

# WESTPORT COUNTRY PLAYHOUSE

MARK LAMOS, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR | MICHAEL BARKER, MANAGING DIRECTOR

## NEWS RELEASE

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### Westport Country Playhouse Announces Co-curator of Script in Hand Playreading Series

Westport Country Playhouse has named director, actor, and playwright Mark Shanahan as co-curator of the 2020 Script in Hand Playreading Series. He will collaborate with Anne Keefe, Playhouse associate artist and current curator of the Series. The Playhouse's Script in Hand Series offers readings of dramas and comedies by professional actors using their skills to catapult the audience's imagination without benefit of scenery or costumes.

"I couldn't be more excited to welcome Mark Shanahan as a co-curator of the Playhouse's Script in Hand program," said Keefe. "Mark has done more Script in Hand readings than any other actor in the course of the 10-plus years we have been producing readings. He shares my love of the form, and will bring exciting new takes on programming as well as a whole new group of actors to our Playhouse stage. For me, this is a perfect partnership and a great start to 2020."

Keefe, who has directed nearly 50 Script in Hand readings, 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.

Shanahan stated, "There is something truly special about the excitement in the air on the night of a Script In Hand reading at The Playhouse. I have been lucky enough to participate in quite a few of them over the years, and I love how Westport audiences embrace the experience, engaging their imaginations alongside the fantastic actors who flock to grace the Playhouse stage.

"I look forward to working with my dear friend, Annie Keefe, to create many more memorable readings for this community and this extraordinary theater, which has meant so much to me," Shanahan added.

Shanahan appeared at Westport Country Playhouse in "Around the World in 80 Days," "Tryst," "Sedition," "David Copperfield," "Journey's End," and over 20 Script in Hand playreadings. He has directed Playhouse Script in Hand readings of "Butterflies Are Free," with Blythe Danner and Jonathan Groff, and "The Greatest Gift" by Weston playwright David Wiltse. New York stage includes "The 39 Steps," "Small World," "Checkers," "Tryst," "The Shaughraun," "As Bees in Honey Drown," and "The Internationalist." His directorial work has been seen at Alley Theatre, George Street Playhouse, Virginia Stage, Hudson Stage, Theatre Square, The White Heron, Fulton Opera House, Mile Square Theatre, Weston Playhouse, Florida Rep, Penguin Rep, Merrimack Rep, Hangar Theatre, The Cape Playhouse, and many more. He is the author of the Off--Broadway and regional hit comedy, "The Dingdong," and his holiday adaptations, "A Merry Little Christmas Carol" and "A

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Sherlock Carol." He is a graduate of Brown University (BA) and Fordham University (MA, faculty). [www.mark-shanahan.net](http://www.mark-shanahan.net).

The 2020 Script in Hand Playreading Series will be at 7 p.m. on Mondays, February 24, March 23, April 27, November 16, and December 14; titles to be announced.

Tickets to Script in Hand Playreadings are \$20 each. Memberships for the Script in Hand Series are \$125 each, and include tickets for all five readings prior to public sale. 2020 membership renewals are currently underway. New memberships will be on sale beginning January 7. Single performance tickets will be available beginning January 21.

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

For more information and 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 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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