



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Two River Theater Company

presents

Macbeth

By **William Shakespeare**

Directed by **Teller** and **Aaron Posner**

Magic Designed by **Teller**

January 15 – February 17, 2008

Red Bank, NJ – Two River Theater Company is about to open the most ambitious production in its 14-season history. *Macbeth* by William Shakespeare, conceived and directed by **TELLER** (of Penn & Teller) and Artistic Director **AARON POSNER**, with magic designed by **TELLER**, opens Saturday, January 19 and has been extended for two additional weeks of performances and will run through Sunday, February 17. In the making for more than a year, artists from ten states have come together to create this bloody, supernatural horror show. This breathtaking grand guignol take on Shakespeare's darkest tragedy explores the twisted minds of the theater's most celebrated husband and wife murder team.

Directors **Teller** and **Posner** describe their vision: "We are creating a pedal-to-the-metal, horror show *Macbeth*, absolutely true to Shakespeare's spine-tingling intelligent, passionate, disturbing, and darkly funny text, delivered in a style that connects directly with the great American tradition of horror films—and serve Shakespeare's dense, twisty and sometimes mad-making and maddening prose."

"I'm excited to work with Teller and this amazing group of artists from all over the country," says **Posner**. "We have an incredible cast, world-class designers, magic consultants, Hollywood mask-makers, composers, percussionists, a fight choreographer, plus two dramaturgs. This is the biggest, most complex, most ambitious production Two River Theater Company has ever done. It is a huge undertaking...and an incredibly exciting one. This production is not so much a clever new take on Shakespeare's classic, but rather an attempt to restore some of the horror, fun, and amazement to a delightfully shocking play that too often flounders under the weight of its own self-importance. We are true to Shakespeare's spine-tingling intelligent, passionate, disturbing, and darkly funny text, while operating in a style that will connect directly with today's audience."

TELLER, the silent half of Penn & Teller since 1975, has been hailed by The New Yorker as "an extraordinary magician...the sort of magician who can invent shadows." Penn & Teller's critically acclaimed stage show spent several years both on and Off-Broadway, played to several sold out national tours and now enjoys a full-time home at

The Rio All-Suite Hotel & Casino in Las Vegas. Their Showtime series *Penn & Teller: Bullshit!* returns for its sixth season in early 2008. Nominated for 11 Emmy awards and the recipient of the 2005 Writer's Guild Award for Outstanding Comedy/Variety Series, the show exposes the fakes and frauds behind such sacred cows as bottled water, feng shui and talking to the dead. The duos network specials include the NBC specials *Penn & Teller: Off The Deep End*, *Don't Try This At Home*, the PBS children's series *Behind The Scenes*, and *The Unpleasant World Of Penn & Teller*, which aired on Comedy Central. The PBS special, *Penn & Teller Go Public*, won Teller an Emmy Award and the International Golden Rose. Penn & Teller also hosted their own Emmy nominated weekly variety series for the FX network, *Penn & Teller's Sin City Spectacular*. On the big screen Teller has appeared in the motion pictures *Penn & Teller Get Killed*, *Long Gone*, *Walt Disney's Fantasia 2000*, *The Fantasticks* and *The Aristocrats*. Teller's latest book, *HOUSE OF MYSTERY: THE MAGIC SCIENCE OF DAVID P. ABBOTT*, examines the art and psychology of one of the early 20th Century's greatest parlor magicians.

Award winning Shakespearean director **AARON POSNER**, is the co-conceiver and co-director of *Macbeth*. TRTC's Artistic Director has worked as a director, playwright, teacher, and consultant in the American professional theater for 20 years. As a co-founder and former artistic director of Arden Theatre Company in Philadelphia, he directed over 40 productions, taught dozens of classes, and created award-winning educational programs. As a freelance director, Posner has worked at many of the countries leading regional theaters including Actors Theatre of Louisville, The Folger Theatre, Seattle Repertory Theatre, Arizona Theatre Company, the Alliance, and many more. In addition to directing, Posner is a published playwright and has penned nearly a dozen adaptations of literature. His most recent adaptations include *Mark Twain's A Murder, A Mystery & A Marriage* with music by James Sugg; *My Name is Asher Lev* based on the novel by Chaim Potok; and *Sometimes a Great Notion*, based on the novel by Ken Kesey. Posner has won Barrymore Awards for directing and playwrighting, two Helen Hayes Awards for direction, and is an Eisenhower Fellow.

