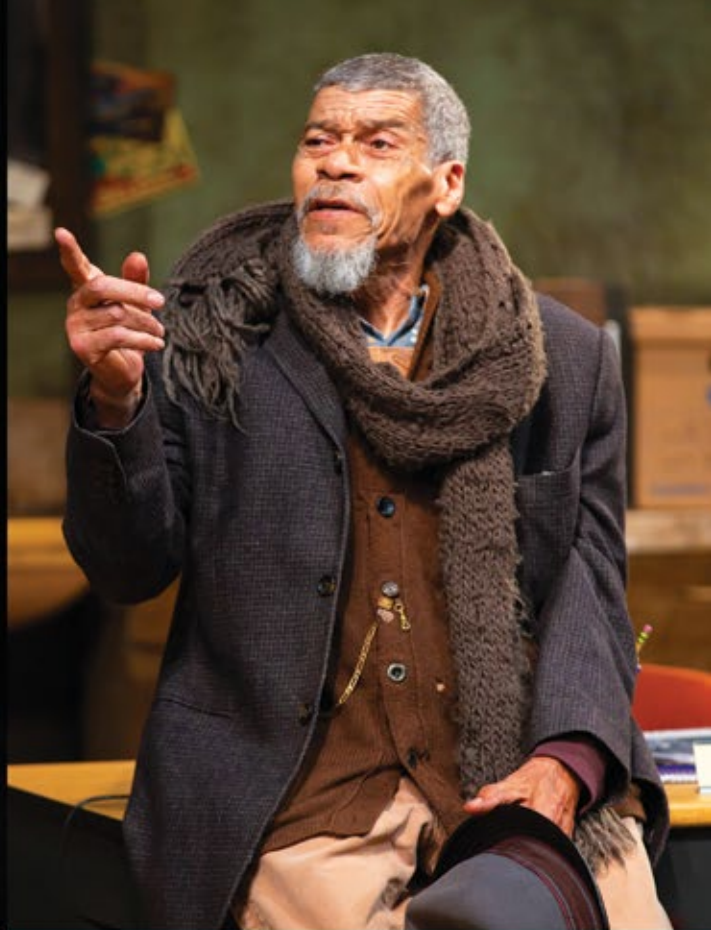


TWO — RIVER THEATER

2019/20 ANNUAL REPORT



DRIVEN MISSION

WE CREATE GREAT AMERICAN THEATER BY DEVELOPING AND PRODUCING NEW WORKS AND WORLD MASTERPIECES THAT MOST RICHLY DIRECT OUR GAZE TO THE LIFE OF THE HUMAN SPIRIT. WE CULTIVATE AN AUDIENCE THAT CHERISHES THE INTIMATE JOY OF THEATER, ENRICHED WHEN SHARED BY A COMMUNITY OF OTHERS.

VISION

TO BE A THEATER WHOSE WORK CONTRIBUTES TO THE CANON OF WORLD THEATER AND IS A VITAL CULTURAL RESOURCE FOR OUR COMMUNITY.

CORE VALUES

ARTISTIC EXCELLENCE

We nurture and challenge the visions of adventurous theater artists. Our commitment to the artistic process is sustained over time through an investment in people, their creative process, and our dedication to the highest artistic standards.

EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

We make our theater a welcoming resource for all. We create engagement programs and partnerships that encourage all voices to come together in conversation around the stories we tell. We invest in the next generation of artists and audiences by introducing students and lifelong learners to the possibility and adventure that theater brings to our lives.

EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

We believe that the essence of theater is democratic: it invites us to encounter, consider and perhaps adopt other points of view, if only for a brief time in a darkened theater. We aspire to build an environment in which artists, audiences, employees, and Board members from different backgrounds and experiences together form an institution that is equitable, diverse, and inclusive.

OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE

We dedicate ourselves to the highest standards in our governance, management, operational, and financial practices. We are committed to developing and retaining an experienced and accomplished staff, an engaged and informed Board of Trustees, and a working environment that attracts staff, volunteers, and artists of the highest caliber.

Cover pictures, clockwise from top: Wayne DeHart in August Wilson's *Radio Golf*; The Company of *A Little Shakespeare: Twelfth Night*. Photo by Yurik L. Lozano; Kelly McIntyre and Amina Faye in *Love in Hate Nation*; Joey McIntyre and Hannah Rose Caton in *Twelfth Night*; Jason O'Connell in *Cyrano*. Photos by T. Charles Erickson. Back cover pictures, clockwise from top: Amber Iman and Carl Hendrick Louis in August Wilson's *Radio Golf*; The Company of *Love in Hate Nation*; Darriel Angeles, Ashley Moshett, Lily Grace Riddle in *A Little Shakespeare: Twelfth Night*. Photo by Yurik L. Lozano; Kelly McIntyre and Amina Faye in *Love in Hate Nation*; Britney Simpson and Jason O'Connell in *Cyrano*. Photos by T. Charles Erickson.

LEADERSHIP

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ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

MICHAEL HURST
MANAGING DIRECTOR

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JOAN H. RECHNITZ
FOUNDERS

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JENNIFER TIPTON

A NOTE FROM ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

JOHN DIAS AND MANAGING DIRECTOR MICHAEL HURST



Michael Hurst and John Dias. Photo by Danny Sanchez.

2019/20 WAS A YEAR OF UNEXPECTED CHALLENGES AND RESILIENCY. As COVID-19 forced people around the world to adjust to daily shifts and “new normals,” it also necessitated that live performance venues like ours find new ways to connect with our community and contribute to the ongoing fights for racial justice occurring around the country. In these uncertain times, we are grateful to our agile and creative team of staff and artists as well as our Board of Trustees, audience, institutional funders, and individual donors, who have remained with us as we went from onstage to online.

