

WESTPORT COUNTRY PLAYHOUSE

MARK LAMOS, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR | MICHAEL BARKER, MANAGING DIRECTOR

NEWS RELEASE

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Westport Country Playhouse Presents Sunday Symposium on “In the Heights”

Colleen Rua, Ph.D., assistant professor of Theatre at Bridgewater State University, will be guest speaker at Westport Country Playhouse’s Sunday Symposium on April 28, following a 3 p.m. performance of the Tony Award-winning musical “In the Heights,” with music and lyrics by Lin-Manuel Miranda and book by Quiara Alegria Hudes.

The Playhouse Sunday Symposium program is free and open to the public. Dr. Rua will engage in conversation with David Kennedy, Playhouse associate artistic director, about “In the Heights,” and Latinx representation on Broadway and in the wider American theater.

Before his 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.

“In the Heights” is now playing, and has been extended by popular demand through May 19.

Dr. Rua’s manuscript, “Coming Home: Latinx Representations on Broadway,” focuses on three Broadway musicals to explore the place and significance of the Latinx character and culture about the search for and construction of “home.” The representative musicals considered in this study are: “West Side Story,” “The Capeman,” and “In the Heights.” Through a thorough investigation of these musicals and their original Broadway productions, she examines the ways in which theatre artists have represented Latinx identity, language, memory and space, and the impact of these representations on both Latinx and non-Latinx audiences.

Dr. Rua was the artistic director of Arlington Children’s Theatre and co-founder and co-artistic director of SouthCity Theatre, in residence at Boston’s Factory Theatre. In 2014-2015, she co-founded and directed BSU’s Acting for Justice theatre troupe which performed at several social justice events. She is the recipient of Bridgewater State University’s 2019 Presidential Award for Distinguished Teaching and was the 2015 recipient the New England Theatre Conference’s Leonidas Nikole Award for Theatre Educator of the Year. Dr. Rua holds a Ph.D. in Drama from Tufts University and an M.A. in Theatre Education from Emerson College. Her research interests include Latinx Theatre, Immersive Theatre, the American Musical, and Theatre for Youth.

The Sunday Symposium Series is supported, in part, by the White Barn Program of the Lucille Lortel Foundation.

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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.

Single tickets start at \$30; buy early for best prices. Special offers are available for seniors, students, educators, and playwrights. For details, visit westportplayhouse.org/special-offers. The contemporary musical is recommended for ages 14 and up.

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 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.