

WESTPORT COUNTRY PLAYHOUSE

MARK LAMOS, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR | MICHAEL BARKER, MANAGING DIRECTOR

NEWS RELEASE

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Westport Country Playhouse Presents In-Person and Virtual Script in Hand Playreading of “A Merry Little Christmas Carol”

For the holiday season, Westport Country Playhouse will present a Script in Hand playreading of “A Merry Little Christmas Carol,” based on Charles Dickens’ “A Christmas Carol,” before a live audience on Monday, December 13, at 7 p.m. The performance will be captured on film for on-demand streaming at home, from Thursday, December 16 through Sunday, December 19.

Part ghost story, part celebration, “A Merry Little Christmas Carol” is written and directed by Mark Shanahan, adapted from his play of the same name. Shanahan is curator of the Playhouse’s Script in Hand playreading series and Playhouse Radio Theater.

“It’s the holidays at the Playhouse! And we wanted to celebrate by presenting the greatest ghost story of them all!” said Shanahan. “The tale of Ebenezer Scrooge is always a powerful reminder that it is never too late to become the best version of ourselves. Of course, these days, the message of Dickens’ story seems more powerfully resonant than ever.

“As the Playhouse once again opens its doors to in-person events, we are excited to host our Script In Hand reading of ‘A Merry Little Christmas Carol.’ Narrated by artistic director Mark Lamos and featuring a cast of six actors playing multiple roles, this highly theatrical adaptation of the novel is tailor-made for the Playhouse stage, offering the chance to tell the classic story in a very personal and - dare I say it? - very spirited way,” Shanahan added.

“A Merry Little Christmas Carol” brings to life the miserly Ebenezer Scrooge, the curmudgeon everyone loves to hate; the Spirits of Christmas Past, Present and Future; and the darling Cratchit family with the ever-hopeful Tiny Tim.

The cast features Jeffrey Bean as Ebenezer Scrooge (Broadway revivals of “Amadeus” and “Bells Are Ringing”; 2020 Drama League Award nomination for Distinguished Performance in Off-Broadway’s “Dublin Carol”); Brittany Kathryn Allen as Belle (New York’s “Gloria: A Life”; “Minor Character,” recipient of the New York Innovative Theatre Award for Best Ensemble; “Tartuffe”); Amy Jo Jackson as Christmas Present (New York’s “Company XIV,” “Exit, Pursued by a Bear”; dialect coach for Broadway’s “Kinky Boots”); Patrick Halley as Bob Cratchit (Westport Country Playhouse’s Script in Hand playreading of “Miracle on South Division Street”; New York’s “The Misanthrope,” “25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee”); Kavin Panmeechao as Jacob Marley (author of “the Return,” presented by Westport Country Playhouse Radio Theater; Lincoln Center Theater’s “The King and I”; national tour of “25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee”); Theo Adamson as Tiny Tim (Broadway Method Academy’s “Newsies”; second grader, studies piano, voice, tap); and Mark Lamos, Westport Country Playhouse artistic director, as Narrator.

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Mark Shanahan, playwright/director, appeared at Westport Country Playhouse in “Around the World in 80 Days,” “Tryst,” “Sedition,” “David Copperfield,” “Journey’s End,” and over 20 Script in Hand playreadings, and directed readings of “Butterflies Are Free,” with Blythe Danner and Jonathan Groff, and “The Greatest Gift” by Weston playwright David Wiltse. He is the creator and curator of Westport Country Playhouse Radio Theater and writer/director of the Playhouse radio adaptation “A Merry little Christmas Carol.” New York acting credit includes “The 39 Steps,” “Small World,” “Checkers,” “Tryst,” “The Shaughraun,” “As Bees in Honey Drown,” and “The Internationalist.” His directorial work has been seen at Alley Theatre, George Street Playhouse, Virginia Stage, Arkansas Rep, White Heron, Fulton Opera House, Weston Playhouse, Florida Rep, Penguin Rep, Merrimack Rep, The Cape Playhouse, and many more. He has written numerous radio plays for White Heron’s Ghost Light Series (featuring Christopher Plummer and Judith Ivey, among others), and is the author of the Off-Broadway and regional hit comedy, “The Dingdong”; “A Merry Little Christmas Carol”; “A Murder at Fernly Hall”; and “A Sherlock Carol,” which premiered this fall Off-Broadway at New World Stages. www.mark-shanahan.net

Run time is 80 minutes with no intermission.

Tickets to attend the playreading in person are \$20. Patrons must be masked and fully vaccinated with an FDA-authorized vaccine to attend an indoor performance and must show proof of vaccination with their valid ticket to enter. For updates on Covid-19 health and safety protocols at the Playhouse, visit <https://www.westportplayhouse.org/visit/covid19safety/>

Tickets for on-demand streaming are \$20 individual, \$40 pair, and \$80 household. Each purchase entitles the ticket buyer to one individual link.

The Script in Hand Playreading Series is supported by the Burry Fredrik Foundation and the White Barn Program of the Lucille Lortel Foundation. 2021 Season Sponsor is the Eunice and David Bigelow Foundation. 2021 Season Media Sponsors are Moffly Media and WSHU Public Radio.

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

To purchase tickets, visit westportplayhouse.org, call (203) 227-4177, or email 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; 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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