



News Release

Contact: Martin Ackley, Director of Public and Governmental Affairs 517-241-4395
Bill DiSessa, Spokesperson, 517-335-6649

Library of Michigan Hosting Exhibit on Late Michigan Author Jim Harrison

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LANSING – Renowned author Jim Harrison had put down stakes out West when he died in 2016, but the indelible literary legacy he left in this state lives on in a photographic exhibit opening Saturday, October 5, 2019 at the Library of Michigan (LM).

Hosted by the LM and Historical Society of Greater Lansing, “Friends” is a collection of photographs by Harrison’s close friend John “Bud” Schulz of St. Johns.

The photographs, taken in 1971-72 at the author’s Leland farm, show a youthful and exuberant Harrison with his wife, Linda, and daughters Jamie and Anna. He is seen tending to his horses and playing with his dog.

Schulz struck up a lifetime friendship with Harrison at Michigan State University (MSU), which continued to the author’s death in 2016. Schulz accompanied Harrison and his coterie of authors, artists, and naturalists on numerous hunting and fishing trips across North America.

“Jim Harrison is one of the best writers to ever call Michigan home,” State Librarian Randy Riley said. “His ability to write poetry, fiction, and essays was matched by few other authors. Hopefully this exhibit will introduce more people to his books.”

Also on display are:

- items reflecting Harrison’s life and passions, including his writing desk, walking stick, artwork, and totems;
- numerous curios he collected from the natural world; and
- personal letters, all 60 of his books, broadsides, manuscripts, and jottings to help interpret his work.

The writer's literary assistant, Joyce Harrington Bahle, and Upper Peninsula author and friend John Smolens will make comments at the exhibit opening that focus on Harrison the individual rather than the celebrated author.

Harrison's career includes more than 60 books spanning multiple genres that include poetry, fiction, essays, and collections of essays on food. His first book of poetry, *Plain Song*, was published in 1965 and his first work of fiction, *Wolf: A False Memoir*, in 1971. The book's dust jacket includes a famous photograph of Harrison against a white workhorse.

Among his most recognizable work are the novels and novellas *Farmer, Dalva* and *Legends of the Fall*. His character Brown Dog, who appears in several novellas, has reached cult status, Riley said.

In addition to Harrison's literary accomplishments, he wrote screenplays for numerous films including the successful *Legends of the Fall* starring Brad Pitt, *Wolf* starring Jack Nicholson, and *Revenge* starring Kevin Costner.

Harrison died March 26, 2016 at his Patagonia, AZ home. He graduated in 1956 from Haslett High School in Michigan, where he was a member of student council, and the Bible club, along with the debate, football, and basketball teams. He graduated from MSU and co-founded Sumac, a respected literary magazine.

The exhibit opens October 5 at 1 p.m. in the LM's Lake Erie Room and runs through December 31, 2019. The exhibit is free and open during regular Library hours.

For more information on LM programs, please email librarian@michigan.gov or call 517-335-1477.

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The Library of Michigan is an agency within the Michigan Department of Education and is dedicated to providing the people of this State and their government one perpetual institution to collect and preserve Michigan publications, conduct reference and research and support libraries statewide. To learn more, visit www.michigan.gov/libraryofmichigan.