

WESTPORT COUNTRY PLAYHOUSE

MARK LAMOS, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR | MICHAEL BARKER, MANAGING DIRECTOR

NEWS RELEASE

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Westport Country Playhouse Announces 2019 Family Festivities Series

Featuring Four Musical Productions including “The Wizard of Oz” and “Angelina Ballerina”

Westport Country Playhouse announces its 2019 Family Festivities Series on selected Sundays from January through April, featuring musical productions based on classic and contemporary children’s stories. The four-show series includes musical versions of the classic, “The Wizard of Oz,” and the bestselling book, “Angelina Ballerina.” Performances are at 1 and 4 p.m., and are approximately one-hour in length. Tickets, at \$20 each, are now on sale.

Opening the 2019 series on Sunday, January 13, will be “The Phantom Tollbooth,” an original stage adaptation of the beloved classic by Norton Juster, with illustrations by Jules Feiffer. When Milo, the boy “who didn’t know what to do with himself,” drives his toy car through a mysterious tollbooth, he finds himself on an eventful and dangerous quest to rescue two Princesses, Rhyme and Reason. Using puppets, masks, magic, inventive scenic effects, and original music, the wonder and adventure of the story comes alive. Produced by Enchantment Theatre Company, the show is appropriate for ages 6 to 11.

“The Story Pirates Greatest Hits Show” will celebrate creative writing by students from coast to coast in a big, hilarious sketch comedy musical performed by professional actors and musicians, on Sunday, February 24, appropriate for ages 4 and up. The performance is based entirely on stories written by elementary school students, and part of the show is made up on the spot by the kids in the audience! The show is produced by The Striking Viking Story Pirates.

“The Wizard of Oz,” on Sunday, March 17, will offer audiences the chance to rediscover the joy of following the yellow brick road with Dorothy, the Scarecrow, the Tinman, and the Cowardly Lion as they travel through a reimagined world of Oz. With music and lyrics by Harold Arlen and E. Y. Harburg; orchestration by Larry Wilcox; background music by Herbert Stothart; adapted by John Kane; directed and choreographed by Clint Hromsco, the show is produced by Vital Theatre Company and geared to audiences ages 2 to 7.

“Angelina Ballerina The Musical” will take the Playhouse stage on Sunday, April 7. Angelina is excited to show off her dance skills to a famous visitor from Camembert Academy, but will Angelina get the starring moment she hopes for? Based on the animated series “Angelina Ballerina The Next Steps.” With book and lyrics by Susan Dilallo, music by Nen Morss, directed and choreographed by Sam Viverito, the show is produced by Vital Theatre Company and appropriate for ages 2 to 7.

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One week before each production, The Westport Library will offer a free-of-charge Saturday program of interactive book readings called “Story Explorers” to promote childhood literacy while also enhancing children’s experiences of attending the Playhouse’s Family Festivities shows. Each “Story Explorers” will include a reading of the book from the upcoming show, plus activities surrounding the book’s theme. Presenting partners for “Story Explorers” are Westport Country Playhouse, The Westport Library, and Westport Young Woman’s League. The program is approximately one hour.

In conjunction with the Family Festivities Series, the Playhouse will once again host a book collection for Read to Grow, Inc., a statewide nonprofit organization that provides free children's books to families with limited access and to community resources that serve them. At each Family Festivities performance, bins will be located in the Playhouse lobby for donations of gently used and new children’s books which will be given to families and programs in the greater Fairfield County area through Read to Grow. During last season’s Family Festivities series, the Playhouse collected nearly 300 books.

Family Festivities Corporate Sponsor is Pitney Bowes. The Family Festivities Series is also supported by the Westport Young Woman’s League.

All artists, titles, and dates subject to change.

Everyone in the audience requires a ticket. For more information and to buy tickets, visit www.westportplayhouse.org or call the box office at (203) 227-4177, toll-free at 1-888-927-7529, or visit Westport Country Playhouse, 25 Powers Court, off Route 1, Westport. Stay connected to the Playhouse on Facebook (Westport Country Playhouse), follow on Twitter (@WCPlayhouse), and on YouTube (WestportPlayhouse).

ABOUT WESTPORT COUNTRY PLAYHOUSE

The mission of Westport Country Playhouse is to enrich, enlighten, and engage the community through the power of professionally produced *theater worth talking about* and the welcoming experience of the Playhouse campus. The not-for-profit Playhouse provides this experience in multiple ways by offering live theater experiences of the highest quality, under the artistic direction of Mark Lamos; educational and community engagement events to further explore the work on stage; the New Works Circle Initiative, a program dedicated to the discovery, development, and production of new live theatrical works; special performances and programs for students and teachers with extensive curriculum support material; Script in Hand play readings to deepen relationships with audiences and artists; the renowned Woodward Internship Program during the summer months for aspiring theater professionals; Family Festivities presentations to delight young and old alike and to promote reading through live theater; youth performance training through Broadway Method Academy, WCP’s resident conservatory program; and the beautiful and historic Playhouse campus open for enjoyment and community events year-round.

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