

## Stowe Prize and Stowe House Grand Re-opening



This was an especially important year for the Stowe Center that culminated in the first week of June. Not only was it the year for the Stowe Prize to be presented, but also it was the completion of the multimillion dollar renovation of the house itself, the first since it became a museum, and the inauguration of the new interactive tour.

To begin the festivities, was the interview by John Dankowsky of Bryan Stevenson, this year's winner of the **Stowe Prize for Writing for Social Justice**, which was awarded for his newest book *Just Mercy*. Immanuel Congregational Church, the venue for the discussion was nearly at capacity. The program began and ended with nearly a full minute each of standing

ovation. Clearly the audience appreciated his work and was not disappointed.

The first questions were prepared by John, and they were followed by questions collected from the audience. While it was requested that the program not be recorded, it can only be hoped that a recording exists. It was too good to only be enjoyed as a memory.

This was of course, followed by the Big Tent Jubilee sponsored by The Hartford where the prize was awarded.

The big tent got double service two days later, with the festivities surrounding the Grand Re-opening of the Stowe House. Governor Malloy, Senator Blumenthal and Mayor Bronin along with Secretary Denise Merrill and Director of Culture Kristina Newman-Scott each spoke about the importance of Harriet Beecher-Stowe to the history of the Nation and the importance of the Stowe Center to the legacy and continuation of her ideals.

Aside from the improvements that can be seen such as wallpaper and carpeting, there have been significant improvements to the health of the home itself, including state-of-the-art fire suppression and climate control. These along with the interactive additions to the tours demonstrate that the mission of the Stowe Center is to keep alive and spread the commitment to social justice that made Harriet Beecher-Stowe so famous in the first place.

When you add in the fact that the tours are often free to Hartford residents, there's just no reason not to see it.

Photos of the events are available at: <https://goo.gl/photos/i6EG9aD55ytbHhKh8>

Upcoming events are at <http://harrietbeecherstowe.org/calendar/> or on Facebook at **Harriet Beecher Stowe Center**