Leading the cast of 18 in the title role of *Macbeth* is **IAN MERRILL PEAKES** (*The Crucible*, *Twelfth Night*, Actors Theatre of Louisville; *The Game of Love and Chance*, *Melissa Arctic*, *Two Gents*, *Measure for Measure*, *Clandestine Marriage*, Folger Shakespeare Theatre; *Much Ado*, Shakespeare Santa Cruz; *Ros. and Guil. Are Dead*, *All My Sons*, *Three Days of Rain*, Arden Theatre Company; *Invention of Love*, Wilma). Lady Macbeth is played by **KATE EASTWOOD NORRIS** (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *Twelfth Night*, *She Stoops to Conquer*, *The Tempest*, *As You Like It*, Folger Shakespeare Theatre; *Much Ado About Nothing*, *The Playboy of the Western World*, *As You Like It*, *King Lear*, Shakespeare Santa Cruz; Theatre *She Stoops to Comedy*, *Big Love*, *Bug*, Woolly Mammoth). Two River Theater Company audiences will remember the Helen Hayes Award winner **Norris** from last winter's production of *The Pavilion*.

CODY NICKELL (*Playboy of the Western World*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *King Lear*, *As You Like It*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *The Tamer Tamed*, Shakespeare Santa Cruz; *Crime and Punishment*, Arden Theatre Company; *The Pillowman*, *Outrage*, *The Merchant of Venice*, Portland Center Stage; *Visiting Mr. Green*, Stamford Theatre Works; *Mary's Wedding*, San Jose Rep), last seen at TRTC as Versati in *The Underpants*, plays the good Macduff. **KAREN PEAKES** (*Twelfth Night*, *A Prayer for Owen Meany*, Arden Theatre Company; *Wit*, Philadelphia

Theatre Company; *Of Mice and Men*, Walnut Street Theatre; *Two Gentleman of Verona*, and *Measure for Measure*, Folger Theatre) plays his wife Lady Macduff. And **PAUL MORELLA** (*Brooklyn Boy*, Olney Theatre; *Sight Unseen*, Everyman Theatre; *Orpheus Descending*, *All My Sons*, Arena Stage; *Angels In America*, Signature Theatre) plays Macbeth's and Macduff's friend and fellow soldier Banquo.

The Weird Sisters are portrayed by **ERIC HISSOM** (Regional theater: Actors Theatre of Louisville, the Arden in Philadelphia, Asolo Rep in Sarasota, Syracuse Stage, the Orlando Shakespeare Theater. Television: *Mortal Kombat*, *Sheena: Queen of the Jungle*, and *One Tree Hill*), **DAN HODGE** (Theatre Exile's *Mr. Marmalade* and *Glengarry Glen Ross*), and **CLEO HOUSE, Jr.** (*Insurrection: Holding History* at Theatre Alliance; *Death and the King's Horseman* at The Lantern Theatre; *Titus* at the Oklahoma Shakespearean Festival).

Three local 11-year old child actors have been cast in *Macbeth*. **JAKE TAVILL** (TRTC's *All My Sons* and *The Umbrellas of Cherbourg*) of Rumson and **JAKE CAMERON** (TRTC's *All My Sons*) of West Long Branch, will portray Young Macduff in alternating performances throughout the run. The third child actor in the production is **JACK NEWSOME** (Running Rabbit's *Velveteen Rabbit* and Piglet in *Winnie the Pooh a Christmas Carol*) of Rumson. **Newsome** plays Banquo's son Fleance. "The young people in the show have been thrown into the oddest world imaginable," says co-director **Posner**. "They are doing an exceptional job, stepping up toe-to-toe with tremendous professional actors while being asked to carry swords, magically appear, and get killed. They have been great and seem to enjoy the twisted, evil playground we have created in this show."

