



For Immediate Release
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FROM MANGO STREET TO OUR STREET: HARTFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY ANNOUNCES FALL 2021 NEA BIG READ

Monthlong programming exploring Mexican culture kicks off Saturday with mariachi performance

(Hartford, CT) – Hartford Public Library’s Fall 2021 NEA Big Read will celebrate Sandra Cisneros’ novel *The House on Mango Street* and explore Mexican culture with a monthlong lineup of programming that kicks off this weekend.

The Mariachi Academy of New England will perform outside the Downtown Library (500 Main Street, Hartford) at 1 p.m. on Saturday, October 9, and there will be free book giveaways.

To see the full slate of Big Read events, visit: <https://www.hplct.org/classes-seminars-exhibits/big-read>

In addition to *The House on Mango Street*, the Big Read will celebrate the youth selection *Dreamers*, by Yuyi Morales. Free copies of the books are available in English and Spanish.

The House on Mango Street tells the story of Esperanza Cordero, a young Latina girl growing up in Chicago. The story of childhood and self-discovery is told in a series of vignettes that range from heartbreaking to joyous.

Dreamers, a picture book memoir, chronicles the true story of Morales’ immigration from Mexico to the United States in 1994 with her infant son and how she adjusted to her new life.

“We’ve heard anecdotally from many of our patrons how much it means to them to see themselves in a story,” said Liz Castle, Hartford Public Library’s programming and events manager. “We want to be able to reflect as many Hartford residents’ experiences as possible in the collection that we offer.”

While Hartford Public Library’s most recent Big Read in March included all virtual events, the fall Big Read consists of a mix of in-person and online programming to celebrate Mexican culture.

Hartford Public Library is one of 61 organizations that received a 2021-2022 Big Read grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. It is the sixth time the library has been selected. The \$14,985 award will support programming and book purchases. Eastern Connecticut State University in Willimantic and the Ferguson Library in Stamford are also participating this year.

The NEA Big Read, a partnership with Arts Midwest, broadens our understanding of our world, our communities, and ourselves through the joy of sharing a good book. Showcasing a diverse range of themes, voices and perspectives, the NEA Big Read aims to inspire conversation and discovery.

Fall 2021 NEA Big Read Schedule

Kickoff to the Big Read – Mariachi!

Saturday, October 9: 1 p.m. – 2 p.m.

Downtown Library, Terrace

Join us in kicking off the Big Read with an outdoor performance from the Mariachi Academy of New England and free book giveaways.

Youth and Family Programs

Through Your Eyes: My Neighborhood

Tuesday, October: 4 p.m., Camp Field Branch

Ages 6-12. Join guest artist, Meredith Arcari Luciano, to create a painting of your neighborhood!

Dreamers

Monday, October 4, p.m., Dwight Branch

Ages 6-12. Join Ms. Rubina for a book reading and discussion of *Dreamers* by Yuyi Morales.

Passport to Art with Young at Art

Tuesday, October 5: 4 p.m., Downtown Library, Atrium

Wednesday, October 13: 3 p.m., Barbour Branch

Ages 6-12. Travel the world through art with special guest, Young at Art.

Big Read Storytime: All Are Welcome

Wednesday, October 6, 10 a.m., Downtown Library, Atrium

Ages 0-5 with parent/caregiver. Join Ms. Katherine for stories and a craft.

Sirius Coyote - Music and Sounds of the Americas

Thursday, October 7th: 4 p.m., Camp Field Branch

Wednesday, October 13th: 11 a.m., Dwight Branch

Big Read Story Time with Ms. Lina

Monday, October 11, 11 a.m., Zoom

Ages 0-5 with parents/caregivers. Join Ms. Lina for stories, activities and music movement.

Big Read Art Club: Yuyi Morales

Tuesday, October 12, 4 p.m., Google Meet

Ages 6-12. Miss Katherine will share some of her favorite books by Yuyi Morales followed by a Dream Pouch craft. *Activity kit available at the Downtown Library.

