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Herb Gardner's classic comedy *A Thousand Clowns*, Directed by Davis McCallum, Opens at Two River Theater on February 5; Featured in the Cast Are Crystal Finn, Matthew Gumley, Brad Heberlee, Lou Liberatore, Michael Nathanson and Nick Sullivan

Performances: February 1 – 20
Opening Night: Saturday, February 5 at 8pm

RED BANK, NJ— Two River Theater Company, under the leadership of Artistic Director John Dias, continues its season with **Herb Gardner's** comedy *A Thousand Clowns*, directed by **Davis McCallum**. Performances will begin at Two River Theater, 21 Bridge Avenue, on **Tuesday, February 1** and continue through **Sunday, February 20**. The opening night performance is **Saturday, February 5 at 8pm**.

Herb Gardner received a 1963 Tony Award nomination for *A Thousand Clowns* and won the Variety Critics Poll as Outstanding New Playwright. For his 1965 film adaptation of the play, which was a nominee for Best Picture, he received an Academy Award nomination for Best Adapted Screenplay and won the Best Screenplay Award from the Writers Guild. In this classic—and subversive—comedy, a whip-smart kid named Nick lives with his far-from-conventional uncle in 1960s New York. When child services knocks on his door, Uncle Murray is forced to make a decision: hold on to the kid, or hold on to his life of free-spirited fun.

Matthew Gumley, a veteran of four Broadway productions (*Elf*, *The Addams Family*, *Mary Poppins* and *Beauty and the Beast*) plays Nick and **Michael Nathanson** (*The Lion King* National Tour and *Romeo and Juliet* at Lincoln Center Theater) plays Murray. Also featured in the cast are **Crystal Finn** (Sandra Markowitz), **Brad Heberlee** (Albert Amundson), Tony Award nominee **Lou Liberatore** (Arnold Burns), and **Nick Sullivan** (Leo Herman).

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. This production is sponsored in part by RBC Wealth Management.

Says Artistic Director John Dias, "I'm very excited to have Davis McCallum at Two River to direct *A Thousand Clowns*; he is someone whose work, intelligence and spirit I have admired for a very long time. His vision for this play captures the moment in a time that is so beautifully evoked by Herb Gardner, the

early 1960s, with a dynamic immediacy and a real understanding of the characters—and the conflicts they face as the world changes around them.”

Herb Gardner made his Broadway debut with *A Thousand Clowns*. He received the 1986 Tony Award, Outer Critics Circle Award and John Gassner Playwriting Award for *I’m Not Rappaport* and was a 1992 Pulitzer Prize finalist for *Conversations with My Father*. One of the contributing writers to *Free to Be...You and Me*, he wrote the screenplays for *Who Is Harry Kellerman and Why Is He Saying Those Terrible Things About Me?*, which starred Dustin Hoffman, and adaptations of his plays *I’m Not Rappaport*, *The Goodbye People* (both of which he also directed) and *Thieves*. At the beginning of his career he wrote a comic strip, “The Nebbishes,” which started in the *Chicago Tribune* and was syndicated in more than 40 newspapers; he retired the cartoon to concentrate on writing fiction and published his only novel, *A Piece of the Action*, in 1958. In 2000, he was awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Writers Guild of America. He died in 2003 at the age of 68.

Davis McCallum directed *Namaste Man* at Two River Theater earlier this season as part of the “Flashes of Brilliance” series. Other recent work in New York includes world premieres of Sam Hunter’s *A Bright New Boise* (Partial Comfort) and *Five Genocides* (Clubbed Thumb), Greg Moss’s *punkplay* (Clubbed Thumb), Charles Mee’s *Queens Boulevard* (Signature Theatre), Quiara Alegría Hudes’ *Elliot, A Soldier’s Fugue* (P73; Pulitzer Prize finalist), Laura Marks’ *Unbound: The Journals of Fanny Kemble*, and Rob Urbinati’s *West Moon Street* (Prospect Theater Company). For the Acting Company, he directed *The Turn of the Screw* (adapted by Jeffrey Hatcher), *Jane Eyre* (adapted by Polly Teale) and Shakespeare’s *The Tempest* and *Henry V*, the last of which was co-produced by The Guthrie and presented in New York at the New Victory. His regional credits include the Old Globe, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Williamstown and many other theaters.

The creative team for *A Thousand Clowns* includes scenic designer **Jason Simms**, costume designer **Jessica Ford**, lighting designer **Matthew Richards**, composer/sound designer **Mark Bennett** and ukulele coach **Paul Heaney**. The casting is by **Janet Foster, C.S.A.** and the stage manager is **Amanda Michaels**.

For 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 or community leader hosts a free discussion to give context and background about the show. For *A Thousand Clowns*, actors **Brad Heberlee** (Albert Amundson) and **Lou Liberatore** (Arnold Burns) will discuss their own creative journeys as they related to the world of the play. 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 the cast after the following performances:

- Wednesdays: **February 9** at 8pm and **February 16** at 1pm
- Sundays: **February 13** and **20** at 3pm

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

- An **audio-described performance** is scheduled for **Wednesday, February 16** at 1pm; tickets are \$15 for patrons needing audio description.
- An **open-caption performance** is scheduled for **Saturday, February 19** at 3pm; tickets are \$15 for those needing open captioning.

Calendar

Tuesday, February 1 at 8pm (Community Preview Performance)
 Wednesday, February 2 at 7pm
 Thursday, February 3 at 8pm
 Friday, February 4 at 8pm
 Saturday, February 5 at 8pm (Opening)
 Sunday, February 6 at 3 pm
 Tuesday, February 8 at 10am (Student Matinee)
 Wednesday, February 9 at 1pm and 8pm (Post-play Discussion)
 Thursday, February 10 at 8pm
 Friday, February 11 at 8pm
 Saturday, February 12 at 3pm and 8pm
 Sunday, February 13 at 3pm (Post-play Discussion)
 Tuesday, February 15 at 10am (Student Matinee)
 Wednesday, February 16 at 1 pm (Audio Described and Post-play Discussion) and 8pm
 Thursday, February 17 at 8pm
 Friday, February 18 at 8 pm
 Saturday, February 19 at 3 pm (Open Caption) and 8pm
 Sunday, February 20 at 3pm (Post-play Discussion and Closing)

Members of the press are invited to the opening-night performance of *A Thousand Clowns* on **Saturday, February 5 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 is a professional not-for-profit regional theater company providing outstanding plays and educational programs for audiences of central New Jersey and beyond. Two River was founded in 1994 by Joan and Robert Rechnitz and over the past 16 seasons has grown into one of the most vital and dynamic arts organizations in the region. The theater has co-produced plays with theaters around the country and received "Theatre of the Year" awards from the New Jersey Theatre Alliance and The Star-Ledger. Two River is a member of the League of Resident Theaters (LORT), Theatre Communications Group (TCG), The New Jersey Theatre Alliance and ArtPride New Jersey.