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Previewing the Red Stick International Festival (May 29-31)

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LSU professor of experimental music and digital media Jesse Allison is spearheading this month's [Red Stick International Festival](#). Allison divulges what to expect at the technology-themed event.

What can visitors expect to find at this year's festival?

[LSU's Center for Computation and Technology](#) is going to present seven events over three days. The opening gala, with a carnival-type feel, will be an industry/business gathering featuring steampunk as well as a performance by a world-renowned digital artist. Other events will include a kid's lab and expo/maker fair, both sponsored by Electronic Arts; Drones, Drama & Drinks sponsored by NOVAC, in which we explore the rising potential (and controversy) of the flying camera; an outdoor screening of *Pitch Perfect*; an animation retrospective of previous Red Stick Animation festivals; and the opening of the NIME @ Red Stick art exhibit (read more on that later).

Any exhibits or events that you think locals might get especially excited about?

The [East Baton Rouge Parish library](#), which has been a big supporter of the festival, is hosting the Expo & Maker Fair at the downtown library on the afternoon of Saturday, May 30, at River Center Branch Library. We are expecting exhibits from Electronic Arts, NASA and local robotics clubs, among others, and a maker fair with booths from various local makers. Acadian Robotics, the only 3-D printer manufacturer in Louisiana, will be demonstrating some of their products.

What's the one part of the festival that's a must for any attendee?

[Celtic Studios](#) is presenting a movie night, and we are showcasing a film made right here in Baton Rouge, *Pitch Perfect*. We are going to show it downtown at North Boulevard Town Square on the evening of May 30. We encourage everyone to grab a blanket, come down and watch the movie.

How long has the festival been running for? How has it evolved over the years?

Stephen David Beck and Stacey Simmons of LSU's Center for Computation and Technology created the Red Stick International Animation Festival in 2005 to show the importance of high-performance computing through a popular medium—computer animation. The last Red Stick Animation Festival was held here in 2012. Last year, we decided to rebrand and retool the festival to an event focused on digital media (including but not limited to animation), maker fairs, experimental music concerts, digital art exhibits, game jams and other technology-derived events. Last year's showcase was called FutureFest. Our goal this year was an open-source festival, with the community helping to shape the events. So we decided to keep the name simple—The Red Stick International Festival.

The festival overlaps with another international conference, New Interfaces of Musical Expression (NIME). How is Red Stick International Festival collaborating with NIME?

We have a number of NIME @ Red Stick crossover events that will allow festival attendees to get a glimpse into recent developments in the music world. The grandest of these is the NIME Art Exhibition Opening Reception on Sunday, May 31, 6-8 p.m. Many of the artists/attendees from NIME will be on hand for the opening, and we also plan for some of the NIME classes and workshops to be open to Red Stick attendees. As Red Stick ends, the NIME conference (May 31-June 3) continues the creative technology events with demos, presentations and concerts that are open to the public. For more info, visit [nime2015.lsu.edu](#).

The Red Stick International Festival festival starts May 29 at 6 p.m. with the opening gala and runs through May 31. All events are free. Events will be held at various spots downtown, including the Shaw Center for the Arts, LSU Museum of Art and North Boulevard Town Square. For a full schedule and to learn more about the event, visit [redstickfestival.org](#).

Publish Date:
4-29-2015