Native New Jerseyan **DAN OLMSTEAD** (*Of Mice and Men*, *Enchanted April*, *The Constant Wife*, Walnut Street Theatre; *Amadeus*, Gretna Theatre; *Taming of the Shrew*, Arden Theatre Company) plays Duncan and Siward. **SCOTT KERNES** (*Alice*, *The Light of Excalibur*, Kennedy Center Theater for Young Audiences; *Autobahn*, *The Death of Meyerhold*, *Four*, *Polaroid Stories*, Studio Theatre Secondstage; *Candida*, Everyman Theatre) plays King Duncan's son Malcolm. **NOEL VELEZ** (*Arms and the Man*, *School for Wives*, *Measure for Measure*, *Mary Stuart*, Pearl Theatre Company; *As You Like It*, Folger Theatre; *Richard III*, *As You Like It*, *The Rivals*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival; *Taming of the Shrew*, Dallas Theater Center) plays Ross. **JOE ISENBERG** (*Crave*, Signature Theatre; *Songs from the New World*, Open Circle Theater; *Ambition Facing West*, Theater Alliance; *Scenes from the Big Picture*, Solas Nua) plays Macbeth's servant and Angus. **COOPER D'AMBROSE** (*Gross Indecency*, The H Street Playhouse; national and international tour of *Scooby-Doo*, *Live in Stage Fright*) plays Sergeant and Young Siward.

Rounding out the cast are two local actors making Two River Theater Company debuts. **EVANDER DUCK, Jr.** (*As You Like It*, Mint Theatre; *Much Ado About Nothing*, *'Tis Pity She's A Whore*, Shakespeare Theatre/ACA; *Julius Caesar*, American Globe Theatre; *Apostasy*, New Jersey Repertory; *The Exonerated*, Charlotte Repertory Company; *Blues For Mister Charlie*, Turtle Shell Productions; *Fences*, African Globe Theatreworks) plays Lennox. **LORENZO VILLANUEVA**, a junior at Performing Arts Academy, plays Donalbain. A TRTC Metroscholar, **Villanueva** is a Point Pleasant Beach resident.

In addition to **magic designed** by **Teller**, the creative team includes **scenic designer DANIEL CONWAY** (current productions include *Stunning* at the Woolly Mammoth Theatre Co, *Chasing George Washington* for the Kennedy Center, and *Free to Sing* for the Strathmore Center for the Performing Arts). Mr. Conway's most recent collaboration with **Posner** was *Measure for Measure* at the Folger Theatre for which he received his tenth nomination for the Helen Hayes Award for Outstanding Design. **Costume designer DEVON PAINTER** (New York designs include: *Luminescence Dating* for The Ensemble Studio Theatre; *Tatjana In Color* for The Culture Project; *House of Blue Leaves* for Juilliard; and many productions for The Pearl Theater Company) returns to TRTC after designing costumes for last winter's *The Pavilion*. Also returning to TRTC are **lighting designer THOM WEAVER** (*Joe Turner's Come and Gone*, Centerstage; *Frankenstein*, 37 Arts; *The Diary of Anne Frank*, Delaware Theatre Company; *Masked*, DR2; *Villa America*, Williamstown Theatre Festival; *Bad Dates*, Two River Theater Company; *King Hedley II*, Signature Theatre. New York: *Thrill Me*, *Medea in Jerusalem*, *Brian Dykstra: Cornered and Alone*, *Ghost Lovers*, and *The Transparency of Val*) and **sound designer KARIN GRAYBASH** (TRTC's *True West* and designs at Arena Stage, McCarter Theatre, Berkeley Repertory, Walnut Street, Dallas Theater Center, Yale Repertory, Folger Theatre, Arden Theatre Company, Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey).

Macbeth co-directors **Teller** and **Posner** have tapped **KENNY WOLLESEN** to compose the music for their bloody horror show. A ubiquitous presence on the New York music scene and founding member of the **New Klezmer Trio**, **drummer Kenny Wollesen** has performed and recorded with an astonishing array of pop, jazz and avant garde artists. This year alone he will tour with John Zorn, Sex Mob, Bill Frisell, Butch Morris, U-Roy, Wax Poetic, Lesser Panda and Wollesonic. New York City based artist **RICHARD HUNTLEY**, will perform Wollesen's *Macbeth* composition live on stage during the run at Two River Theater Company. Percussionist for blues/jazz/Americana band **Hazmat Modine**, **Huntley** has recorded and/or performed with many great musicians including: Cameron Brown, Marvin Hamlisch, Tovah Feldshuh, Frank London, Mulgrew Miller, and B.D. Wong. **Wollesen** will occasionally sub-in to play during performances throughout the run.

