



**PRESS RELEASE**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**THE ALABAMA HUMANITIES FOUNDATION HOLDS SUCCESSFUL ART AUCTION IN MONTGOMERY, RAISES FUNDS FOR PROGRAMS TO BENEFIT ALABAMIANS**

In commemoration of the **50th anniversary of the publishing of *To Kill a Mockingbird***, the **Alabama Humanities Foundation (AHF)** hosted “**TKAM 2010: *To Kill a Mockingbird*—Awakening America’s Conscience,**” a series of statewide celebratory events in Birmingham and Montgomery to honor the book’s lasting significance for the state, country and the world. The event invited select statewide and national artists to create original works of art inspired by the novel and its themes. All of the exhibit’s works of art, including pieces by **nationally known artists Nicolosi, Nall, Charlie Lucas and William Christenberry**, were auctioned as part of a special reception and culminating celebration in **Montgomery at Wynfield Estates**, the home of the late Winton and Carolyn Blount, on **Saturday, May 22**. Copies of *To Kill a Mockingbird* signed by the author were also auctioned. Proceeds will assist the Alabama Humanities Foundation in fulfilling its mission to reach all Alabamians, through its many public programs and initiatives, including those for teachers, students and the public alike.

The event also featured a sneak-preview screening of the documentary film *Our Mockingbird*, an AHF-grant funded film by filmmaker Sandra Jaffe, and original music by Alabama folk singer Karren Pell. More than 250 people were in attendance, including Mary Badham, who portrayed Scout in the film version of *To Kill a Mockingbird*; Alabama Pulitzer Prize winners Rick Bragg, Joey Kennedy and Harold Jackson; Dr. and Mrs. Cam West, president of Huntingdon College; Montgomery Mayor and Mrs. Todd Strange; Dr. and Mrs. Jack Hawkins, chancellor of Troy University; Mr. and Mrs. Bill Cabaniss, former U.S. Ambassador to the Czech Republic; former Gov. and Mrs. Jere Beasley; former Alabama Supreme Court Justice and Mrs. Gorman Houston; Judge and Mrs. Harold Albritton; Judge and Mrs. Mark Fuller; Judge and Mrs. Keith Watkins; and Judge and Mrs. John Rochester. National artists Nicolosi, Nall and Charlie Lucas were also in attendance.

The event was sponsored in Montgomery by Alabama River Group and Parsons & Whittemore, Jere Beasley, Pickwick Antiques, Vulcan Materials Company, Morgan Keegan, Balch & Bingham LLP and Hyundai Motor Manufacturing Alabama LLC, with beverages compliments of Merrill Lynch.

The “**TKAM 2010: *To Kill a Mockingbird—Awakening America’s Conscience***” webpage, [ahf.net/mockingbird](http://ahf.net/mockingbird), will serve as an ongoing resource for *To Kill a Mockingbird* information, event photos, articles and discussion prompts. An **online artwork catalog** is also available for viewing on [ahf.net/mockingbird](http://ahf.net/mockingbird).

Prior to the May 22 reception, **Stonehenge Gallery** in Montgomery held a preview art exhibit May 18–21 with an opening reception on May 20 with more than 200 people in attendance. The **Capri Theatre**, in partnership with AHF, held a special showing of the film on May 20, at which more than 260 people attended.

### **Participating Artists**

Doug Baulos, Barbara Bondy, Jerry Brown, Annie Butrus, Catherine Cabaniss, William Christenberry, Clayton Colvin, Chip Cooper, Jane Timberlake Cooper, Derek Cracco, Beverly Erdreich, Brian Edmonds, Barbara Evans, Frank Fleming, Randy Gachet, Carolyn Goldsmith, Karen Graffeo, Jennifer Harwell, Wesley Higgins, Bethanne Hill, Darius Hill, Lonnie Holley, Mary Kimbrough, Janice Kluge, Bruce Larsen, Sally Legg, Charlie Lucas, Jane Marshall, Nall, Nicolosi, Caleb O’Connor, Susan Perry, Amy Pleasant, Larry Thompson and Maralyn Wilson

