

WESTPORT COUNTRY PLAYHOUSE

MARK LAMOS, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR | MICHAEL BARKER, MANAGING DIRECTOR

NEWS RELEASE

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Westport Country Playhouse Announces Livestream Event Celebrating Fairfield County's Young Artists Hosted by Tony Award® Winner Kelli O'Hara on Friday, April 17

Tony Award®-winning Broadway star Kelli O'Hara, in partnership with Westport Country Playhouse's education and community outreach department, will host "Getting to Know You: A Celebration of Young Artists," on Friday, April 17, at 7 p.m., on the Playhouse YouTube channel and Facebook Live.

The virtual showcase will feature 10 randomly selected Fairfield County high school students. They will get the opportunity to share their experiences with O'Hara and perform a musical theater selection.

"I am very proud to partner with Westport Country Playhouse as we celebrate the highly anticipated (but sadly unseen) performances of our community's young performers this year," said O'Hara. "We can still gather together as one community, virtually, in the spirit of true live performance, and give these kids a platform. I think it will be an uplifting way to support the magnificent arts programs we have in Fairfield County and ensure that all the passion and hard work doesn't go to waste."

To register, Fairfield County high school students may visit westportplayhouse.org/livestream and upload a video of a musical theater song during a 72-hour period between Sunday, April 5, at 10 a.m. and Wednesday, April 8, at 10 a.m.

The 10 students selected for the livestream event will be notified by Friday, April 10. Additionally, 10 understudies will be chosen to submit a question for O'Hara to answer during the show.

"I am also a firm believer in the healing magic of the arts, and I know we could all use some of that right now," said O'Hara.

Kelli O'Hara's portrayal of Anna Leonowens in the critically acclaimed revival of "The King and I" garnered her the 2015 Tony Award® for Best Leading Actress in a Musical, along with Drama League and Outer Critics nominations. Her most recent role leading the Broadway revival of "Kiss Me, Kate" earned O'Hara glowing reviews and a 2019 Tony nomination for Best Performance by an Actress in a Leading Role in a Musical. She has countless other Broadway, regional/Off-Broadway, film, and television credits, showcasing her versatility and unequivocal talent.

All videos submitted as a part of the entry process will be featured in a compilation video produced and released on Playhouse social media channels.

During the event, tax-deductible donations to the 501(c)(3) non-for-profit Playhouse will be accepted. "If you are in a position to give a special gift to help the Playhouse continue developing programs like

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this, we would be so grateful," said Gretchen Wright, Playhouse director of development. "We will get through this together."

Support for the event is from Bankwell, 2019-2020 Family Programming Sponsor.

For more information on the livestream showcase with Kelli O'Hara, contact Jenny Nelson, Playhouse director of education and community outreach, via email at education@westportplayhouse.org.

For Westport Country Playhouse information, visit westportplayhouse.org, leave a message on the box office voicemail at (203) 227-4177, or email at boxoffice@westportplayhouse.org. The Playhouse's physical box office is closed during the pandemic, but staff is working from home, returning phone messages and answering emails. Please understand with the high volume of inquiries, it may take up to 72 hours to respond. 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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