

WESTPORT COUNTRY PLAYHOUSE

NEWS RELEASE

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Westport Country Playhouse Presents Pulitzer Prize-winning Playwright, Screenwriter, and Activist Tony Kushner on June 6

Mary-Louise Parker, who appeared in Kushner's "Angels in America" on HBO, will lead the conversation.

Westport Country Playhouse will present "In Conversation with Tony Kushner," Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright, screenwriter, and activist, who authored "Angels in America" and "Caroline, or Change" for the stage; and "Munich," "Lincoln," and "West Side Story" for the screen, on Thursday, June 6, at 8 p.m.

Kushner will be interviewed on stage by Mary-Louise Parker, who won both a Golden Globe and a Primetime Emmy Award for the role of Harper Pitt in the acclaimed HBO television miniseries "Angels in America," based on Kushner's play. An audience Q&A and book signing will follow the conversation.

"The Playhouse is honored to host an evening with one of the boldest and most influential playwrights in the American theatre," said Mark Shanahan, Westport Country Playhouse artistic director. "In a conversation lead by Mr. Kushner's colleague, the extraordinary Mary-Louise Parker, we look forward to this rare and intimate chance to hear about the creative process from a master craftsman."

Kushner is best known for his two-part epic play, "Angels in America: A Gay Fantasia on National Themes." A revival of "Angels in America" ran off-Broadway and won the Lucille Lortel Award in 2011 for Outstanding Revival. His other plays include "A Bright Room Called Day," "Slavs!," "Hydrotaphia," "Homebody/Kabul," as well as the musical "Caroline, or Change," and the opera "A Blizzard on Marblehead Neck," both with composer Jeanine Tesori.

Kushner wrote the screenplays for Mike Nichols' film of "Angels in America," and Steven Spielberg's "Munich." His screenplay for Spielberg's movie, "Lincoln," was nominated for an Academy Award, and won the New York Film Critics Circle Award, Boston Society of Film Critics Award, Chicago Film Critics Award, and others. He wrote the screenplay for Spielberg's award-winning 2021 movie remake of "West Side Story." He co-wrote, along with Spielberg, the script for "The Fabelmans," a semi-autobiographical film based on Spielberg's childhood. It was later nominated for the 2023 Academy Award for Writing (Original Screenplay).

Among Kushner's many honors are a Pulitzer Prize for Drama, an Emmy Award, two Tony Awards, three Obie Awards, two Evening Standard Awards, an Olivier Award, two Oscar nominations, an Arts Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, a PEN/Laura Pels Award, and a Spirit of Justice Award from the Gay and Lesbian Advocates and Defenders. Other awards include a Cultural Achievement Award from The National Foundation for Jewish Culture, Chicago Tribune Literary Prize for Lifetime Achievement, 2012 National Medal of Arts, 2015 Lifetime Achievement in the American Theater Award, Steinberg Distinguished Playwright Award, 2019 Dramatists Guild Foundation's Madge Evans and Sidney

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Kingsley Awards, 2020 Distinguished Achievement Award, and Chicago Public Library Foundation's 2022 Carl Sandburg Literary Award. He is the subject of a documentary film, "Wrestling with Angels: Playwright Tony Kushner," made by the Oscar-winning filmmaker Freida Lee Mock. Born in New York City in 1956, and raised in Lake Charles, Louisiana, Kushner lives in Manhattan with his husband, Mark Harris.

Mary-Louise Parker will next star in Paramount Global's highly anticipated limited series "The Gray House." She recently can be seen in Bernardo Britto's "Omni Loop" which premiered at this year's SXSW festival. Other film and television include "Weeds" (Golden Globe Award, Emmy and SAG nominations), "Angels in America" (Emmy, Golden Globe and Satellite awards), "The West Wing" (Emmy nomination), "The Robber Bride" (Emmy nomination), and others. Her theater credits include the Broadway revival of "How I Learned to Drive," a role she originated off-Broadway (Tony nomination, Obie Award, Lucille Lortel Award and Outer Critics Circle Award). In 2021, she won the Tony Award for Adam Rapp's "The Sound Inside." Also, "Proof" (Tony, Drama Desk, Outer Critics Circle, Drama League, Lucille Lortel, Obie awards), "Prelude to a Kiss" (Tony nomination, Theatre World Award, Clarence Derwent Award, Drama Desk nomination), "Reckless" (Tony nomination), and others. She was a member of Circle Rep Theater Company. Also a writer, Parker was an on-staff contributor at *Esquire* magazine for over a decade, and has written for *The New York Times*, *O* magazine, and others. Her first book, "Dear Mr. You," was translated into multiple languages, and included on the *San Francisco Chronicle's* list of best books of the year. For her philanthropic work, she has been awarded The Woman of Vision Award from the David Lynch Association, the Sandra Day O Connor Award, the GLAAD Award, the Hetrick Martin Award, and others.

Tickets to "In Conversation with Tony Kushner" are \$55, \$65, and \$75. Running time is 90 minutes; no intermission.

For full details, visit: <https://www.westportplayhouse.org/show/in-conversation-with-tony-kushner/>

2024 Programming and Season Sponsor is Barbara Streicker. Media sponsors are Moffly Media and WSHU Public Radio. Westport Country Playhouse is a 501(c) (3) not-for-profit organization.

A complete schedule of Playhouse events is available at westportplayhouse.org. All play titles, artists, dates, and times are subject to change.

For Westport Country Playhouse information and tickets, visit westportplayhouse.org or call the box office at (203) 227-4177, toll-free at 1-888-927-7529. Stay connected to the Playhouse on Facebook (Westport Country Playhouse), Instagram ([wcplayhouse](https://www.instagram.com/wcplayhouse)), and YouTube (WestportPlayhouse). Westport Country Playhouse is located at 25 Powers Court, off Route 1, Westport.

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