

# WESTPORT COUNTRY PLAYHOUSE

MARK LAMOS, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR | MICHAEL BARKER, MANAGING DIRECTOR

## NEWS RELEASE

**Contact:** Patricia Blaufuss, Public Relations Manager  
(203) 227-5137 x197 | (203) 571-1287 | pblaufuss@westportplayhouse.org

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### Westport Country Playhouse Script in Hand Playreading of Romantic Comedy “Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley”

Westport Country Playhouse will present a Script in Hand playreading of “Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley,” the romantic comedy sequel to Jane Austen’s “Pride and Prejudice,” by Lauren Gunderson and Margot Melcon, on Monday, December 16, at 7 p.m. The reading will be directed by Anne Keefe, Playhouse associate artist and curator of the playreading series. Tickets are \$20 each.

“Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley’ ticks so many boxes!,” said Keefe. “It has a literate, classic setting and well-loved characters wrapped in comedy and tied with a romantic bow. I hope you make it part of your holiday, whatever that may be.”

“Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley” was one of the most produced plays in the U.S. in 2017. Set in December 1815, two years after “Pride and Prejudice” ends, “Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley” focuses on middle-sister Mary as its unlikely heroine. At Pemberley, the grand estate of Mr. and Mrs. Darcy, an unexpected guest at a holiday gathering sparks Mary’s hope for independence, an intellectual match, and possibly, even love.

The cast includes **Kristen Hahn** as Mary Bennet (Broadway’s “A Gentleman’s Guide to Love and Murder,” “Our Town”; Westport Country Playhouse’s “Our Town,” Script in Hand playreadings “You Know I Can’t Hear You When the Water’s Running,” “The Late Christopher Bean,” “Dracula”); **Allison Altman** as Jane Bingley (Westport Country Playhouse’s Script in Hand playreadings “Breaking Legs,” “I Hate Hamlet”; regional theater’s “Nicholas Nickleby,” “Pride and Prejudice”); **Rebekah Brockman** as Lydia Wickham (Westport Country Playhouse’s “The Liar,” Script in Hand playreadings “Lunch Hour,” “The Country Club”; films “Bridge of Spies,” “The Chaperone”); **Joe Delafield** as Charles Bingley (Westport Country Playhouse’s “The School for Husbands”; Broadway’s “Tartuffe”; Off-Broadway’s “Fashions for Men,” “Outward Bound”; nominee, LA’s Best Supporting Actor Ovation Award).

**Carson Elrod** will play Arthur de Bourgh (Westport Country Playhouse’s “Don Juan,” “Bedroom Farce,” “How the Other Half Loves,” and others; Broadway’s “Peter and the Starcatcher”); **Brenda Meaney** as Anne de Bourgh (Westport Country Playhouse’s “And a Nightingale Sang,” reading of “The Revolutionists”; New York theater’s “Indian Ink,” “Incognito,” “Party Face”); **Elizabeth Stahlmann** as Elizabeth Darcy (Westport Country Playhouse’s “Grounded,” for which she earned the Connecticut Critics Circle Award for Outstanding Solo Performance; New York’s The Acting Company); and **Max von Essen** as Fitzwilliam Darcy (Westport Country Playhouse annual galas in 2010, 2011, and 2016; Broadway’s “Anastasia,” “An American in Paris” (Tony/Drama Desk/Grammy nominations)).

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25 POWERS COURT WESTPORT, CONNECTICUT 06880

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE T (203) 227-5137 F 203.221.7482 | BOX OFFICE T (203) 227-4177 F (203) 454-3238

[westportplayhouse.org](http://westportplayhouse.org)

Stage directions will be read by Alexandra Rapaport. Stage manager is Megan Smith.

The co-playwrights are Lauren Gunderson and Margot Melcon. Gunderson is the most produced living playwright in the U.S. She is a winner of the Lanford Wilson Award and the Steinberg/ATCA New Play Award. Her work has been commissioned, produced, and developed at companies across the U.S. She is Playwright in Residence at Playwrights Foundation. Melcon is a theater artist, administrator, and writer. She was the director of new play development at Marin Theatre Company for seven years, where she dramaturged over 30 productions and administered the company's two annual new play prizes and commissioning program.

Director Anne Keefe is the associate artist at Westport Country Playhouse and curates the Script in Hand playreading series. She has directed nearly 50 Script in Hand readings. She served as artistic director of Westport Country Playhouse with Joanne Woodward in 2008, and as associate artistic director from 2000-2006, also with Ms. Woodward.

All dates, titles, and artists subject to change.

The Script in Hand Playreading Series will continue on Mondays at 7 p.m. on February 24, March 23, and April 27; titles to be announced.

The Script in Hand Playreading Series is sponsored by Marc and Michele Flaster in 2019 with support from the White Barn Program of the Lucille Lortel Foundation.

For more information and to buy tickets, visit [www.westportplayhouse.org](http://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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