In the time that we’ve been at home, **TWO RIVER DOVE HEADFIRST INTO CREATING DIGITAL PLATFORMS FOR ARTISTIC, EDUCATIONAL, AND SOCIAL CONTENT.** We launched our first online reading series with artists from our past, present and future called Two River Rising, which benefited Two River as well as five other social justice/ social service organizations around the country. Meanwhile, we finished a capital project launched in 2018/19 to renovate the plaza in front of our lobby entrance. The new plaza includes foliage, benches, café tables and chairs and a pergola stage for outdoor programming and events. A dedicated team of staff members led by our Director of Facilities, our General Manager, and our Director of Production are working diligently to plan for a safe return to live performances both outdoors on our new plaza and indoors in our theaters.

It is antithetical to who we are as theater makers not to be in the same room together. We make a living on the certainty of the existential need to gather in a sacred space, breathe the same air, and tell ourselves of our shared humanity. One upside to these past few months is that everyone, the world over, is reminded now of how essential that is. When the time comes, the world will hunger for that connection again. And we will be here for them. We will move through, among many things, this uncertainty, a little bit every day. And, **ARMED WITH THE DEEPER KNOWLEDGE OF THIS EXPERIENCE WE WILL RETURN** to what we know: that time spent, in communion, at a place like Two River is what’s needed to—as our founder Bob Rechnitz taught us—“most richly direct our gaze to the life of the human spirit.” The clouds of uncertainty will clear but never disappear. Yet, we’ll have the theater again to provide a respite from the unknowing.


THANK YOU FOR BEING WITH US FOR 26 SEASONS. WE WILL SEE YOU ALL AGAIN SOON!



TWO RIVER THEATER

PRODUCES CLASSICS, CONTEMPORARY PLAYS AND WORLD PREMIERES, AND SUPPORTS THE VOICES, AMBITIONS AND VISIONS OF THEATER ARTISTS.

Since Two River was established 26 years ago, we have stayed true to our founding principles, bringing a fresh eye to masterpieces from the European and American canons. We are also committed to the full range of new-play development and production. We believe that we are enlivened and enriched by new work and the artists who create it, and that the American theater is truer, richer, deeper and more reflective of who we are as a culture if it includes new work.



Since its founding, Two River has **PREMIERED** 17 original plays and musicals; **COMMISSIONED** 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 Playwright-in-Residence Madeleine George (which enjoyed an Obie Award-winning Off-Broadway run); and **DEVELOPED** numerous other plays and musicals. During the 2019/20 season, Two River premiered the musical, *Love in Hate Nation* with book, music, and lyrics by Joe Iconis.



WE ARE SUPPORTING NEW PLAYS IN

DEVELOPMENT

by commissioned writers including Rinde Eckert (who is working on a Mark Twain/Huckleberry Finn project with director David Schweizer); Jessica Hagedorn (who is writing a musical based on the all-female band from the 1970s, *Fanny* to be directed by May Adrales); and Daniel Maté and Marshall Paillet (*Middle School Mysteries*). Other new works in development include the musical *Radiant Baby*, about the life and work of Keith Haring, written by Stuart Ross and Debra Barsha, as well as projects by Ngozi Anyanwu, Eboni Booth, Matt Barbot, Lisa Kron, and Ben Steinfeld.

TWO RIVER HOSTS SEVERAL PROGRAMS TO NURTURE ARTISTS AND THEIR WORK. Each year, we present a **CABARET OF NEW SONGS** for the musical theater in association with NYU's Graduate Musical Theatre Writing program. Additionally, we host numerous **ARTIST RESIDENCIES** including a week-long retreat for playwrights from the adventurous New York-based company Clubbed Thumb.

In the 2019/20 season, we invited four new writers to the **EMERGING PLAYWRIGHTS** group. This program supports early career playwrights in the development of a new play and culminates in a public reading. This year's cohort included Eleanor Burgess, Jessica Huang, Kareem M. Lucas, and Emily Zemba. Guided by Literary Manager Taylor Barfield and Playwright-in-Residence Madeleine George, the group met throughout the season to get to know Two River Theater and Red Bank, share their work, receive feedback on projects in development, and discuss topics pertinent to being writers in the field. In April, the group held their final meeting via Zoom. Two River postponed this cohort's Emerging Playwrights Group readings until the 2020/21 season.

WE BELIEVE THAT WE HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO CREATE THE MOST REPRESENTATIVE THEATER THAT WE CAN. Reflecting the demographics of our community, Two River has cast our productions with diverse acting companies, and made plays by African-American and Latinx theater artists an essential part of each mainstage season. In 2019/20, we continued our commitment to present all ten plays of **AUGUST WILSON'S AMERICAN CENTURY CYCLE**, one play documenting each decade of African-American life in the 20th Century, with our production of *Radio Golf*, which was cut short due to COVID-19.

In August 2019, Two River presented our 9th annual **CROSSING BORDERS (CRUZANDO FRONTERAS) FESTIVAL** of play readings and live music by Latinx theater artists. Each year, we look for full-length plays, musicals and works for young people that speak to the diversity of the Latinx experience. Participation in Crossing Borders (Cruzando Fronteras) grows each year. This year we moved all Crossing Borders (Cruzando Fronteras) readings and events from our more intimate 110 seat Marion Huber Theater to our larger Rechnitz Theater to respond to the festival's growth.



May Adrales (pictured center) director of *Play Like A Girl*.



NYU Graduate Musical Theater Writing Program Cabaret of New Songs.



The Company of *Be More Chill*. Photo by T. Charles Erickson.



A Night of Music: Flaco Navaja & The Razor Blades at the Crossing Borders Festival.