Surcari – Music with a Latin Beat

Wednesday, October 13: 11 a.m., Downtown Library, Atrium

Big Read: Butterfly Dreamer Craft

Thursday, October 14, 3:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m., Camp Field Branch

Ages 6-12. Join Ms. Katryna to make a beautiful butterfly inspired by the book, *Dreamers* by Yuyi Morales.

Discover Your Dreams in Books

Monday, October 25, 10 a.m. – 1 p.m., Barbour Branch

Ages 0-6. What are we? In Yuyi Morales' *Dreamers*, parent and child discover who they are in the pages of books they find in the library. Drop in for a Big Read storytime and craft inspired by Yuyi's story and your own dreams.

Teen Programs

Augmented Reality Story Walk

Week 1: 10/11 & 10/13: 3 p.m. – 6 p.m.

Week 2: 10/18 & 10/20: 3 p.m. – 6 p.m.

Week 3: 10/25 & 10/27: 3 p.m. – 6 p.m.

Week 4: 11/1 & 11/3: 3 p.m. – 6 p.m.

Downtown Library, YOUmedia

Create an augmented reality story walk based on the book *The House on Mango Street*! Here's how... select a scene from *The House on Mango Street*, choose an artistic medium (draw, paint, illustrate, etc.) to depict the scene on a 13x19in storyboard, animate your scenes, compose instrumentals or sound effects for their scenes in ProTools and showcase your completed scenes!

Adult Programs

From Mango Street to Our Street – Poetry Workshop

Wednesday, October 13: 4:30 p.m. – 5:45 p.m., Park Street Library at the Lyric

Join us in poetry writing, and exploration of themes in the book by Sandra Cisneros, "The House on Mango Street". Get a free copy of the book.

Denis y su Grupo Swing

Wednesday, October 13: 5 p.m. – 6 p.m.

Rain date: Friday, October 15: 5 p.m. – 6 p.m.

Downtown Library, Terrace

House On Mango Street Exhibit – The Virtual Experience

Thursday, October 14: 4:30 p.m. 5:30 p.m., Zoom

Special Guest Cesáreo Moreno, visual arts director/chief curator for the National Museum of Mexican Art in Chicago, will be presenting on the exhibit he curated in honor of Sandra Cisneros's book *The House on Mango Street*. The topic of focus from the book will be "abuse and family".

Paint The House You Grew Up In & Tell Vignettes of Your Story

Thursday, October 14: 4 p.m., Albany Library

Join artist Candace Donaldson for a "paint night" style workshop.

From Mango Street to Barbour Street

Wednesday, October 20th: 2 p.m. – 3:30 p.m., Barbour Library

Come hear stories from the book, *The House on Mango Street*. Create Mexican yarn paintings in the cultural art style of the author, Sandra Cisneros, celebrating stories from the library and your homes on Barbour Street. Please call, 860-695-7401 or email, iblean@hplct.org to register.

FAMILIA=FAMILY

Wednesday, October 20: 2 p.m. – 3 p.m., Dwight Library

Esperanza from *The House On Mango Street* loved her familia, family meant everything! Come join us to discuss and write poems on what family means to YOU.

The House On Mango Street: Book Discussion, Exploration and Interpretation through Art

Thursday, October 21 and October 28: 5 p.m. – 6 p.m., Camp Field Library

Join us in a discussion of Sandra Cisneros' short novel, *The House on Mango Street*, to explore and make connections to the themes, neighborhood, and characters in the life of a young girl growing up in the inner city. Art kits will be provided for participants to explore and interpret life in their own environment. Two-part series will include book discussion and art activity.

Registration suggested by calling the Camp Field Branch at 860-695-7440.

Honoring CT Latina Poets

Saturday, October 23: 11 a.m., Park Street Library at the Lyric and Zoom

Celebrating Park Street Library at The Lyric opening in collaboration with Connecticut Poet Laureate Margaret Gibson as she presents poetry readings from Connecticut Latina poets.

