

WESTPORT COUNTRY PLAYHOUSE

MARK LAMOS, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR | MICHAEL BARKER, MANAGING DIRECTOR

NEWS RELEASE

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Westport Country Playhouse's "Story Hour with Jenny" Presents In-Person, Interactive Reading of "Lubaya's Quiet Roar"

Westport Country Playhouse's "Story Hour with Jenny," a live, in-person series to engage children, grades K-3, will present an in-person, interactive reading of the picture book, "Lubaya's Quiet Roar," on Sunday, June 6, at 11 a.m., on the Playhouse campus.

Written by Newbery Honor winner Marilyn Nelson, with paintings by Philomena Williamson, ©2020, "Lubaya's Quiet Roar" is a lyrical, impactful story that tells how every child, even the quietest, can make a difference in their community and world. Jenny Nelson, who is the Roz and Bud Siegel director of education and community engagement at the Playhouse, will lead the one-hour session.

"Story Hour with Jenny" is a series of interactive readings of social justice picture books written and illustrated by BIPOC artists. Their themes center on the four pillars of the Playhouse's education department: Empathy, collaboration, activism, and literacy. "Lubaya's Quiet Roar" represents activism.

Young Lubaya is happiest when she's drawing, often behind the sofa while her family watches TV. There, she creates pictures on the backs of her parents' old protest posters. But when upsetting news shouts into their living room, her parents need the posters again. The next day her family takes part in a march, and there, on one side of the posters being held high, are Lubaya's drawings of kids holding hands and of the sun shining over the globe—rousing visual statements of how the world could be. "Lubaya's roar may not be loud, but a quiet roar can make history," said the author.

The upcoming book in the "Story Hour with Jenny" series is "Wings," written and illustrated Christopher Myers, ©2000, about a boy whose appearance makes him the target for school bullies, on Sunday, July 11, at 11 a.m.

Jenny Nelson, who leads "Story Hour with Jenny," hails from Arizona where she received her bachelor's degree in theater, master's degree in theater from the University of Arizona, and a second master's degree in education from Fairfield University. She is the associate artistic director of Collective Consciousness Theatre, a social justice theater in New Haven. She has taught at several universities, including City College of New York in the graduate program for theater professionals and educators. She has also worked as an artist and educator at several theaters, including Long Wharf Theatre, Shubert Theatre, and Yale Repertory Theatre. Recently, Nelson was a nominee for the Tony Teaching Award of Excellence.

Tickets for each "Story Hour with Jenny," including picture book, activity packet, and crayons, start at \$10. All books were purchased by the Playhouse from People Get Ready, a Black-owned community

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book space in New Haven. <https://www.peoplegetreadybooks.com/> To register, visit <https://tickets.westportplayhouse.org/overview/storyhour>, call the Playhouse box office at (203) 227-4177, or email boxoffice@westportplayhouse.org.

2021 Education Program supporters include the Eunice and David Bigelow Foundation; The David and Geri Epstein Foundation; George A. and Grace L. Long Foundation; Adolph and Ruth Schnurmacher Foundation, Inc.; The Westport Young Woman's League; as well as Athena and Daniel Adamson; Paige and Jodi Couture; Anna Czekaj-Farber; and Roz and Bud Siegel.

Covid-19 health and safety protocols, including social distancing and mask wearing, will be observed at all Playhouse in-person events.

For Westport Country Playhouse tickets and information, visit westportplayhouse.org, leave a message on the box office voicemail at (203) 227-4177, or email at boxoffice@westportplayhouse.org. Stay connected to the Playhouse on Facebook (Westport Country Playhouse), follow on Twitter (@WCPlayhouse), and on YouTube (WestportPlayhouse).

ABOUT WESTPORT COUNTRY PLAYHOUSE

Founded in 1931, Westport Country Playhouse is celebrating its 90th anniversary year. 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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