CYRANO

By Jason O'Connell and Brenda Withers
Adapted from the play by Edmond Rostand
Directed by Meredith McDonough
A Co-Production with Hudson Valley
Shakespeare Festival

JOAN AND ROBERT RECHNITZ THEATER

SEP 21 – OCT 13 / 2019

Two River opened the season with a new adaptation of Edmond Rostand's *Cyrano de Bergerac* by Jason O'Connell (Two River's *Noises Off* and *The Merry Wives of Windsor*) and Brenda Withers. O'Connell led a five-person cast as the larger-than-life Cyrano, the brilliant thinker, wordsmith and swordsman.

"A brilliant adaptation...the cast is nothing short of remarkable" – *BroadwayWorld*



Luis Quintero, Britney Simpson, and Jason O'Connell in *Cyrano*. Photo by T. Charles Erickson.

LOVE IN HATE NATION

Book, Music and Lyrics by Tony Award® Nominee
Joe Iconis
Directed by John Simpkins

JOAN AND ROBERT RECHNITZ THEATER

NOV 9 – DEC 1 / 2019



The Company of *Love in Hate Nation*. Photo by T. Charles Erickson.

We welcomed back Joe Iconis, composer and lyricist of the worldwide sensation *Be More Chill*. Iconis' world premiere musical *Love in Hate Nation* is set in a 1960s Juvie Hall and uses classic "bad girl" movies as the inspiration for the story of young people caught between eras of a changing America. Sixteen-year old Susannah Son is carted off to the National Reformatory for Girls to get her head put on straight. There she meets the aggressively incorrigible Sheila Nail, and a relationship forms which leads to an all-out "revolution in the institution" as they attempt to break out of the boxes society has created around them. Girl Group Wall of Sound harmonies are filtered through a punk rock spirit in this rebellious and romantic new musical.

"*Love in Hate Nation* is stronger than nearly any new musical I've seen this year, rest assured that you'll leave Hate Nation madly, deeply in love"

– *Broad Street Review*

GROWING AUDIENCES: REACHED OVER 11,500 AUDIENCE MEMBERS

through this co-production with the Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival.

OUR MOST POPULAR SHOW FOR YOUNG PEOPLE!

Over 20% of the audience was age 30 or younger.

TWELFTH NIGHT

By William Shakespeare
Directed by Sara Holdren

JOAN AND ROBERT RECHNITZ THEATER

JAN 11 – FEB 2 / 2020



Celeste Ciulla and Richard Hollis in *Twelfth Night*. Photo by T. Charles Erickson.

Unexpected love triangles, separated twins, and mistaken identities propel this gender-bending tale. A play saturated in perilous excesses—of love, of grief, of ego, of drink, of mischief—*Twelfth Night* is one of Shakespeare's most celebrated plays and, perhaps, his most perfect comedy. Sara Holdren, who staged Two River's Little Shakespeare productions of *The Comedy of Errors* and *Macbeth*, directed.

"Director Sara Holdren delivers the fun in her dynamic production." – *New Jersey Stage*

OUR MOST GLOBAL AUDIENCE BASE EVER!

Audience members purchased tickets from 31 states + Canada, England, Germany, Japan, Peru, Spain and more!

AUGUST WILSON'S RADIO GOLF

Directed by Obie Award® winner Brandon J. Dirden

JOAN AND ROBERT RECHNITZ THEATER

FEB 29 – MARCH 12 / 2020



Carl Hendrick Louis and Wayne DeHart in August Wilson's *Radio Golf*. Photo by T. Charles Erickson.

Director Brandon J. Dirden (*King Hedley II*, *Seven Guitars*) returned to Two River to direct our sixth production from August Wilson's The American Century Cycle—*Radio Golf*, the Cycle's 10th and final play, set in 1997. Real-estate developer Harmond Wilks is determined to become the first black mayor of Pittsburgh and revitalize the Hill District. Starbucks, Barnes & Noble and Whole Foods are ready to move in. But one particular house on the development site, at 1839 Wylie Avenue, must be torn down, a casualty of urban blight. And that house belonged to Wilson's legendary Aunt Ester—forcing Harmond, and the Hill District itself, into a battle between the past and the future.

"Brandon Dirden (Director) and Two River have located and are amplifying the show's great power." – *The Star Ledger*

TRT ARTIST FAMILY: This production marked Brandon J. Dirden's seventh Two River Theater production, and his third production as a director.

RED BANK

TWO RIVER THEATER is committed to contributing to great American theater by nurturing and producing the classics of tomorrow. During 2019/20, new works produced or presented as staged readings at Two River were produced in theaters around the country or will be produced in 2020/21.



The Ballad of Little Jo
by Sarah Schlesinger, Mike Reid, and John Dias
TRT 2016/2017 Season
Watertown Theatre in Addison, TX



Paris
by Eboni Booth
TRT Emerging Playwrights Group Readings 2019
Atlantic Theater Company in New York, NY



72 miles to go...
by Hilary Bettis
TRT Crossing Borders/
Cruzando Fronteras 2018
Roundabout Theatre Company in New York, NY



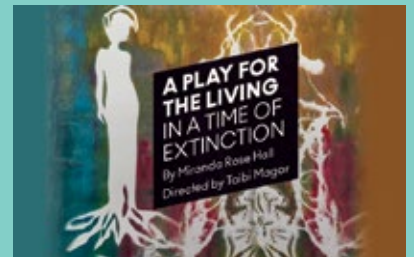
Oo-Bla-Dee
with book and lyrics by Regina Taylor and music by Diedre L. Murray
TRT 2018/19 Season
Repertory Theatre of St. Louis



The Bridge of San Luis Rey
by David Greenspan
TRT 2017/18 Season
Colony Theatre in Miami, FL



Richard & Jane & Dick & Sally
by Noah Diaz
TRT Crossing Borders/
Cruzando Fronteras 2018
Baltimore Center Stage



A Play for the Living in a Time of Extinction
by Miranda Rose Hall
TRT Emerging Playwrights Group Readings 2019
Baltimore Center Stage

BE MORE CHILL

by Joe Iconis and Joe Tracz (2014/15 Season) opened at The Other Palace in London on February 18, 2020. Two River Theater's original cast recording of *Be More Chill* is the #4 most streamed cast album of the DECADE, coming in behind *Hamilton*, *Dear Evan Hansen* & *Wicked*.





