

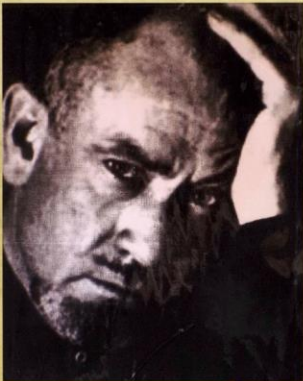
Friday, June 5, 2020, 7pm

Program design: Hannah Frank, OnAxisMusic.com



*John  
Steinbeck:*  
Scribe of  
Social  
Conscience

In Memoriam



1902-68

In Memoriam



1974-2020

Featuring the literature of John Steinbeck  
Performed by Megan Corse & Paul McComas  
with special guest Darryl Alan Reed

Created/curated & commentary written by Paul

**Hosted by 3 vital Milwaukee nonprofits:**

**Marquette University Center for Peacemaking,  
The Alma Center, and Safe & Sound**

**Live via Zoom & Facebook**

[steinbeckshow.com](http://steinbeckshow.com)

Megan Corse. Photo: Phil Circle

# John Steinbeck: Scribe of Social Conscience

Pre-show "Radio Steinbeck" program: "Buffalo Dreams" (Bunny Sings Wolf), *The Florida Project* trailer (Sean Baker), "Country at War" (John Doe/X), "Daughters" (Lissie Maurus). DeeJay: Keith Emroll. Script: Paul McComas

In memory of George Floyd and John Steinbeck



Megan Corse, Photo: Phil Circle, digital effects: Hannah Frank

## In the Press

David Lührssen's 5/26/20 *Milwaukee Shepherd Express* article about the show:  
[bit.ly/steinbeck-shepherdexpress](http://bit.ly/steinbeck-shepherdexpress)

"Most of us haven't given Steinbeck enough thought since high school or college. But Paul McComas has, reflecting on the timeless message of extending oneself to others—particularly to 'the least of these.' And he's acting on it."  
– *Milwaukee Shepherd Express*, 3/21/13

"McComas emphasizes Steinbeck's social message, drawing parallels between the author's times and our own, and uses the humanities to engage and challenge his audience: to think about how Steinbeck responded to social indignity—and to reflect on how we respond to it ourselves."  
– *Milwaukee Neighborhood News*, 4/1/13

"The Milwaukee-born-and-raised McComas emphasizes—and embodies—Steinbeck's status as a master chronicler of 'the have-nots', not only via the spoken word but through song and drama as well."  
– *Waupaca (WI) County News*, August 2013

"Acting as the author's ambassador, McComas—himself an award-winning author, as well as a critically acclaimed actor—has a fresh, appealing approach to helping audiences 'get' Steinbeck."  
– *Door County (WI) Advocate*, 8/28/13

## \*Hang out with us after the show!

Talkback with (Moderator) Pat Kennelly, Director, Marquette University Center for Peacemaking; Megan Corse, performer; Joe'Mar Hooper, Executive Director, Safe & Sound; Paul McComas, performer & show creator/curator; Darryl Alan Reed, performer; Dr. Terri Strodthoff, Founding Director, the Alma Center

Ask questions & make comments in the Q&A feature during the show!

Introduction: Pat Kennelly, Director, Marquette University Center for Peacemaking

- *Of Mice and Men* (1937)  
"George & Lennie" + commentary
- Tribute to George Floyd
- *Of Mice and Men* (1937) "Crooks: 8 minutes & 46 seconds" Enacted by Darryl Alan Reed; adapted by Paul McComas
- ♪ "The Ghost of Tom Joad" (1999; Bruce Springsteen)
- *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939) excerpt + commentary
- *Cannery Row* (1945) excerpt + commentary
- ♪ "Delta 88 (Nightmare)" (1978; John Doe)
- *East of Eden* (1952) excerpt + commentary
- *Travels with Charley: In Search of America* (1962) excerpt + commentary  
+ **Talkback\***

