

Preliminary Schedule At-A-Glance
(Subject to Change)

WEDNESDAY, November 19, 2025

11 AM – 12:00 Noon	TOUR REGISTRATION
12:00 Noon – 5:00 PM	ATLANTA BLACK HERITAGE TOUR
3:00 PM – 5:00 PM	REGISTRATION - Membership
6:00 PM – 8:00 PM	PRE-FESTIVAL EVENT <i>Kuumba Storytellers of Georgia Welcomes NABS to Atlanta!</i>

THURSDAY, November 20, 2025

8:00 AM – 5:00 PM	REGISTRATION – Membership
11:00 AM – 7:00 PM	VISIT THE MARKETPLACE!!!
8:30 AM – 9:15 AM	AKWABAA GATHERING!
9:00 AM – 10:00 AM	Storytelling Through Fabric Collage (YOUTH) <i>Presenter – Willa Brigham</i>
9:15 AM – 10:00 AM	BLACK APPALACHIAN FELLOWSHIP AWARDS CEREMONY
10:00 AM – 11:00 AM	Stories in Verse: Crafting Poetic Tales (YOUTH) <i>Presenter – Sarai Abdul-Malik</i>
10:00 AM – 11:00 AM	Storytelling Through Fabric Collage <i>Presenter – Willa Brigham</i>
10:30 AM – 12:00 NOON	“A TASTE OF APPALACHIA” CONCERT <i>Featuring: Beverly Fields Burnette, Janice Cooley, Omope Carter Daboiku, Felecia Outsey & Eric Jordan Monstalong</i>
12:15 PM – 1:30 PM	VILLAGE TELLIN’! (Boxed Lunch)
	CONCURRENT WORKSHOPS
2:00 PM – 3:00 PM	Sharing the Torch: How to Engage and Sustain Young Adults <i>Presenter - Paul D. Best</i>
	Nuts and Bolts of Storytelling <i>Presenter – Len Cabral</i>
	Voice Warm-Up Workshop (YOUTH) <i>Presenter – Oba William King</i>
3:00 PM – 4:00 PM	Sharing the Torch: How to Engage and Sustain Young Adults

Presenter - Paul D. Best

Nuts and Bolts of Storytelling

Presenter – Len Cabral

3:30 PM – 5:00 PM

CONVERSATION WITH THE ELDERS (YOUTH)

Moderator: Emily Lansana

VISIT THE MARKETPLACE!!!

6:30 PM – 6:45 PM

DRUMMING & DANCING

6:45 PM -6:50 PM

LIBATION

6:45 PM – 7:00 PM

OPENING GALA!!.....AFFILIATE MARCH

7:00 PM – 7:15 PM

GREETINGS

7:15 PM – 9:30 PM

OPENING GALA! STORYTELLING CONCERT

Featuring: “In The Spirit”, Danielle Daniel, Len Cabral & Tejumola Ologboni

9:00 PM – 9:15 PM

MOTHER MARY CARTER SMITH LOVE CIRCLE

(KUUMBA Circle)

9:30 PM – 10:30 PM

STORY SWAP

9:30 PM – 10:00 PM

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

FRIDAY, November 21, 2025

7:30 AM – 5:00 PM

REGISTRATION – Membership

9:00 AM – 11:00 PM

VISIT THE MARKETPLACE!!!

9:00 AM – 1:00 PM

YOUTH BLACK HERITAGE TOUR (YOUTH ONLY)

