

WESTPORT COUNTRY PLAYHOUSE

MARK LAMOS, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR | MICHAEL BARKER, MANAGING DIRECTOR

NEWS RELEASE

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Westport Country Playhouse Hosts 2019 Season Kick-off on Saturday, March 30

Admission-free event offers food trucks, beer tastings, ticket discounts, and season preview with performances by “In the Heights” cast members.

Westport Country Playhouse will host a 2019 Season Kick-off event on Saturday, March 30, from 4 to 6:30 p.m., offering a fun atmosphere with food trucks and beer tastings. In addition, the Playhouse box office will be open during the event for special, day-of/in person-only ticket discounts. Admission is free and open to the public.

A preview of the 2019 Season’s five productions will be hosted by Mark Lamos, Playhouse artistic director, from 5:15 p.m. to 6:15 p.m., with special guest appearances. Plus, director and choreographer Marcos Santana will appear with “In the Heights” cast members who will sing selections from the Tony Award-winning musical, conceived by “Hamilton” creator Lin-Manuel Miranda. Santana along with three of the actors in the Playhouse’s season opener performed in the original Broadway production of “In the Heights.”

Local food trucks, including Lobster Craft of Fairfield, Dough Girls of Greenwich, and Mama’s Food Truck of Stamford, will be on site with their specialties available for purchase from 4 to 5 p.m. Free beer tastings will be provided by Two Roads Brewing Company of Stratford and Bad Sons Beer Company of Derby. Two of the Playhouse’s restaurant partners, Westport’s Tavern on Main and Rizzuto’s, will serve complimentary dessert tastings. Wine, soda, bottled water, coffee, and tea will be available for sale. Vendors are subject to change. Rain date is April 6.

The Playhouse’s 2019 Season, from April 23 through November 23, features five-plays, including two musicals, two dramas, and a comedy. The season will begin with “In the Heights,” with music and lyrics by Lin-Manuel Miranda, book by Quiara Alegría Hudes, and directed and choreographed by Marcos Santana, from April 23 through May 11. Before the smash hit “Hamilton,” Lin-Manuel Miranda wowed audiences with “In the Heights,” a love letter to New York City’s famed Washington Heights, a vibrant community on the brink of change. Three generations dream of new opportunities and struggle with the pressures of expectation and tradition. With an infectious score featuring a blend of hip-hop, salsa, merengue, and soul, “In the Heights” invites audiences to celebrate life and love in this uniquely American story. Special funding is provided by Adam Clemens and Galia Gichon, Czekaj Artistic Productions, Joyce Hergenhan, Judy and Scott Phares, and Barbara and John Samuelson. Corporate Production Sponsor is Bank of America.

The gripping drama, “Skeleton Crew,” will be staged June 4 through June 22, written by prize-winning Motor City native Dominique Morisseau, and directed by LA Williams. Rumor has it that Detroit’s last export auto plant will soon close. Four factory workers navigate opposing agendas and shifting power

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dynamics in their desperate attempts to survive whatever comes next. Production Sponsors are Judy and Scott Phares. Corporate Production Partner is Fidelity Investments.

"Hershey Felder as Irving Berlin," with lyrics and music by Irving Berlin, book by Hershey Felder, and directed by Trevor Hay, will run July 16 through August 3. From Czarist Russia to New York's Lower East Side to Broadway, Irving Berlin's uplifting immigrant story epitomizes the American Dream. His songs captured our hearts. Featuring Berlin's most popular standards, including the Great American Songbook classics, "Blue Skies," "There's No Business Like Show Business," "White Christmas," and more, Felder's one-man show celebrates Irving Berlin, the composer, and reveals the inspiration for Berlin's countless hit songs. Production Sponsors are Barbara and John Streicker. Production Partners are Johnna G. Torsone and John McKeon. Corporate Production Partner is Cohen & Wolf, P.C.

"Mlima's Tale," written by Lynn Nottage and directed by Mark Lamos, is scheduled October 1 through October 19. Mlima is a magnificent and beloved Kenyan elephant, killed by poachers for his coveted ivory tusks. As traffickers of Mlima's bounty maneuver the illicit ivory market, the animal's invincible spirit follows their path of desire, greed, crime, and corruption in this powerfully theatrical fable. Production Sponsors are Czekaj Artistic Productions, and Barbara and John Samuelson.

The 2019 season culminates with Molière's "Don Juan," a world premiere translation and adaptation by Brendan Pelsue, directed by David Kennedy, playing November 5 through November 23. Meet the legendary Don Juan as you've never seen him before in this darkly comic take on a classic 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. Sex, politics, religion--nothing is sacred in Molière's brilliant comedy. Production Sponsor is the Eunice and David Bigelow Foundation.

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 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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