### Major performances of this show:

March 25, 2013 Premiere: Center for Peacemaking, Marquette University, Milwaukee  
August 31, 2013: Unitarian-Universalist Fellowship, Ephraim (Door County), WI  
October 22, 2013: Passages series, Emeritus Program, Oakton Community College, Skokie, IL  
June 2, 2014: Winchester Academy, Waupaca, WI  
June 5, 2020 Duo Version debut: Alma Center/MU Center for Peacemaking/Safe & Sound, Milwaukee

**“Ideas are like rabbits:  
you get a couple,  
and you learn how to  
handle them, and pretty  
soon you have a dozen.”  
– John Steinbeck**

“Steinbeck once wrote, ‘Ideas are like rabbits: you get a couple, and you learn how to handle them, and pretty soon you have a dozen.’ Well, Paul McComas is full of rabbits. Make a point of meeting them, and him, at his live stage show *John Steinbeck: Scribe of Social Conscience*.” – *N.E.W. (Northeast Wisconsin) Voices, Volume I, No. 3 (Summer 2013)*



Paul McComas with a shot of John Steinbeck. Photo: Eric Diekhans

**“If we expand resources for all residents and work to bridge the gaps between neighborhoods, we will come out of this [COVID-19] situation stronger than ever. As Steinbeck’s novels and this performance remind us, if we help those most marginalized during the pandemic, we create a better community for everyone.”**

**– Joe’Mar Hooper, Executive Director, Safe & Sound**

**“Building community  
is at the heart of  
peacemaking. It is  
imperative in times  
of struggle, isolation,  
and injustice to  
join together as  
peacemakers and  
community builders.”  
– Pat Kennelly, Director,  
Marquette University  
Center for Peacemaking**

**“Our country is better served by individual courage than by the safe and public ‘patriotism’ that is the last refuge of scoundrels ... My father—a great man—taught me rules that are not abrogated by our nervous, hysterical times: glory to God; honor to my family; loyalty to my friends; respect for the law; love of country; and instant, open revolt against tyranny, whether it comes from the bully in the school yard, the foreign dictator, or the [domestic] demagogue.” – John Steinbeck**

**“Stress is high, and so many  
entertainment outlets have been  
taken away. Performers provide  
an opportunity to come together  
in community—especially vital  
during this [COVID-19] time.”**

**– Dr. Terri Strodthoff,  
Founding Director,  
the Alma Center**

**“Steinbeck’s themes, agenda and craft have long been major influences on me as a writer, an activist and a person. With his unflagging insistence that each of us is, indeed must be, our sisters’ and our brothers’ keeper—and especially now, with the ever-increasing marginalization of ‘the least of these’ by the current COVID-19 crisis—Steinbeck 80 years later could hardly be more timely or more necessary. I’m honored to do what I can, through this show, to keep his legacy alive, and active, in our society and our world.”**

**– Paul McComas**



Our mascot,  
“Charlene”

**“Steinbeck’s character work is  
fascinating. His stories focus on  
the people in life whom most of  
us overlook—those who are faced  
with the gravest challenges.”**