A LITTLE SHAKESPEARE: TWELFTH NIGHT

Adapted and Directed by Em Weinstein
MARION HUBER THEATER
JANUARY 31 – FEBRUARY 9 / 2020



Celebrating its 7th season as one of Two River's most popular education programs, *A Little Shakespeare* engages young artists and audiences with the work of the Bard. Each year, a 75-minute version of one of Shakespeare's plays—adapted, directed and designed by professional artists—is performed and supported backstage by local high school students for audiences age 9 and up.

Adapted and directed by Em Weinstein, this season's *Little Shakes* transported us to Illyria Beach Club, a fictional seaside haven in Southern California. "*Twelfth Night* is Shakespeare at his most dexterously playful," says Em. "The play interweaves tragedy, comedy, music, and an excess of love." Audiences enjoyed volleying beach balls and grooving to original songs with a cast of 14 including a full house band, with 5 teenagers working diligently backstage - running lights, sound, props, and costumes.

Top image: Company of *A Little Shakespeare: Twelfth Night*. Bottom image: Jack Cusick as Malvolio in *A Little Shakespeare: Twelfth Night*. Photo by Yurik L. Lozano.

AUDIENCE RAVES:

"I finally understood the verbiage of Shakespeare."

"Wow, those kids are so talented. What a great show!"

"This was our fifth time seeing it. So good."

"I wish it was running longer. I would love to come see it again!"

PARENT FEEDBACK:

"I would never have been able to afford putting my child in a program such as this if there had been a cost to us. I am a single mother of three children on a teacher's salary and this would not have been possible."

"The program is invaluable for young people who love the arts who may not otherwise have such an opportunity to learn, grow, and share their gifts and talents in the arts."

"My gratitude and heart goes out to all of the donors and all those providing funding for such a wonderful and quality program for the children."

WE BELIEVE

ARTS EDUCATION PROMOTES TWO CENTRAL GOALS: SUPPORTING THE ARTIST WITHIN EACH STUDENT AND BUILDING FUTURE AUDIENCES.

WE INSPIRE

EMPATHY, RISK-TAKING AND A SENSE OF ADVENTURE.

WE SUPPORT

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AND LIFE-LONG LEARNING.

ARTS EDUCATION



STUDENT MATINEES AND NO SEATS EMPTY

We offer school-time performances for nearly every production each year. Although this season was cut short by COVID-19, **we welcomed 2,183 students from 38 NJ middle and high schools to 11 student matinee performances.**

Teachers received Curriculum Guides to help them integrate the work on stage with work done in the classroom. Following each performance, schools were invited to participate in talkbacks with members of the casts, helping to inspire relevant and engaging discussions back at school.

Of the students and teachers who attended student matinees this season, 36% of them received their tickets, transportation, and workshops for free through Two River's No Seats Empty programs for low-income schools. Additionally, five schools were chosen for our No Seats Empty: Total Experience program, receiving tickets to multiple productions, as well as pre- and post-show workshops at their schools.



METRO SCHOLARS

This year-long program is open to high school juniors who are interested in exploring acting, design and/or technical theater/stage management. In the 19/20 season, **14 Metro Scholars from 9 local high schools** assisted Two River's staff in several departments, saw every show at Two River for free, and took specially designed master classes with theater professionals.



THEATERWORKS

TheaterWorks connects underserved youth to the variety of vocational opportunities available in the theater. This season, two students on the autism spectrum attended a Relaxed Performance of *Love in Hate Nation* and participated in a TheaterWorks workshop beforehand. The majority of TheaterWorks groups, 100 people in total, were scheduled to participate in the workshops and performances for *Radio Golf*, *The Hombres*, and *Lackawanna Blues*, which were cancelled due to COVID-19.



SUMMER INTENSIVES

Students in grades 7-12 created an original show each week of the three-week Summer Intensives program which included an Onstage Track for performers, and a Backstage Track for designers, stage crew and technicians. Led by a team of professionals and guest artists, each show is created by the students and shaped by the directors; the shows revolved around themes to challenge, inspire, and move the ensembles.

For three weeks in July 2019, 70 students, 9 of whom received full or partial need-based scholarships, participated.



MONDAY MASTERS

Two River Theater hosted its third year of master classes led by some of the marvelous artists who were involved in our season and were excited to work with students and lifelong learners. Several workshops were ultimately cancelled due to COVID-19, but **24 students of all ages** worked with Chesney Snow and Michael Cumpsty.



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR TEACHERS

Two River offered several opportunities for teachers to learn information and skills to take back to their classrooms while earning professional development credit hours. In July 2019, we collaborated with the T. Thomas Fortune Foundation to host our second one-day program, "August Wilson, T. Thomas Fortune and Gentrification Then & Now," in compliance with the New Jersey Amistad Commission. We also offered Professional Development & Performance Previews for every production, helping teachers to integrate our Curriculum Guides more fully into their classes to prepare for their student matinees.

NEW! PLAY DATES

Offered one per show (total of four this season), Play Dates enabled parents/guardians to attend a Saturday matinee performance while their children ages 6-11 simultaneously participated in theater games, making crafts and exploring themes inspired by the production with Two River teaching artists.



SPECTRUM THEATER RESIDENCIES

Building on our past work with students on the autism spectrum, Two River partnered with several organizations to offer on and off-site classes this season.

