

# WESTPORT COUNTRY PLAYHOUSE

MARK LAMOS, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR | MICHAEL BARKER, MANAGING DIRECTOR

## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Westport Country Playhouse Cancels April 5 Preview Performance of “Next to Normal” Due to Technical Issues**

#### **Supply chain and labor shortages causing delay in mounting the musical**

Due to technical issues, Westport Country Playhouse has cancelled the first preview performance of the pop/rock musical “Next to Normal” on Tuesday, April 5, and is rescheduling ticket holders into future performances of their choice. Previews will now begin on Wednesday, April 6 through Friday, April 8. Opening night will remain on Saturday, April 9. The production runs through Sunday, April 24.

“Theater professionals have a can-do spirit, but we are not immune to global forces,” said Michael Barker, Playhouse managing director. “Even we in the theater world find ourselves affected by supply chain and labor shortages. As a result, some technical needs to mount ‘Next to Normal’ have us delayed and we are regrettably forced to cancel our first preview on Tuesday, April 5th.”

Over the past weekend, ticket holders for the cancelled performance received email and telephone communication from the Playhouse with instructions on how to reschedule by completing a form. The box office staff will be available on Monday, April 4, from 12 to 6 p.m., to process rescheduling forms in the order received. For additional questions or concerns, please contact [boxoffice@westportplayhouse.org](mailto:boxoffice@westportplayhouse.org) or 203-227-4177. Due to anticipated high call volume, please be prepared to leave a voicemail; a box office representative will return the message as soon as possible.

There is no charge to reschedule in lieu of the cancelled performance. Any upcharge for a date with a higher ticket price will be waived. Every effort will be made to offer comparable seating locations.

“Next to Normal,” the three-time Tony Award®-winning musical and winner of the Pulitzer Prize for Drama, will play April 6 through April 24. A multi-racial cast is headed by Wilson Jermaine Heredia, Tony Award® winner for his portrayal of Angel in “Rent,” and Darlesia Cearcy, who played Erzulie in the Tony Award®-winning revival of “Once on This Island.” The musical is directed and choreographed by Marcos Santana, who helmed the Playhouse production of “In the Heights” in 2019. Featuring a six-piece live orchestra, the pop/rock score is by Tom Kitt, with book and lyrics by Brian Yorkey.

“Next to Normal” pushes the boundaries of contemporary musical theater with a story about a family’s loss and endurance. Dad’s an architect. Mom rushes to pack lunches and pour cereal. Their daughter and son are bright, wise-cracking teens. They appear to be a typical suburban American family. And yet, their lives are anything but ordinary because the mother has been battling mental illness for 16 years. While the mother’s struggle prevents the family from having a life that is normal, they hope for one that is “next to normal.” The musical takes audiences into the minds and hearts of each character, presenting their family’s story with love, compassion, and spirit. The show is appropriate for ages 14 and up; running time is approximately two hours with one 15-minute intermission.

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#### **WESTPORT COUNTRY PLAYHOUSE**

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

Production Sponsor is Czekaj Artistic Productions. Corporate Production Partner is Bank of America. Additional support is from cthumanities. 2022 Season Media Sponsors are Moffly Media and WSHU Public Radio.

Single tickets for "Next to Normal" start at \$35 during preview performances (April 6 - 8), and beginning April 9 Opening Night, tickets start at \$50 and are subject to change based upon availability. Buy early for best prices. For information on special offers, including discounts for students, senior citizens, educators, military and first responders, Indigenous peoples, professional playwrights, and groups, as well as options for pay-what-you-will and Westport Library pass, visit [www.westportplayhouse.org/visit/box-office/](http://www.westportplayhouse.org/visit/box-office/).

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

All audience members must present proof of vaccination and wear a mask at all times while inside Westport Country Playhouse. Actors' Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers in the U.S., requires that actors perform only at theaters where audiences wear masks. For updates on Covid-19 health and safety protocols at the Playhouse, visit <https://www.westportplayhouse.org/visit/covid19safety/>

For more information and to buy tickets, visit [www.westportplayhouse.org](http://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 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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