



FUTURE BR

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Artists, scientists, and engineers may not seem to have much in common, but on May 29, they'll find shared ground at the 2015 Red Stick International Festival. The three-day event in downtown BR invites the design-minded to share ideas and celebrate the collaborative efforts, which have led to many technological advancements in Louisiana.

The event originally took place alongside the Red Stick Animation Festival, and took place at LSU until 2012. It was created by Stephen David Beck and Stacy Simmons, both of whom are part of the Center for Computation and Technology at LSU.

"Last year, CCT decided to go out to community stakeholders and talk about rebranding and retooling the festival to an event that will focus on digital media," said Randy Dannenberg, assistant director of economic development for CCT. "The Red Stick Festival is a place to promote Louisiana's contribution to science, technology and art throughout the world."

Jesse Allison, assistant professor in LSU's Experimental Music and Digital Media program says that the Festival showcases mashups of the creative arts and technology industries, both of which are "exploding around Louisiana." Allison performs research into how technology can expand what is possible with sound in music. He also has an interest in "computer interactivity in performance and performed in several cyber arts festivals.

"The festival is coming at this from every facet: video games to interactive art exhibitions, drones in movies to experimental sound performance, digital animation to the maker community," Allison said.

The maker community will be hosting a Makers Expo and Fair on Saturday, May 30, from 2 to 6 pm. Local crafters and inventors will display their work at the River Center Branch Library in downtown Baton Rouge. The maker community of Baton Rouge ranges from tech enthusiasts to garage tinkerers of all ages and backgrounds. Challenging the idea of hobbyists, makers each come to the Fair with a different interest, whether it be organic beauty products or digital application programing, come together with one focus—to create.

The culmination of technology and crafting has gained the national maker community a spotlight. President Obama hosted the first ever White House Maker Faire in 2014, which featured student, entrepreneurs, and everyday citizens. The White House said in a June 2014 press release that their Maker Faire aimed to help makers launch new businesses and create jobs, increase the opportunity for students to become Makers, and present Makers with the challenge to tackle our most pressing problems.

The Louisiana Makers Community certainly has its task ahead of it with recent budget issues in the state. The current push to create more cost efficient technologies to solve medical and environmental issues inspires many of our local maker communities.

Workshops will be held the same afternoon available for makers of all ages and free to the public. The subject matter includes electronic kit building, long exposure photography "painting with light," and the Cloud Workshop. Cloud is described as "a constellation of cloudlets that are programmed in the workshop, and as a result whose presence is a reflection of the community that made it."

The Fair and the rest of the Festival are part of a movement to educate the public and increase access to creative technologies. One example of this is the participation of Electronic Arts, or EA Games, a video game developer company whose North American testing center is located at LSU.

"[We] feel that the future of Baton Rouge's digital media and video game sector will continue to grow with the festival itself," said Patrick Lamont, lead recruiter at the center. EA Games will have playable demos available for the public to test out at the Makers Fair.

Applications to participate in the Maker's Fair are available on the Red Stick International Festival's website, redstickfestival.org. A full schedule of the weekend's events is also available on the website.

Following the Red Stick International Festival Makers Fair, an outdoor screening of the 2012 film *Pitch Perfect*, which filmed in Baton Rouge, will be held at the Galvez Plaza. The screening is open to the public, who are encouraged to bring picnic materials, chairs and blankets.

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