

WESTPORT COUNTRY PLAYHOUSE

NEWS RELEASE

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Westport Country Playhouse Announces Revised 2023 Season

Scaled-back schedule reflects necessary cost-cutting due to pandemic's ongoing impact on performing arts venues

Westport Country Playhouse has reduced its 2023 season to three productions from the previously announced five. The change reflects the impact that COVID has had, and continues to have, on the Playhouse and the performing arts community nationwide, according to the Playhouse board of trustees and staff leadership.

“Although we learned how to produce shows safely last season — we never had to cancel a performance due to COVID illness! — audiences are coming back slowly and we have yet to reach pre-pandemic levels of participation,” said Gretchen Wright, Playhouse director of development and interim managing director. “As a result, in 2022 we successfully produced one musical and four plays but finished with low ticket revenue and a significant deficit – a fate similar to many other theaters in Connecticut.”

“Even in the best of times, ticket sales only cover 40% of a show’s cost,” noted Anna Czekaj-Farber, chair, Playhouse board of trustees.

“The board of trustees have been very engaged in supporting the theater and all the changes, proactively leading the Playhouse to brighter future,” Czekaj-Farber stated. “We are an agile organization and we are trying to adjust to ensure the longevity and health of this important institution that has been a part of our community for more than 90 years. We are confident that we are making the prudent decision that would allow us to prosper as we have many exciting plans for the future of this wonderful theater.”

The revised 2023 season will include three previously announced productions, each running three weeks: “Ain’t Misbehavin, from April 11 through April 29; “Dial ‘M’ for Murder,” from July 11 through July 29; and “School Girls; or, The African Mean Girls Play,” October 24 through November 11.

The goal is also to focus on broadly appealing and revenue-positive programming, and on building deeper community partnerships.

Current 2023 season ticket holders have been contacted by the Playhouse box office on how to claim the value of the canceled tickets by gift certificate, refund, or donation. 2023 Flex Pass holders have also been contacted.

“Stay tuned in the coming weeks for announcements of additional programming and events,” said Czekaj-Farber. “Thank you as always, to our loyal subscribers and new audience members for their support.”

For complete 2023 season details and season ticket information, visit:

<https://www.westportplayhouse.org/2023seasonontickets>

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Single tickets for 2023 season productions will go on sale in March.

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

For more information, visit 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), Instagram (@wcplayhouse), and YouTube (WestportPlayhouse).

ABOUT WESTPORT COUNTRY PLAYHOUSE

Founded in 1931, the Playhouse is celebrating its 92nd year. The mission of the 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.

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