

Thursday, June 19, 2025

Registration open 12:00 pm - 2:15 pm, 2nd Floor Promenade | The Mysterious Bookshop open 9:00 am - 6:30 pm, Nassau West & East, 2nd Floor

6:30 pm - 8:00 pm

THRILLERFEST OPENING RECEPTION Co-Hosted by St. Martin's Press, Minotaur Books, Tor Publishing Group, Forge | Trianon Ballroom, 3rd Floor

THRILLERFEST XX - 2025

Friday, June 20, 2025

Registration open 7:30 am - 6:30pm, 2nd Floor Promenade
The Mysterious Bookshop open 9:00 am - 6:30 pm, Nassau West & East
All events are on the 2nd floor of the New York Hilton Midtown unless otherwise indicated

Sutton North & Center

Beekman

Sutton South

Regent

8:00 am - 8:50 am

BAIT, SWITCH OR DISTRACTION?
Using Red Herrings
Moderator: Dwayne Goetzl
David Ellis
Jamie Freveletti
Melinda Leigh
Vanessa Lillie
Catherine McKenzie
Greg Wands

FEAR, HIGH STAKES OR CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT?
Ratcheting up Tension
Moderator: Boyd Morrison
Christine Carbo
Joshua Corin
Trevor Firetog
S.C. Godfrey
J.B. Manas
Jon McGoran

TEAR-JERKER, H.E.A., OR CLIFFHANGER?
Writing Satisfying Endings
Moderator: Allison Brennan
Anne Burt
Audrey J. Cole
Sarah Zachrich Jeng
Matthew Sullivan
Tony Wirt

HOOK, LINE OR SINKER?
The Art of the Short Story
Moderator: Meredith Anthony
Mysti Berry
Diana Hansen-Young
Nick Kolakowski
Stefanie Leder
Lawrence Light
Caleb Stephens

8:55 am - 9:45 am

NEW YORK TIMES, USA TODAY OR AMAZON?
How to Become a Bestseller
Moderator: Nell Nyren
Tom Colgan
Dan Conaway
McKenna Jordan
Kelley Ragland

INTRIGUE, TRAUMA OR IN MEDIAS RES?
Good Beginnings
Moderator: Dervla McTiernan
R.G. Belsky
Georgina Cross
Simon Gervais
Rick Mofina
Lori Rader-Day
Hayley Scrivenor

WHO, WHEN OR WHY?
The Psychological Thriller Summit
Moderator: Sonica Mizerski
Andrea Bartz
K.T. Nguyen
Wendy Walker
Stacy Willingham
Olivia Worley

STONE, POV OR SYNTAX?
Finding Your Author Voice
Moderator: John Copenhaver
Catherine Bruns
Marco Carocari
Kelsey Cox
Doug Grad
Caryl Janis
Gerri Lewis
Bryan Lienesch

9:45 am - 10:05am

All authors from morning sessions will be signing books in Murray Hill West & East

10:10 am - 11:00 am

STANDALONE, SERIES OR BOTH?
Thriller Awards Nominees
Moderator: Tosca Lee
David Baldacci
Roy Johansen
Meg Gardiner
Dervla McTiernan
Lisa Scottoline
Lisa Unger

MEDIEVAL, WORLD WAR II OR SWINGING SIXTIES?
Writing Historical Thrillers
Moderator: Tracey Devlyn
Kate Belli
John Copenhaver
Elizabeth Crowens
Sara DiVello
Boyd Morrison

FIRST, THIRD OR OMNISCIENT?
The Many Powers of POV
Moderator: Carter Wilson
Nekesa Afla
Sorboni Banerjee
Reed Bunzel
W. Michael Gear
Heather Graham

RED HERRINGS, CLUES OR PUZZLES?
Writing Mystery Novels
Moderator: Tessa Wegert
Daniella Bernett
John Dobbyn
Maggie Giles
Joseph LeValley
M. A. (Mary) Monnin
Lynn Tavernier
Susan Wolfe

11:05 am - 11:55 am

Spotlight Guest Oyinkan Braithwaite, interviewed by Hank Phillippi Ryan | Sutton North & Sutton Center