CONCURRENT WORKSHOPS

9:00 AM – 10:00 AM

Appalachian Blues Women: Wild Women Give Us the Blues

Presenter – Kelle Jolly

**Show and Tell: Where Storytelling
and Theater Meet**

Presenter – April Armstrong

10:00 AM – 11:00 AM

Appalachian Blues Women: Wild Women Give Us the Blues

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and Theater Meet**

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11:00 AM – 12 NOON

**BASF Workshop - Joy and Justice Journeys to a
Sustainable Future**

Presenter – Jim Embry

12 NOON – 1:00 PM	VILLAGE TELLIN’!
1:00 PM – 2:30 PM	AFFILIATES LUNCHEON <i>Presentation of Awardees for: Charlie & Linda Jenkins Brown Service Award, Ruth & Brother Blue Circle of Elders Award, and the Baba Jamal Koram Harambe Youth Award.</i>
2:00 PM – 2:30 PM	BABA JAMAL REMEMBRANCE <i>featuring Tejumola Ologboni</i>
2:30 PM – 3:30 PM	Grounded & Centered: Qigong for Storytellers <i>Presenter - Gloria Elder</i> What Ya Think? <i>Back by popular demand!!</i>
2:30 PM – 4:00 PM	Step Up Your Storytelling Journey (YOUTH) <i>Presenter – Toni Simmons</i>
3:30 PM – 4:30 PM	Grounded & Centered: Qigong for Storytellers <i>Presenter - Gloria Elder</i> What Ya Think? <i>Back by popular demand!!</i>
4:30 PM – 5:00 PM	STORY SWAP
5:30 PM – 7:00 PM	DINNER ON YOUR OWN VISIT THE MARKETPLACE!!!
6:30 PM – 6:45 PM	NABS ENSEMBLE – DRUMMING & DANCING
6:45 PM – 9:30 PM	“IN THE TRADITION...” CONCERT <i>Featuring: Gwendolyn Napier, Jerry G. White, Deborah Strahorn, Toni Simmons & Donna Willingham</i>
9:30 PM – 11:00 PM	KUUMBA StorySLAM

SATURDAY, November 22, 2025

9:00 AM – 1:00 PM	REGISTRATION – Membership
9:00 AM – 10:00 PM	VISIT THE MARKETPLACE!!!
9:00 AM – 10:45 AM	NABS MEMBERSHIP MEETING
11:00 AM – 12 NOON	AFFILIATE PRESIDENTS MEETING
11:00 AM – 12 NOON	SHORT & SWEET CONCERT! (NEW to the NABS Stage!) <i>Featuring: Norma D. Ashong, Djeli Celestia, Lauren Dotson & Michael Brundy</i>
12 NOON – 1:00 PM	Lunch on your own

VISIT THE MARKETPLACE!!!

1:00 PM – 2:30 PM

YOUTH STORYTELLING CONCERT

3:00 PM – 4:30 PM

JACKIE TORRENCE TALL TALES CONTEST

4:30 PM – 6:30 PM

VISIT THE MARKETPLACE!!!

6:30 PM – 6:50 PM

ZORA NEALE HURSTON AWARDS

6:50 PM – 9:00 PM

“NABS HONORS...” STORYTELLING CONCERT

Akbar Imhotep *Honored by Gwendolyn Napier &*

Deborah Strahorn

Nothando Zulu *Honored by Danielle Daniel &*

Brotha Ase’ (Zulu Grandson)

Gwen Hillary *Honored by “In The Spirit”*

And more Honorees....

9:15 PM – 10:00 PM

STORY SWAP

9:15 PM – 10:00 PM

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

SUNDAY, November 23, 2025

8:30 AM – 9:30 AM

NABS SPIRITUAL CONCERT

Featuring: Jerry G. White & Donna Willingham

9:30 AM – 10:00 AM

MAMA LINDA GOSS CLOSING UNITY CIRCLE

WORKSHOP DESCRIPTIONS

Storytelling Through Fabric Collage (YOUTH) – Willa Brigham

Students will create an original 8x10 fabric collage using fabric and glue. This will involve layering and assembling various pieces of fabric to create a visually interesting composition. Unlike traditional collage, these fabric collages will incorporate textiles of different colors, textures, and patterns to add depth and dimension. Each participant will then tell the story of their collage in **15 seconds or less**. As time permits, there will be an interactive discussion on what makes our individual collages different, yet the same. Attendees will use Willa’s original composition, Differences, with the theme, We Are All Different But We Are All The Same.

Stories In Verse: Crafting Poetic Tales (YOUTH) – Sarai Abdul-Malik

Stories in Verse is a joyful and imaginative storytelling workshop where children learn to weave stories through rhythm and rhyme. Blending the art of poetry with narrative, this workshop invites children to explore poetic language, imagery, and emotion as tools to craft their own poetic tales. Drawing inspiration from classic voices as well as original poetic works, participants discover how stories can sing, dance, and flow in verse. Whether it’s a rhyming adventure, a lyrical tale of friendship, or a heartfelt reflection, this workshop empowers children to find their voice and play with words in meaningful, musical ways.

Voice Warm-Up: Vocal, Diction and Articulation Ritual (YOUTH) - Oba William King

For anyone who uses their voice to share their expertise, this skills development workshop is designed for you to add another tool to your professional artist kit. Participants will receive a copy of a link to continue your growth with this warm-up content. You will experience easy to follow Instructions and exercises that are engaging for beginners to seasoned professionals.

