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Atlanta-Fulton Public Library System Presents America’s Music
Featuring Ernest Gaines’ A Lesson Before Dying • February – March, 2013

Atlanta – The Atlanta-Fulton Public Library System has been awarded a $2,500 grant to host a program series featuring documentary film screenings and scholar-led discussions of twentieth-century American popular music.

The Atlanta-Fulton Public Library System will host the “America’s Music: A Film History of Our Popular Music from Blues to Bluegrass to Broadway” series to enlighten audiences about uniquely American musical genres including blues and gospel, Broadway, jazz, bluegrass and country, rock ‘n roll, mambo, and hip hop. The Atlanta-Fulton Public Library System is one of fifty sites nationwide selected to host this program series. “America’s Music” is a project by the Tribeca Film Institute in collaboration with the American Library Association, Tribeca Flashpoint, and the Society for American Music. “America’s Music” has been made possible by a major grant form the National Endowment for the Humanities: Exploring the Human Endeavor.

The goal of the libraries aligns perfectly with those of the Big Read: to stop the decline of literary reading in America by encouraging reading. This “one book/one community” opportunity offers everyone the chance to read and discuss a single book within their communities and is a wonderful chance for real dialog.

Participants throughout Fulton County and the city of Atlanta will read the same book, A Lesson Before Dying by Ernest Gaines. This story of injustice and redemption addresses the theme of how one affirms life in the face of death. A Lesson Before Dying was also made into a movie, and there will be film screenings at many of the libraries branches during February and into March as well as other programs and events.

How can you participate? The project is everywhere! All 34 libraries in the Atlanta-Fulton Public Library System will have ways to engage with book club events, film screenings, contests, exhibitions and theatrical readings. You can also participate by encouraging your book club, your family, your friends to pick up the book and read.

The Library System is partnering with Fulton County Schools, who received 150 paperbacks for students to read. Students will also have a chance to meet the author “virtually,” as he will be brought in via satellite to provide an interactive presentation on February 26. This event will be streamed on the library’s website as well.
For a full list of programs surrounding the Big Read, check out www.afpls.org.

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Atlanta-Fulton Public Library System is the largest in the state, with 34 libraries and a collection of more than 2.5 million items. It offers innovative programs, services and virtual resources tailored to meet the needs of each branch's community. Children, teens and adults may choose from a variety of classes, visit exhibitions, listen to authors discuss their work, check out videos, DVDs and CDs, attend book club discussions, get homework help, hear music and see live performances. Last year patrons borrowed more than 4.2 million items, made 4 million visits to the libraries and our website had over 4 million hits.