E. Hastings Foundation, Investors Foundation, Jewish Federation in the Heart of New Jersey, The Blanche and Irving Laurie Foundation, Manasquan Bank Charitable Foundation, Molly Pitcher Inn and The Oyster Point Hotel, Monmouth University, MusicWorks Inc., OceanFirst Bank, OceanFirst Foundation, Open Heart Yoga, Senior Living Residences Marlboro, The Shubert Foundation, The Stone Foundation of New Jersey, Visiting Nurse Association of NJ Health Group, Triumph Brewing Company, Zager Fuchs P.C., and other generous funders.

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 85+ 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.