

PADUCAH



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Paducah CVB Launches Visiting Artist Program

Paducah, KY – March 17, 2026 – The Paducah Convention & Visitors Bureau is proud to announce the launch of a new Visiting Artist Program, debuting at the Lower Town Arts & Music Festival this summer. The program, developed as part of Paducah's ongoing role as a UNESCO Creative City of Crafts & Folk Art, is intended to bring artists from throughout the UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN) to Paducah for cultural exchange and community engagement.

For the program's inaugural year, the CVB issued a call for applications through the UCCN and selected Louis Michot, fiddle player, vocalist, and driving creative force behind the Grammy Award-winning Lost Bayou Ramblers. Michot hails from Arnaudville, Louisiana, but calls New Orleans – the country's newest UNESCO Creative City – his artistic home.

"I'm thrilled and honored to be the inaugural Visiting Artist for Paducah," said Michot. "I look forward to connecting with the local community, and exploring cultural sustainability and exchange through workshops and performances."

Michot will be in Paducah on May 6 and 7, 2026, for a residency that includes workshops and community engagement activities, before taking the stage at the Lower Town Arts & Music Festival on May 8. His visit offers Paducah audiences and community members the rare opportunity to connect directly with an artist from another U.S. Creative City.

"When we made the decision to deepen our partnership with LTAMF I wanted it to be intentional. I wanted it to be something the community would genuinely benefit from," said Alyssa Phares, President & CEO of the Paducah CVB. "Bringing Louis Michot in fulfills that. What many people don't realize is that the French cultural corridor doesn't start and end in Louisiana. It runs right up the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers to our doorstep."

A two-time Grammy winner, Michot has released more than 20 albums, composed six film scores (including music for the Oscar-nominated film *Beasts of the Southern Wild*) and published more than 100 original songs. In addition to his Grammy awards, Michot earned the title of *Louisianan of the Year* in 2020, and his album *Mammoth Waltz* with the Lost Bayou Ramblers, was named second-most important Louisiana album of the 21st century by *The Times-Picayune*.

The Paducah CVB created the Visiting Artist program with the intention of bringing a tangible benefit of Paducah's UNESCO Creative City designation – cross-city collaboration and knowledge sharing – back to the Paducah community.

“When Louis performs and teaches here, he's not introducing something completely new. He's bringing something back to us.” Phares said. “UNESCO's Creative Cities network exists because culture requires intention to survive, and Louis's work of teaching, performing, and sharing is proof that the best way to honor a tradition is to make sure someone else knows it. That's why Paducah is proud to welcome him.”

The Lower Town Arts & Music Festival takes place May 8 and 9, 2026, in Paducah's historic Lower Town Arts District.

For more information, visit paducah.travel.

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