

WESTPORT COUNTRY PLAYHOUSE

MARK LAMOS, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR | MICHAEL BARKER, MANAGING DIRECTOR

NEWS RELEASE

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Westport Country Playhouse's New Works Initiative Stages Reading of "The Incubators" on Monday, November 7

New, dark comedy explores timely political issues

On the evening prior to Election Day, Westport Country Playhouse's New Works Initiative (NWI) will stage the first public reading of a new, dark comedy that explores issues potentially influencing the 2022 vote. "The Incubators," about young pro-life activists, written by Madison Fiedler and directed by Joan Sergay, is set for Monday, November 7, at 7 p.m., in the Playhouse's Jason Robards Theatre. Tickets are \$10. The reading is recommended for age 16 and up.

"The play humanizes a group of pro-life youth campers, some of which are unsure of what they believe, and some of which are just spouting what they've been told by their parents," said Liam Lonegan, Playhouse assistant artistic director. "I think the thing that makes Madison's play so important is that it asks questions, rather than making some kind of didactic political statement. It's artistic, and not propaganda. That's why we fell in love with it."

In "The Incubators," it's late summer of 2019 and the first day of "California Right to Life Leadership Camp," age division 15-17. The campers are not only excited by finally being surrounded by like-minded activists ready to fight for what they believe in, they're also eager to learn new strategies of warfare. Anthony wants to protest Planned Parenthood; Saidie wants to be pregnant; and Billie isn't sure she belongs there. The one thing they can all get behind is that they are The Pro-Life Generation and they're just getting started.

The Playhouse's NWI provides an artistic home to writers and theater makers, offering the resources and support necessary to further the growth of their works. NWI gives playwright and director two days to dive into the world of the play, making any changes and edits that might further the play's development. On the second day of the workshop, the company rehearses for half a day, and later reads through the play for an audience.

Playwright Madison Fiedler's work includes "Spay," which premiered this year at Rivendell Theatre Ensemble in Chicago, and was a 2022 Jeff Award nominee for Best New Work. She has a BA from Northwestern University. <https://www.madisonfiedler.net/>

Director Joan Sergay has directed and developed work at Ensemble Studio Theater, Actors Theatre of Louisville, among others. She has a BA from Northwestern University. <https://www.joansergay.com/>

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The NWI program is made possible through the generosity of the Laurents/Hatcher Foundation, the Lucille Lortel Foundation, Athena and Daniel Adamson, and Michele and Marc Flaster.

Masks are strongly encouraged, but not required. For updates on Covid-19 health and safety protocols at the Playhouse, visit <https://www.westportplayhouse.org/visit/covid19safety/>

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

For information and 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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