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‘The Laramie Project: 10 Years Later’ Draws 50,000 Theatergoers

By [PATRICK HEALY](#)

The creators of “The Laramie Project: 10 Years Later,” the new follow-up play to the [acclaimed 2000 drama](#) about the murder of [Matthew Shepard](#), said Thursday morning that more than 50,000 people had seen performances of the show during its simultaneous debut at theaters in all 50 states and several countries on Monday night.

The new play, [based on interviews with residents of Laramie, Wyo.](#), where Mr. Shepard was murdered included some newsy revelations. One of the prison interview, one of the two confessed killers, Aaron J. McKinney, acknowledged that he hated homosexuals like Mr. Shepard and that the killing may have been a hate crime, and added at one point, “Matt Shepard needed killing.”

His comment stood in contrast to a [“20/20” report on ABC](#) in 2004 that left the impression that the murder might not have been a hate crime but rather a drug-fueled robbery gone wrong.

The performance of the two-hour play in New York, at Alice Tully Hall, drew an extended standing ovation – as well as three protesters outside the theater, holding signs including one that read “Hell Is Real Ask Matt.” The creators of the play coordinated performances across the country and overseas to mark the anniversary of Mr. Shepard’s death, on Oct. 12, 1998.

[Moises Kaufman](#), the director and one of the writers of both the original and new work, said he and his colleagues were now considering whether the “10 Years Later” play should receive its own

full-scale production or if the two “Laramies” should be combined into one piece.