12:00 pm - 12:30 pm

WORKSHOPS, PERKS OR SELF PROMOTION? Getting the Most Out of Your ITW Membership
ITW Membership Meeting (all are welcome, members or aspiring members, prizes) | Sutton North & Sutton Center

12:40pm - 1:30pm

DARK, DAMAGED OR DEPRESSED?
Dramatic Thrillers
Moderator: Roland Gulliver
Will Dean
Mary Kubica
Chris Pavone
Lisa Scottoline
Kate White

JEALOUSY, REVENGE OR LOVE?
Tension in Domestic Suspense
Moderator: Liz Talley
Ashley Elston
Kendra Harpster
Darby Kane
Nicole Moleti
Krista Wells

NARRATION, MARKETING OR PRODUCTION?
How Audio Ups the Value for Authors
Moderator: Suzanne Elise Freeman
Scott Brick
Stacy Creamer
Will Damron
Jessica Kaye
January LaVoy

CONFLICT, CHAOS OR CRUCIBLE?
Writing Compelling Action
Moderator: J.M Adams
Jessie Garcia
T.R. Hendricks
Jeffrey James Higgins
John David Mann
Steve Urszenyi

1:30 pm - 1:50 pm

All authors from midday sessions, including Spotlight Guest Oyinkan Braithwaite, will be signing in Murray Hill West & East

1:50 pm - 2:50 pm

THE TWISTED WOMEN'S BOOK CLUB EVENT Oyinkan Braithwaite, Robert Dugoni, Steve Feldberg, Joseph Finder, Gregg Hurwitz, Sarah Pekkanen, Stacy Willingham with K.J. Howe moderating | Gramercy West & East

3:00 pm - 3:50 pm

STEADY, ACCELERATING OR WHIPLASH?
Addictive Pacing
Moderator: Samantha Skal
Robert Dugoni
Joseph Finder
Charlaine Harris
Wanda Morris
Walter Mosley
Tessa Wegert

UNPREDICTABLE, UNASSUMING OR UNEXPECTED?
Types of Antagonists
Moderator: Bonnie Traymore
Yasmin Angoe
Daco Aufferorde
Paul Doiron
Deborah J. Ledford
Ronald Malfi
Steph Nelson

GROCERY STORES, GOLF LINKS OR PILATES?
Mining Suburbia for Drama
Moderator: Paula Munier
Elle Cosimano
Faith Gardner
Jaime Lynn Hendricks
Kaira Rouda
Miranda Smith

LINEAR, ROLLERCOASTER OR ZIG ZAG?
My Publishing Story: Round 1
Moderator: D.J. Palmer
S.K. Andrews
Jenn Bregman
Mary Dixie Carter
Caroline Cleveland
Angela Douglas
Michelle Maryk

3:55 pm - 4:45 pm

Spotlight Guest Jennifer Hillier, interviewed by Lisa Gardner | Sutton North & Sutton Center

4:50 pm - 5:40 pm

AUCTION, OPTION CLAUSE OR SLUSH PILE?
Fresh Ways to Be Published
Moderator: Isabella Maldonado
Joe Brozman
Luisa Cruz Smith
Jenna Jankowski
Madeline McIntosh
Shawn Reilly Simmons

NOBLE, POWERFUL OR AMBITIOUS?
Writing Characters With Depth
Moderator: Alex Finlay
Mark Alpert
Mark Edwards
Mike Papantonio
Robert Rotstein
L.S. Stratton
Ashley Winstead

LIGHTS, CAMERA OR ACTION?
Filmworthy Writing
Moderator: Jon Land
Peter Malone Elliott
Jennifer Fawcett
Matthew Quinn Martin
David Morrell
Susan Walter
Matt Witten

SHERIFF, LAWYER OR JUDGE?
Writing about Crime and the Law
Moderator: Jerri Williams
David Bushman
Thomas B. Cavanagh
Bonnie Kistler
Marcy McCreary
McCracken Poston, Jr.

