

WESTPORT COUNTRY PLAYHOUSE

NEWS RELEASE

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Westport Country Playhouse Script in Hand Reading of New Play “A Danger to Yourself and Others” on Monday, November 18

The reading of this humorous crime caper offers a fast-paced but heartfelt take on living with anxiety in the modern age.

Westport Country Playhouse will present a Script in Hand playreading of “A Danger to Yourself and Others,” a new play that takes a humorous look at what it’s like navigating life with anxiety, on Monday, November 18, at 7 p.m. Written by Colette Mazunik and directed by Brendon Fox, the play is the winner of Gulfshore Playhouse’s New Works Festival, Naples, Florida.

“Colette Mazunik’s ‘A Danger to Yourself and Others’ is a fast-paced, wry, and wonderfully witty tale of romance, trust, mental health, deception... and identity theft!,” said Mark Shanahan, Playhouse artistic director and curator of the Script in Hand playreading series. “Mazunik leads us through a labyrinthine maze of wild secrets and unexpected plot twists, all while keeping the story rich with heart and humor.”

Shanahan added, “It’s always a joy when we can feature a vibrant new work in our Script in Hand series. Under Brendon Fox’s expert direction and featuring an extraordinary cast, this promises to be a memorable night at the Playhouse as we help launch this exciting new play.”

“A Danger to Yourself and Others” takes place the week before Thanksgiving. Eddie, anxious and in debt, tries to rob a gas station. Instead, he falls for the station clerk, bungles a burglary, gets caught with a weapon, evades hospitalization, flees from the police, and has his library card revoked. The play is a farcical look at what it’s like navigating life with anxiety, never knowing if the gnawing feeling in your gut is a dose of good, old-fashioned intuition...or irrational fear. The play was developed in the DCPA Theatre Company’s Playwrights’ Group, Denver.

The cast includes **Heather Botts** as Leah (Broadway: “Dr. Zhivago,” Lincoln Center Theater’s “My Fair Lady”; National Tour: LCT’s “The King and I” as Anna; TV: “This Is Us”; Regional Theatre: “The Secret Garden,” “The Light in the Piazza,” “South Pacific”; www.heatherbotts.com); **Derrick Cobey** as Charlie (Westport Country Playhouse: Script in Hand playreadings “Satchel Paige and The Kansas City Swing,” “Ripcord”; Broadway: “Kiss Me Kate” second revival, Kander and Ebb’s “The Scottsboro Boys”; Off-Broadway: “The Tin Pan Alley Rag,” “Ragtime”); **Téa Guarino** as Shelby/Trina (BFA in acting from Rutgers University; credits include the New York premiere of “Good Bones” at The Public Theater, “A Hundred Words for Snow” with Connecticut Repertory Theatre; Television: “Law & Order: SVU”).

Stephanie Machado as Mara (“Gods Untitled” - Playwrights Horizons, New Works Lab; “An Enemy of the People,” “Indecent,” “Assassins” - Yale Repertory Theatre”; MFA Yale School of Drama, BFA SMU; www.stephaniemachado.me); **Brian Owen** as Eddie (Westport Country Playhouse’s “Camelot”; “Sesame Street,” “That Parenting Musical,” “Bye Bye Birdie,” “Dog Man: The Musical,” “Chains,” “Baskerville,” “The 39 Steps,” “Cabaret,” “A Midsummer Night’s Dream”; @difficultlemondesigns); **Rhonda Ross** as Dr.

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Woodle (Westport Country Playhouse: Playhouse Radio Theater's "Special Delivery," Script in Hand playreading of "The Outsider," former Playhouse intern; singer/songwriter and Emmy-nominated actress; daytime television's "Another World" as Toni Burrell).

Faith Sandberg will read stage directions (Stage: "Fun Home," "Peter & The Starcatcher," "Mamma Mia"; originated roles of Terri in new musical "The Good Girl," Sophie in an adaptation of "Tom Jones," Kitty in season one of HBO's "Boardwalk Empire"); **Christine Lemme** is stage manager (Broadway: "Reasons to Be Pretty," "Swan Lake"; Off-Broadway: Irish Rep, Lincoln Center Theater; National Tours: "The Vagina Monologues," "Chess," "Company").

Playwright **Colette Mazunik** is a writer and educator living in Denver. Her plays include "Hellfire & Ham" (commissioned by Boulder Ensemble Theatre Company), "A Danger to Yourself and Others" (winner of the Gulfshore Playhouse New Works Festival), and "Ravening" (published in *Stage It and Stream It* by Applause Theatre and Cinema books). Short films include "Thanksgiving Dinner" and "Match." Her short films have been official selections for the Madrid International (Best Story nominee) and the Bermuda International Film Festivals, among others. Her short play "The Matthew Portraits" was a finalist in the Samuel French OOB Festival. This year her work will be featured in The Best Women's Stage Monologues 2024. She was an inaugural Playwright Fellow at the Denver Center for the Performing Arts and has partnered with aerospace engineering scientists at the University of Colorado Boulder to write about near-earth space debris. As a teacher, she loves to create safe spaces for students to hone their skills and shape their unique and diverse stories. MFA in playwriting from the Actors Studio Drama School at New School University. Member, Dramatists Guild. colettemazunik.com

Director **Brendon Fox** is the artistic director of Peterborough Players in New Hampshire, as well as a director, teacher, author, producer whose work has been seen from Los Angeles to Prague. He has worked internationally at several theaters and training programs. His article "Directing Two Crucial Moments in 'Long Day's Journey into Night'" appeared in the *Eugene O'Neill Review*. Directing credits include: "The Winter's Tale," "Henry Six Part Three," "Love's Labour's Lost" at Prague Shakespeare Company; "Twelfth Night" at Hanover Repertory (MA); "Judith" at Urbanite Theatre (World Premiere) (FL); "A Hundred Words for Snow" at Connecticut Rep (US Premiere); "Love's Labour's Lost" at Colorado Shakespeare Festival; "Long Day's Journey into Night" at American Stage (FL); "Baskerville" at Long Wharf Theatre (CT) and a co-production of Cleveland Playhouse / Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park (OH); "Angels in America" (Parts One and Two) at PlayMakers Repertory Company (NC); "Opus" at Portland Center Stage (OR); "The Two Gentlemen of Verona" at Houston Shakespeare Festival; "How the Grinch Stole Christmas!" and "Much Ado About Nothing" at Old Globe Theatre (CA). Fox has helped incubate new work at Gulfcoast Playhouse's New Play Festival in Florida, JAW in Portland, New Harmony Project in Indiana, and the Asolo New Play Festival. He has taught at programs such as Juilliard, USD / Old Globe, UNCo, FSU / Asolo Rep, and others. Member, SDC. www.foxdirector.com.

Tickets are \$30; limited availability. Running time is two hours with one intermission. Age recommendation is age 14 and up.

For full details, visit: <https://www.westportplayhouse.org/show/a-danger-to-yourself-and-others/>

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>.

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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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