

SPEAKERS



JESSICA B. HARRIS, FORUM MODERATOR
Keynote Speech

JESSICA B. HARRIS is the author of twelve books documenting the culture and foodways of the African diaspora. In her four decades as a scholar and journalist, she has written extensively about African culture in the Americas, focusing on food traditions, and has lectured nationally and internationally at museums, colleges, and conferences. Harris holds degrees from Bryn Mawr College, the Université de Nancy in Paris, Queens College, and New York University. She is professor of English in the CUNY system in New York and was named the inaugural scholar-in-residence of the Ray Charles Chair in African-American Material Culture at Dillard University in New Orleans, where she founded the Institute for the Study of Culinary Cultures.



PATRICK J. DUNNE, PROPRIETOR, LUCULLUS ANTIQUES
*Pralines: Creole Sweet Tooth and Other Culinary Customs:
A Long View of How We Came to Our Table Style*

PATRICK J. DUNNE is the proprietor of Lucullus, an antiques store in New Orleans that deals exclusively in objects, art, and furnishings related to dining. Because of its unique focus, the shop has been featured in several national and international magazines and has been the subject of numerous television segments. A sixth-generation southerner, Dunne received his MA in intellectual history from Georgetown University and did doctoral work in American and European cultural history at Tulane University. He is the author of numerous articles on traveling, dining, and collecting in both Europe and the United States. His pieces have appeared in *Historic Preservation*, *Southern Accents*, *Coastal Living*, and *Entrée*, and he was a senior editor-at-large for *House Beautiful*. His book, *The Epicurean Collector: Exploring the World of Culinary Antiques*, was published by Little, Brown and Co. in 2002.



ROSA MARÍA GONZÁLEZ LAMAS, PRESIDENT, VIAJES & VINOS
The Sweet Heart of Puerto Ricans

An extensive career in Caribbean tourism introduced **ROSA MARÍA GONZÁLEZ LAMAS** to the food and wine sector. She directed the Caribbean Culinary Federation and currently leads Viajes & Vinos, a marketing-communications initiative devoted to promoting wine tourism and developing wine and gastronomy projects. She is editor of www.viajesyvinos.com, a website featuring articles, interviews, and news on wine and cuisine, and her work has been distinguished with various international food and wine journalism awards. González's contributions as a freelance writer have been published in print and electronic media in Puerto Rico, Spain, and the Americas, a region she currently covers as a correspondent for www.foodsfromspain.com.



MM PACK, FOOD WRITER AND HISTORIAN
You Say Pralines, We Say Pray-leens: The Praline Tradition in Texas

MM PACK is a food writer, historian, and private chef who lives in Austin and San Francisco. A former librarian and technical writer, she is a graduate of Rice University, the University of Texas, and the California Culinary Academy, and has been writing about food since 1998. A regular contributor to the *Austin Chronicle* and *Edible Austin*, Pack has published in *Gastronomica*, the *San Francisco Chronicle*, *Oxford Encyclopedia of Food and Drink in America*, *Scribner's Encyclopedia of Food and Culture*, *The Dictionary of Culinary Biography*, and the Southern Foodways Alliance's *Cornbread Nation 1*. She has presented on Texas foodways to museums and food-history groups, as well

as to the International Association of Culinary Professionals, the Culinary Institute of America-Napa, the Foodways Texas Symposium, and the Southern Foodways Alliance.



MICHELLE ROUSSEAU, CEO, BELLEFIELD GREAT HOUSE
Jamaican Sweet Tooth: A Nostalgic Look at Authentic Island Candy

MICHELLE ROUSSEAU, along with her sister, Suzanne Rousseau Bernard, have been planning parties for Jamaica's elite for twelve years. As owners and operators of a catering company that focuses on a unique brand of modern Caribbean food, they have catered various events for private, government, and corporate clients throughout the island. Featured in the book *The Jamaican Woman: A Celebration* (Creative Links, 2001) as outstanding female achievers in the culinary field, the sisters are also winners of the *Jamaica Observer's* Table Talk Food Award for Best Young Entrepreneur in Food (1998), Best Caterer (2001 and 2004), and Caterers of the Year (2008). Rousseau has also worked with Sandals Resorts International and the Jamaican Foreign Service. She holds a BA in Spanish from the University of Western Ontario, Canada, and an MA in Latin American Studies from the Universidad de Salamanca, Spain. A true daughter of the Caribbean, Rousseau has a great passion for upholding and modernizing the cultural and culinary traditions of the region. She resides in Kingston and Montego Bay and is CEO of Bellefield Great House and Gardens.