Fight direction is by **DALE ANTHONY GIRARD** (*Romeo et Juliette* at the Metropolitan Opera, *Othello*, *Cyrano de Bergerac* and *The Three Musketeers* at the Pioneer Theatre, *Macbeth*, *Carmen* and *Cold Sassy Tree* for Opera Carolina, *Tosca* and *Porgy & Bess* at the Piedmont Opera, *Noises Off*, *Sleuth*, and *A Streetcar Named Desire* at the Studio Arena Theatre and *Faust*, *Don Giovanni* and *Romeo et Juliette* at the Chautauqua Opera), an award winning fight director and author of the stage combat manual [Actors On Guard](#). Special effects make-up artist **FRANK IPPOLITO** (film: *Pirates of the Caribbean 2* and *3*, *Chronicles of Riddick*, and *Casanova*) created the masks for the weird sisters. And magician **MATTHEW HOLTZCLAW** is the production's magic consultant. Holtzclaw has consulted and designed illusions for Marco Tempest's *The Virtual Magician* and written and directed the plays *Red Head* and *Cane's Bayou* for the New York International Fringe Festival.

Macbeth is a co-production with the Folger Theatre in Washington, DC and is sponsored in part by Monmouth University. *Macbeth* has been extended and is scheduled to run through **Sunday, February 17**. Tickets are \$32 - \$56. For more information about TRTC's 2007/2008 Season, call **732.345.1400**, visit www.trtc.org or visit the **Two River Theater Company Box Office**, located at 21 Bridge Avenue in Red Bank, NJ. **Subscriptions and**

single tickets are now on sale. Three-show subscription prices range from \$63 - \$144 and are discounted at least **20%**. **Discounted group rates** and **dinner/theater packages** are available by calling TRTC's Sales Hotline at 732.345.1400 ext 813. Box Office Hours: Monday-Saturday: 10am-6pm; Sunday: Noon-5pm

B4 Play, TRTC's **free, pre-show discussion series**, is scheduled 45 minutes prior to every performance. **Do Not Fear Shakespeare**, a window into the creative process, will be hosted by Artistic Associate Liz Green and an actor from the *Macbeth* cast.

Post-show discussions are scheduled following the 8pm performance on Wednesday, January 23, and following the matinees on Sunday, January 27 at 3pm and Wednesday, January 30 at 1pm. There are nine **student matinee performances** scheduled throughout the run. **Discounted group rates** and **dinner / theater packages** are available through the Box Office or by calling TRTC's Sales Line 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: MACBETH EVENTS:

Tuesday, January 15 – Community preview performance sponsored by Zager, Fuchs PC. More than 100 members of the Red Bank Men's Club will be treated to the first public performance of *Macbeth*.

Saturday, January 19 – Opening Night performance of *Macbeth* and post-show celebration.

Wednesday, January 23, 8pm; Sunday, January 27, 3pm; Wednesday, January 30, 1pm – **Post-show discussions** led by a member of the artistic staff will follow each performance.

Thursday, January 31 – An **audio-described performance** is scheduled at 8pm. Tickets are \$12 for those needing audio-description. Call 732.345.1400.

Saturday, February 2 – An **open-captioned performance** is scheduled for the 3pm matinee.

In conjunction with our production sponsor Monmouth University:

Sunday, February 3 – **Talking Shakespeare: A dialogue with Aaron Posner and Stephen Orgel**

At 1:30pm at Two River Theater, nationally acclaimed scholar and Stanford University Professor **Dr. Stephen Orgel**, author of *Imagining Shakespeare*, and *The Illusion of Power*, and TRTC's Artistic Director **Aaron Posner** discuss Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, and Posner and Teller's wildly imaginative production.

Monday, February 12 - **Talking Shakespeare: A dialogue with Jonathan Gil Harris and John J. Burke**

At 4:30pm at **Lauren K. Woods Theater, Monmouth University**. George Washington University Professor **Dr. Jonathan Harris**, author of *Sick Economies: Drama, Mercantilism and Disease in Shakespeare's England*, *Staged Properties in Early Modern English Drama*, and *Foreign Bodies and the Body Politic: Discourses of Social Pathology in Early Modern England*, and Monmouth University's Department of Music and Theatre Arts Chair, **Dr. John J. Burke** discuss the history of props, disease and magic in Shakespeare's *Macbeth*.

