

Tennessee Williams Fest celebrates 30 years

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Patrons browse books at a past Tennessee Williams/New Orleans Literary Festival. (Photo by Paula Burch-Celentano)

Inspired by the inimitable Southern playwright, the [Tennessee Williams/New Orleans Literary Festival](#) will celebrate 30 years of programming enjoyed by both budding writers and lovers of local culture.

Taking place at multiple venues throughout the French Quarter from Wednesday (March 30) through Sunday (April 3), five days of events will commemorate Williams' time in New Orleans, his legendary works and his legacy carried on by contemporary authors.

"We're celebrating how Tennessee Williams put New Orleans on the map," says Dominique Ellis, the festival's publicist.

This year's packed lineup features French Quarter walking tours, engaging panels and celebrity appearances from bounce artist Big Freedia and actress Mary Badham, best known as Scout from the film *To Kill a Mockingbird*.

The festival also hosts several master classes for both aspiring and professional authors, including New Orleans native Alys Arden discussing unconventional paths to publication at The Historic New Orleans Collection on Thursday (March 31) at 9 a.m.

"The master classes are good for finding a sense of balance in writing," says Ellis.

The festival's speaker series also includes Tulane University faculty members Richard Campanella and Peter Cooley as well as alumni Aimee Hayes, Tom Sancton and Christina Vella.

Additionally, guests will eagerly await the festival's signature tradition — the annual Stanley & Stella Shouting Contest.

Marlon Brando's memorable scene from *A Streetcar Named Desire* sets the stage for the popular shouting match, taking place on Sunday (April 3) at 4:15 p.m. in Jackson Square.

Festival board president Janet Daley Duval has served as the contest's longtime Stella, with each year's participants portraying Stanley calling up to her balcony.

"A lot of women participate as well, yelling, 'Stanley!' This year [Duval] is passing the slip to Cecile Monteyne," says Ellis.

Monteyne is the managing director of The NOLA Project and a Tulane University alumna.

The contest is free and open to the public.

Festival [tickets](#) are available online.

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Dominique Ellis, publicist for the Tennessee Williams/New Orleans Literary Festival