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Contact: Ami McConnell  
info@writerfestnashville.com

## WRITERFEST NASHVILLE UNITES CREATIVE WRITERS AT FIFTH CONFERENCE

*Join writers of book, song, and screen Nov. 17-18 at Belmont University*



**NASHVILLE, TN.** – WriterFest Nashville will kick-off its fifth annual conference Nov. 17-18 at Belmont University. An incredible two-day event designed for writers of book, song and film, it aims to inspire, empower and connect creatives. The weekend includes 11 expert panel sessions, five seminars and “Ask the Expert” one-on-one appointments, as well as a special fundraiser for Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library at Love and Exile Winery and Bar.

Keynote speakers at 2023’s conference are **Patti Callahan Henry**, a New York Times, EPCA, Globe and Mail and USA Today bestselling author of 17 novels, including “The Secret Book of Flora Lea” and “Once Upon a Wardrobe”; **Tyler Merritt**, Nashville-based actor, comedian, vocalist, creator of The Tyler Merritt Project and author of “I Take My Coffee Black: Reflections on Tupac, Musical Theater, Faith and Being Black in America”; and **Julia Whelan**, deemed “The Adele of Audiobooks” by The New York Times, a writer, actor and audiobook narrator of more than 500 titles. Whelan’s “Thank You For Listening” was a Best of 2022 pick at Amazon, and her numerous awards include Audible’s Narrator of the Year.

Past notable keynote speakers include songwriter **Tom Douglas**, member of the Nashville Hall of Fame and co-writer of the Paramount Plus show “Love, Tom”; **JT Ellison**, New York Times bestselling novelist and Emmy-award winning host of “A Word on Words”; and **Liane Moriarty**, New York Times bestselling novelist of “Big Little Lies.”

Founded in 2018 by Ami McConnell, WriterFest was established as a creative gathering for aspiring writers, published authors, screenwriters, poets, songwriters, and entertainment industry professionals in Nashville. Attendees can enjoy keynote talks by the best writers in the business as well as in-depth sessions with professional editors, literary agents, filmmakers and music industry insiders.

*“WriterFest Nashville is the most amazing writing festival. I’ve met so many fabulous genuine, good*

*writers here. I've had the time of my life.*" — **Tara Stringfellow, Bestselling author, "Memphis,"**  
**WriterFest 2022 Keynote Speaker**

*"WriterFest sets the standard for events like this. I really enjoyed participating in panels and meeting so many talented writers. I left on a creative, inspiring high."* — **Julian R. Vaca, Nashville Next Chapter Society Author Ambassador, screenwriter and author of "The Memory Index"**

*"WriterFest Nashville managed to do the impossible: it brought together screenwriters, songwriters, novelists, and nonfiction authors with top notch workshops, networking, and huge industry pros. Whether you are an aspiring writer or an established author, there's something for everyone here. I'm already counting down the days until next year..."* — **Rea Frey, author of "The Other Year"**

*"The vibe around Winterfest 2018 was electric ...I so enjoyed being part of this great event."* —**Tom Douglas, award-winning #1 hit songwriter, "Run to You," "The House that Built Me," "Meanwhile Back at Mommas"**

To learn more about WriterFest and buy tickets, visit [www.writerfestnashville.com](http://www.writerfestnashville.com).

#### **WriterFest Directors:**



**Ami McConnell:** WriterFest founder and director Ami McConnell is an author, bestselling ghostwriter and editor with over 20 years' experience in-house at major trade book publishers. She formerly served as Editor-in-Chief and VP of Howard Books/Simon & Schuster and as an acquiring editor at HarperCollins. She has edited numerous New York Times bestsellers and award winners. Ghostwriting projects include celebrated singers, songwriters, social media influencers, psychologists, doctors, therapists, and film/tv actors. She lives in the Nashville area with her family. Follow Ami on Instagram [@amimcconnellwrites](https://www.instagram.com/amimcconnellwrites) or on Facebook [here](#), or at [amimcconnell.com](http://amimcconnell.com).



**Sara Wigal:** Programming Director Sara Wigal is an Assistant Professor of Media & Entertainment and Director of [Publishing](#) at Belmont University. Her students learn in a unique undergraduate program that equips students with necessary skills and knowledge to enter the book world. She serves on the fundraising committee of [Next Chapter Society](#), a section of the Nashville Public Library Foundation. She is the founder of the Nashville Publishing Meetup, a group for industry contacts to network without being client-facing. Wigal has been published by Library Journal, The Tennessean, Publishers Weekly, Writer's Digest, and other literary and scholarly journals. She is an aspiring historical fiction novelist, and writer of the personal essay. Find her on Instagram [@shewritespirates](https://www.instagram.com/shewritespirates).