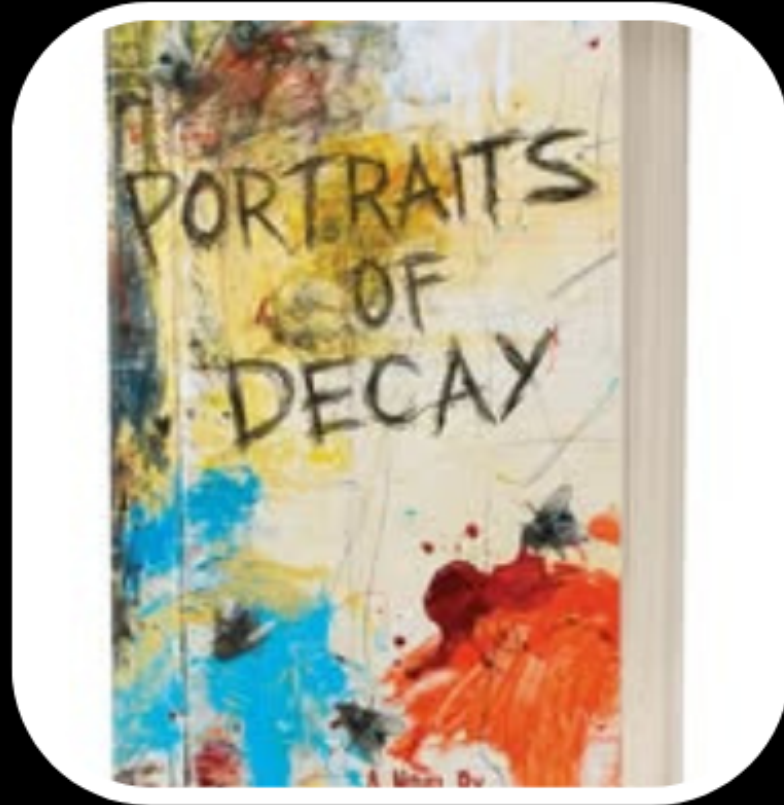




HORROR BOOK CLUB KIT

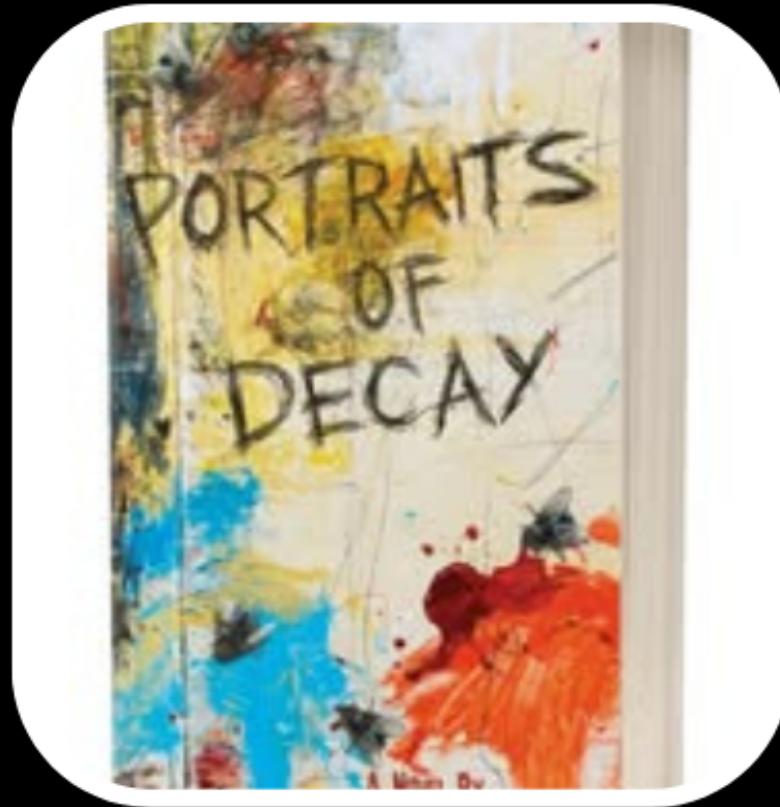




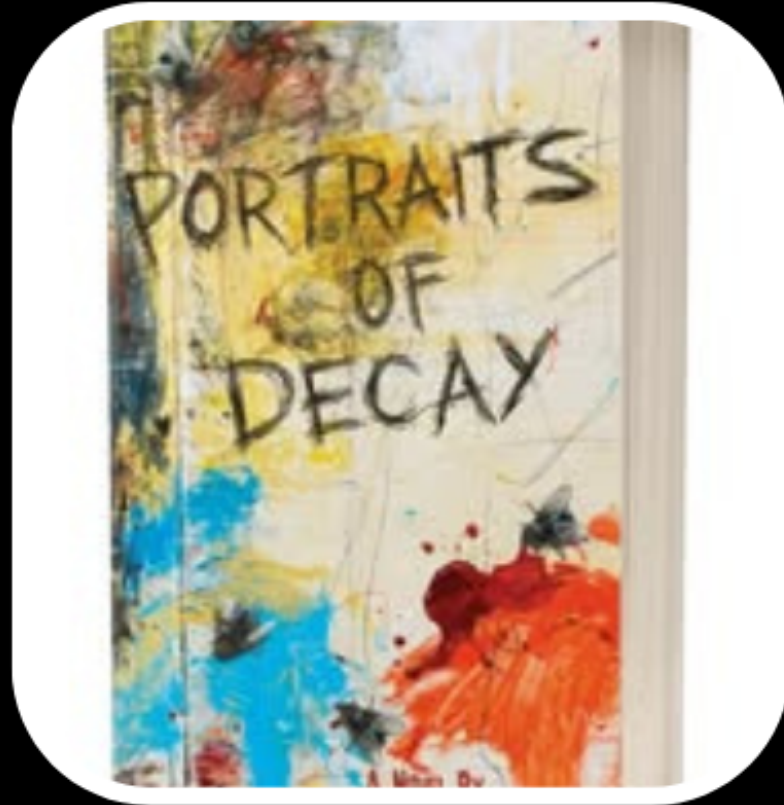
Portraits of Decay Playlist Part One

Prologue: Pachelbel Canon in D
Chapter 1: Needless–Kenneth L. King
Chapter 2: Laisse Le Vent Souffler–Zachary Richard
Chapter 3: Art School Girl–Stone Temple Pilots
Chapter 4: Killing All the Flies–Mogwai
Chapter 5: You & I–Local Natives
Chapter 6: I'd Rather Go Blind–Etta James
Chapter 7: A Place to Start–White Denim
Chapter 8: Dealin' with the Devil–Muddy Waters
Chapter 9: Beware–Al Green
Chapter 10: Swamp Witch–Jim Stafford
Chapter 11: I Put a Spell on You–Screaming Jay
Hawkins

Portraits of Decay Playlist Part Two



- Chapter 12: Buried Alive-Radio Werewolf
- Chapter 13: I Don't Love You Anymore-Tyler, The Creator
- Chapter 14: Paint My Face-The Devil Makes Three
- Chapter 15: Helpless-Metallica cover of Diamondhead
- Chapter 16: Heel on the Shovel-16 Horsepower
- Chapter 17: Flies Bump Against the Glass-Thee Oh Sees
- Chapter 18: Baron Samedi-The Dead Brothers
