



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 15, 2008

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Two River Theater Company

presents

Art

By Yasmina Reza

Translated by Christopher Hampton

Directed by Kirsten Kelly

September 30 – October 19, 2008

Red Bank, NJ –Two River Theater Company kicks off its 15th anniversary season with **Yasmina Reza's** award-winning comedy **Art**. This smart and funny play explores the value and meaning of both friendship and art when a (nearly) all-white painting ignites an escalating argument among three middle-aged men threatening to destroy their life-long friendship. Directed by **Kirsten Kelly**, **Art** is scheduled to run from September 30 through October 19.

"I'm honored to be working on such a great play which explores such interesting questions about art, beauty, judgment and friendship," says **Director Kirsten Kelly** (*365-Week 47*, Public Theatre; *Slipping*, Rattlestick; *Macbeth, Romeo & Juliet, Hamlet*, Chicago Shakespeare Theater). "I love each of these guys. And I love when their different opinions come up against each other, in essence, to try and figure out who they are, what they think and why they are friends. It's absurd to watch as each character is driven to the edge over this one white painting. The painting is the fourth character in the play. It has no words, but it speaks volumes in this story."

"*Art* is one of my favorite plays," says **Artistic Director Aaron Posner**. "It is exactly the kind of play I love – funny, smart, and wonderfully human. And about something nearly all of us can relate to: *friendship*. *Art* does what great plays do best: By showing us the truth about other times, other places, and other people, they illuminate the truth about us, and these tricky, complex, fascinating lives we lead."

The cast includes three Two River Theater Company newcomers. **Tim Barker** (NY: *Growing Pretty*, *Road to Nirvana*) portrays Serge, **Howard W. Overshown** (NY: *Julius Caesar*, *BLUE*, *YellowMan*, *Beauty on the Vine*, and *Never The Sinner*) plays Marc, and Obie Award winner **Michael Ray Escamilla** plays Yvan.

The creative team includes scenic designer **Luke Hegel-Cantarella** (NY: *Make Me a Song*, *Human Error*, *Her Majesty the King*, *Cam Jansen*, *Norman and Beatrice*, *Junie B. Jones*), costume designer **Chloe Chapin** (NY: *Three On A Couch*, *Romeo & Juliet*, *A Cocktail Hour*, *Elliot: A Soldier's Fugue*, *The Director*), lighting designer **Joel Moritz** (TRTC's *The Glass Menagerie*, *Our Town*, International: Blue Man Group, NY: *Tatjana in Color*, *wAve*, *Just as If*, *The Tempest*, *Elliot a Soldier's Fugue*, *Phedre*), and sound designer **Eric Shim**.

"**Working in White**" an exhibit of recent paintings created by local artist **Jon Peters** will be displayed in Two River Theater's lobby throughout the run of *Art*. In partnership with the Laurel Tracey Gallery of Red Bank, the exhibit features new monochromatic paintings/objects which hang on the wall like sculpture. The works are available for sale and a portion of the proceeds benefit the theater.

Art begins previews on Tuesday, September 30; opens Saturday, October 4; and runs through Sunday, October 19. **Tickets are \$24 - \$60** and are available by calling the TRTC Box Office at **732.345.1400**, online at **www.trtc.org** or by visiting the Box Office at 21 Bridge Avenue in Red Bank. The production is sponsored by **RBC Wealth Management**.

Before Play, TRTC's **free, pre-show discussion series**, is scheduled 45 minutes prior to every performance. Sharing real-life stories, **Before Play** will explore male friendships from bonding to bosom buddies. This lively discussion about art, friendships, and the many misunderstandings in both will be hosted by Two River Theater Company staff.

Post-show discussions are scheduled following the 8pm performance on Wednesday, October 8 and following the matinees on Sunday, October 12 at 3pm and Wednesday, October 15 at 1pm. A **student matinee performance** is scheduled at 10am on Tuesday, October 14. **Discounted group rates** and **dinner / theater packages** are available through the Box Office or by calling Brian Holland, TRTC's Community Relations Manager, at 732.345.1400 ext 813.

TRTC is accessible to people with disabilities, including wheelchair accessibility, assisted listening devices and large print programs at every performance. Accessible seating is available by reservation. For more information call the Box Office at **732.345.1400**.

CALENDAR NOTICE ART EVENTS:

Tuesday, September 30 through Sunday, October 19 – “Working in White” art exhibition with recent paintings by local artist **Jon Peters** will adorn Two River Theater’s lobby.

Tuesday, September 30 – Community preview performance sponsored by Zager, Fuchs, PC. More than 100 staff and volunteers of the Community YMCAs of Red Bank and Middletown will be treated to the first public performance of *Art*.

Saturday, October 4 – The 2008/2009 season begins with the Opening Night performance of *Art* at 8pm. A celebration, sponsored by Fidelity Investments, will follow the show.

Wednesday, October 8, 8pm; Sunday, October 12, 3pm; Wednesday, October 15, 1pm – Post-show discussions led by a member of the artistic staff will follow each performance.

Thursday, October 15 – An **audio-described performance** is scheduled at 8pm. Tickets are \$14 for those needing audio-description. Call 732.345.1400.

WHERE:

Two River Theater Company
21 Bridge Street
Red Bank, NJ 07701

WHEN:

September 30 – October 19, 2008

Members of the press are invited to the opening night performance of *Art* on Saturday, October 4 at 8pm.

Please schedule tickets through Jayme Powers, Director of Communications, by phone at **732.345.1400 ext.**

830 or via email at jpowers@trtc.org.

WHO:

Written by **Yasmina Reza**
Translated by **Christopher Hampton**
Directed by **Kirsten Kelly**
Scenic Design by **Luke Hegel-Cantarella**
Costume Design by **Chloe Chapin**
Lighting Design by **Joel Moritz**
Sound Design by **Eric Shim**

CAST:

Tim Barker – Serge
Howard W. Overshown – Marc
Michael Ray Escamilla – Yvan

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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. TRTC was founded in 1994 by Robert and Joan Rechnitz and over the past 14 seasons has grown into one of the most vital and dynamic arts organizations in the region. Since opening its new theater in May of 2005, TRTC has hosted a number of luminaries and award winners, including Bruce Springsteen, Olympia Dukakis, Jackson Browne, Jon Bon Jovi, Edward Albee, Sheldon Harnick, and the African Children’s Choir. The company received “Theatre of the Year” awards from the New Jersey Theatre Alliance in 2006, and from *The Star-Ledger* in both 2006 and 2008. TRTC is supported in part by grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, the New Jersey State Council on the Arts/Dept. of State, a partner agency of the National Endowment for the Arts, and contributions from hundreds of local and national corporations, foundations, businesses and individuals. Two River Theater Company is a member of Theatre Communications Group and the New Jersey Theatre Alliance.