

WESTPORT COUNTRY PLAYHOUSE

MARK LAMOS, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR | MICHAEL BARKER, MANAGING DIRECTOR

NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release: October 22, 2019

World Premiere Translation/Adaptation of Molière's Comedy "Don Juan" Begins November 5 at Westport Country Playhouse

Nick Westrate steps into title role in the satire of sex, politics, and religion

Westport Country Playhouse's world premiere translation and adaptation of Molière's comedy, "Don Juan," by Brendan Pelsue, directed by Playhouse associate artistic director David Kennedy, will begin Tuesday, November 5 and run through Saturday, November 23.

Stepping into the role of Don Juan, replacing a previously announced actor, is **Nick Westrate**. Westrate was in Broadway productions of "Bernhardt/Hamlet," "Casa Valentina," and "A Moon for the Misbegotten." Off-Broadway credits are "Tribes," "A Delicate Ship," "Galileo," "Love's Labor's Lost," "Unnatural Acts," "The Little Foxes," and "The Boys in the Band" (Drama Desk nomination, featured actor). Regionally, he has appeared at Yale Rep, McCarter, Cal Shakes, The O'Neill, Huntington, and Barrington Stage. Television credits include the role of Robert Townsend on AMC's "Turn: Washington's Spies" (series regular, 3 seasons), and he has also appeared in HBO's "Mildred Pierce," "The Tick," "Blindspot," "Quantico," "Person of Interest," "New Amsterdam," and "Blue Bloods." Upcoming is HBO's miniseries "The American Guest." Film credits are "Ricki and the Flash," directed by Jonathan Demme, and the upcoming feature, "The Volunteers." Westrate is the recipient of the 2012 special Drama Desk Award for his work in three plays that season. He is an NYTW Usual Suspect, a Juilliard School graduate, a founding member of the Fair Wage OnStage movement, and a proud union member of AEA and SAG-AFTRA.

Meet the legendary Don Juan as you've never seen him before in this modern-dress production of the satirical, classic comic tale. Wherever he goes, the notorious seducer and antihero leaves behind a trail of broken hearts and society scandals, relying on his trusty sidekick, Sganarelle, to clean up his unruly messes. When an unearthly visitor arrives, Don Juan may finally be forced to confront his wicked ways.

Sganarelle, Don Juan's sidekick, will be played by **Bhavesh Patel** (Broadway's "The Nap," "Present Laughter" opposite Kevin Klein; Lincoln Center Theater's "War Horse"). **Philip Goodwin** will portray Don Juan's father Don Louis (Broadway's "Tartuffe," "The School for Scandal," "The Diary of Anne Frank").

Other cast members are **Jordan Bellow** as Don Carlos (New York theater's "Interior"; regional theater's "A Raisin in the Sun"; television's "Gotham"); **Paul DeBoy** as Mr. Gusman/Statue (Broadway's "Mamma Mia!"; television's "Leviathan"); **Carson Elrod** as Pierrot/Dimanche (Westport Country Playhouse's "Bedroom Farce," "How the Other Half Loves," and others; Broadway's "Peter and the Starcatcher"); **Suzy Jane Hunt** as Dona Elvira (Broadway's "Dear Evan Hansen," "Dead Accounts"; television's "The Americans"); **Bobby Roman** as Don Alonzo (film credits "The Challenger," "Tapestry,"

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“One Night in Brooklyn”); **Ariana Venturi** as Charlotte (five seasons at Berkshire Theatre Festival; Alya Feinburg in season two of “The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel”); and **Claudia Logan** as Mathurine/The Ghost (HBO’s “Random Acts of Flyness,” “The Deuce”; Netflix’s “Tales of the City”).

Playwright Molière (1622-1673) was the leading French comic actor, stage director, and dramatic theoretician of the seventeenth century. In addition to “Don Juan,” his works include “The School for Husbands,” “The School for Wives,” “Tartuffe,” “The Misanthrope,” “The Doctor in Spite of Himself,” “Amphitryon,” “The Miser,” “Scapin,” “The Learned Ladies,” and “The Imaginary Invalid.”

Translator/adaptor Brendan Pelsue is a playwright, librettist, and translator whose work has been produced in New York and regionally, including “Wellesley Girl” at the Humana Festival of New American Plays, “Hagoromo” at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, and “Read to Me” at Portland Stage Company. He also produces the podcast “We Are Not These People” with journalist Natasha Haverty. Originally from Newburyport, MA, he received his MFA from Yale School of Drama and his BA from Brown University, where he received the Weston Prize in playwriting.

Director David Kennedy is in his eleventh season as Playhouse associate artistic director. He has directed Playhouse productions each season, including “Suddenly Last Summer,” “Loot,” and “The Invisible Hand,” which received the 2016 Connecticut Critics Circle (CCC) Award for Outstanding Production of a Play, and for which Kennedy won the CCC honor for Outstanding Director of a Play. He was previously with Dallas Theater Center, and was founding artistic director of The Lunar Society in Toronto and Milkman Theatre Group in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

The creative team includes Marsha Ginsberg, scenic design, and Sam Vawter, associate scenic design; Katherine Roth, costume design; Matthew Richards, lighting design; Fitz Patton, original music and sound design; Michael Rossmly, fight director and intimacy coach ; Karin White, props supervisor; Dana Tanner-Kennedy, dramaturg; Tara Rubin Casting, Laura Schutzel and Claire Burke, CSA; and Shane Schnetzler, production stage manager.

Production Sponsor is the Eunice and David Bigelow Foundation. Corporate Production Partner is BNY Mellon Wealth Management. 2019 Season Media Sponsors are Moffly Media and WSHU Public Radio.

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. (No Wed. or Sat. matinees during preview week). Special series feature Taste of Tuesday (November 5), LGBT Night (November 7), Post-Play Dialogues (November 7 and 14), Opening Night (November 9), Sunday Symposium (November 10), Together at the Table Family Dinner (November 12), Open Captions (November 17), Backstage Pass (November 20), Playhouse Happy Hour (November 21), and Thursday TalkBack (November 21).

Single tickets for “Don Juan” start at \$30 during preview performances (November 5 -8), and after November 9 Opening Night, tickets start at \$40, and are subject to change based upon availability. Buy early for best prices. Special offers are available for seniors, students, educators, and playwrights. For details, visit westportplayhouse.org/special-offers.

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

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 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, Westport Country Playhouse's resident conservatory program; and the beautiful and historic Playhouse campus open for enjoyment and community events year-round. Charity Navigator has recently awarded its top 4-star charity rating to the Playhouse in recognition of its strong financial health and commitment to accountability and transparency.

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