



CONTACT:

Marcey Wright

Public Relations Supervisor

marcey.wright@memphistn.gov

C: (901) 463-3055

O: (901) 576-6713

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Exciting Programs in Store for Memphis Reads Enthusiasts

Featured Author Jesmyn Ward Coming to Town for Memphis Reads 2016

MEMPHIS, TN – Natural disasters can shape a nation's history and the human experience in unmistakable ways. Graphic images following Hurricane Katrina and Louisiana's recent catastrophic floods show devastation and loss, as people's lives are changed forever. A shared spirit of survival and perseverance shines through, however, as citizens salvage what's left.

Memphis Reads, the city's largest book club, will share in this collective spirit through the thought-provoking book *Salvage the Bones* by award-winning author Jesmyn Ward – this year's featured book and author. In addition to reading this page-turner, several exciting events are planned throughout the city, featuring the author herself.

"We hope to break down the physical and metaphoric walls that exist between Memphians by giving them a common reading experience," said CBU associate professor and event planner Karen B. Golightly. "Through the events scheduled in September, attendees can learn about the issues addressed in the book through art exhibits, documentaries, films, panel discussions, and author/expert talks. The point is to find a way in which Memphians can participate in different aspects and viewpoints of the issues at hand, in order to build community one book at a time."

Memphis Reads 2016 events are listed below.

Purchased Lives: New Orleans and the Domestic Slave Trade, 1808 – 1865

National Civil Rights Museum (State of Tennessee Gallery)

September 12 – mid-November 2016 (Free with museum admission; Tennessee residents may enter free of charge on Mondays after 3 p.m.)

Screening: Spike Lee's *When the Levees Broke (Parts 1 – 2)*

University of Memphis (304 University Center, Bluff Room)

Thursday, Sept. 15, 2016

5:30 p.m. reception, 6 p.m. film screening (Free and open to the public)

Screening: *Beasts of the Southern Wild*

Benjamin L. Hooks Central Library (3030 Poplar Avenue, meeting room C)

Monday, Sept. 19, 2016

5:30 p.m. reception, 6 p.m. film screening (Free and open to the public)

Panel Discussion: *My Whole City Underwater – Race, Trauma, and Surviving Katrina*

University of Memphis (342 University Center, Shelby Room)

Thursday, Sept. 22, 2016

5:30 p.m. reception, 6 p.m. discussion (Free and open to the public)

***JESMYN WARD TALK AND BOOK SIGNING**

Christian Brothers University (650 East Parkway South, CBU Theatre)
Wednesday, Sept. 28, 2016, 7 p.m. (Free and open to the public)

***Q & A WITH JESMYN WARD AND BOOK SIGNING**

Rhodes College (2000 North Parkway, Bryan Campus Life Center)
Thursday, Sept. 29, 2016, 6 p.m. (Free and open to the public)

Great Conversations with Rhodes Professor Ernest Gibson

Benjamin L. Hooks Central Library (3030 Poplar Avenue, Memphis Room, 4th FL)
Thursday, Oct. 4, 2016, 5:30 p.m. (Free and open to the public)

“Memphis Reads is more than just a book club,” noted Memphis Public Library’s Adult Services Coordinator Wang-Ying Glasgow. “This literacy initiative drives us to have great conversations that surround the human experience, allowing people to connect with people in meaningful ways.”

Golightly added, “We are so excited to welcome Jesmyn Ward to Memphis. With the most recent flooding in Baton Rouge, this book reminds us of the unpredictable nature of natural disasters and the ways in which losing all material possessions shows us what is really important.”

The presenting sponsor of Memphis Reads is International Paper. This project is funded under a grant contract with the State of Tennessee and funded in part by a grant from South Arts, in partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts and the Tennessee Arts Commission. Memphis Reads is also sponsored by Follett. Partner organizations include the City of Memphis, the Memphis Public Library & Information Center, Friends of the Library, the National Civil Rights Museum, the University of Memphis, Southwest Tennessee Community College, Rhodes College, Christian Brothers University, Facing History and Ourselves, Shelby County Schools, and the Booksellers at Laurelwood.

For more information about Memphis Reads 2016, visit www.memphisreadsbook.org.

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ABOUT THE MEMPHIS PUBLIC LIBRARY & INFORMATION CENTER:

The Memphis Public Library & Information Center (MPLIC) is committed to satisfying the customer’s need to know. With 18 Library locations throughout the Greater Memphis area, MPLIC offers an array of programs, services, and resources for citizens and visitors to enjoy. They include JobLINC mobile career services, LINC/2-1-1 telephone referral services, a TV and radio station (WYPL TV-18, WYPL FM 89.3), a small business center, laptops for checkout and free Wi-Fi access, in addition to books, e-books, DVDs, records, compact discs, and educational programs for children, teens, and adults. Customers can find age-appropriate services and a list of Library locations at www.memphislibrary.org.

Memphis Public Libraries are publicly and privately funded. Approximately three million people visit the Memphis Public Library & Information Center each year.

ABOUT THE CITY OF MEMPHIS:

Memphis is the largest city in Tennessee and a major cultural center for the Southeastern United States. It has a metropolitan population of more than one million. For more information about the City, visit www.memphistn.gov.