

WESTPORT COUNTRY PLAYHOUSE

NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Patricia Blaufuss, Public Relations Manager

(203) 227-5137 x197 | (203) 571-1287 | pblaufuss@westportplayhouse.org

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“Grey’s Anatomy’s” Kate Burton Among Cast in Westport Country Playhouse’s New Adaptation of Classic Suspense Thriller “Dial M for Murder,” July 11-29

Mark Lamos directs Jeffrey Hatcher’s “stunning” new version of revenge tale that inspired Hitchcock’s masterpiece.

Westport Country Playhouse will stage a new adaptation of the classic suspense thriller of blackmail and revenge, “Dial M for Murder,” July 11 through July 29, adapted by Jeffrey Hatcher, from the original play by Frederick Knott, and directed by Mark Lamos, Playhouse artistic director. The production will be Lamos’ final directing work at the Playhouse prior to his planned retirement in January 2024 after 15 seasons as artistic director. The five-member cast includes Kate Burton as Inspector Hubbard, Patrick Andrews as Tony Wendice, and Kate Abbruzzese as Margot Wendice.

“I’m addicted to mysteries, thrillers, and detective fiction,” said Lamos. “This is one of the greats of all time. It’s been re-thought and adapted by Jeffrey Hatcher, and garnered amazing notices last year at its premiere in California.”

Lamos noted that Hatcher’s adaptation of the classic play is “stunning.” He added, “The playing time is shorter, and the plot is driven by different means. It was approved by the estate of Frederick Knott, who wrote the original long-running play that Hitchcock turned into a 3D film. Even if you think you know ‘Dial M for Murder’ backwards and forwards, I assure you, you’ll find new and exciting surprises as Jeffrey’s version sweeps towards its dramatic conclusion.”

“Dial M for Murder” is an edge-of-your-seat tale about a devious husband, his wealthy wife, and her lover. The new version offers even more surprises and diabolic twists than the renowned Hitchcock film. The plot unfolds as Tony is convinced that his wife Margot has been cheating on him. Now it seems that the affair is over, but in his jealousy Tony spins a web of suspicion and deception that will tighten around them and ensnare them both in danger, recrimination and murder.

Kate Abbruzzese will play Margot Wendice (Off-Broadway credits include “Pound,” opposite Christopher Lloyd; regional theater work includes Sarah in “Espejos: Clean” at Hartford Stage; Margot Wendice in “Dial M for Murder” at The Old Globe; Portia in “Julius Caesar,” Hamlet in “Hamlet” at Shakespeare & Company; Elizabeth Bennet in “Pride and Prejudice” at Baltimore Center Stage; film/television includes “The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel”; MFA, NYU Graduate Acting; **Patrick Andrews** is cast as Tony Wendice (Westport Country Playhouse’s “Red,” “Camelot,” “Romeo and Juliet”; Broadway’s “Angels in America”; regional theater’s “Red” at Arena and Goodman Theatre, “The Iceman Cometh” at BAM and Goodman Theatre, “American Buffalo” at Steppenwolf Theatre Company and McCarter Theatre Center; Criterion/Hulu’s “Henry Gamble’s Birthday Party”; former front man with electronic pop band Baathhaus; current artist in residence with Dream Brother Gallery).

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25 POWERS COURT WESTPORT, CONNECTICUT 06880

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE T (203) 227-5137 F 203.221.7482 | BOX OFFICE T (203) 227-4177 F (203) 454-3238

westportplayhouse.org

Kate Burton will portray Inspector Hubbard. (Westport Country Playhouse's "Selected Shorts" 2005; Broadway's "Present Laughter" with Kevin Kline and George C Scott; "Hedda Gabler," "The Elephant Man," "The Constant Wife," "Spring Awakening," "Company," "Jake's Women"; London West End's "Three Sisters"; "On the Verge" at Hartford Stage; "Measure for Measure," "The Grand Manner" at Lincoln Center Theater, Mark Lamos, director; film/television's "Inventing Anna," "Unfaithful," "Ice Storm," "Where'd You Go, Bernadette," "Homeland," "Empire Falls" with Joanne Woodward and Paul Newman; "Scandal," "Grey's Anatomy"; three Tony and Emmy nominations, Emmy winner; professor USC/Brown; Brown/Yale grad).