5:40 pm - 6:00 pm

Authors from late afternoon sessions will be signing in Murray Hill West & East, including Spotlight Guest Jennifer Hillier and The Twisted Women's Book Club Authors

6:00 pm - 7:30 pm

FRIDAY NIGHT COCKTAIL PARTY sponsored by Kevin Anderson & Associates | Mercury Suite (3rd Floor)

THRILLERFEST XX - 2025

Saturday, June 21, 2025

Registration open 7:30 am - 2:15 pm 2nd Floor Promenade, Awards Banquet Check-In 5:30 pm - 7:15 pm, 3rd Floor West Promenade
The Mysterious Bookshop open 9:00 am - 5:30 pm, Nassau West & East
All events are on the 2nd floor of the New York Hilton Midtown unless otherwise indicated

	Sutton North & Center	Beekman	Sutton South	Regent
8:00 am - 8:50 am	FLASHBACKS, PARALLEL OR THREE ACT? Story Structure in Thrillers Moderator: Kyle Steele Emily Carpenter Tullan Holmqvist Mandy McHugh A.G. Mock Robert Swartwood	HUNT, DIG OR SNIFF? Researching the Dark Side Moderator: Hannah Morrissey Matt Cook Andrew DeYoung Noelle W. Ihli Ward Larsen Josh Moehling	ANXIETY, ENVY OR FEAR? Emotions in Thrillers Moderator: Karin Nordin J. Luke Bennecke Allison Buccola Rob Hart Linda Hurtado Bond Cara Reinard	TRANSFORMATION, ADVENTURE OR UPHILL BATTLE? Crafting Thriller Plots Moderator: James L'Etoile Sharon Dukett Don Helin Joanne Leedom-Ackerman Michael McLaughlin Carla Seyler Janna Sherrier

ITW PRESENTS BREAKFAST THE 2025 DEBUT AUTHOR CLASS
 Lori Brand, Matthew Becker, R. John Dingle, Laurie Dove, Jacqueline Faber, James Foley, Bill Gormley, Jenni Howell, Carinn Jade, Cherisa "C.I." Jerez, Miles Joyner, Maria Kelson, Laura Leffler, Andrew Ludington, Marty Ludlum, Tamara Miller, Jennifer Moorhead, Jennifer K. Morita, Rachel Paris, Ande Pliego, Gregg Podolski, Gary Quessenberry, Cynthia Rice, Michael Rigg, Saratoga Schaefer, Dianna Sinovic, Suja Sukumar, Mark Thielman, Joel Turner, Michael Wendroff, Jen Marie Wiggins, Aliah Wright
 Introductions by Robert Dugoni | Trionan Ballroom

10:00 am - 10:25 am Authors from early morning sessions will be signing in Murray Hill West & East, including the 2025 DEBUT AUTHORS

10:30 am - 11:20 am	LECTER, RAMBO OR DRACULA? Creating Memorable Characters Moderator: Sarah Pekkanen Alex Finlay Lisa Gardner John Grisham Jennifer Hillier David Morrell Lisa Unger	BEST STANDALONE, SERIES OR DEBUT? Thriller Awards Nominees Moderator: Todd Gerber Eric Beetner Kate Brody Libby Cudmore Alejandro Nodarse Jason Rekulak Lori Roy	COMING OF AGE, FIRST LOVE OR THE CHOSEN ONE? Writing About and for Younger Readers Moderator: Lee Matthew Goldberg James Daley Amjed McDonnell Chris Mullen Marisha Pessl R.L. Stine Melanie Sumrow	HEADLINES, EAVESDROPPING OR PEOPLE WATCHING? Where Writers Get Their Ideas Moderator: Samuel Octavius Mindy Carlson Chelsea Conradt William Maz Glenn Parris Michael Stagg Andrew Welsh-Huggins
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11:30 am - 12:20 pm ThrillerMaster John Grisham, interviewed by Lisa Unger | Sutton North & Sutton Center

12:20 pm - 12:40 pm Authors from the late morning sessions will sign in Murray Hill West & East
 Please note that John Grisham will only be pre-signing the books for sale at our onsite bookstore. He is not able to sign any other books.

