



Tuesday, Oct. 21, 2025

## LOUISIANA BOOK FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES RETURN OF POPULAR POETRY PROGRAMS

**BATON ROUGE, La.** – The [Louisiana Book Festival](https://LouisianaBookFestival.org) has announced its full slate of programs featuring poets and poetry on Saturday, November 1, in downtown Baton Rouge.

“The Louisiana Book Festival is dedicated to celebrating literature in all its forms, and we are proud to highlight the outstanding work of regional and Louisiana-based poets once again,” said Lieutenant Governor Billy Nungesser. “We invite poetry lovers from across the region to come experience the festival’s impressive lineup of programs, readings, and discussions this year.”

“Great poetry has the power to inspire creativity, transcend barriers, and form a unique collaboration between the reader and the writer,” said Robert Wilson, Louisiana Book Festival Executive Director. “We’re always excited to be able to showcase dozens of prolific and award-winning poets at our event and have them to share their work and process with attendees from throughout the state and region.”

Louisiana Poet Laureate [Gina Ferrara](#) will lead two insightful panels of Louisiana poets and will participate in two special poetry exchanges, *Poet Laureate to Poet Laureate*, with Louisiana’s previous Poet Laureate [Alison Pelegrin](#), and *From Borough to Bayou: A Conversation Between the State Poet Laureates*, with New York State Poet Laureate [Kimiko Hahn](#). Led by Ferrara, the two *Louisiana Poets* panels will feature readings from a total of 12 distinguished and award-winning poets.

The recipient of the [2025 Louisiana Writer Award](#), poet and educator [Julie Kane](#), will be recognized and officially receive her award at a special ceremony in the State Library’s Seminar Center beginning at noon, and she will be featured with a follow-up conversation moderated by former Louisiana Poet Laureate and Writer Award recipient [Darrell Bourque](#).

Kane will also present one of the festival’s [WordShops](#) seminars the day before the festival, *Does Your Writing Smell? The Power of “The Fifth Sense,”* which employs science and notable published examples to explore how scent imagery is conveyed in writing. [Register online](#) for that workshop and others on Friday, October 31.

Two esteemed, award-winning former Poet Laureates of Louisiana, one a native of New Orleans, [Mona Lisa Saloy](#), and the other a native of Lake Charles, [John Warner Smith](#), worked together to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the destructive hurricanes of 2025 in *Hurricanes Katrina & Rita at 20: An Anthology of*

*Louisiana Poetry with Art*. The work served as a forum for published and emerging poets as well as nine artists of Louisiana to share art and poems of their experiences, feelings, and reflections of Katrina and Rita, and these contributors will be featured in a special panel discussion at the festival.

A biography of southern poet Frank Stanford is the subject of one of the festival's discussion group sessions. *The Life and Poetry of Frank Stafford* by award-winning author [James McWilliams](#) examines the influential work and complicated life of the prolific but largely unknown talent. New Orleans poet [Ralph Adamo](#) will moderate the discussion.

A returning popular activity is the festival's *Poetry-to-Order* feature. Poets [Cassandra de Alba](#) and [GennaRose Nethercott](#) of The Traveling Poetry Emporium will create free personalized poems, which can be taken home as keepsakes, composed on the spot in the lobby of the State Library using antique typewriters.

For complete details on the 2025 Louisiana Book Festival, a schedule of events, and featured authors and titles, visit [LouisianaBookFestival.org](https://LouisianaBookFestival.org) and follow us 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.



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