Krystel Lucas will play Maxine Hadley (Selected theater credits include "Sherlock Holmes and the Case of the Jersey Lily" at Alley Theatre, "Galboss Power Hour" at Primary Stages, "Hamlet" at Shakespeare Theatre DC, "Our Town" at Triad Stage, "The Sty of the Blind Pig" at TheaterWorks Hartford; Netflix's "Jessica Jones"; MFA NYU Grad Acting); and **Denver Milord** will play Lesgate (Westport Country Playhouse's "Tiny House," "Straight White Men"; Broadway's "Oklahoma!"; Off-Broadway's "Terms of Endearment," "Meaningful Conversation"; regional theater, including "Minor Fantastical Kingdoms," "Troilus & Cresida," "The Taming of the Shrew," "In the Next Room," "Cabaret"; films "Jack Reacher," "Dead Ringers," "The Last Witch Hunter," "Blue Bloods," "Blacklist," "Outsiders," "Southland"; BFA Carnegie Mellon University).

Director Mark Lamos has helmed many plays at Westport Country Playhouse since 2008, earning Connecticut Critics Circle Awards for his direction of "She Loves Me" (2010), "Into the Woods" (2012), "The Dining Room" (2013), "Man of La Mancha" (2018), and "Mlima's Tale" (2019). Under Lamos' artistic direction, the Playhouse was named "Theater Company of the Year" by *The Wall Street Journal* in 2013. Lamos' extensive New York credits include "Our Country's Good," for which he received a Tony Award nomination. A former artistic director at Hartford Stage, he earned the 1989 Tony Award for the theater's body of work. He was awarded the Connecticut Medal for the Arts as well as honorary doctorates from Connecticut College, University of Hartford, and Trinity College, and in 2016, was the recipient of the John Houseman Award.

Playwright Jeffrey Hatcher's Broadway credits include the book for "Never Gonna Dance." Off-Broadway credits include "Three Viewings," "A Picasso," "The Government Inspector," "Scotland Road," "The Turn of the Screw," and "Tuesdays with Morrie." Film and television credits include "Stage Beauty," "Casanova," "The Duchess," and episodes of "Columbo."

Frederick Knott (1916-2002) was an English playwright and screenwriter. He wrote three plays: "Dial M for Murder," "Wait Until Dark," and "Write Me a Murder." "Dial M for Murder" and "Wait Until Dark" were subsequently adapted into successful screenplays.

The creative team includes Alexander Dodge, scenic design; Fabian Fidel Aguilar, costume design; Emma Deane, lighting design; Kate Marvin, sound design; Michael Rossmly, fight director/intimacy coach; Shane Ann Younts, dialect coach; Matthew Melchiorre, production stage manager; Kevin Jinghong Zhu, assistant stage manager; and Natalie Hoefling, production assistant.

Production Sponsor is Barbara K. Streicker. Production Partners are Czekaj Artistic Productions and Allen and Lorraine Noveck. Corporate Production Partner is RBC Wealth Management. 2023 Media Sponsors are Mofly Media and WSHU Public Radio. 2023 Marketing Sponsor is Haddad & Partners.

Performance schedule is Tuesday at 7 p.m., Wednesday at 2 and 7 p.m., Thursday at 7 p.m., and Friday at 8 p.m., Saturday at 3 and 8 p.m. and Sunday at 3 p.m. (No Wed. or Sat. matinees during preview week). Special series include Taste of Tuesdays (July 11), Pride Night (July 13), Black Excellence Night (July 14), Opening Night (July 15), Sunday Symposium with playwright Jeffrey Hatcher (July 16), Open Captions (July 23), Backstage Pass (July 26), and Thursday TalkBack (July 27). The Playhouse has teamed up with local restaurant partners to offer specialty cocktails to celebrate the show during its run.

The play is recommended for age 12 and up. Running time is approximately two hours with one intermission.

Single tickets for “Dial M for Murder” start at \$35 during preview performances (July 11 - 14), and beginning July 15 Opening Night, tickets start at \$45 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 library passes visit www.westportplayhouse.org/visit/box-office/.

More info on “Dial M for Murder” at <https://www.westportplayhouse.org/show/dial-m-for-murder/>

Jeffrey Hatcher's adaptation of Frederick Knott's “Dial M for Murder” premiered at The Old Globe in San Diego, CA in July 2022. Knott's original version of the play was first presented on the stage in London in June 1952. In October 1952, the play premiered on Broadway. The 1954 film adaptation, directed by Alfred Hitchcock, starred Ray Milland and Grace Kelly.

The complete schedule of productions and other events is available at westportplayhouse.org.

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

For more information and to buy tickets, visit 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) and on YouTube (WestportPlayhouse).

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