



## Mary Kubica, known for addictive mystery, emotional depth, set for Toledo book talk



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Orsayor Simmons of Holland can't wait until Feb. 5, the day she'll finally get to meet in person Mary Kubica, one of her favorite authors.

"I have been reading Mary Kubica's work since 2014," Mrs. Simmons said. "I was immediately drawn to her ability to create psychological tension that feels personal and unsettling without relying on shock value. Her stories linger with you long after finishing the book."

Her appearance in Toledo for the Authors! series at the Main Library is one of the New York Times best-selling writer's first stops on a three-week book tour launching her new psychological thriller *It's Not Her*.

At 7 p.m., Ms. Kubica will bring to the stage the stories of how and why she writes suspense novels that have engrossed fans across the globe.

“She’s another author people have requested over the years, so we were happy to get her,” said Kathy Selking, the library system’s director of development, affinity, and events.

### ‘Emotional depth’

Ms. Kubica lives and writes in the Chicago area, and *It’s Not Her* is her 10th novel. The story, she said, “may be my most propulsive book. It’s sort of a cautionary tale as well as suspense.”

It centers on what happens when a family’s resort vacation is shattered. A woman finds the bodies of her brother and sister-in-law, discovers her teenage niece missing, and learns that her nephew slept through it all. As family and town secrets emerge across the pages, the woman’s questions turn to whether her niece is the victim in a brutal crime or if she’s the killer.

Kasey Girardot finished reading an advance copy of *It’s Not Her* a couple of weeks ago.

“It may be my favorite yet,” the West Chester, Ohio-based influencer said. Ms. Girardot’s novels.and.nailfies Instagram account has more than 20,000 followers who engage on the books she reads and her manicures that match the book covers.

“There are so many plot twists and a very addictive mystery and a ton of emotional depth that got me,” Ms. Girardot said of the new novel. “That added emotional depth made it really hard hitting.”

Mrs. Simmons used almost the same words to describe why she loves Ms. Kubica’s novels.

“That lasting emotional impact is what made me a longtime fan,” she said. Known as @book\_referees across social media and curator of [bookreferees.org](https://www.bookreferees.org), Mrs. Simmons reads all genres yet keeps returning for more of Ms. Kubica’s work.

“What keeps me coming back to her writing is her consistency and growth as a storyteller,” Mrs. Simmons said. “Each book feels fresh, yet her voice is always recognizable. She explores fear, trust, and human vulnerability in a way that feels realistic and relatable, which makes her stories hard to put down.”



Another reader, Leslie Lindsay, said it's the darkness in Ms. Kubica's books that is the appeal.

"Her work comes across as though it were written by someone with a dark streak, someone paranoid and suspicious, but she is not that at all. She is kind, warm, and loves cats," said Ms. Lindsay, who lives in Chicago and met with the author in 2021.

"I love the way she can take seemingly innocuous daily life and turn [it] into something more sinister," she said. "I also think Mary tends to lean toward events that are real, happening under our noses, but we don't always see them."

### **First time in Toledo**

The book tour for *It's Not Her* is Ms. Kubica's longest one yet. "Three straight weeks and 25 stops," she said.

After Ohio, Illinois, and Indiana, she'll be in New Jersey, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, California, Arizona, Texas, and Wisconsin. Being able to meet readers in person makes it worth it, she said.

"The fun thing is you connect with people on social media, and to connect with them in person is special," Ms. Kubica said.

Her writing process is simple: be dedicated to the page. She was a high school history teacher without a lot of free time and two young children when she first began writing.

"By necessity, I got up at 5 a.m. to write. I had 5 a.m. to 7 a.m. to write and that was it," she said.

Even though her oldest is now 20, she maintains the discipline from those early years.

As for what she's looking forward to most in Toledo: the audience questions and the book signing line afterward, she said.

"After the presentation part, I love that I get to meet everyone who has come out. That's one of my favorite parts of the process," she said. "It means so much. We spend so much time alone with our characters and don't know if it will connect with readers. To get that feedback means so much."



Tickets, which include a copy of *It's Not Her*, are available at [toledolibrary.org/authors](https://toledolibrary.org/authors).

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