



**For Immediate Release**

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**Announcing Desiree S. Evans as the next “Gulf South Writer in the Woods”**

**GSWW is a joint program of A Studio in the Woods and New Orleans Center for the Gulf South**

**NEW ORLEANS, LA** - A Studio in the Woods and New Orleans Center for the Gulf South are excited to announce Desiree S. Evans as the third [Gulf South Writer in the Woods](#), a joint program designed to support the creative work, scholarship and community engagement of writers examining the Gulf South region. Evans will receive a stipend of \$5,000, a 6-week residency over 18 months at A Studio in the Wood, Tulane University library access, and staff support from the presenting partners. For this iteration of the program, the partners chose to focus their support on the genre of speculative fiction, which encompasses all works containing elements that don't exist in reality: magical realism, science fiction, fantasy, horror, etc.

“Speculative fiction is important now because it is crucial for us as a region and a larger world community to envision futures where we can live and survive with impending challenges and changes in our hearts, minds, souls, and climate,” says Dr. Denise Frazier, Assistant Director of New Orleans Center for the Gulf South, “It’s imperative to think creatively about how we live with water and what changes need to be made now for future generations to be informed, survive, and hopefully thrive in a more ‘watery’ region.”

Desiree S. Evans will be completing work on a dystopian literary fantasy novel set hundreds of years into the future along what remains of the Gulf Coast. She will also devise and host public programs to share this work with the New Orleans community. The novel tells the story of an African-American woman and her family surviving in a post-climate change world where most of Louisiana is under water. In this phantasmagorical new landscape, monsters of myth and legend converge alongside stories of our past and dreams of our possible futures. As a work of speculative fiction and eco-fabulism, the novel makes its home alongside the growing canon of literature exploring the effects of anthropogenic climate change. Desiree will also spend time editing her short-fiction collection — an interlinked series of stories steeped in the folklore, mythology, and history of the bayou communities of rural Louisiana.

As a Louisiana native, the Gulf South region plays an important role in Desiree’s writing. In taking readers into her speculative Southern landscapes, she aims to showcase the rich heritage and cultural traditions of a place that is sometimes more water than land. Desiree’s stories exist in a space where storms and rivers rage, where ancestors call, and where magic just might be real enough to touch.

[Desiree S. Evans](#) is an award-winning writer, scholar, and activist from South Louisiana. She writes fiction for children, teens, and adults. She is a 2020 winner of the Walter Dean Myers Grant for children’s fiction awarded by the organization We Need Diverse Books. Her work has received support from the Voices of Our Nations Arts Foundation (VONA/Voices), Kimbilio Fiction, the Callaloo Creative Writing

Workshop, the Barbara Deming Memorial Fund, the Hurston/Wright Foundation, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators. Desiree holds an MFA in creative writing from the Michener Center for Writers at The University of Texas at Austin, an MA in international policy from Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs, and a BA in journalism from Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism.

**A Studio in the Woods**, a program of Tulane University's ByWater Institute, is one of the leading artistic and academic residency programs in the Gulf South region. The Studio fosters creative responses to the challenges of our time by providing retreat to artists, scholars, and the public in our protected forest on the Mississippi River. For more information visit: [www.astudiointhewoods.org](http://www.astudiointhewoods.org).

**New Orleans Center for the Gulf South at Tulane University** (NOCGS) is an interdisciplinary, place-based institute dedicated to preserving, perpetuating, and celebrating the distinctive cultures of New Orleans and the Gulf South, identified as the bioregion stretching from Florida to Texas. All NOCGS programming is based on the belief that the more we understand where we are, the more fully we can engage in our democracy and collective destiny. <https://liberalarts.tulane.edu/programs/nocgs>

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