Over 165 students from The Harbor School in Eatontown, OASIS tlc, Friendship Circle, and Monmouth County Parks Therapeutic Recreation participated. Some classes focused on using The Hunter Heartbeat method to teach about Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*; others used children's books to encourage full bodied participation in storytelling. Led by teaching artists with extensive experience, students improved body awareness, verbal and non-verbal communication and self-confidence through the art of theater.





Book Club discussion of *Orlando*, by Virginia Woolf, in connection with *Twelfth Night*



Community art project with artist Holly Suzanne Rader, creating lobby art for *Love in Hate Nation*



Guggenheim Works in Progress for *Love in Hate Nation*, featuring choreographer Mayte Natalio, Director John Simpkins, and Writer/Composer Joe Iconis

INSIDE TWO RIVER

■ A series of arts and humanities events, specially curated for each of our productions. In the 2019/20 season, 35 events helped Two River Theater reach more than 2,600 attendees.



The cast of *Love in Hate Nation* at the August 2019 Workshop Performance



Inspired by our production of *Cyrano*, Community Poetry Night at Johnny Jazz Park in partnership with Red Bank Parks and Recreation



Drag queen Lady Celestina at Pride Night



School of Rock students performing a concert of protest music inspired by *Love in Hate Nation*



TEDxAsburyPark Salon with speakers presenting on "Panache" and *Cyrano*



Actor Wayne DeHart and Director Brandon J. Dirden in a live interview with WBGO 88.3FM for August Wilson's *Radio Golf*



Carl Hendrick Louis of
August Wilson's *Radio Golf*



The Two River Players' *Romeo and Juliet*,
featuring Sara Holdren



Playwright Matt Barbot with a
selection from *El Coqui Espectacular*
and the *Bottle of Doom*



Story Time with Artistic
Assistant Kamilah Bush

■ To stay in touch with our audiences while our stages were dark due to COVID-19, Two River kept the love of theater going through curated digital content! Our website and social media were filled with daily posts of artist features, at-home activities, crafts, classes, workshops, reflections on previous productions, and more!

SCENE AT TWO RIVER

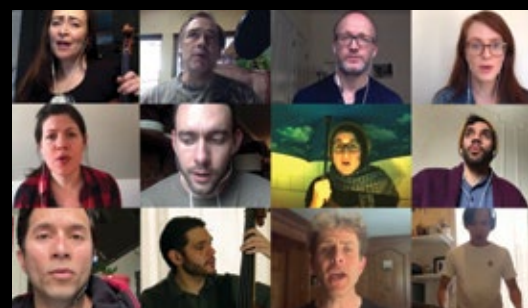
■ From March through the end of what would have been the 2019/20 season in June, Two River Theater hosted over 30 live digital events, reaching over 600 attendees and thousands of views, likes, and other interactions on social media.



Lighting Design Feature with Lighting and
Sound Assistant Cassie Mazza



Katie's Crafting Corner with Special
Events Manager Katie Benson



"Wind and the Rain" with the Lobbyists
and *Twelfth Night* cast

BACKSTAGE



Our jam-packed calendar of special events kicked-off on September 27 with our **Pave the Plaza** party and the opening night of **Cyrano**. Cooler weather and on-going construction moved us inside in October for our always-popular **NYU Cabaret**, featuring original songs written by graduates and faculty of NYU's acclaimed master's degree in Musical Theatre Writing Program. Donors enjoyed a cocktail party in the Victoria J. Mastrobuono Library before the performance.

November 15 brought us a revolution in the Marion Huber Theater for the **Love in Hate Nation Opening Night pre-show dinner**. All proceeds from this special event were directed to new play and musical development. Our blackbox theater was transformed to illuminate murals of girls from the early 1960s inspired by Simplicity dress patterns. Following cocktails and a delicious dinner catered by In Thyme accompanied by wine from Nicholas Wines, guests enjoyed dessert and a special performance by Joe Iconis where he performed his song "I Was A Teenage Delinquent!" The song, which had been a staple of the early 2010s Joe Iconis & Family performances, was the inspiration for *Love in Hate Nation*.

THANK YOU TO OUR LOVE IN HATE NATION OPENING NIGHT SPONSORS!

THE SHIRELLES: Hackensack Meridian Health Riverview Medical Center, Denholtz Properties and Caroline Huber.

THE MARVELETTES: Marilyn and Robert Broege, The Columbo Family, John R Hall, Thomas Hessman, Patricia and Vernon Ralph.





The new year ushered in Shakespeare in all our spaces! We celebrated the opening of **Twelfth Night** on January 17. Donors and special guests joined us for a technical rehearsal of **A Little Shakespeare: Twelfth Night** followed by a reception in the Victoria J. Mastrobuono Library on January 24.

August Wilson devotees joined us for an intimate dinner in the lobby followed by a technical rehearsal of **August Wilson's Radio Golf** on February 26. Donors and special guests joined us on March 6 for the opening night of August Wilson's *Radio Golf* as we celebrated our sixth production in August Wilson's American Century Cycle.

While our spring donor events and Gala were cancelled due to COVID-19, we launched our first online donor event on May 28 – **Beer 101**. Donors “zoomed” into the 60-minute virtual beer tasting for an interactive experience including a behind-the-scenes glimpse at Red Bank’s Triumph Brewing Company’s process—all from the comfort of their homes! We finished out our special event calendar with an **invitation only “zoom” cooking demonstration and wine tasting** with Chef Nicholas Harary.





NEW CENTER AND PLAZA

In January 2020, we opened the Center for New Work, Education and Design. The new 36,000 square foot facility has two rehearsal studios, artist labs, expanded shops, centrally located offices for the theater's Production and Education staffs and multiple storage areas. The Center allows us to expand the impact of our new-play development activities, education programs and free community events.



