

# WESTPORT COUNTRY PLAYHOUSE

MARK LAMOS, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR | MICHAEL BARKER, MANAGING DIRECTOR

## NEWS RELEASE

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### Digital-Age Romantic Drama “Sex with Strangers” at Westport Country Playhouse Begins September 26

Written by “House of Cards” Writer/Producer Laura Eason

“Sex with Strangers,” a romantic drama about ambition and fame in the digital age, will be staged at Westport Country Playhouse, from September 26 through October 14. The play is written by Laura Eason, who is best known for four seasons as a writer/producer on the Netflix drama “House of Cards.” “Sex with Strangers” is one of the most-produced plays in the U.S. in ’15-’16 and ’16-’17 seasons with more than 50 separate productions. The director is Katherine M. Carter. The play includes adult themes and language.

“‘Sex with Strangers’ is about the ways modern relationships are influenced by the internet,” said Mark Lamos, Westport Country Playhouse artistic director. “It also entertainingly deals with the generational differences between a woman who falls for a younger man. She’s a thirty-something author struggling with her second novel. He’s a twenty-something blogger whose book about casual sex has rocketed to the top of the bestseller lists. Their mutual exploration of each other’s needs and points of view makes for a funny, rueful, and up-to-date look at love, sex, and how different we find ourselves as we seek togetherness in a world that keeps changing every time we press ‘send.’”

The cast includes Chris Ghaffari as Ethan (Westport Country Playhouse’s “What the Butler Saw”; Hartford Stage’s “Romeo & Juliet”; Shakespeare in the Park’s “King Lear”; MFA, Yale School of Drama; native of Greenwich, CT); and Jessica Love as Olivia (Broadway’s “The Snow Geese,” “The River”; Off-Broadway’s “Aubergine,” “The Rivals”; television’s “The Blacklist,” “Redemption”; training at Juilliard).

Playwright Laura Eason is a Brooklyn-based screenwriter, playwright, and writer/producer on the Netflix drama “House of Cards,” which received a WGA nomination for outstanding writing in a drama series, and three Primetime Emmy Award nominations for drama series. She has more than 20 produced plays and adaptations, including “Around the World in 80 Days.” Eason is an ensemble member and the former artistic director of Lookingglass Theatre Company in Chicago, and a Dramatists Guild, WGAE, AEA, SAG, and SDC member. She is an alumna of Northwestern University and WP Playwright’s Lab. lauraeason.com or @LEasonNYC.

Director Katherine M. Carter was assistant director for Westport Country Playhouse’s “Art” and “Red.” She is the co-founding artistic director of The MITTEN Lab theater residency in Northern Michigan and

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founding artistic director of The Other Mirror; a New York company dedicated to adaptations for the stage. She has worked at Wolf Trap Opera (16' Directing Fellow), Playwrights Horizons (11'-12' Fellow), The Little Orchestra Society, 54 Below, Dixon Place, New York University, and Boston Opera Collaborative. She has been awarded residencies with The Drama League, Magic Time, The Directors Company and, currently, New Georges. [www.KatherineMCCarter.com](http://www.KatherineMCCarter.com).

The design team includes Edward T. Morris, scenic design; Caitlin Cisek, costume design; Alan Edwards, lighting design; and Beth Lake, sound design.

"Sex with Strangers" Production Partners are Stephen Corman, Carole Hochman, and Stan Green; Corporate Production Partner is BNY Mellon.

Performance schedule is Tuesday at 7 p.m., Wednesday at 2 and 8 p.m., Thursday and Friday at 8 p.m., Saturday at 3 and 8 p.m. and Sunday at 3 p.m. Special series feature Taste of Tuesday (Sept. 26), LGBT Night OUT (Sept. 28), Opening Night (Sept. 30), Sunday Symposium (Oct. 1), Together at the Table Family Dinner (Oct. 3), Open Captions (Oct. 8), Backstage Pass (Oct. 11), Playhouse Happy Hour (Oct. 12), and Thursday TalkBack (Oct. 12).

Single tickets start at \$30; buy early for best prices.

Westport Country Playhouse's 2017 Season culminates with one of the greatest love stories ever told, "Romeo and Juliet" by William Shakespeare. The tale of two star-crossed teenagers, who fight to love each other in a violent world, will run October 31 through November 19, directed by Mark Lamos, who the *New York Post* said, "is among the finest Shakespearean directors in the world."

All play titles, artists, and dates are subject to change.

For more information and to buy tickets, visit [www.westportplayhouse.org](http://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 Playhouse creates this relationship with the community and provides this experience in multiple ways by offering: Live theater experiences of the highest quality, under the artistic direction of Mark Lamos, from May through November; educational and community engagement events and opportunities to further explore issues presented by the work on stage; special performances and programs for students and teachers with extensive curriculum support material; *Script in Hand* play readings throughout the year to deepen relationships with audiences and artists alike; the renowned Woodward Internship Program training program during the summer months for aspiring theater professionals; Family Festivities presentations from December through April to delight young and old alike and to promote reading through live theater; and the beautiful and historic Playhouse campus open for enjoyment and community events year-round. The value of the Westport Country Playhouse to all it touches is immeasurable.

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