WHERE:

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

WHEN:

January 15 – February 17, 2008

WHO:

Written by **William Shakespeare**
Conceived and Adapted by **Teller**
and **Aaron Posner**
Directed by **Teller** and **Aaron Posner**
Magic Design by **Teller**
Scenic Design by **Daniel Conway**
Costume Design by **Devon Painter**
Lighting Design by **Thom Weaver**
Sound Design by **Karin Graybash**
Music Composition by **Kenny Wollesen**
Fight Direction by **Dale Anthony Girard**
Mask/Make-up Design by **Frank Ippolito**
Magic Consulting by **Matthew Holtzclaw**
Dramaturgy by **Michele Osherow**
and **Miriam Weisfeld**
Production Stage Management by **Kate Olden**
Assistant Director **Jeremy Skidmore**

CAST:

***Jake Cameron...** Young Macduff
Cooper D'Ambrose ... Sergeant/Young Siward
Evander Duck... Lennox
Eric Hissom..Weird Sister/Doctor/Murderer/Porter
Dan Hodge ... Weird Sister / Caithness
Cleo House... Weird Sister / Mentieth /Murderer
Richard Huntley... Percussionist
Joe Isenberg... Angus / Servant
Scott Kerns... Malcolm
Paul Morella... Banquo
Jack Newsome ... Fleance
Cody Nickell... Macduff
Kate Eastwood Norris...Lady Macbeth
Dan Olmstead... Duncan / Siward
Ian Merrill Peakes...Macbeth
Karen Peakes... Lady Macduff / Gentlewoman
***Jake Tavill...** Young Macduff
Noel Velez...Ross
Lorenzo Villanueva ...Donalbain / Seyton

*The two Jakes portray the role of Young Macduff in an alternating performance schedule.

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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 as Monmouth County's first professional regional theater in 30 years, and over the past 13 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, and Sheldon Harnick. In 2006, the company received "Theatre of the Year" awards from both *The Star Ledger* and the New Jersey Theatre Alliance. TRTC is supported in part by grants from 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. Continental Airlines is TRTC's official airline. Two River Theater Company is a member of Theatre Communications Group and the New Jersey Theatre Alliance.

FOLGER THEATRE (Co-Producer) in Washington, DC, is the centerpiece of Folger Shakespeare Library's programs for the public. With a full season of nearly 200 performances, Folger Theatre has been recognized for its innovative stagings of works by Shakespeare, his contemporaries, and those inspired by him. Folger Theatre productions are characterized by their compelling, inspired direction, based in a keen understanding of the text, that combine the resources of extraordinary professional actors, designers, and experts. Folger Theatre has, in the past seventeen years, staged more than 70 plays, including world premieres of new works—Craig Wright's *Melissa Arctic*, Caleen Sinnette Jennings's *Playing Juliet*, *Casting Othello*, Roger Rees's *What You Will: By and About the Bard*, and Lynn Redgrave's Tony Award nominated *Shakespeare for My Father*. Folger Theatre, under the direction of Artistic Producer Janet Alexander Griffin, has been honored with 44 Helen Hayes Award nominations and 12 awards for excellence in acting, direction, design, and production—including the 2006 Award for Outstanding Resident Play for Aaron Posner's production of *Measure for Measure*, which *The Washington Post* called "a measure of greatness."

Folger Shakespeare Library is a world-class center for scholarship, learning, culture, and the arts. Home to the world's largest Shakespeare collection and a primary repository for research material from the early modern period (1500–1750), Folger Shakespeare Library is an internationally recognized research library offering advanced scholarly programs in the humanities; a national leader in how Shakespeare is taught in grades K–12; and an award-winning producer of cultural and arts programs— theater, music, poetry, exhibits, lectures, and family programs. A gift to the American people from industrialist Henry Clay Folger, Folger Shakespeare Library—located one block east of the U.S. Capitol—opened in 1932. Learn more at www.folger.edu.