STUDIO A

We packed the house for our very first public event in Studio A with a **TEDXAsburyPark Salon** in conjunction with *Twelfth Night*. A few weeks later, we welcomed the cast, creatives and production staff of *Radio Golf* to the first day of rehearsal in Studio A.



HACKENSACK MERIDIAN HEALTH RIVERVIEW MEDICAL CENTER STUDIO B

This more intimate space hosted our first education workshop of 2020: **Monday Masters Shakespeare Scene Study** led by actor and director Michael Cumpsty! In Feb, WBGO Jazz 88.3FM's Doug Doyle interviewed Radio Golf director Brandon J. Dirden and cast member Wayne DeHart before a live audience.



PARKING

In early 2020, over **75 complimentary spaces including eight handicapped spaces were available to patrons**. COVID-19 delayed Phase 2 of the parking lot renovation which will be completed this fall.



THE PLAZA RENOVATION IS COMPLETE! Construction started in the fall of 2019 and continued throughout the winter months. In January, over 100 pavers were installed with names, quotes, and tributes from our patrons, artists, and community members. The completed plaza includes foliage, benches, bike racks, and a pergola stage for outdoor programming and events.

PAVE THE PLAZA



Suzanne Anan Design
Ansell Grimm & Aaron PC
Susannah Austin
Marilyn M. Baldi
Ellen and Carl Battaglia
Lisa and Stephen Becker
Barbara Benson
Paul Benz
Philip Bonaventura
Nancy and Martin Brilliant
Marilyn and Bob Broege
Arlene Brown
Peter Bruguiera
Nancy and Edward Butler
Dr. Joseph J. Calabro
Thomas Carroll
The Carton Family
Barbara and Dr. Harold Chafkin
Joan G. Clark
Kathleen Clark
Rose and William Colin
Elizabeth Columbo
The Cordaro-Camoosa Family
Alexandra D'Amore
Duke Dang and Charlie Rosen
Lynn and Jan Dash
Jacqueline DeFelice
Alba Di Bello
Kathleen Ellis and
The Honorable Kenneth Pringle
Linda and Bob Ensor
Susan and Don Faistl
Linda and Philip Falcone
Jean Gassaway

Gellman Images
Vincent Gillick
Suzan Globus
Margaret and Jim Graf
Gale and Dr. Robert B. Grossman
Kirstin and Todd Haggard
Lanae and Todd Herman
Thomas K. Hessman
Lamar Hicks
Rusty Eidmann Hicks
John Hoffman
Barbara and Joseph Hollander
Phyl and Don Howard
Caroline P. Huber
Cecilia and Boris Jelic
The Jewish Federation in the
Heart of New Jersey
Bonnie and Dr. Thomas Johnson
Carol R. and Barry W. Johnson
Beverly and Frederick Johnson
Ginny Kamin
Helen and Dr. Samuel Kim
Phyllis Kinsler
Robin and John Klein
Bridget and Thomas Kluwin
Mavis Kolb
Roberta and Bob Krantz
Mary Jane and Richard Kroon
Nicole Lerario
Diane and Dr. Frank Lopresti
Anne Luzzatto
Don and Mary Magee
Wendy and Gerald Marks
Susanne Mars

Thank you to all the donors who supported the Pave the Plaza campaign!

Kimberly Mason
Charles and Theresa Mattina
Beth and Vincent Mazza
The Honorable Edward J. McKenna
Nancy and David Medrow
Patricia and Steven Meko
Nyire and Gregory Melconian
Metrovation
Carol Migliore
Gloria Moro
Lois and Robert Mortenson
Nancy A. Mulheren
Brendan Carolyn Mulholland
Jeffrey and Julie Mullen
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*Includes Matching Gift

MATCHING GIFTS

The following have provided matching gifts to Two River on behalf of their employees.

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Black Rock Matching Gift Program
The Horizon Foundation for New Jersey
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Johnson & Johnson Matching Gifts
The KIND Foundation
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Plymouth Rock Foundation
Prudential Financial, Inc. (3)

The United way of Monmouth and
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Verizon Wireless

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Boys and Girls Clubs of

Monmouth County

In memory of Robert Rechnitz

Esther Barcan

In memory of Robert Rechnitz

Randy Becker

In memory of Nancy Daley

Leslie and Richard Black

In memory of Michelle Skole

Lois P. Broder

In memory of Robert Rechnitz

Lois P. Broder

In memory of Kenneth Stunkel

Jill and John Caddell

In memory of Robert Rechnitz

Candice Chirgottis

In honor of John Dias

Robert and Susan Grossman

In memory of Nancy Daley

Christianna and Keith Harvey

In memory of Nancy Daley

Eileen and Timothy Hogan

In memory of Robert Rechnitz

Barbara and Joseph Hollander

In memory of Robert Rechnitz

Caroline P. Huber

In memory of Robert Rechnitz

Ginny Kamin

In memory of Robert Rechnitz

Jean Klc

In memory of Nancy Daley

Lunch Break

In memory of Robert Rechnitz

Zanda Lynn

In memory of Nancy Daley

Vincent and Beth Mazza

In memory of Nancy Daley

Michelle McCreary

In memory of Maureen Fisher

Susan Mikaitis

In memory of Nancy Daley

The Murphy Family Foundation

In memory of Robert Rechnitz

Sally and Charles Neustadt

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In honor of Edward J. McKenna Jr.