12:50 pm - 1:40 pm	VOICE, SPECIAL EFFECTS OR FULL CAST? What Makes Thrillers Pop in Audio? Moderator: Suzanne Elise Freeman Scott Brick Gregg Hurwitz James Patterson Karissa Vacker	THE BUTLER, THE TREACHEROUS FRIEND OR THE DARK SECRET? Avoiding Predictable Tropes Moderator: Jaime Levine Esme Addison Jon Land James L'Etoile Donald Maass Otto Penzler Clea Simon	PRIMAL FEAR, GONE GIRL OR THE SIXTH SENSE? Creating Twists that Work Moderator: Elena Hartwell Taylor Steena Holmes Harry Hunsicker Tosca Lee Wanda Morris	HIT, KICK OR PUNCH? Knocking Out Dramatic Fight Scenes Moderator: Ruth Church Simon Gervais Carla Hoch Stephen Mann Adam Plantinga James D. Robertson
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1:50 pm - 2:40 pm Silver Bullet Award Winner James Patterson, interviewed by Gregg Hurwitz | Sutton North & Sutton Center

2:40 pm - 3:00 pm Authors from the early afternoon sessions will sign in Murray Hill West & East, including Silver Bullet Award Winner James Patterson

3:10 pm - 4:00 pm	REACHER, PLUM OR HOLMES? Series Protagonists Moderator: Hank Phillippi Ryan James O. Born Allison Brennan Charlaiane Harris Walter Mosley John Sandford	STRESS, MARRIAGE OR PRESSURE? Thrilling Domestic Suspense Moderator: Jamie Mason Nicole Baart Danielle Girard Elise Hart Kipness D.J. Palmer	BOOKSTAGRAM, BOOKTOK OR BOOKTUBE? Social Media Secrets from the Best Moderator: Sara DiVello Tonya Cornish, @BlondeThrillerLover Tabrizia Jones, @CupOfTeaJones Magen Mintchev, @BonechillingBooks Jordan Moblo, @JordysBookClub	LINEAR, ROLLERCOASTER OR ZIG ZAG? My Publishing Story: Round 2 Moderator: Isabella Maldonado Toni Halleen Omar Hussain Alissa Lee Lenore Nash Ryan Pote Jennifer Sadera Brian Tracey
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4:10 pm - 5:00 pm	HIGH STAKES, UNFORGETTABLE CHARACTERS OR QUALITY WRITING? Writing a Blockbuster Moderator: Jeff Ayers Lou Berney Karen Dionne Heather Graham R.L. Stine Danielle Trussoni	BOND, SMILEY OR LUPIN? Spying around the World Moderator: Traci Abramson I.S. Berry Puja Guha Jonathan Payne Adam Sikes Paul Vidich	YACHTS, HOLLYWOOD OR CHALET? Writing about the Rich and Glamorous Moderator: Susan Lee Kimberly Belle May Cobb Rachel Koller Croft Jon Lindstrom Deborah Goodrich Royce	TRADITIONAL, HYBRID OR SELF-PUBLISHING? The Many Paths of Publishing Moderator: Elise Hart Kipness D.M. Barr Gayle Brown Sandy Clements Jennifer Pashley Rick Pullen Penny Zang
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5:00 pm - 5:20 pm Authors from the late afternoon sessions will sign in Murray Hill West & East

6:00 pm - 7:00 pm PRE-BANQUET COCKTAIL PARTY, hosted by ITW | 3rd Floor West Promenade & Grand Ballroom Foyer (3rd Floor)

7:00 PM ITW 20th ANNUAL THRILLER AWARDS BANQUET, hosted by Emcee Lisa Scottoline | Grand Ballroom (3rd Floor)
 2025 ThrillerMaster JOHN GRISHAM, Award Presented by 2009 ThrillerMaster David Morrell
 2025 Silver Bullet Award Recipient JAMES PATTERSON, Award Presented by 2017 Silver Bullet Award Recipient Lisa Gardner
 2025 Thriller Legend Award Recipient NEIL NYREN, Award Presented by USA TODAY Bestseller Hank Phillippi Ryan
 2025 Thriller Fan Award Recipient McKENNA JORDAN, Award Presented by ITW Co-Presidents Lisa Unger and Gregg Hurwitz
 Presentation of the THRILLER AWARDS with ITW VP of Awards, New York Times Bestseller Tosca Lee

THRILLERMASTER AFTER PARTY honoring 2025 ThrillerMaster JOHN GRISHAM, hosted by ITW | 3rd Floor West Promenade and Grand Ballroom Foyer (3rd Floor)