

# WESTPORT COUNTRY PLAYHOUSE

## NEWS RELEASE

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### Westport Country Playhouse Script in Hand Playreading of “Witch” on Monday, October 7

**Tony Award winner Santino Fontana in cast of new, wickedly funny play by Jen Silverman, whose play “The Roommate” is currently on Broadway.**

Westport Country Playhouse will present a Script in Hand playreading of “Witch,” offering a new take on bargaining with the devil, written by Jen Silverman, on Monday, October 7, at 7 p.m. Playwright Silverman is currently represented on Broadway with their new comedy, “The Roommate,” starring Patti LuPone and Mia Farrow.

“Jen Silverman is one of today’s most celebrated playwrights—and with good reason,” said Mark Shanahan, Playhouse artistic director and Script in Hand curator. “‘Witch’ is a smart, sophisticated, funny play which masterfully blends sharp humor with thought-provoking commentary. Though set in 1621, Silverman’s language is strikingly fresh and modern, offering a new take on the old tale of what it means to make a deal with the devil. This captivating and wicked comedy is ideal for an October night at the Playhouse, as we usher in autumn with the promise of a devilishly good time.”

In “Witch,” a charming devil arrives in the quiet village of Edmonton to bargain for the souls of its residents in exchange for their deepest wishes. Elizabeth should be his easiest target, having been labeled a “witch” and cast out by the town, but her soul is not so readily bought. An inventive retelling of a classic Jacobean drama, this insightful, subversive fable debates how much our souls are worth when hope is hard to come by. The play is inspired by “The Witch of Edmonton” by Rowley, Dekker, and Ford.

The cast includes **Jonathan Burke** as Cuddy Banks (Broadway: “The Inheritance,” “Choir Boy,” “Tuck Everlasting”; Off-Broadway: “Cats: The Jellicle Ball”; Television: “Only Murders in the Building”; Film: “Noah’s Arc: The Rona Chronicles”; Co-creator of @notlookingtheseries; BFA, Ithaca College); **Alison Cimmert** as Elizabeth Sawyer (Westport Country Playhouse: “Romeo and Juliet,” “She Loves Me”; Broadway: “Gary,” “Amelie,” “She Loves Me,” “The Mystery of Edwin Drood,” “Bonnie and Clyde,” “A Tale of Two Cities”; BA Brown University; AlisonCimmert.com); **Santino Fontana** as Scratch (Tony, Drama Desk, Outer Critics Circle awards for Best Actor in a Musical as Michael Dorsey/Dorothy Michaels in “Tootsie,” Tony Nomination for “Cinderella”; Lucille Lortel, Obie, Outer Critics Circle awards for “Sons of the Prophet”; @santinfofontana); **Ana Cruz Kayne** as Winnifred (New York Theatre: “Someone Spectacular”; Film: “Barbie,” “Jerry and Marge Go Large,” “Little Woman,” “Saint Joan”; TV: “Painkiller,” “Lioness,” “Bull,” “Blue Bloods,” “Rescue Me,” “Law & Order”); **Michael McCorry Rose** as Frank Thorney (Broadway/Tours: “Wicked,” “Anastasia,” “A Gentleman’s Guide to Love and Murder,” next season’s “The Queen of Versailles”; Film: Universal Picture’s “Wicked” starring Cynthia Erivo and Ariana Grande, “Disenchanted” for Disney+; michaelrose.me); **Thom Sesma** as Sir Arthur Banks (Broadway/National Tours: “The Lion King,” “Titanic,” “Man of La Mancha,” “Miss Saigon”; New York Theatre: “Dead Outlaw” – 2024 Outer Critics Circle Award, “Letters of Suresh” – Lortel Award nomination; thomsesma.com); and **Faith Sandberg** will read stage directions.

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25 POWERS COURT WESTPORT, CONNECTICUT 06880  
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westportplayhouse.org

Playwright **Jen Silverman** (they/them) is a playwright, novelist, and screenwriter. Plays include: "The Roommate" (Broadway: The Booth Theatre; Regionally: Actor's Theatre of Louisville Humana Festival, Williamstown Theatre Festival, Steppenwolf, South Coast Repertory Theatre, etc.); "Highway Patrol" (The Goodman); "Spain" (Second Stage Theater); "Collective Rage: A Play in 5 Betties" (Woolly Mammoth, MCC, Southwark Playhouse London); "The Moors" (Yale Repertory Theatre, The Playwrights Realm); and "Witch" (Writer's Theatre, The Geffen, The Huntington). Books include: the debut novel "We Play Ourselves," story collection "The Island Dwellers," and novel "There's Going to Be Trouble" from Random House. Silverman also wrote the best-selling narrative podcast "The Miranda Obsession" for Audible, starring Rachel Brosnahan. Silverman is a three-time MacDowell Fellow, a member of New Dramatists, and a Scholar of Note at the American Library in Paris. They write for TV and film, including "Tales of the City" (Netflix) and "Tokyo Vice" (Max). Their Oscar® qualifying short film "Troy" screened at 70 festivals internationally including the 2023 Sundance Film Festival and is featured online in *The New Yorker's* Screening Room. Honors include fellowships from the New York Foundation for the Arts, the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the Guggenheim. More info at [www.jensilverman.com](http://www.jensilverman.com).

Tickets are \$30. Running time is 95 minutes; no intermission. Age recommendation is 14 and up.

For full details on the Script in Hand playreading of "Witch," visit:

<https://www.westportplayhouse.org/show/script-in-hand-witch/>

The Script in Hand Playreading Series is supported by Joyce Hergenhan and the White Barn Program of the Lucille Lortel Foundation. 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.

More Script in Hand playreadings are scheduled on Mondays at 7 p.m. on December 2 and dates to be determined in 2025; titles to be announced. Script in Hand playreadings offer intimate storytelling as professional actors bring the words to life without sets or costumes. For a video on Script in Hand, visit: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h2eWDaF-JXA>.

A complete schedule of Playhouse events is available at [westportplayhouse.org](http://westportplayhouse.org). All play titles, artists, dates, and times are subject to change.

For Westport Country Playhouse information and tickets, visit [westportplayhouse.org](http://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](https://www.youtube.com/WestportPlayhouse)). Westport Country Playhouse is located at 25 Powers Court, off Route 1, Westport.

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