

WESTPORT COUNTRY PLAYHOUSE

MARK LAMOS, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR | MICHAEL BARKER, MANAGING DIRECTOR

NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release: October 23, 2019

Westport Country Playhouse Script in Hand Playreading of Comedy/Drama “Visiting Mr. Green”

Westport Country Playhouse will present a Script in Hand playreading of the comedy/drama, “Visiting Mr. Green” by Jeff Baron, on Monday, November 18, at 7 p.m. The cast includes Tim Jerome as Mr. Green and Charles Socarides as Ross Gardiner. The reading will be directed by Anne Keefe, Playhouse associate artist and curator of the playreading series. Tickets are \$20 each.

“In a contentious world, what better balm for the soul than a play with real heart, strong life lessons, and a few laughs,” said Keefe.

“Visiting Mr. Green” was nominated as Best Play by the Drama League. After its year-long run in 1997 at New York’s Union Square Theatre, it has been produced in 46 countries in 23 languages in over 500 productions.

In “Visiting Mr. Green,” the title character is an elderly, retired dry cleaner, who lives in a run-down apartment building on Manhattan’s upper west side. Mr. Green wanders into New York traffic and is almost hit by a car driven by Ross Gardiner, a young corporate executive. Found guilty of reckless driving, Gardiner is ordered to perform a community service helping the recent widower for six months. What starts as a comedy about two men who do not want to be in the same room together becomes a gripping and moving drama as they get to know each other, come to care about each other, and open old wounds they’ve been hiding and nursing for years.

The cast include **Tim Jerome** as Mr. Green. He was in the original cast of Broadway’s “The Rothschilds,” “Grand Hotel,” “The Moony Shapiro Songbook,” Arthur Miller’s “Creation of the World and Other Business,” Baz Luhrmann’s “La Bohème,” and “Me and My Girl” (1987 Tony Award nomination). He was in replacement casts of Broadway’s “Phantom of the Opera,” “Tarzan,” “Beauty and the Beast,” “Cats,” “The Magic Show,” “Lost in Yonkers,” and “Man of La Mancha” (original production). Film credits include “Thirteen Days,” Tim Robbins’ “Cradle Will Rock,” “Compromising Positions,” Costa-Gavras’ “Betrayed,” “Billy Bathgate”; and Woody Allen’s “Husbands and Wives,” “Everyone Says I Love You,” “Celebrity,” and “Deconstructing Harry.” In 1983, Jerome founded a company – now known as MainStreet Musicals - to promote the regional development of original theatrical musicals.

Charles Socarides will play Ross Gardiner. He was in Westport Country Playhouse’s “The Dining Room,” directed by Mark Lamos, and Script-In-Hand readings of “Tuesdays with Morrie,” “Better Late,” “Lobby Hero,” and “The Mousetrap.” He plays the recurring character Scott Goodman on CBS’ “Madam Secretary.” He was a series lead on Dustin Lance Black’s ABC miniseries “When We Rise.”

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which chronicled the LGBT movement in America. Favorite recent theater credits include "20th Century Blues" at Signature Theatre; Stephen Karam's "Sons of the Prophet" and Christopher Durang's "The Marriage of Bette and Boo," both at Roundabout Theatre; and A.R. Gurney's "Indian Blood," directed by Mark Lamos at Primary Stages.

Stage directions will be read by Alexandra Rappaport. Stage manager is Page Tazewell.

Playwright Jeff Baron has won many awards for "Visiting Mr. Green," including Best Play in Chile, Israel, Uruguay, Greece, Mexico, Germany, and Turkey. Baron was awarded the KulturPreis Europa, the first American and the first playwright to receive this award. His plays "Mother's Day," "Brothers-in-Law," "When I Was Five," "You're Not My Family," and "Mr. and Mrs. God" have been produced in Australia, Germany, Peru, Brazil, Argentina, and the U.S. His comic novels "I Represent Sean Rosen" and "Sean Rosen Is Not for Sale" are published by HarperCollins. His television writing includes "The Tracey Ullman Show," "A Year in the Life," "Sisters," "Almost Grown," "Aaron's Way," and Nickelodeon. At Carnegie Hall, he directed the world premiere of his one-act opera "Song of Martina." His award-winning short films have been seen internationally. His journalism, poetry, and fiction have been published in New York Magazine, Dallas Times-Herald, Tetu (Paris), T.O. (Toronto), Publishers Weekly, and the New York Daily News.

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.

The next Script in Hand playreading will be "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. Set two years after "Pride and Prejudice" ends, the play focuses on middle-sister Mary as its unlikely heroine. At the family's holiday gathering, an unexpected guest sparks Mary's hope for independence, an intellectual match, and possibly, even love. Cast members will be announced soon.

All dates, titles, and artists subject to change.

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 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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