- Chapter 19: Broken Bones and Pocket Change-St. Paul
- Chapter 20: Speaking with a Ghost-Citizen
- Chapter 21: Mama-Genesis
- Chapter 22: I Will Follow You Into the Dark-
Death Cab for Cutie
- Chapter 23: You and Me-Alice Cooper
- Chapter 24: Dark was the Night, Cold was the Ground-
Blind Willie Johnson
- Chapter 25: Burn the Witch-Queens of the Stone Age



Portraits of Decay Playlist Part Three

Chapter 26: Murder Most Foul–Bob Dylan

Chapter 27: Cure for Pain–Morphine

Chapter 28: Falling Apart–Slow Pulp

Chapter 29: Queen–Perfume Genius

Chapter 30: Long Walk Home–Neil Young





PORTRAITS OF DECAY TASTING MENU

OPENING
HOURS

09.00 PM
10.00 AM

APPETIZERS

MIRLANDE'S HOT CRAWFISH DIP OF THE DEAD

TENDER CRAWFISH TAILS COMBINED WITH CREAM CHEESE, PARMESAN, GREEN ONIONS, AND GARLIC SERVED WITH WARM, SLICED FRENCH BREAD THAT IS TO DIE FOR

RED SNAPPER AND SHRIMP CEVICHE CARONDELET

A CERVICHE OF TENDER SNAPPER BITES, SHRIMP, CUBED PINEAPPLE, SLICED BELL PEPPER IN A CITRUS JUICE THAT IS THE TALK OF THE TOWN

