

# WESTPORT COUNTRY PLAYHOUSE

MARK LAMOS, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR | MICHAEL BARKER, MANAGING DIRECTOR

## NEWS RELEASE

**Contact:** Patricia Blaufuss, Public Relations Manager  
(203) 227-5137 x197 | (203) 571-1287 | pblaufuss@westportplayhouse.org

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### **Westport Country Playhouse Announces HD Archival Video Streaming of “Man of La Mancha” and “Of Mice and Men”**

Westport Country Playhouse has selected two HD videos from its archives of performances captured live on stage for streaming on demand. The Playhouse’s 2018 production of “Man of La Mancha,” the Tony Award-winning musical following Don Quixote’s quest for “The Impossible Dream,” will stream on-demand from Monday, August 23 through Sunday, September 5. “Of Mice and Men,” the classic drama by Nobel Prize and Pulitzer Prize-winning author John Steinbeck, produced at the Playhouse in 2008, will stream on demand from Monday, September 13 through Sunday, September 26. Both productions are directed by Mark Lamos, Westport Country Playhouse artistic director. Tickets for streaming individual productions start at \$25. The Playhouse box office staff will provide instructions on how to watch virtual content by logging in at [westportplayhouse.org](http://westportplayhouse.org).

“Man of La Mancha,” inspired by Cervantes’ masterpiece “Don Quixote,” won five Tony Awards, including Best Musical. The Playhouse production won two Connecticut Critics Circle Awards: Mark Lamos for Outstanding Director, and Philip Hernandez, as Don Quixote, for Outstanding Actor in a Musical. The story of Quixote’s battle for good and the love of his fair maiden is written by Dale Wasserman, with music by Mitch Leigh, and lyrics by Joe Darion.

Area critics reviewing the Playhouse’s “Man of La Mancha” said, “Truly a musical for our times; well-conceived in every way.” - Hartford Courant; and, “Don’t miss this exceptional revival of one of the all-time great musicals.” - WICC.

“Of Mice and Men” is based on Steinbeck’s 1937 tale of two migrant ranch workers, George and Lennie, who wander from one California town to another during the Depression in search of the American dream. One of the few plays to be adapted by the novelist himself, this version is true to the book and filled with the drama that shot the story to instant acclaim.

Reviews for the Playhouse’s production of “Of Mice and Men” included, “Westport’s potent production has a vitality and sensuality.” – The New York Times; and, “A handsome revival; tastefully spare, sensitive, and unsentimental staging.” – Variety.

Cast members for “Man of La Mancha” are Philip Hernandez as Cervantes/Don Quixote (only actor in Broadway history to play both Jean Valjean and Inspector Javert in “Les Misérables”; original Broadway casts of “Kiss of the Spider Woman” and Paul Simon’s “The Capeman”); Gisela Adisa as Aldonza/Dulcinea (Broadway’s “Beautiful,” First National Tour of “Sister Act”); and Tony Manna as Sancho Panza (Amazon Prime’s “The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel”).

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25 POWERS COURT WESTPORT, CONNECTICUT 06880

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE T (203) 227-5137 F 203.221.7482 | BOX OFFICE T (203) 227-4177 F (203) 454-3238

[westportplayhouse.org](http://westportplayhouse.org)

Others in the “Man of La Mancha” cast are Ceasar F. Barajas as Pedro, Carlos Encinias as Padre, Michael Scott Gomez as Paco/Guard/Horse, Paola Hernandez as Antonia, Michael Mendez as Innkeeper/Tenorio, Ian Paget as Captain/Anselmo, Lulu Picart as Maria/Housekeeper, Jermaine Rowe as Juan/Guard/Horse, David Sattler as Governor, Clay Singer as Duke/Carrasco, and Esteban Suero as Barber/José.

The creators of “Man of La Mancha” are Dale Wasserman, playwright, who also wrote “One Flew over the Cuckoo’s Nest”; Mitch Leigh, composer, who received the Contemporary Classics Award from the Songwriter’s Hall of Fame for “The Impossible Dream”; and Joe Darion, lyricist, who wrote book and lyrics for “Illya Darling,” based on the film “Never On Sunday.”

The cast for “Of Mice and Men” is headed by Brian Hutchison as George (Broadway’s “The Boys in the Band” in 2018, “The Invention of Love,” “Proof”; film version of “The Boys in the Band” in 2020), and Mark Mineart as Lennie (Broadway’s “Julius Caesar” with Denzel Washington and “Macbeth” with Kelsey Grammer). Others in the cast are Mateo Gómez as The Boss, Kene Holliday as Crooks, Matthew Montelongo as Slim, Betsy Morgan as Curley’s Wife, Tommy Nohilly as Carlson, Sean Patrick Reilly as Whit, Rafael Sardina as Curley, and Edward Seamon as Candy.

“Of Mice and Men” was written by John Steinbeck (1902-1968), who won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1962 and the Pulitzer Prize for his 1939 novel “The Grapes of Wrath.” Born in Salinas, California, he worked as a hired hand on ranches, nourishing his impression of the California countryside and its people. Steinbeck’s works include “Tortilla Flat” (1935), “The Pearl” (1947), and “East of Eden” (1952).

Director of both productions is Mark Lamos, who has helmed many plays at Westport Country Playhouse since 2008, winning five Connecticut Critics Circle Awards for his direction. A former artistic director at Hartford Stage, he earned the 1989 Tony Award for the theater’s body of work.

Westport Country Playhouse’s 2021 Season Sponsor is the Eunice and David Bigelow Foundation. 2021 Season Media Sponsors are Moffly Media and WSHU Public Radio.

The Playhouse’s 2021 Season will continue with an in-person staging, as well as a filmed version, of “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, November 2 through November 20. Script in Hand playreadings will be on October 4 - 10, and December 14 – 19, titles TBA. All virtual content in the Playhouse’s 2021 season will be available on demand for patrons’ convenience, with captions in both English and Spanish translation. The complete schedule is available at [westportplayhouse.org](http://westportplayhouse.org).

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

For tickets and information, visit [westportplayhouse.org](http://westportplayhouse.org), call (203) 227-4177, or email at [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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