**– Megan Corse**

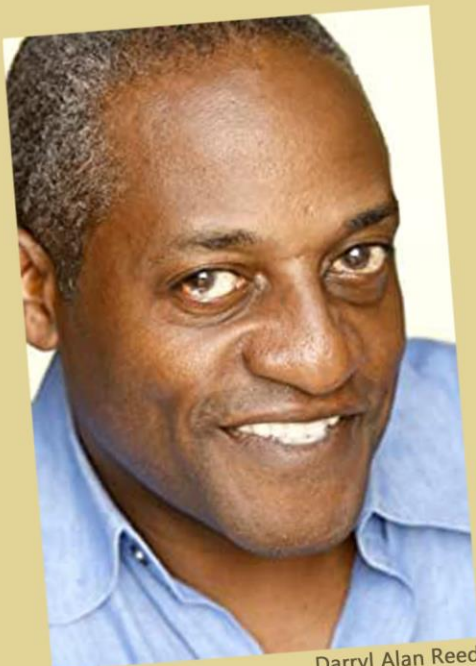
# About the Performers

**Megan Corse** is a film, theatre, and television actor often seen performing monthly readings of new works at Chicago's iO Theater. Look for Megan at (virtual) film festivals in *Parent Teacher Conference* and the newly award-winning short, *Birthday B\*tch*. Also a musician, she loves incorporating music into her world of performance with musical theatre, live music shows, and these wonderful duo programs. Megan was raised in Eau Claire and Stoughton, WI, and obtained her B.A. in English Literature and Media Studies from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. When not performing, Megan spends her time practicing yoga and cuddling with a Burmese-mix cat named Andy, a chinchilla named Bob, and her musician-songwriter-author husband, Phil Circle. They live in Rogers Park, Chicago.



Megan Corse & Paul McComas  
Photo: Phil Circle

**Paul McComas** is a two-time *Chicago Reader* Critic's Choice honoree in Theatre & Performance and the award-winning author of six books of fiction. He's also an American Film Institute- and international-prize-winning filmmaker, a media/literary scholar with a film book under contract, and a recording artist: in 2017, CAUDog Records released the soundtrack to his and Maya Kuper's stage musical *Unplugged: A Survivor's Story in Scenes & Songs*, adapted from Paul's acclaimed '02 novel. An educator in cinema/media, creative writing, literature, theatre, and bass guitar, he has won teaching awards from Northwestern and National Louis universities. With a career focused on the overlap between the arts, healing, and progressive activism, Paul serves on both the National Leadership Council and the Speakers Bureau of the Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network (RAINN). He is an Event Chair for The Kennedy Forum for mental health; founded and performs in both Rock Against Depression and (with Megan) the *Fool for Love* Sam Shepard memorial/ALS-benefit project; and was recognized for his arts-driven advocacy by the WI state legislature. He has partnered with and performed alongside Michael York, done script writing for friend Ed Asner, and collaborated with RAINN co-founder Tori Amos, all for charity. Paul plays in three bands: the Dayna Clay Project, a RAINN benefit group; the "alt-Western/jazz-dive" quartet Badlands Lounge; and punk-poppers The Daves, founded in 1982 and "still kickin'." The Milwaukee native lives in Evanston, IL with wife and fellow writer Heather and their rescued champion-racer greyhound, Sam. Says Paul, "I feel infinitely blessed to share the stage with magnificent Megan and devastatin' Darryl—two of the best performers, and people, I know."



Darryl Alan Reed

**Megan & Paul** kick off, with this performance, their fifth full year of collaboration, which began when he cast her in his stage musical *Unplugged*. They soon spun off into a variety of popular duo work—the *Fool for Love* Sam Shepard memorial/ALS-benefit project; their three-part *Best of the Bard: Shakespeare's Greatest Hits* performance-and-analysis program; multiple performances each February of A.R. Gurney's one-woman-one-man play *Love Letters*; and live performances of original and cover songs, dramatic scenes, and literary readings—in theaters, cabarets, and learning-in-retirement programs, and at Racine (WI) Correctional Institution.

**Booking/info: Paul, (224) 343-6484, paulmccomas@mail.com**

**Darryl Alan Reed ("Crooks")** is a Chicago native whose acting career has been filled with variety and notable projects. He has received numerous theatre awards, including the Joseph Jefferson, Ovation, NAACP, *Gay Chicago Magazine*, Black Theater Alliance, and AUDELCO. Television credits include memorable character turns as Wallace in *Martin*, Rondo in *Rizzoli and Isles*, and Carl Douglas in the O.J. Simpson Miniseries *American Tragedy*; his most recent TV credits include *Adam Ruins Everything* and John Singleton's *Snowfall*. Darryl has appeared in films that have been nominated for Oscar, Golden Globes, SAG, and People's

Choice Awards, including *The American President*, *Sweet and Lowdown*, and *(500) Days of Summer*. As a pitch man, he has appeared in numerous national commercials that have launched product brands for McDonald's, Nike, and GEICO. Says Darryl, "I am excited to be involved in this project that includes two of America's prolific voices: John Steinbeck and Paul McComas. I am especially blessed to work again with my brother and friend, Paul, who through the years has nurtured for me our shared love of language, music, and activism."