FANY GERSON, CHEF AND AUTHOR
Pralines and Mexican Sweets

FANY GERSON was born and raised in Mexico City, where as a little girl she dreamed of being a chef. She attended cooking school in Mexico, then graduated from the Culinary Institute of America. She has worked in kitchens worldwide, including Akelare, a Michelin three-star restaurant in Spain; Eleven Madison Park; and Rosa Mexicano in New York, where she developed acclaimed modern Mexican desserts. Her cookbooks *My Sweet Mexico: Recipes for Authentic Pastries, Breads, Candies, Beverages, and Frozen Treats* and *Paletas & Aguas Frescas* were published by Ten Speed Press. Her work has been featured in the *New York Times*, *Gourmet*, *Fine Cooking*, *Time Out*, *New York* magazine, and *Edible Manhattan*. Her company, La Newyorkina, sells *paletas* at the Hester Street Fair and *aguas frescas* at the New Amsterdam Market. Gerson is planning to open a Mexican ice cream shop in New York City. She loves to be creative and considers the opportunity to make people happy the best thing about her job.



CHARLES J. GRAHAM, HORTICULTURALIST, LSU AGRICULTURAL CENTER, SHREVEPORT
Pecans: Past, Present, and Future

CHARLES J. GRAHAM was raised on a farm-ranch in Anderson County, Texas. After graduating from Cayuga High School, he completed his BS and MS at Texas A&M University, followed by a PhD in plant physiology at Clemson University. He accepted a position with the LSU Agricultural Center in 1995 and has conducted research on several commodities, including peaches, nectarines, plums, watermelons, mayhaws, pawpaws, and pecans. He currently conducts research on pecans at the Pecan Research-Extension Station in Shreveport, and he serves as the state's pecan specialist.



PRALINE MEMORIES (PANEL DISCUSSION)

Food personality, culinary teacher, and author **POPPY TOOKER** is passionate about food and the people who bring it to the table. She brings all these elements together in her weekly radio show, *Louisiana Eats*, which airs on NPR affiliates throughout south Louisiana. Tooker has appeared as a guest on the Food Network and the History Channel, and she provides weekly restaurant commentary on WYES's *Steppin' Out*. Her book, *The Crescent City Farmers Market Cookbook* (marketumbrella.org, 2009), received a Tabasco cookbook award and was named Cookbook of the Year by *New Orleans* magazine. She was recognized by the *Times-Picayune* as a Hero of the Storm for her work reviving New Orleans restaurants and food providers following Hurricane Katrina. The International Association of Cooking Professionals recognized her rebuilding efforts at its 2008 conference with its first-ever Community Service Award, and in 2012 *Southern Living* magazine named her a Hero of the New South.

ZENA EZEB has been employed at Dillard University for the past twenty-six years in various capacities; she is currently working as the assistant to the dean for the College of Arts and Sciences and for the chair of the humanities department. Ezeb has attended Cameron College, where she studied word processing; Tulane University, where she studied computer information systems; and Verbatim Academy of Court Reporting. She uses all of her education and skills in different areas of her life. Ezeb is also a calligraphist, making specialized invitations, place cards, and thank-you notes. She has transcribed various books, articles, interviews, and lectures, including "To Thank a Teacher," written by Dr. Gloria Wade-Gayles, a renowned scholar at Spelman College. Ezeb loves to read and cook.

KENNY STOKES is a third-generation candymaker. His aunt Leah Johnson bought Cook's Confections at 714 St. Louis Street in 1944, and the shop eventually became known as Leah's Pralines. In 1983 Stokes's mother, Elna, took over for Leah and raised her son and daughter in the family business. Today Stokes continues the tradition and follows the same recipes and standards of excellence set forth by the generations that preceded him.

