BOOK TALK

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 21

ALISA SOLOMON

Wonder of Wonders: A Cultural History of Fiddler on the Roof
Wonder of Wonders: A Cultural History of Fiddler on the Roof

In the half-century since its premiere, Fiddler on the Roof has had an astonishing global impact. In this book, drama critic Alisa Solomon (Columbia University) traces how and why the story of Tevye the dairyman, created by the great Yiddish writer Sholem Aleichem, was reborn as a cultural touchstone, not only for Jews and not only in America. Solomon follows Tevye from his humble appearance on the Yiddish stage, through his adoption by leftist dramatists, to his Broadway debut, to his ultimate destination: a Hollywood blockbuster. The show spoke to the deepest conflicts and desires of its time: the fraying of tradition, generational tension, the loss of roots. Wonder of Wonders reveals the surprising legacy of a show about tradition that itself became a tradition.

Co-sponsors: UWM’s Center for 21st Century Studies, Center for International Education, College of Letters & Science, Cultures & Communities Program, History Department, Peck School of the Arts, and the UWM Libraries, as well as the Coalition for Jewish Learning, the Harry and Rose Samson Jewish Community Center, Hillel Milwaukee, Jewish Museum Milwaukee, and the Milwaukee Jewish Federation.