Emily J. Rechnitz

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Dr. Joan Rechnitz

In Memory of Gordon Litwin

Barry V. Qualls

In honor of Caroline Huber

Marion Quinn

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Sheila and Richard Sachs

In memory of Robert Rechnitz

Shrewsbury Foundation

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Karin and Joe Stein

In memory of Robert Rechnitz

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Paulette Wall

In memory of Nancy Daley

Wendie and Stephen Weinstein

In memory of Robert Rechnitz

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Laurie and Bud Wolfe

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Chryssa Yaccarino Charitable Trust

In loving memory of Bob Rechnitz

*Listing reflects gifts made between
August 1, 2019-August 21, 2020*

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THE VISIONARY CIRCLE \$25,000+



INNOVATOR CIRCLE \$10,000-\$24,999



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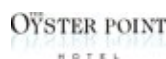
COMMUNITY PARTNERS



The Merrill G. & Erita E. Hastings
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IN-KIND SUPPORT



THEATER ACCESS

TWO RIVER THEATER is committed to making our facilities and performances accessible for all patrons, actors, and employees.



AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETATION

Scheduled American Sign Language interpreted performances for patrons with hearing loss, and fluency in ASL, are occasionally offered.



ASSISTIVE LISTENING DEVICES

Assistive Listening Devices are available for individuals with hearing loss to assist with amplification and clarity. Lightweight headsets, with no wires or cables, are available free of charge for all Two River Theater performances.



AUDIO-DESCRIBED PERFORMANCES

Scheduled audio description performances for patrons with vision loss are offered for each of our subscription series productions. Using a lightweight headset, with no wires or cables, which operate with an infra-red system, patrons can hear a live, objective, and concise description of the action on stage.*



BARRIER-FREE ACCESS

The theater provides barrier-free access for patrons using wheelchairs or walkers with on-grade entrances, elevators, railings, and wide doorways. Integrated seating for patrons in wheelchairs, accessible restrooms, wheelchair requests, and wheelchair storing space during the performance are also available.



LARGE PRINT PROGRAMS

Large print programs are available at the box office.



OPEN CAPTIONING

Scheduled open captioned performances for patrons with hearing loss are offered for each of our subscription series productions. A screen, which projects dialogue as the action occurs live on stage, is placed to the side of the stage, and no additional special equipment is necessary.*



RELAXED PERFORMANCES

Scheduled relaxed performances are designed to provide a welcoming and judgement-free theater experience for people on the autism spectrum and with other sensitivity issues or special needs.

**Reduced ticket prices are available for patrons benefiting from this service.*

STAFF



Two River Theater Staff in Studio A. Photo by Danny Sanchez

ARTISTIC

Stephanie Coen
Associate Artistic Director

Taylor Barfield
Literary Manager

Madeleine George
Playwright in Residence

Kamilah Bush
Artistic Assistant

ADMINISTRATION

Alma Malabanan-McGrath
General Manager

Margaret Shafai
Director of Finance

Karen Pierce
Staff Accountant

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Director of Marketing

Jenna Castano
Associate Director of Marketing

Hannah Walker
Institutional Marketing Manager

Yurik L. Lozano
Multimedia Manager

Michele Klinsky
Box Office Manager

Evan Kudish
Box Office Supervisor

Lynn Kroll
Box Officer/Group Sales Coordinator

Vernette Spicer
Box Officer/Access Coordinator

Samantha Truglio
Auslin Williams

Matt Yee
Box Officers

Angela White
House Manager & Volunteer Coordinator

Tess Ammerman
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Angela Kluwin
Associate Director of Development

Katie Benson
Special Events Manager

Rachel Hulsart
Institutional Giving Manager

Thomas Dougherty
Events Assistant

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Director of Education

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Education & Community Engagement Manager

Lea Anello
Corinda Bravo
Amanda Butterbaugh
Devin Fletcher
Shane O'Neil
Maria Paduano

Lucas Pinner
Elliot Roth
Steven Wilson
Teaching Artists

Em Weinstein
Adaptor/Director

OPERATIONS

Julia Alvidrez
Operations Director

Wayne Van Sant
Maintenance Supervisor

Vinnie Gillick
Lamar Hicks
William Hinton
Building Maintenance

PRODUCTION

Lauren Kurinskas
Director of Production

Will Cruttenden
Associate Production Manager

Jackie Romeo
Production Management Assistant

Alison Campbell
Company Management Assistant

Jacqueline Deniz Young
Technical Director

Colleen Dolan
Scenic Charge

Fiona Malone
Assistant Technical Director

Duane Noch
Master Carpenter

Christian Dilks
Staff Carpenter

Laura Nuneviller
Shop Assistant

Marlène Whitney
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Assistant Properties Supervisor

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Properties Assistant

Lesley Sorenson
Costume Shop Supervisor

Jill DiGiuseppe
Draper

Maggie Barnett
Wardrobe Supervisor

Jennah H. Cruz
Costume Assistant

Olga "Sue" Patino
Lighting Supervisor

Dan Montano
Sound Supervisor

Cassie Mazza
Abigail Lynn Smith

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Niew Bharyaguntra
Devin Christor
Production Assistants

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FINANCIAL RESULTS

As a 501(c)(3) not-for profit organization, Two River Theater is dedicated to creating great American theater while maintaining fiscal responsibility. Due to COVID-19, Two River Theater had to make the difficult decision in March to cancel all performances and events through June 30, 2020. The cancellation resulted in the early closing of August Wilson's *Radio Golf*, and cancelling our productions of *The Hombres* by Tony Meneses, and *Lackawanna Blues* by Ruben Santiago Hudson as well as our annual Gala, a vital event in our fundraising efforts. The cancellation of productions, Annual Gala, and other programming represented approximately \$600K in revenue loss for the fiscal year. For this fiscal year, earned income represents only twenty five percent of our operating budget, therefore contributed income from generous individuals, businesses and foundations was critical to ensure Two River Theater remains a vital cultural institution.

FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30/2020

INCOME

EARNED INCOME

	AMOUNT	% OF TOTAL
Single Ticket Sales	415,489	7.1%
Subscription Sales	237,261	4.0%
Other Earned Income	788,686	13.4%
TOTAL EARNED INCOME	1,441,436	24.5%

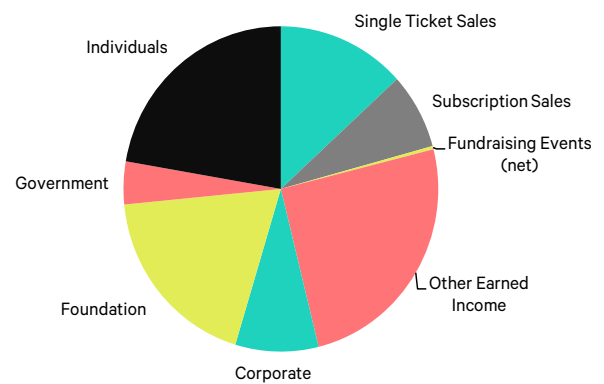
CONTRIBUTED INCOME

Corporate	268,567	4.6%
Foundation	591,292	10.0%
Fundraising Events (net)	10,200	0.2%
Government	133,812	2.3%
Individuals	700,898	11.9%
Released from Temporary Restricted	2,739,462	46.5%
TOTAL CONTRIBUTED INCOME	4,444,231	75.5%

TOTAL INCOME

5,885,667	100.0%
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INCOME



EXPENSES

PRODUCTION EXPENSES

Rechnitz Theater Productions	944,945	15.7%
Marion Huber Theater Productions	59,765	1.0%
Production Department	450,314	7.5%
PRODUCTION EXPENSES SUBTOTAL	1,455,024	24.3%

DEPARTMENTAL EXPENSES

Administrative	855,122	14.3%
Artistic	630,461	10.5%
Development	352,902	5.9%
Education	218,392	3.6%
Marketing and Audience Services	1,007,044	16.8%
Production and Operations	1,480,845	24.7%
DEPARTMENTAL EXPENSES SUBTOTAL	4,544,766	75.7%

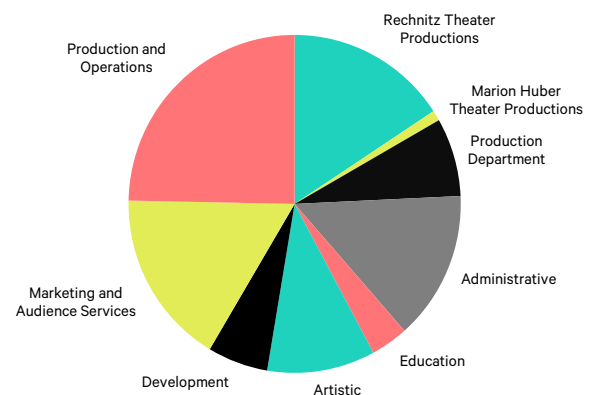
TOTAL EXPENSES

5,999,790	100.0%
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OPERATING SURPLUS

-114,123	
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EXPENSES



During our 2019/20 Season, we received our **sixth consecutive four-star rating - the highest possible - from Charity Navigator**, the leading charity evaluator, for our sound fiscal management and commitment to accountability and transparency.

REMEMBERING OUR FOUNDER, BOB RECHNITZ



Two River Theater mourns the loss of our Founder and Executive Producer, Robert M. Rechnitz, who died at his home on October 12, 2019. He was 89.

With his marvelous wife, Joan, Bob had the dream to create a world-class professional theater in Monmouth County 25 years ago. His directing credits here included 10 productions, most recently *The Belle of Amherst* starring his longtime collaborator Maureen Silliman.

In 2016, Two River produced *Lives of Reason*, a world-premiere play co-written by Bob and his friend and colleague Kenneth Stunkel, under the direction of Jonathan Fox, Two River's former Artistic Director. Like its authors, many of the characters in the play seek solace in literature; through it, they achieve a greater understanding of the universe, and our place in it.

Bob's impact on our theater and our community extended far beyond the work our audiences saw on stage. A civic leader, a philanthropist, a man with a quick laugh and a quicker mind, Bob was an indefatigable advocate for his belief that theater brings meaning and purpose to our lives. We miss him.



Two River founders Robert and Joan Rechnitz.

We remember Bob with this short essay, “*Theater—A Human Resource.*” Bob wrote these words to support the launch of Two River’s permanent home in Red Bank, which opened in 2005 with his production of *You Can’t Take It with You.*

Like a town hall, a church, a sports arena, a theater is a gathering place. Within its walls, a collection of individuals can be forged into a community, a congregation. One takes his seat, the house lights dim, and one surrenders his individuality for a time to respond in concert with his fellows to the ritual of the play. Deeply akin to the ritual of religious ceremony, the great plays are woven of man’s ultimate concerns, his explorations of the past, his profoundest aspirations for the future.

Theater instructs, it challenges, it entertains; it makes us laugh, tap our feet, weep, and long for other times. But, beyond laughter, beyond tears, the theater at its greatest brings us consolation. It feeds the heart’s desires, speaking to the heart in the heart’s own language, beyond words. And it inspires us with intimations and affirmations of life we never knew were hidden in us.

The theater building—the building itself—has its own significance. It becomes a place to hang out. The lights will always be on. People of all ages and means will find the place intriguing, a place of opportunities where they may learn, explore, and exercise their own various talents in the theater’s professional environment. Young men and women, particularly those lonely ones whose hearts ache for meaning, whose minds hunger for a deeper direction, just may find comfort here. Through their contact with the art and the artists and their dedication to excellence, they may begin to discover pathways to the answers they seek. Just the physical fact of the building, then, will serve to bring a sense of order and meaning and purpose to the lives of many in our community. ■

