

# WESTPORT COUNTRY PLAYHOUSE

MARK LAMOS, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR | MICHAEL BARKER, MANAGING DIRECTOR

## NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release: June 23, 2021

### Westport Country Playhouse Presents Virtual Symposium for Timely New Comedy, “Tiny House”

Westport Country Playhouse will present a virtual Symposium in conjunction with the on-demand staging of the timely new comedy, “Tiny House.” The Symposium will be on the Playhouse’s website, westportplayhouse.org, from Wednesday, June 30 through Sunday, July 18. Michael Gotch, playwright, will engage in conversation with host David Kennedy, Playhouse associate artistic director, about the play’s themes of utopia and apocalypse, political polarization, downsizing, escaping urban life, and fresh starts, as well as the challenges of producing a play virtually. The Symposium is free-of-charge; running time is approximately 45 minutes.

“Michael is so wonderfully articulate about his work, methods, and influences that speaking with him is both delightful and educational,” said David Kennedy. “You could spend the entire afternoon in dialogue, and continue to receive fresh insights into his extraordinary play. It promises to be a great conversation.”

In “Tiny House,” fireworks fly when family, friends, and quirky neighbors come together for a Fourth of July barbecue at the off-the-grid, isolated mountain paradise of a young, urban couple. “Tiny House,” directed by Mark Lamos, Playhouse artistic director, will stream on demand from Tuesday, June 29 through Sunday, July 18. A one-night-only, in-person screening in the Jason Robards Theatre at the Playhouse will take place on Tuesday, June 29, at 7 p.m.

Playwright Michael Gotch’s “Tiny House” is his first full-length play. It was a semifinalist at Eugene O’Neill Playwrights Conference (2018), Ashland New Plays Festival (2018), and Forward Flux Three New American Plays (2018). “Tiny House” premiered in 2019 with Delaware’s Resident Ensemble Players (REP), a professional theater located at the University of Delaware, under the former title, “Minor Fantastical Kingdoms,” following a New Works Initiative workshop in 2018 at Westport Country Playhouse. Gotch’s second full-length play, “Starter Pistol,” was workshopped at Westport Country Playhouse and had its world premiere at The REP under the direction of Mark Lamos in 2020. It was the winner of the Ashland New Plays Festival (2019), and a semifinalist in two other competitions. Since the Covid-19 pandemic, Gotch has written and directed a radio play adaptation of Bram Stoker’s “Dracula,” and a duet of Agatha Christie short story radio play adaptations, “The King of Clubs” and “The Cornish Mystery,” both currently streaming via The REP’s website, www.rep.udel.edu. Also an actor, Gotch has performed at leading theaters in New York and regionally, including Westport Country Playhouse/REP’s co-production of “A Flea in Her Ear,” as well as over 70 productions as a founding company member at The REP, University of Delaware, where he also teaches in the College of Arts and Sciences.

Host David Kennedy is in his thirteenth season as Playhouse associate artistic director. He has directed Playhouse productions each season, including “Suddenly Last Summer,” “Loot,” and “The Invisible Hand,” which received the 2016 Connecticut Critics Circle (CCC) Award for Outstanding

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Production of a Play, and for which Kennedy won the CCC honor for Outstanding Director of a Play. He was previously with Dallas Theater Center, and was founding artistic director of The Lunar Society in Toronto and Milkman Theatre Group in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

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

Other special events surrounding the production of “Tiny House” will include an LGBT Night Out cocktail party on Tuesday, June 29; and an interactive, virtual talkback with panelists on Monday, July 12.

“Tiny House” running time is approximately 100 minutes, including a brief intermission between the two acts. Appropriate for ages 14 and up. More information on “Tiny House” at: [westportplayhouse.org/tinyhouse](https://www.westportplayhouse.org/tinyhouse)

The Playhouse’s 2021 Season continues with “Doubt: A Parable,” the Pulitzer Prize and Tony Award-winning drama written by John Patrick Shanley and directed by David Kennedy, Playhouse associate artistic director, playing November 2 through November 21. Two HD video productions from the Playhouse archives will stream on-demand, beginning with the musical, “Man of La Mancha” (2018), from August 23 through September 5, and another TBA, from September 13 - 26. Script in Hand playreadings will play October 19 – 24, and December 14 – 19; titles to be announced. All 2021 Playhouse events are listed at: <https://www.westportplayhouse.org/whats-on/>

2021 Season Sponsor is the Eunice and David Bigelow Foundation. Production Sponsor is Barbara Samuelson. 2021 Season Media Sponsors are Moffly Media and WSHU Public Radio.

All play titles, artists, dates, and formats are subject to change.

Virtual tickets for “Tiny House” start at \$25. The Playhouse box office staff will provide instructions on how to watch virtual content by logging in at [westportplayhouse.org](https://www.westportplayhouse.org).

Tickets for a one-night-only, in-person screening of “Tiny House” in the Playhouse’s Jason Robards Theatre on Tuesday, June 29, 7 p.m., are \$20; general admission, seating on a first-come, first-served basis. All in-person patrons will attest to being fully vaccinated against Covid-19, or willing to provide a negative PCR test result time stamped within 36 hours of the performance time. Covid-19 health and safety protocols, including capacity restrictions and mask-wearing, will be observed.

Current virtual performance ticketholders who want to instead attend the in-person screening may exchange their tickets by calling the Playhouse box office at 203-227-4177.

For information and tickets, visit [westportplayhouse.org](https://www.westportplayhouse.org), call the box office at (203) 227-4177, or email [boxoffice@westportplayhouse.org](mailto: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 90<sup>th</sup> 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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