

WESTPORT COUNTRY PLAYHOUSE

NEWS RELEASE

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Westport Museum Micro-exhibit at Westport Country Playhouse Explores Music of the Harlem Renaissance

“Black Excellence and the Sounds of the Jazz Age,” in conjunction with the musical “Ain’t Misbehavin’,” opens April 11 in Playhouse lobby

Westport Museum and Westport Country Playhouse are collaborating on a micro-exhibit entitled “Music of the American Experience: Black Excellence and the Sounds of the Jazz Age,” installed in the Playhouse lobby, from April 11 through 29. Tying in with the Playhouse’s current production, “Ain’t Misbehavin’: The Fats Waller Musical,” the exhibit explores the music featured in the show and the historical events that led to the Harlem Renaissance. The partnership is an opportunity for two of Westport’s cultural institutions to combine their strengths and explore history in a new and engaging way. The exhibit is free-of-charge and open to visitors two hours before performances of “Ain’t Misbehavin’.”

“More and more, we are seeing theaters, musical venues, and other arts spaces using their platforms to engage in public history,” said Ramin Ganeshram, executive director of Westport Museum for History & Culture. “We are committed to aiding these fellow cultural institutions provide their audiences with opportunities to connect to our past and to civic engagement in the present. Installing exhibits that enhance Playhouse productions is a collaboration for the public good that we hope to continue well into the future.”

Last fall, Westport Museum installed an exhibit entitled “Departures/Arrivals” to accompany the Playhouse production, “From the Mississippi Delta,” helping to contextualize the themes of the Great Migration within the play.

“Ain’t Misbehavin’” won the 1978 Tony Award® for Best Musical and was named a 2022 “Critic’s Pick” in *The New York Times*. Backed by a seven-piece, on-stage band, the five-member cast features a contestant from “X Factor” and “The Voice” and two finalists from “American Idol.” Director and choreograph is Jeffrey L. Page, who won an MTV Video Music Award for his work with Beyoncé, and has been a featured choreographer on Fox Television’s “So You Think You Can Dance.” The score of jazz, blues, and swing music of the 1920s and 1930s will provide insight into a vibrant time in American history and music, as well as energize, enlighten, and entertain.

More info on “Ain’t Misbehavin’” at <https://www.westportplayhouse.org/show/aintmisbehavin/>
Show trailer at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m0DyGs3cqU0>

“Ain’t Misbehavin’” is conceived by Murray Horwitz and Richard Maltby, Jr. Co-producers are Barrington Stage Company in Pittsfield, MA, and Geva Theatre Center in Rochester, NY.

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“Ain’t Misbehavin’” Corporate Production Partner is Bank of America. Production Partners are Athena and Daniel Adamson. 2023 Media Sponsors are Moffly Media and WSHU Public Radio. 2023 Marketing Sponsor is Haddad & Partners.

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

For ticket information, visit www.westportplayhouse.org/visit/box-office/ 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) and on YouTube (WestportPlayhouse).

ABOUT WESTPORT MUSEUM FOR HISTORY & CULTURE

The award-winning Westport Museum for History & Culture’s mission is to continually engage in scholarly research and examination of Westport’s history as part of the larger American story. The Museum encourages interest in recognizing and preserving the records, relics, and historic sites of the Town of Westport and vicinity. The Museum takes a holistic view of local and national history that is inclusive of the histories of all people and groups represented in American heritage.

ABOUT WESTPORT COUNTRY PLAYHOUSE

Founded in 1931, 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.

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