

New Orleans Book Festival at Tulane returns March 27-29

February 27, 2025

|

Mary-Elizabeth Lough, PhD mlough@tulane.edu

[View PDF](#)



The [New Orleans Book Festival at Tulane University](#) returns this spring, bringing together an impressive lineup of national and local authors, thought leaders and creatives.

More than 100 writers, along with chefs, musicians and artists, will take part in the fourth annual festival, to be held March 27-29 on Tulane's uptown campus. The event will feature author sessions, panel discussions and engaging conversations, all free and open to the public.

Among the festival's notable guests are award-winning journalists Connie Chung and Bob Woodward, bestselling novelist John Grisham, financial journalist and author Michael Lewis, former Saints quarterback Archie Manning, columnist and author Maureen Dowd, actor and director Griffin Dunne, festival co-chair and bestselling biographer Walter Isaacson.

Among the authors who will be featured at the festival, the following Tulane alumni will be bringing their expertise and personal stories to the audience:

*[Danielle del Sol \(A *11\)](#) – Danielle del Sol has been executive director of the Preservation Resource Center since 2018. Before that, she served as the assistant editor and then editor of *Preservation in Print* magazine for seven years, and as PRC's communications director. She holds a Master in Preservation Studies degree from the Tulane University School of Architecture, where she also served as an adjunct lecturer for several years. She sits on the boards of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, National Preservation Partners Network and Preservation Action, as well as local boards.

*[Tripp Friedler \(L *85\)](#) – President and CEO of Free Gulliver, LLC, Friedler is an author and philanthropist with a background in leadership and service. He founded the Young Leadership Council in 1986, which has grown into a thriving organization supporting community initiatives. Tripp penned *FreeGulliver: Six Swift Lessons in Life Planning*, published by Trost Publishing. His latest book, *The Tunnel*, honors the memory of his late son, Henry Friedler, with all proceeds donated to mental health charities nationwide.

*[Sarah Jaffe \(NC '02\)](#) – A writer and reporter, Jaffe lives in New Orleans and on the road. Her books include *Work Won't Love You Back: How Devotion to Our Jobs Keeps Us Exploited, Exhausted, and Alone*; *Necessary Trouble: Americans in Revolt* and *From the Ashes: Grief and Revolution in a World on Fire*.

*[Meredith Maltby Jao \(SLA '16\)](#) – Jao is a children's book author, advertising strategist and former Tulane tennis player living in New Orleans. She and her husband, Chishan Jao — an illustrator, creative designer and fellow former Tulane tennis player ('17) originally from Taiwan — teamed up on the court and now collaborate as a husband-and-wife storytelling duo. *The Hesitant Hedgehog* is their debut picture book for fans of Frog and Toad and Little Bear about nurturing

acceptance in yourself and others.

*[Rachel Marsh \(SLA '16\)](#) – Marsh grew up in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. She earned her Bachelor of Arts from Tulane, where she studied English and psychology and minored in Spanish. After graduating, she moved to Boston where she earned her Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing for Children from Simmons University. She is now back in the Crescent City, where she eats the world's best food and stays busy with her almost-hundred-year-old house. She works for the New Orleans Public Library, and her writing is represented by Larissa Melo Pienkowski at Jill Grinberg Literary Management. *Rougarou Magic* is her debut novel.

*[Michael Sacks \(A&S '90\)](#) – Sacks works on the editorial staff for *Vanity Fair* and writes for *The New Yorker*, as well as contributing humor to *Esquire*, *GQ*, *Believer*, *Vice*, *Salon*, *McSweeney's*, the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, and other publications. He is the *New York Times* bestselling author of 10 comedy books and three audio projects. The last four books have been featured on *Vulture's* "Best Comedy Books of the Year" list. His books have made the *New York Times* Bestseller List twice.

*[Echo Olander \(NC '81\)](#) – A longtime advocate for the arts in New Orleans, Olander has spent decades working to build creative capacity in the city. She is the former leader of KID smART, a nationally recognized arts education organization, and continues to foster connections between art, community and culture.

*[Marie Quintana \(SW *79\)](#) – A nationally acclaimed business leader and inspiring speaker, Quintana has held leadership roles at major corporations, including Tenet Healthcare, PepsiCo and IBM. She has been named one of the Top 50 Hispanic Women in Business by *Hispanic Business Magazine* and one of the Top 50 Women in Grocery by *Progressive Grocer*. Passionate about mentorship and leadership development, she co-founded the PepsiCo Women of Color Alliance and actively supports future women executives.

*[David Weill \(A&S '86, M *90\)](#) – Dr. Weill is the former director of the Center for Advanced Lung Disease and Lung and Heart-Lung Transplant Program at Stanford University Medical Center. He is currently the principal of the Weill Consulting Group which focuses on improving the delivery of pulmonary, ICU and transplant care. Dr. Weill's writing has appeared in the *Wall Street Journal*, *USA Today*, *Salon*, *Newsweek*,

the *Chicago Tribune*, *STAT*, the *Washington Post*, *The Hill*, *LitHub*, *Tablet*, *The Times of Israel*, *TODAY.com* and the *Los Angeles Times*. He also has been interviewed on Fox, CNN, and *The Doctors* television show and by the *New York Times*, the *San Francisco Chronicle*, and the *Wall Street Journal*. Dr. Weill's memoir *Exhale: Hope, Healing*, and *A Life in Transplant* was published in May of 2021. His novel, *All That Really Matters*, was published in June of 2024.

*[Michael White \(G *79, G *83\)](#) - White is a renowned New Orleans clarinetist, bandleader, composer, historian and educator, recognized as a leading authority on traditional New Orleans jazz. He has performed worldwide, recorded over 50 albums, and collaborated with legends like Wynton Marsalis, Eric Clapton and Paul Simon. Inspired by George Lewis, White began his jazz career in the 1970s, playing with brass bands and forming the Original Liberty Jazz Band in 1981. His recordings, including *Blue Crescent* and *Adventures in New Orleans Jazz*, highlight his deep connection to the city's musical heritage. His numerous accolades include the NEA Heritage Fellowship, *Offbeat Magazine's* Clarinetist of the Year, and the French Chevalier of Arts & Letters. Despite losing his home and archives to Hurricane Katrina, White continues to champion and preserve the spirit of New Orleans jazz.

With an exciting mix of authors, experts and entertainers, the 2025 New Orleans Book Festival at Tulane promises to be an unmissable celebration of literature, ideas and culture.