LivFree Wellness Zone Yoga/Martial Flow

Thursday, October 28: 5:00 p.m. – 5:50pm, Downtown Library, Peters Reading Room

Practitioners will create their own Wellness Zone through a LivFree Yoga/Martial Flow including fitness and play with Martha-Rea. You will engage and connect to your mind, body and spirit with love and kindness.

Register here: <https://programs.hplct.org/event/5594652>

Painted Sugar Skull Masks

Thursday, October 28th: 1 p.m. – 3 p.m., Downtown Library, Cafe

Come and learn more about this Mexican tradition associated with the Day of the Dead. We will also discuss our Big Read book, *The House on Mango Street* and Esperanza's struggles related to her sense of cultural identity.

Hartford History Center Programs

Hartford Public Library Branch Histories

Semi-permanent exhibits that launch on October 11 at each branch library location and online

For over 125 years, the Hartford Public Library has made a significant impact on the residents of the City of Hartford and beyond. As early as 1907, the Library established its first neighborhood branch library (Dwight Branch), with branches being created through the 1920s in neighborhoods across the city. With each year and moves to new locations, HPL's library branches transformed to fit the needs of changing neighborhood populations with specialized collection development, programming, and staff. Enjoy select photographs and information about each branch history, drawn from the Hartford Public Library's archive, Hartford Times photograph collection, smaller collections donated by former HPL staff, and reference materials

from local newspapers. And we invite you to share your own stories about how your neighborhood branch has supported your journey.

Virtual Partner Series: Stories of Complexity and Connection in Hartford's Ancient Burying Ground

Workshop: Genealogical Research in Colonial and Revolutionary Connecticut for Beginners

Wednesday, October 13: 6 p.m. – 7:30 p.m., Zoom

Register here: <https://bit.ly/ColonialGenealogy>

Diana Ross McCain and Carol R. Whitmer of Come Home to Connecticut, a genealogical consulting service, will introduce beginning genealogists to the basic sources and process for researching families who lived in Connecticut in the 1600s and 1700s. They will cover resources as vital, church, probate, military and cemetery records, including what kinds of information they contain and how to access them.

Workshop: Telling Your Family Story - Putting it All Together

Wednesday, October 20: 6 p.m. – 7:30 p.m., Zoom

Register here: <https://bit.ly/FamilyStoryWkshp>

Wondering how to put your family story together? Jill Marie Snyder will present a detailed program outlining the steps she took to research her family tree and become the author of an award-winning published narrative of her family's story. Jill Marie Snyder, author and family historian, is the winner of a 2020 Afro-American Historical & Genealogical Society book award for *Dear Mary, Dear Luther*.

Lecture: In the Shadow of the Great Hartford Witch Hunt

Wednesday, October 27: 6 p.m. – 7:30 p.m., Zoom

Register here: <https://bit.ly/HartfordWitchHunt>

Hear from Richard Ross III, author of *Before Salem: Witch Hunting in the Connecticut River Valley, 1647-1663*. Decades before the Salem Witch trials, 11 people were hanged as witches in the Connecticut River Valley. The advent of witch hunting in New England was directly influenced by the English Civil War and the witch trials in England. Ross will examine the reasons for the outbreak of witch hysteria in Connecticut and especially the origins of the witchcraft accusations leading up to the "Great Hartford Witch Hunt" in 1662-63. He will identify individuals buried in the Ancient Burying Ground who were connected in some way to the witch hunting and/or the witch trials noted including townspeople, officials and clergy.

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About Hartford Public Library

Now celebrating its 127th year, Hartford Public Library remains at the forefront of redefining the urban library experience in the 21st century. With locations throughout the city, the library provides education, intellectual enrichment and cultural development for thousands of children, youth and adults every year. Hartford Public Library has also gained local and national recognition for its wide range of new initiatives and partnerships designed to meet the needs of a diverse and dynamic city and region, including immigration services, employment assistance and youth leadership training. www.hplct.org.