

04/07/12 | SIGN IN / CREATE ACCOUNT



Search



ART. NEWS. LIFE. DAILY.



- Home
- ARTS&CULTURE
- LIFE&LEISURE
- NEWS&VIEWS
- EVENTS
- PODCASTS
- VIDEOS
- SITE FAQ
- VITAL



Arts & Culture > Reading > Books > The Big Read: Celebrating "To Kill A Mockingbird"
The Big Read: Celebrating "To Kill A Mockingbird"

February 12th, 2012 | By Jennifer Kaufman
 Share This | (1)Comments | Archives and RSS feed for Jennifer Kaufman

0 Like Sign Up to see what your friends like.

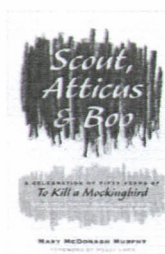
More than fifty years after its release, Harper Lee's Pulitzer Prize-winning novel *To Kill a Mockingbird* still connects with readers with its themes of family, race, social justice and standing up for what's right. So it's no surprise [The Big Read Milwaukee](#) chose *To Kill a Mockingbird* to promote the importance of reading in America.

The Big Read is a program affiliated with the [National Endowment of the Arts](#) with a goal to promote reading through programs in selected American communities by

focusing on notable literature. In Milwaukee, The Big Read has joined forces with several organizations in celebrating *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Programs include lectures, read-a-thons, book readings and film screenings. The [Milwaukee Repertory Theater](#) is featuring a production of the novel, adapted by Christopher Sergel and directed by Aaron Posner, and its run has been extended through March 11.

"We are getting in all types of audiences," said Milwaukee Rep Public Relations Director Cindy Moran. "We have families coming to see it, school groups, all ages and all ethnicities. There is great power to this story and clearly it's resonating with many people."

Judy Hansen, the Rep's Board President said, "The Rep has made a strong commitment to deepen its community engagement and outreach initiatives and partnerships, not only with the work that you will see on stage, but in expanding the conversation with the issues and ideas that our creative work explores. Our hope is that with productions like [Next to Normal](#) and *To Kill a Mockingbird*, and the special educational initiatives around them, our audiences are becoming a part of the larger community conversation."



On Feb. 13, Milwaukee will get two chances to celebrate *To Kill a Mockingbird*, both of which are free to attend. At 2 p.m., [Boswell Book Company](#) will host author and filmmaker Mary McDonagh Murphy. Murphy will give a talk about her book, *Scout, Atticus & Boo: A Celebration of Fifty Years of To Kill a Mockingbird*, and discuss the novel's powerful endurance and how it shaped the lives of so many readers. Just a few of the people she interviewed include Oprah Winfrey, Tom Brokaw, Rosanne Cash, Scott Turow and Anna Quindlen. Joining Murphy will be longtime Milwaukee Rep actor Deborah Staples who plays Jean Louise, Scout as an adult and narrator in the Rep's production.

Boswell owner Daniel Goldin says there has been some positive buzz about this event and hopes attendees will be entertained and enlightened by the discussion. Of *To Kill a Mockingbird*, he says, "I have numerous customers who tell me it's their favorite. It's a book many have read early, and then re-read again and again...there is something to be said that Harper Lee never published again; it puts the book in a sort of legendary status. There's no follow up book to taint the author's reputation."

Also on the 13th, Murphy will show her documentary *Hey, Boo: Harper Lee & To Kill a Mockingbird* at 7 p.m. at the Milwaukee Rep. The documentary looks at how the novel went from an idea in Harper Lee's mind to an enduring classic. It details the challenges Lee endured writing the novel and rejection she faced from publishers. Many famous



Lee E. Ernst and Malloreay Wallace in Milwaukee Rep's production of Harper Lee's and Christopher Sergel's *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Photo by Michael Brosilow.

Sign up for TCD's eNews
 Delivered 3x weekly
 Top stories
 Premium giveaways
 No spam

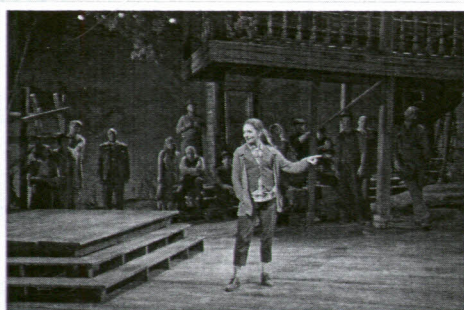


MASON STREET GRILL lounge
 presents
MUSIC MASON
 ENJOY LIVE MUSIC AT MASON STREET GRILL TUESDAYS THROUGH SATURDAYS.
 VIEW DETAILS

The Kathleen Dunn Show
 Monday-Thursday 9-11 am
 Ideas 90.7 WHAD-FM
 Continue the conversation after the show on [facebook](#).

people talk about their love for the novel, and Murphy interviews Lee's sister, Alice Finch Lee, about her sister's reticence over being interviewed and why she never wrote another novel.

The Big Read Milwaukee has partnered with many notable organizations to celebrate *To Kill a Mockingbird*, including the [Milwaukee Public Library](#), [Milwaukee Public Schools](#), [Literacy Services of Wisconsin](#), the [Next Door Foundation](#) and [Big Brothers Big Sisters](#).



Deborah Staples and cast in Milwaukee Repertory Theater's production of Harper Lee's and Christopher Sergel's *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Photo by Michael Brosilow.

[About TCD](#) | [Contact TCD](#) | [Advertising, Social Media, and Services](#) | [Jobs at TCD](#) | [Terms and Conditions](#)
 © 2012 Vital Media Group | Site by Fresh Coast Ventures, LLC

To learn more visit the Big Read's website at nebigread.org. For Tom Strini's review of The Rep's production, [click here](#), and for Mark Metcalf's podcast with Mallorely Wallace (Scout), [click here](#).

Related Stories

- [The Rep's "Mockingbird" memory](#)
- [Spring 2012 Milwaukee Arts Guide: Theater](#)
- [On Stage 1/31: Fiery flamenco, MSO quests, and a novel Rep show](#)
- [PODCAST: Mallorely Wallace as Scout in "To Kill a Mockingbird"](#)
- [Cleopatra: the Myth, the Reality; Author Stacy Schiff visits](#)

[\(1\)Comments](#) | [Post Comment](#) | [Print This](#) | [Email This](#) | [Author RSS](#) | [Write to the Editor](#)

Theatre as a Nonprofit | YNPN Milwaukee says:

February 29, 2012 at 12:55 pm

[...] nonprofits also focus heavily on community engagement and education. They feature strong education programming that not only brings many first-time [...]

Reply

Leave a Reply

Name (required)
 Mail (will not be published) (required)
 Website

Submit Comment