In-kind support for “**TKAM 2010: *To Kill a Mockingbird—Awakening America’s Conscience***” is being provided by Alabama Writers’ Forum; Amanda Schedler Fine Art; Auburn University—Montgomery; Bare Hands Gallery; Birmingham Civil Rights Institute; Jennifer Harwell Art Gallery; Jennifer Hunt Gallery; Mail Enterprises; Maralyn Wilson Gallery; Monty Stabler Galleries; *Portico*; Sixteenth Street Baptist Church; Space One Eleven; Stonehenge Gallery; Sirote & Permutt P.C.; the UPS Store at Patton Chapel Plaza; the University of Alabama at Birmingham Visual Arts Gallery; and [www.scottfisk.com](http://www.scottfisk.com).

“**TKAM 2010: *To Kill a Mockingbird—Awakening America’s Conscience***” kicked off on **April 9** at the **Sixteenth Street Baptist Church** in Birmingham at 4:30 p.m. with “***To Kill a Mockingbird at 50: Perspectives on One Book’s Influence***,” a panel discussion on the novel co-sponsored by the Frances Marlin Mann Center for Ethics and Leadership and the Cumberland School of Law at Samford University, and supported by Sixteenth Street Baptist Church. The panel discussion was free and open to the public and featured moderator John Carroll, dean of the Cumberland Law School at Samford University; panelist Delores Boyd, former federal judge and co-author of *Jim Crow and Me: Stories From My Life As a Civil Rights Lawyer*; panelist Jonathan Bass, chair of the Samford University history department and a leading expert on the civil rights movement in Alabama; and panelist Susan Swagler, book critic for several publications, including *Birmingham Magazine*.

An opening night reception for the “**TKAM 2010: *To Kill a Mockingbird—Awakening America’s Conscience***” preview art exhibition, also free and open to the public, followed the panel discussion from 6 to 8 p.m., held at the **Birmingham Civil Rights Institute**.

### **AHF Programming Surrounding *To Kill a Mockingbird* and its themes**

Over the years, AHF has continued to provide grants and programs that utilize *To Kill a Mockingbird* and its themes.

- During the 2010 Alabama Book Festival, supported in part by AHF, Don Noble, emeritus professor of English at the University of Alabama, host of *Bookmark* on Alabama Public Television and a former AHF Board member, will discuss his recently released book *Critical Insights: To Kill a Mockingbird*.
- For more than a decade, AHF has supported the Alabama Writers Symposium in Monroeville. Along with the Alabama Tourism theme of the Year of Small Towns and Downtowns, this year's symposium, April 28 to May 1, pays homage to the 50th anniversary of the book. The Harper Lee Award for Alabama's Distinguished Writer and the Eugene Current-Garcia Award for Alabama's Distinguished Literary Scholar are presented at the symposium.

In 2010–11, the following AHF Road Scholar Speakers Bureau presentations will focus on the novel:

- “To Kill a Mockingbird: Successes and Myths”  
Presented by Nancy Anderson
- “The World of Childhood: *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, *To Kill a Mockingbird* and *The Kite Runner*”  
Presented by Nancy Anderson
- “The Rise and Fall of Atticus Finch”  
Presented by Christopher Metress

Full presentation descriptions and the entire 2010–11 **Road Scholars Speakers Bureau** catalog are available for viewing at [ahf.net](http://ahf.net) under “Programs.” For further information on how to book a scholar, please contact AHF Programs Coordinator Michael Chambers at (205) 558-3999 or [mchambers@ahf.net](mailto:mchambers@ahf.net).

#### **About the Alabama Humanities Foundation**

The Alabama Humanities Foundation is a nonprofit organization funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities (of which AHF is the state affiliate), as well as by corporate and individual donors. The Foundation is dedicated to the promotion and celebration of the humanities throughout the state of Alabama and, to that end, conducts its own statewide programs and awards grants, on a competitive basis, to nonprofit organizations for humanities projects. For more information on this and other AHF programs, please call (205) 558-3980.