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2026 LOUISIANA BOOK FESTIVAL TO GATHER HUNDREDS OF AUTHORS ACROSS DOZENS OF GENRES

BATON ROUGE, La. – From Southern Gothic hauntings to American history, high-stakes thrillers to Creole kitchens, the 2026 [Louisiana Book Festival](https://LouisianaBookFestival.org) offers something for readers of every interest. The state’s flagship literary event returns Saturday, October 31, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. in downtown Baton Rouge, at the [State Library of Louisiana](https://StateLibraryofLouisiana.org) and the surrounding Capitol Park area. Admission is free.

“Whatever you love to read, you’ll find your people at the Louisiana Book Festival,” said Lieutenant Governor Billy Nungesser. “A history buff and a horror fan can walk the same block in downtown Baton Rouge, meet the authors behind their favorite books, and never spend a dime doing it. It’s simply one of the best days of the year for book lovers in our state.”

With [more than 200 authors and presenters](#) across dozens of panels, the 2026 program spans more than [20 major genres](#). Among the offerings at this year’s program are:

- [Biography and Memoir](#). Headlining this year’s program is “Irma Thomas: Soul Queen of New Orleans,” which debuts the first biography of the beloved New Orleans rhythm-and-blues singer — with Thomas herself scheduled to appear alongside authors Scott Billington and Johnette Downing. The festival’s biography subject area features great variety this year, from “Living in the Present with John Prine” with Tom Piazza, to “Fierce Women: Power, Resistance, and Reinvention,” a panel on women who reshaped their worlds, and many others.
- [Fiction and Literature](#). The festival’s largest subject area headlines with “NBF Presents Southern Satire,” a National Book Foundation partnership bringing National Book Award–honored authors Ben Fountain (*Billy Lynn’s Long Halftime Walk*) and T. Geronimo Johnson (*Welcome to Braggsville*) together for readings and conversation. Louisiana itself takes center stage in “Tides of Fortune and Loss,” a panel on storms, secrets, and survival in Louisiana-set fiction featuring Stephanie Soileau and Rod Davis.
- [Foodways](#). Celebrated chefs trade kitchen stories in “Memories from the Kitchen,” pairing Creole chef Frank Brigtsen (*Color of Flavor*) with New Orleans chef Alon Shaya (*Memories of a Good Meal*). “From Pasture to Plate” preserves the traditions of boucherie and boudin with Chase Cormier and Ken Wells, and live cooking demonstrations run throughout the day in the Cooking Demonstration Tent.
- [Horror, Fantasy, and the Supernatural](#). Fittingly for a festival that lands on Halloween, the supernatural looms large. “Demons of Our Own Making” explores Southern Gothic hauntings and family secrets with David Armand and Emily Carpenter, while “Ghosts and Other Hauntings”

gathers Kim Fu, Jennifer Murphy, and Tlotlo Tsamaase for a conversation on grief and reckoning. The theme carries into the festival's ["One Book, One Festival" discussion](#) of Anne Rice's *Interview with the Vampire*, marking the novel's 50th anniversary.

- [Mystery, Crime, Suspense, and Thrillers](#). Acclaimed author Joe R. Lansdale brings his latest Hap & Leonard novel, *Petrified Dreams*, to "Blood, Books, and Bass Guitars," a showcase of high-octane crime fiction. "Killer Calendar: New Orleans Mysteries for Every Season" serves up Crescent City intrigue with Ellen Byron and Greg Herren, and Southern suspense takes center stage in "Drastic Measures," featuring Ashley Elston.
- [History](#). As the nation marks its 250th anniversary, "The Wider Story" revisits the American Revolution and the Louisiana Purchase with historians Richard Bell, Denise Kiernan, and Alexander Mikaberidze. Closer to home, "Killing the Kingfish" examines the assassination of Huey Long with author Jack B. McGuire, and "Lincoln's Republic" takes on the Civil War era.
- [Romance](#). This year's [Louisiana Writer Award](#) recipient, romance novelist Farrah Rochon, headlines the genre with an award ceremony and an "In Conversation" session before joining "Love Across Genres" alongside Liz Lawson and Alexandra Vasti. For readers who like a little bite with their romance, "No Ordinary Love" dives into romantasy, vampires, and epic adventure.
- [Science Fiction](#). Acclaimed author Yoon Ha Lee anchors the genre, appearing in both a young adult sci-fi panel and "Beyond the Stars," a conversation on cosmic horror, ancient magic, and survival among the stars with fellow novelist Brian Fontenot.

"In a single day, a reader can move from a Southern Gothic ghost story to a panel on the American Revolution to a demonstration of Creole cooking," said Robert Wilson, executive director of the Louisiana Book Festival. "We build the program around that kind of range on purpose. The genres are how most readers find their way in, and this year's lineup gives every one of them a reason to show up."

Times and locations for all book talks and programs are available [on the festival's website](#), and all author appearances can be found on the site's [individual author pages](#).

For complete details on the 2026 Louisiana Book Festival, a schedule of events, and featured authors and titles, visit LouisianaBookFestival.org and follow the event on the [Louisiana Book Festival Facebook page](#).

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