# About the hosting nonprofits:

Make optional donations at [steinbeckshow.com/contribute](http://steinbeckshow.com/contribute).



## Marquette University Center for Peacemaking

The Marquette University Center for Peacemaking fosters research and action for the promotion of peace, human dignity, and justice. The center's programs provide students with opportunities to develop peacemaking skills and faculty with avenues to research nonviolence. The center's impact reaches both near, and far beyond, campus, through social-action projects based in Milwaukee and international partnerships in Afghanistan, El Salvador, and India. [www.marquette.edu/peacemaking](http://www.marquette.edu/peacemaking)



**ALMA CENTER**  
Heal. Transform. Evolve.

## The Alma Center

The Alma Center works to heal, transform, and evolve the unresolved pain of trauma that fuels the continuation of cycles of violence, abuse, and dysfunction in families and community. We work primarily with men at-risk or involved in the criminal justice system, with a particular focus on men who have a history of domestic violence. Our vision is that healing-focused care becomes a leading approach for re-imagining the criminal justice system, particularly in regard to intervention and prevention of family violence, and moves the system toward more restorative and effective models. [www.almacenter.org](http://www.almacenter.org)

## Safe & Sound

Safe & Sound's mission is to unite residents, youth, law enforcement, and community resources to build safe and empowered neighborhoods. With a vision for a safe neighborhood for everyone in Milwaukee, Safe & Sound works to increase collective efficacy—the strength of the social fabric of the neighborhoods we serve. To do this, Safe & Sound employs a three-part approach: community organizing, youth organizing, and neighborhood safety efforts. In 2019, Safe & Sound engaged 30,783 youth and adults in 1,199 community events and meetings to strengthen neighborhood bonds. [www.safesound.org](http://www.safesound.org)

## Thank You:

The Alma Center (Dr. Teri Strodthoff); Sean Baker; Phil Circle; Eric Diekhans; John Doe; Keith Emroll; Hannah Frank, MVPPP (Most Valuable Promoter-Publicist-Planner); Marquette University Center for Peacemaking (Pat Kennelly; special thanks to Parisa Shirazi and Chris Jeske for running our Zoom and Facebook streams!); Lissie Maurus; Heather & Sam McComas; *Milwaukee Shepherd Express* (David Luhrssen); Darryl Alan Reed; *Riverwest Currents* (Vince Bushell & Lee Ann Gutowski); Riverwest Radio (Sandy Weisto); Safe & Sound (Grace Arend, Joe'Mar Hooper and Amanda Garry Aliperta); Bunny Sings Wolf; Vaudezilla; WTMJ/NBC-TV4's *Noon News* (Jeff Kiernan, Susan Kim, James Kust, Joe Poss, and Pete Zervakis); and X (the band).

**“Selfish, mean, ugly, grasping, egotistical people use others to bolster their sense of self-importance. This is crippling. Love [though] is an outpouring of everything good in you, of kindness and consideration and respect—not only the social respect of manners but that greater respect, which is recognition of another person as unique and valuable.**

**[Exploiting] makes you sick and small and weak.**

**But love can release in you strength and courage and goodness, and even wisdom, that you didn't know you have.”**

**- John Steinbeck**

Video of full show + talkback available  
beginning 6/6/20 at [steinbeckshow.com/video](http://steinbeckshow.com/video)