

WESTPORT COUNTRY PLAYHOUSE

NEWS RELEASE

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Westport Country Playhouse Script in Hand Playreading of “Paris” by Pulitzer Prize-Winning Playwright on Monday, April 14

Westport Country Playhouse will present a Script in Hand playreading of “Paris,” a fierce, funny, and subtle look at working-class America, on Monday, April 14, at 7 p.m. The play is written by Eboni Booth, winner of the 2024 Pulitzer Prize for Drama. Director is Anissa Felix.

“‘Paris’ by Eboni Booth is a powerful, beautifully written play about the deep need to be seen, tackling issues of race, commerce, community, and invisibility in a small town workplace,” said Mark Shanahan, Playhouse artistic director and Script in Hand series curator. “It’s a remarkable piece of modern American theatre by a brilliant writer, using suspense, humor, and great heart to illuminate the quiet struggles and resilience of characters whose experiences often go unnoticed.”

Director Anissa Felix added, “‘Paris’ poses the question of power dynamics within the workplace. How does one behave when they are instilled with power at their job but are disenfranchised in their everyday life? And why is it okay for certain people to break the rules, but not for others?”

“Paris” is about Emmie, one of the only Black people living in Paris, Vermont. She desperately needs a job. When she is hired at Berry’s, a store off the interstate selling everything from baby carrots to lawnmowers, she begins to understand a new kind of isolation. “Paris” is a play about invisibility, being underpaid, and how it feels to work on your feet for ten hours a day.

Hillary Fisher will play Emmie (Broadway: “The Notebook”; Off-Broadway: “Between the Lines,” “Cyrano”; Regional: “Pamela’s First Musical,” “Cinderella,” “Little Shop of Horrors,” “Ragtime”; Television: “The Chica Show”; Pace University B.F.A., LaGuardia High School); **Alison Cimmet** as Maxine (Westport Country Playhouse: “Romeo and Juliet,” “She Loves Me”; Broadway: “Gary,” “Amelie,” “She Loves Me,” “The Mystery of Edwin Drood,” “Bonnie and Clyde,” “A Tale of Two Cities”; BA Brown University; AlisonCimmet.com); **Deirdre Madigan** as Wendy (Westport Country Playhouse: “And A Nightingale Sang,” “A Marriage Minuet,” “A Few Good Men,” several Script in Hand readings; Broadway: “Hillary and Clinton,” “Sweat,” “A Delicate Balance,” “Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf”; Off-Broadway: “Philadelphia, Here I Come,” “Coal Country,” “Exit Strategy”); **John Ottavino** as Dev (70 professional productions in 36 states and seven countries, including “A Doll’s House” on Broadway, “Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf” in Leningrad; Regional: “Circle, Mirror, Transformation” - Kevin Kline Award, “Blackbird” - Cincinnati Award).

Julius Thomas III as Gar (Westport Country Playhouse: “Broadway’s Bad Boys”; NAACP Theatre and Helen Hayes awards-nominated actor; Broadway: Alexander Hamilton in “Hamilton,” Barry Gordy in “Motown: The Musical”; and others; six Broadway National Tours); **T.J. Wagner** as Logan (Seen on Amazon Prime, The BBC, and Spotlight on Plays Digital Theatre; National Tour: “M3gan: The Musical”; Regional: “Mary Shelley’s Frankenstein,” “The Break,” “All Fall Down”; TBFA from Ithaca College; tjwagner.com); and **Frederick Weller** as Carlisle (Broadway: “To Kill A Mockingbird,” “Mothers &

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Sons," "Glengarry Glen Ross," "Take Me Out"; Awards: Obie, Drama Desk; Nominations: Lucille Lortel (2); Drama Desk (2); Film: "BlackKKlansman," "When Will I Be Loved," "The Shape of Things," "Stonewall"; TV: "In Plain Sight"); **Serenity S'rae** will read stage directions (Credits in acting, writing, and performance; Liberations Theatre Company's New Play Workshop; Boston University BFA, Theatre Arts).

Playwright **Eboni Booth** is a writer and actor from New York City. Her play, "Primary Trust," won the 2024 Pulitzer Prize for Drama. "Paris" had its premiere at Off-Broadway's Atlantic Theater Company in 2020. Booth is a resident playwright at New Dramatists and a recipient of a Steinberg Playwright Award, a Helen Merrill Award for Playwriting, and a John Gassner Award. She is a graduate of Juilliard's playwriting program and the University of Vermont.

Director **Anissa Felix** has performed in several Broadway shows, including "Motown: The Musical," "Sunset Boulevard" starring Glenn Close, and "The Donna Summer Musical," and television shows. Her most recent work can be seen in Netflix's "Survival of the Thickest." She was assistant director for Westport Country Playhouse's "A Sherlock Carol" and "Theatre People." She is making her directorial debut with the Script in Hand playreading of "Paris."

"Anissa Felix is a director who provides wonderful insight, depth, and collaboration in her work, and it's always a joy to have her at the Playhouse," said Shanahan. "I can't wait to see Anissa and her accomplished cast bring this incredible play to life."

Kevin Jinghong Zhu is stage manager (Westport Country Playhouse: "Kim's Convenience," "As Bees in Honey Drown," "Tribes"; Broadway: Harper Lee's "To Kill a Mockingbird"; Off-Broadway: "A Delicate Balance," "It's a Wonderful Life, MFA: Yale School of Drama).

Tickets are \$30. Running time is 90 minutes, no intermission. Some adult language.

For full details, visit: <https://www.westportplayhouse.org/show/paris/>

The Script in Hand Playreading Series is supported by Joyce Hergenhan and the White Barn Program of the Lucille Lortel Foundation. 2025 Programming and Season Sponsor is Barbara Streicker. Media sponsors are Moffly Media and WSHU Public Radio. Westport Country Playhouse is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization.

The upcoming Script in Hand playreading season is scheduled on Mondays at 7 p.m. in 2025 as follows: May 5, June 9 ("The Shark Is Broken", behind-the-scenes look at the making of the film "Jaws"), Sept. 8, Nov. 3, and Dec. 1; titles to be announced.

Script in Hand playreadings offer intimate storytelling as professional actors use their skills to catapult the audience's imagination without benefit of scenery or costumes. For a video on Script in Hand, visit: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h2eWDaF-JXA>

A complete schedule of Playhouse events is available at [westportplayhouse.org](https://www.westportplayhouse.org). All play titles, artists, dates, and times are subject to change.

For Westport Country Playhouse information and tickets, visit [westportplayhouse.org](https://www.westportplayhouse.org) or call the box office at (203) 227-4177, toll-free at 1-888-927-7529. Stay connected to the Playhouse on Facebook (Westport Country Playhouse), Instagram (wcplayhouse), and YouTube (WestportPlayhouse). Westport Country Playhouse is located at 25 Powers Court, off Route 1, Westport.

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