

WESTPORT COUNTRY PLAYHOUSE

MARK LAMOS, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR | MICHAEL BARKER, MANAGING DIRECTOR

NEWS RELEASE

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Westport Country Playhouse's Family Festivities Series Presents "Charlotte's Web" on Sunday, February 23

Westport Country Playhouse's Family Festivities Series will present "Charlotte's Web," produced by TheaterWorksUSA, on Sunday, February 23, at 1 and 4 p.m. The show, based on the classic book by E. B. White, is written by Joseph Robinette, best known for the book for Broadway's "A Christmas Story: The Musical." Performances are approximately one-hour in length, and appropriate for grades K-5. Tickets are \$20 each.

In "Charlotte's Web," a spider named Charlotte weaves a plan to convince Farmer Zukerman that her good friend, Wilber, is a prize pig and deserves a place on the farm forever. The brand-new production of the classic story of friendship and loyalty is infused with original bluegrass music and features madcap and endearing farm animal characters.

TheaterWorksUSA, the producing company, has led the Theater for Young and Family Audiences movement in New York City and across North America for over half a century. Since 1962, the 501(c)3 not-for-profit has captured the imaginations of 100 million new and veteran theatergoers with an award-winning repertoire of over 130 original plays and musicals. In addition to touring 11 family productions around the country, TheaterWorksUSA's season highlights include the Broadway production of "The Lightning Thief: The Percy Jackson Musical," and the world premieres of two *New York Times* Critic's Picks, "Dog Man: The Musical" and "The Pout-Pout Fish," which recently opened the New Victory Theater's season. "The Pout-Pout Fish" will come to Westport Country Playhouse in March.

In advance of the performance, a free-of-charge, interactive program, "Story Explorers," featuring a book reading of "Charlotte's Web" and activities surrounding the show's themes, will take place as follows: Saturday, February 8, at 10:30 a.m., Fairfield Public Library, 1080 Old Post Road, Fairfield; Sunday, February 9, at 9 a.m., Westport Weston Family YMCA, Schine Meeting Room, 14 Allen Raymond Lane, Westport; Wednesday, February 12, at 11 a.m., Westport Weston Family YMCA, Schine Meeting Room, 14 Allen Raymond Lane, Westport; Saturday, February 15, at 9 a.m., SONO Branch Library, 10 Washington Street, Norwalk; Saturday, February 15, at 11 a.m., Westport Library, 20 Jesup Road, Westport; and Saturday, February 15, at 1 p.m., Bridgeport Public Library - North Branch, 3455 Madison Avenue, Bridgeport.

The one-hour Story Explorers" program is led by staff from Broadway Method Academy, the resident conservatory of Westport Country Playhouse. "Story Explorers" promotes childhood literacy while also enhancing children's experiences of attending the Playhouse's Family Festivities shows. "Story Explorers" is sponsored by United Bank Foundation and presented by Westport Country Playhouse and Broadway Method Academy.

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Westport Country Playhouse's four-show 2019-2020 Family Festivities Series is presented on selected Sundays from December through March, featuring productions with music based on classic and contemporary children's stories. The final Family Festivities show of the season is "The Pout Pout Fish," produced by TheaterWorksUSA on Sunday, March 15, as Mr. Fish sets out on a sweeping oceanic quest to find Miss Clam's missing pearl, and discovers there is more to him than his permanently plastered pout.

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.

Family Festivities Series Corporate Sponsor is Pitney Bowes. The Family Programming Sponsor is Bankwell. 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 of the highest caliber 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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