

# WESTPORT COUNTRY PLAYHOUSE

MARK LAMOS, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR | MICHAEL BARKER, MANAGING DIRECTOR

## NEWS RELEASE

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### Westport Country Playhouse Hosts Free Playreading Celebrating International Women's Day on Friday, March 8

To celebrate International Women's Day on Friday, March 8, at 7 p.m., Westport Country Playhouse will host a free-of-charge reading of "The Revolutionists," an irreverent comedy about four women - a spy, an assassin, a writer, and a royal.

The reading places a comedic spin on contemporary political and social issues as seen through the eyes of four historic women, reimagined as heroines of the French Revolution. "The Revolutionists" is written by Lauren M. Gunderson, "the most produced living playwright in America," according to *American Theatre* magazine. Director is Bethany Gugliemino, Playhouse artistic and management associate.

"On a day when we celebrate all the women in our lives, this play shares the story of four bold and inspiring women," said Gugliemino. "They fight for the right to tell their own stories and to have their voices heard in a tumultuous time not so different from our own."

Tickets are free-of-charge by reservation by calling the Playhouse's box office at 203-227-4177, emailing [rsvp@westportplayhouse.org](mailto:rsvp@westportplayhouse.org), or in person at 25 Powers Court, off Route 1, Westport. Online reservations are unavailable for this event. Seating is reserved; limit of two free tickets per household. The play includes adult themes and language.

Following the reading, Positano Ristorante, located adjacent to the Playhouse, will offer free appetizers and cash bar.

The cast members are **Danielle Davenport** as Haitian rebel Marianne Angelle (Westport Country Playhouse's New Works Circle Initiative reading of "The Biggest Valley," 2017 and 2018 International Women's Day events; Starz's "Power," Amazon's "Sneaky Pete," Netflix's "Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt"); **Jacqueline Guillen** as assassin Charlotte Corday (Westport Country Playhouse New Works Circle Initiative reading of "Torera"; New York credits "Play/Date," "Lilia," "Satyricono," "Judgment of Fools," "Trees in their Youth," "Miss Julie"); **Mahira Kakkar** as former queen Marie Antoinette (Westport Country Playhouse's "Twelfth Night"; film's "Hank and Asha," for which she was named Slamdance favorite, best actress Napa Film Festival, best actress Wild Rose Film Festival); and **Brenda Meaney** as playwright Olympe de Gouges (Westport Country Playhouse's "And a Nightingale Sang"; New York theater's "Indian Ink," "Incognito," "Party Face," The Neil LaBute Short Play Festival, "The New Morality").

Playwright Lauren M. Gunderson is the winner of the Lanford Wilson Award, the Steinberg/ATCA New Play Award, and the Otis Guernsey New Voices Award. She is also a finalist for the Susan Smith

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Blackburn Prize and John Gassner Award for Playwriting, and a recipient of the Mellon Foundation's 3-Year Residency with Marin Theatre Company. She studied Southern Literature and Drama at Emory University and Dramatic Writing at NYU's Tisch School where she was a Reynolds Fellow in Social Entrepreneurship. Her work has been commissioned, produced, and developed at companies across the US including South Coast Repertory ("Emilie," "Silent Sky"), The Kennedy Center ("The Amazing Adventures of Dr. Wonderful and Her Dog!"), and more. She co-authored "Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley" with Margot Melcon, which was one of the most produced plays in America in 2017. She is Playwright in Residence at Playwrights Foundation. LaurenGunderson.com and @LalaTellsAStory.

Director Bethany Gugliemino, Westport Country Playhouse artistic and management associate, assists with the Playhouse's New Works Circle Initiative and writes program content for mainstage productions. Last season, she organized a series of community events associated with the Playhouse's world premiere production of "Thousand Pines." Prior to her current role, she was a Playhouse development fellow. Gugliemino previously worked as a dramaturg with Egg & Spoon Theatre Collective in New York City. She studied at the University of Florida and University College London.

Sponsors for "The Revolutionists" are Czekaj Artistic Productions and Pitney Bowes.

Charity Partner for the event is Dress for Success of Mid-Fairfield County. A drop-off box will be located in the Playhouse lobby for donations of gently used professional attire, beginning Friday, March 1 through the reading on Friday, March 8. Monetary contributions for the charity will be accepted at the reading.

Community Partners are The Rowan Center and Women's Mentoring Network.

International Women's Day is a global day celebrating the social, economic, cultural, and political achievements of women. The day also marks a call to action for accelerating gender parity. More information on International Women's Day is available at [www.internationalwomensday.com](http://www.internationalwomensday.com).

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

## **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, Westport Country Playhouse's resident conservatory program; and the beautiful and historic Playhouse campus open for enjoyment and community events year-round.

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