Sharing The Torch: How to Engage & Sustain Young Adults – Paul. D. Best

How do we recruit and keep young adults within NABS and our NABS Affiliates? Through hands-on activities, group problem solving, and open discussions, participants will learn effective mindsets and strategies to engage young adults, make it easier for them to be committed, and how to transition the younger generations into leadership. Participants will also receive an affiliate “To-Do” list to implement what they learn within their affiliate.

Nuts & Bolts of Storytelling: Tips for Successful Telling – Len Cabral

This workshop will explain the tools needed to become a storyteller that engage the listening audience. Questions from where to find stories, how to learn stories, and how and where to practice them will be answered. In addition, you will explore story memorization and how to avoid mistakes that get in the way of the story. Len will also discuss the importance of setting the stage before taking the stage.

CONVERSATION WITH THE ELDERS: Stories for When We Wonder Why – Emily Lansana

In this session the Elders and Youth will listen to a traditional “Why” story and then work together to craft a new story in the folktale format that answers the question “Why.” The story will be developed collectively and Emily will direct participants to create a performance of their new folktale. Youth and elders will together explore tools and techniques for sharing stories that engage intergenerational audiences.

Appalachian Blues Women: Wild Women Give Us the Blues – Kelle Jolly

This workshop explores the lives and music of three influential Appalachian blues women—**Bessie Smith, Ida Cox, and Leola Manning**—who used their voices to document the struggles, joys, and realities of life in the early 20th century. Through their lyrics and musical styles, they exemplify the blues tradition of blending honest emotion with storytelling. Participants will compose original blues songs with lyrics that tell a story. This workshop is for beginner to advanced storytellers.

Show & Tell: Where Storytelling and Theater Meet – April Armstrong

In this workshop you will explore the intersection of story and theater as storytellers AND actors. This workshop incorporates theater skills to create a dynamic storytelling style that can enhance your presentation. Through improv and vocal exercises, character exploration, and movement, participants will discover their inner and outer actor. Utilizing the actors’ handbook, April offers techniques for memorization, story analysis, character development, as well as warm up and relaxation routines. Sometimes, you just need to ignite your inner ham(let).

Joy & Justice: Journeys to a Sustainable Future – Jim Embry

In this workshop, Jim will describe how, with the support of the NABS/BASF Fellowship, I’ve been able to expand my Joy and Justice Journey throughout the year with 20+ diverse community organizations, universities and conferences. Join Jim and be inspired to listen, learn, and laugh about his incredible storytelling journeys which, like the Sankofa Bird, connects the past, present and future. There’s a bit of spoken word, poetry, photography, music, and even a lil’ dancing!

Grounded & Centered: Qigong for Storytellers – Gloria Elder

This workshop introduces Qigong—a gentle movement and breath practice that enhances both creative expression and overall well-being. Whether you’re a writer, performer, speaker, or simply someone with a story to share, you’ll learn how to ground your nervous system, open your voice, and access story from a calm, connected place. No previous experience with Qigong is necessary. Just bring your curiosity, a notebook, and clothes you can move in. This is a low-impact, deeply nourishing workshop for creatives who want to tell better stories—and feel better doing it.

Step Up Your Storytelling Journey (YOUTH) – Toni Simmons

This interactive workshop will provide an opportunity for youth to learn the art of Blackstorytelling. Tips and techniques on choosing, learning and telling stories will be shared. Participants will engage in creative storytelling exercises to develop stage presence, vocal projection and expression. There will be demonstrations and practice of retelling folktales. Ways to include audience participation with songs, chants and actions will be explored.

Whatyathink? (Back by popular demand!)

Share that story you've been working on, want to get out of your head and put on paper, or share that one story that you would like some feedback on. Just tell it and two "seasoned" tellers will give you some encouragement and tips...if that's what you want.

KUUMBA STORYSLAM!!!

The Kuumba StorySLAM will be where tellers are invited to put their name in the hat for a chance to get on stage and tell a 5-minute story on a given topic, i.e. a story that explores racial awareness, pride, awakening, etc. Stories will be judged on a 10-point scale for staying on time, staying on topic, story construction and craftsmanship. **Cash prizes will be awarded to for 1st, 2nd & 3rd place winners!**