

# WESTPORT COUNTRY PLAYHOUSE

## NEWS RELEASE

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### Westport Country Playhouse Announces 2026-27 Theatre Season with Six Shows, including Two World Premieres

**The Playhouse will stage three-week runs of two new works and a comedy, and shorter runs of a musical murder-mystery, a memoir, and holiday fare.**

Westport Country Playhouse announces its upcoming 96th theatre season, from October 2026 through August 2027, filled with a vibrant balance of comedy, drama, music, mystery, and heartfelt storytelling.

Under the artistic direction of Mark Shanahan, the mainstage season will include two world premieres: a dazzling new play by acclaimed playwright Ken Ludwig, directed by renowned theatre artist Emily Mann, and a new comedy that returns by popular demand after its successful *Script in Hand* reading, starring two-time Tony Award winner Judith Ivey. The season will also feature an energetic comedy centered on self-discovery, along with three shorter-run shows—a musical murder mystery, a personal memoir, and a festive holiday presentation.

“From world premieres to audience favorites, our upcoming season is filled with drama, mystery, music, laughter,” said Shanahan. “I’m especially thrilled that this season allows the Playhouse to launch not one, but two exciting new plays into the theatre landscape. The wildly imaginative ‘Ken Ludwig’s *Pride and Prejudice, Part 2: Napoleon at Pemberley*,’ directed by the incomparable Emily Mann, reunites audiences with some of literature’s most beloved characters in a sparkling new adventure filled with wit, romance, and surprise. Charlotte Booker’s ‘*The Pancake Club*,’ starring Judith Ivey, is a funny, deeply moving new comedy about friendship, family, and the ways we continue growing throughout our lives - a play first embraced by audiences through our *Script in Hand* series.

“Rounding out our mainstage season is ‘*The Legend of Georgia McBride*,’ one of contemporary theatre’s most joyful and uplifting comedies, celebrating transformation, identity, and the courage to embrace change. And our special, shorter-run events continue the celebration with the return of our holiday favorite, ‘*A Sherlock Carol*’; the fast-paced musical-comedy mystery, ‘*Murder for Two*’; and Sharone Sayegh’s powerful and deeply personal, ‘*The Goldsmith*.’ It’s a season that reflects the kinds of stories Playhouse audiences love most: entertaining, heartfelt, surprising, and filled with the transformative power of live theatre.”

#### Westport Country Playhouse 2026-27 Season

The world premiere of “**Ken Ludwig’s *Pride and Prejudice, Part 2: Napoleon at Pemberley***,” written by Ken Ludwig and directed by Emily Mann, will kick off the Playhouse’s 2026-27 season from October 20 through November 7. What happens after Elizabeth Bennet marries Mr. Darcy? In this sparkling and wildly imaginative sequel to Jane Austen’s beloved classic, married life at Pemberley is turned upside down when an unexpected houseguest arrives: Napoleon Bonaparte himself. As the fallen emperor awaits exile, his presence ignites intrigue, romance, and revolution among the Darcys and their colorful circle of friends and relations. Filled with wit, romance, and high-spirited comedy, “*Pride and Prejudice, Part 2*” blends Austen’s elegant world with a dash of historical adventure, creating a lively ensemble comedy about marriage, ambition, and the thrill of changing one’s destiny.

“**A Sherlock Carol**,” a Playhouse holiday tradition, returns by popular demand for its fourth consecutive year, December 12 – 20. The family-friendly holiday show, written and directed by Mark Shanahan, is based on a Sherlock Holmes tale by Sir Arthur Conan and “*A Christmas Carol*” by Charles Dickens. The two literary legends collide when a grown-up Tiny Tim calls on Sherlock Holmes to investigate the mysterious death of Ebenezer Scrooge. This

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inventive holiday mashup of Dickens and Doyle blends mystery, heart, and humor into a theatrical treat for audiences of all ages. A *New York Times* "Critic's Pick" and international sensation, the Playhouse cast includes members of the original, off-Broadway company and some exciting new faces.

**"Murder for Two,"** with book and lyrics by Kellen Blair, book and music by Joe Kinosian, and directed by Scott Weinstein, will run March 4 - 7. A musical-comedy murder mystery with a twist: two actors play 13 roles - and the piano. When a famous novelist is found dead at his own surprise birthday party, it's up to a small-town police officer to solve the case. With suspects ranging from eccentric party guests to feuding relatives, "Murder for Two" delivers a fast-paced blend of music, comedy, and clever theatricality.

Two-time Tony Award winner Judith Ivey stars in the world premiere of **"The Pancake Club,"** written by Charlotte Booker and directed by Mark Shanahan, running April 20 – May 8. Ivey said, "Westport Country Playhouse is a monument in my career's life. Performing there in my friend Charlotte's play, and led by Mr. Shanahan is an achievement in my life. Thank you, Westport!"

Reprising her role from the 2026 Script in Hand hit presentation, Ivey will play Brenda, a waitress at a small-town diner where a group of senior men meet regularly for breakfast, calling themselves the Pancake Club. As Brenda struggles with the sudden death of her oldest friend, the Club members squabble over the eulogy, the widow refuses to grieve, a mysterious stranger threatens the town's equilibrium, and her only daughter teeters on the brink of a meltdown. Funny, moving, and filled with warmth, this world premiere explores friendship, family, and the question we all face sooner or later: Does anybody ever truly grow up?

**"The Goldsmith,"** written and performed by Sharone Sayegh, and directed by Zachary Prince, will play May 19 – 22. Inspired by her own family's journey, Broadway actress Sharone Sayegh weaves a captivating story through the golden jewelry passed down across generations - from Iraq to Israel and ultimately to America - as she explores identity, belonging, and the complexities of heritage and home. Moving, surprising, deeply personal, and an overwhelming hit with recent readings in the Playhouse's Barnstormer and Script In Hand series, "The Goldsmith" returns by popular demand to the Playhouse stage as a fully realized performance.

**"The Legend of Georgia McBride,"** written by Matthew Lopez and directed by Bruce Warren, will play from July 13 - 31, 2027. Casey is an Elvis impersonator, and a really good one. But he's barely making ends meet and is expecting to become a father soon. When he loses his gig as the King of Rock and Roll, Casey trades in one set of sequins for another, taking a job at a drag club where his life is turned upside down in the most unexpected and dazzling ways. Filled with humor, heart, and high heels, "The Legend of Georgia McBride" is a joyful, high-energy comedy about finding your voice and embracing change - and discovering who you are.

Six-show season ticket packages are now on sale, available to both new and returning subscribers. Season subscribers who purchase by July 10 as part of the Early Bird offer will receive a complimentary guest pass. Pricing varies based on performance date, time, and seating selection. Season ticket holders enjoy benefits such as priority seat retention, significant savings compared to single-ticket purchases, flexible ticket exchange options, and more. Single tickets go on sale September 1 at noon.

For complete 2026-27 season details, visit: <https://www.westportplayhouse.org/2026-2027-season/>

2026 Programming and Season Sponsor is Barbara Streicker. Media sponsors are Mofly Media and WSHU Public Radio. Westport Country Playhouse is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization.

A complete schedule of year-round Playhouse events, including plays, concerts, comedy, Script in Hand playreadings, Family Festivities, Barnstormers, and more, is available at <https://www.westportplayhouse.org/whatson/>. All titles, artists, dates, and times are subject to change.

For Westport Country Playhouse information and tickets, visit [westportplayhouse.org](http://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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