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WHAT TO EXPECT AT THE 2026 LOUISIANA BOOK FESTIVAL

BATON ROUGE, La. — The [2026 Louisiana Book Festival](#) returns **Saturday, October 31, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.** in downtown Baton Rouge, with events at the State Library of Louisiana and throughout the surrounding area. Admission is free. More than 200 authors and presenters – from best-selling, award-winning names to writers making their debut – will take part in dozens of panels, programs, and book signings spanning more than 20 genres at the state’s signature literary event.

“Every single fall, downtown Baton Rouge comes alive with the absolute best of our state’s literary culture,” said Lieutenant Governor Billy Nungesser. “It is a true honor to welcome book lovers, authors, and families from every corner of Louisiana to our capital city for a day of sharing great stories. Hosting an event of this caliber is a massive point of pride for Louisiana, and it shows the world how we celebrate our unique heritage. I encourage everyone to bring their family out to downtown Baton Rouge to experience this wonderful, free celebration of reading and community.”

Landing squarely on Halloween, the 2026 festival leans into the occasion while reaching across every kind of reader’s interest. Some of this year’s highlights include:

- A 50th-anniversary [One Book, One Festival](#) discussion of Anne Rice’s *Interview with the Vampire*, the New Orleans-born novel that reshaped modern gothic fiction. The [horror and supernatural lineup](#) carries the Halloween spirit further with panels on Southern Gothic hauntings and ghost stories featuring [David Armand](#), [Emily Carpenter](#), [Kim Fu](#), [Bethany C. Morrow](#), and more.
- The presentation of the Louisiana Writer Award to best-selling romance novelist [Farrah Rochon](#), honored with a ceremony and an “In Conversation” session before she joins a panel on writing love across genres. The Baton Rouge Area Foundation’s latest Ernest J. Gaines Award honoree, [Rob Franklin](#), will discuss his debut novel *Great Black Hope*.
- The debut of the first biography of New Orleans music icon [Irma Thomas](#), with Thomas herself scheduled to appear alongside authors [Johnette Downing](#) and [Scott Billington](#). The biography and memoir lineup also includes [Tom Piazza](#) on the life and music of John Prine.
- A National Book Foundation–presented conversation on Southern satire with National Book Award honorees [Ben Fountain](#) and [Jason Mott](#), plus a panel on Louisiana-set fiction with [Stephanie Soileau](#) and [Rod Davis](#).
- High-octane crime and suspense with [Joe R. Lansdale](#) and his final Hap & Leonard novel, alongside New Orleans mysteries and Southern thrillers from [Ellen Byron](#), [Greg Herren](#), and [Ashley Elston](#).

- History timed to the nation's 250th anniversary, revisiting the American Revolution and the Louisiana Purchase with historians [Richard Bell](#), [Denise Kiernan](#), and [Alexander Mikaberidze](#), and a look at the assassination of Huey Long with [Jack B. McGuire](#).
- Live cooking demonstrations throughout the day in the Cooking Demonstration Tent, plus foodways panels pairing celebrated Louisiana chefs including [Frank Brigtsen](#) and [Alon Shaya](#), and a session highlighting the traditions of boucherie and boudin.
- A full day of poetry hosted by Louisiana Poet Laureate [Gina Ferrara](#), plus the festival's popular poetry-to-order feature, where writers compose free, personalized poems on antique typewriters in the State Library lobby.
- Science fiction and fantasy anchored by acclaimed novelist [Yoon Ha Lee](#), the Young Readers Pavilion and Teen HQ with activities and award-winning authors for younger readers, [more than 100](#) exhibitors, food vendors, and a statewide public library and bookmobile roundup.
- In a festival first, all four of the most recent [Louisiana Young Readers' and Teen Readers' Choice Award](#) winners will be in attendance for a special recognition ceremony and book discussion.

All featured titles will be available for purchase in the festival book tent, run by Cavalier House Books of Denham Springs and Lafayette. T-shirts, mugs, pins, stickers, and other merchandise featuring this year's festival artwork will be on sale.

Seats remain for the festival's [WordShops seminars](#), held the day before the festival on **Friday, October 30**, at the State Library. These three-hour writing workshops are open to writers of all experience levels, with each session focused on a different topic, from creative writing technique to the business of writing. To learn more, visit the [WordShops webpage](#) or call (225) 219-9503.

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](#).

The [Louisiana Center for the Book](#) was established in the State Library of Louisiana in 1994. Its mission is to stimulate public interest in reading, books, literacy, and libraries and to celebrate Louisiana's rich literary heritage. It is the official state affiliate of the Library of Congress Center for the Book.



Contact Information:

Kevin Calbert
State Library of Louisiana
225-342-4930
kcalbert@library.la.gov

Barry Landry
Office of the Lieutenant Governor
225-342-7009
blandry@crt.la.gov