PAT McDONALD FOWLER is a third-generation praline maker and a sixth-generation New Orleanian. She is a former CEO and current consultant for Aunt Sally's Praline Shop Inc., one of New Orleans's oldest and most famous praline manufacturing and retail firms, which was founded by her grandfather, Pierre Bagur Sr., and later run by her father, Walter McDonald Sr. As a consultant, Fowler assists Aunt Sally's in the development and management of praline making, especially in the areas of flavor, production, recipe development, and protection of Aunt Sally's original Creole praline recipe. Fowler's design and consulting company, Pat McDonald Fowler Inc., specializes in visual design, including package design, home product design, and illustration; and consults in marketing, merchandising, recipe development, and sales planning for large and small companies.



CONSUMPTION OF PRALINES (PANEL DISCUSSION)

ELIZABETH WILLIAMS began her food career writing a restaurant column with her husband while attending Louisiana State University, where she earned a BA and JD. President of the Southern Food and Beverage Museum (SoFAB), she is also on the faculty of the food studies program at New York University and writes on issues of food and law. Prior to her work with SoFAB, Williams was president and CEO of the University of New Orleans Foundation and for many years was engaged in the private practice of law. As an Army JAG officer, she lived in Europe for three years and ate her way around the continent. She is the author of *The A-Z Encyclopedia of Food Controversies and the Law* (Greenwood Press, 2010) and the forthcoming *New Orleans: A Food Biography* (AltaMira).

SUSAN TUCKER is curator of books and records at the Newcomb College Institute, Tulane University. She is the author of *Telling Memories Among Southern Women* (LSU Press, 1988); coeditor with Katherine Ott and Patricia Buckler of *The Scrapbook in American Life* (Temple University Press, 2005), winner of the Allen G. Noble Book

Award for the best-edited book in the field of North American material culture; and editor of *New Orleans Cuisine: Fourteen Signature Dishes and Their Histories* (University Press of Mississippi, 2009). In 2009 and '10 Tucker served as a consultant to the Louisiana State Museum and has recently been working on a book about the archival and genealogical cultures of New Orleans.

Georgia native **NICOLE A. TAYLOR** got her start as an artisanal candymaker; TM Chocolate was founded by college buddies concocting confections and now has a full line of handmade treats. She is a food-justice activist, a social-media maven, and is currently the host of *Hot Grease*, a progressive food-culture radio program on the Heritage Radio Network. Taylor is also a member of the Food Systems Network NYC, the Southern Foodways Alliance, and the Northeast Organic Farming Association of New York; a mentor for Flip the Table Youth Council; and a frequent panelist at New York City food events. She has worked as a community-outreach consultant for the Brooklyn Food Coalition and raised funds for the Urban Justice Center through the Vendy Awards. She is featured in *America I Am: Pass It Down Cookbook* (SmileyBooks, 2011) and is a principal at NAT Media. Taylor holds a BS in community health education from Clark Atlanta University.

CHANDA M. NUNEZ is a native New Orleanian and holds an MA in history from the University of New Orleans. Her thesis, "Just Like Ole Mammy Used to Make: Reinterpreting New Orleans African-American Praline Vendors as Entrepreneurs," examines the city's enterprising and celebrated praline women. Nunez is currently a Tulane University Global South Fellow. She has curated an exhibition at the Southern Food and Beverage Museum about the history of the praline, entitled Pecan Candy, and has presented her research at the Louisiana Studies Conference, National Council on Public History, and Oak Street Po-Boy Festival. She currently lives in Atlanta and is working on a book about pralines.



RIEN FERTEL, PhD CANDIDATE, HISTORY, TULANE UNIVERSITY
Closing Comments: Praline Connections

RIEN FERTEL is currently completing his dissertation on white Creole print culture and society in Tulane University's history department. Additionally, he is a free-lance writer on culinary matters. Fertil's most recent project is the online column "Past and Repast" for *Oxford American* magazine. Since 2008 he has worked as an oral historian for the Southern Foodways Alliance at the University of Mississippi, for whom he will embark on a three-week road trip to document South Carolina "barbeculture." Those adventures can be followed at www.thebarbecuebus.com. Fertil lives in New Orleans and St. Martinville, Louisiana.