

WESTPORT COUNTRY PLAYHOUSE

NEWS RELEASE

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Westport Country Playhouse Presents Dialogue on Music Education

In conjunction with the production of “Ain’t Misbehavin’,” the founder of KEYS will discuss the benefits of music instruction for Bridgeport’s underserved kids.

Westport Country Playhouse will present a post-play dialogue with Robert Silvan, founder and artistic director of KEYS (Kids Empowered by Your Support, Inc.), providing free music lessons to under-resourced students of Bridgeport, following the 7 p.m. performance of the musical, “Ain’t Misbehavin’,” on Tuesday, April 25.

Hosted by Liam Loneygan, Playhouse assistant artistic director, the Playhouse post-play dialogue is free and open to the public. No performance ticket is necessary to attend the program. Guests are invited to arrive at the Playhouse approximately two hours after curtain time; the program will begin immediately after the performance, at approximately 9:15 p.m.

“I founded KEYS in 2004 because I believe that all children benefit from music, particularly in the form of personalized one-to-one instruction,” said Silvan. “My conviction is rooted in my own experiences as a student of music, as a musician, and from having been a longtime piano teacher.

“For years I have watched children learn to love music not only as listeners but as active creators,” added Silvan. “I’ve also witnessed growth in dexterity, hearing, reading, hand/eye and hand/ear coordination, self-esteem, and maturity among my music students.”

Silvan noted that not all families can afford music instruction for their children. In many school systems music and arts programs have virtually vanished because of budget constraints.

“It is my goal to bring music lessons to children in Bridgeport, where children have little means of gaining this vital life experience,” he said. “I founded KEYS to bring music to them in spite of their backgrounds or financial ability.

Since its founding in 2004, the KEYS program now reaches over 600 children in private and group music lessons and through collaborations with other non-profits.

Silvan is a jazz musician and composer and has been a music educator for 40 years, teaching classical, jazz, blues, popular music, improvisation, and composition. He is the music director at the Talmadge Hill Community Church in Darien, and the former music director at The Montessori School in Wilton. More info: www.keysmusic.org.

Students from the KEYS program will perform on Saturday, April 29, from 7 to 7:45 p.m. in the Playhouse lobby prior to the performance of “Ain’t Misbehavin’.” Students from RCA (Regional Center

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for the Arts) in Trumbull and Cooperative Arts and Humanities High School in New Haven will play pre-show music in the lobby on Thursday, April 27 and Friday, April 28, respectively.

“Ain’t Misbehavin’” continues on the Playhouse stage through April 29. Named a 2022 “Critic’s Pick” in *The New York Times*, the show’s five-member cast features a contestant from “X Factor” and “The Voice” and two finalists from “American Idol.” 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.

“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.

The Playhouse’s three-production, 2023 season continues with a reimagining of “Dial ‘M’ for Murder,” the suspenseful thriller of blackmail and revenge, running from July 11 through July 29; and “School Girls; or, The African Mean Girls Play,” a buoyant and biting comedy exploring the universal similarities and glaring differences facing teenage girls across the globe, playing from October 24 through November 11. The complete schedule is available at westportplayhouse.org.

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 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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