DRINKS

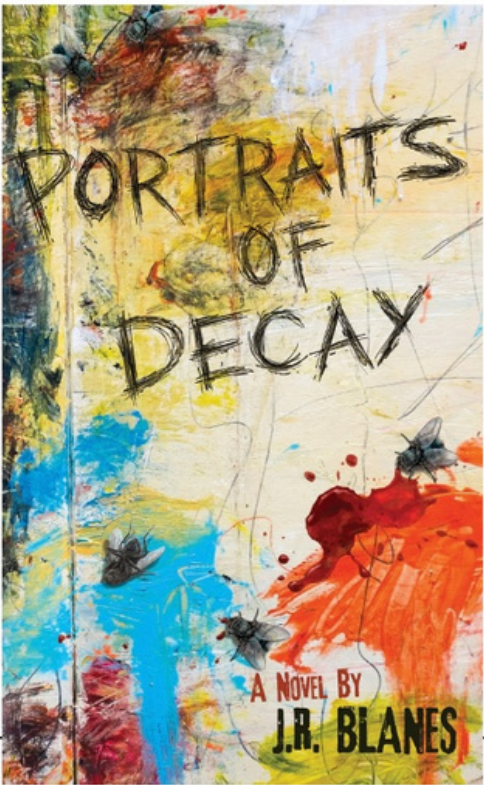


GEMMA LANDRY'S GIN FIZZ

A Fancily Refreshing Beverage of Gin, Fresh Lemon, Egg White, Club Soda, and Simple Sugar for Hint of Sweetness

NEVAEH'S CAFÉ AU LAIT

A classic comforting beverage of strong coffee and steamed milk.



SALADS

MARCEL'S MASTERFUL MUFFULETTA PANZANELLA

A Ciabatta Bread Salad soaked in Red Wine Vinegar thrown together with Grated Tomato, Pickled Giardiniera, Mixed Olives, and Sliced Italian Meats (Salami, Capocollo, and Mortadella) just how they do it in the Lower Ninth

CAMILE IS NO CAJUN CHICKEN

A Scoop of Sliced Boneless Chicken Dressed to Impress with Chopped Green Onion, Bell Pepper, Parsley and Celery drizzled in a Delectable Creole Mustard piled on top of an Elegant Head of Spinach

DESSERT

BANANA FOSTERING A LA BARON SAMEDI

A CLASSIC DESSERT RAISED FROM BANANAS SAUTEED IN BUTTER, BROWN SUGAR, CINNAMON, AND A GENEROUS SPLASH OF RUM THAT ENTICES ON A SCOOP OF ICE CREAM AND GOES GREAT WITH AN AFTER-DINNER CIGAR

MAIN COURSE

JEFFERSON'S ARTFUL JAMBALAYA

A Picturesque Bowl of Rice Rendered Flavorful with Spicy Sausage, Sweet Ham, Sizzling Shrimp, Hearty Vegetables Colored with a Dash of Cajun Seasoning That Tastes as Good as it Looks

ANGELIQUE'S SMOTHERED ETOUFFEE

A Stirring Seafood Stew Portioned with Baby Crawfish and Shrimp Smothered in a Lovely, Light Brown Roux that Will Possess You



RUADÁN
BOOKS



Mirlande's Hot Crawfish Dip OF THE DEAD

2 SERVINGS

INGREDIENTS

8 oz. cream cheese, soften before hand
1 cup Parmesan or Mozzarella cheese
¼ cup mayonnaise
1t. Coleman's dried mustard powder
2 green onion, chop both white and green parts if you want to be a true Louisianan
¼ cup of green bell pepper, diced
2 cloves garlic, chopped
1 t. crab and shrimp, boiled (easier to buy pre-boiled unless you are a true Louisianan)
1 t. Worcestershire sauce
1 t. Cayenne pepper (only if you like extra spice)
12 oz. cooked crawfish tail meat (Best if you buy from Louisiana)
French bread, sliced.

METHOD

- 1.Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.
- 2.Combine cream cheese, ¾ cup of Parmesan Cheese, mayonnaise, dried mustard, green onions, bell peppers, garlic, shrimp boil, and Worcestershire sauce in a medium mixing bowl. Whisk ingredients together until combined.
- 3.Gently fold in the crawfish tail meat and chopped parsley.
- 4.Season with salt and pepper. Spread the crawfish mixture into a greased small baking dish or pie plate.
- 5.Bake for 20 minutes. Top dip with remaining ¼ cup of Parmesan cheese and bake until cheese is melted and bubbly, about 10 minutes more. Top with sliced green onion or chopped parsley, if desired.
- 6.Serve on French bread.

JEFFERSON'S ARTFUL JAMBALAYA



INGREDIENTS

- ½ pound of small to large shrimp (peeled and deveined. Easier to buy this way)
- ¼ pound chicken cubed
- 8 oz Andouille Sausage
- 1 T Creole Seasoning
- 2 T Olive Oil
- ½ cup each of the following: chopped garlic, green pepper, onion, bell pepper, celery, tomato
- 3 bay leaves
- 1 T of the following: Worcestershire sauce and hot sauce (Louisiana Brand)
- 1 t of ketchup
- ¼ t cayenne
- ½ t paprika
- ¾ cup white rice
- 3 cups chicken stock
- Dash of salt and pepper to your liking

DIRECTIONS

1. Toss shrimp and chicken with creole seasoning
2. Heat oil in saucepan on high and add peppers, celery, onion sauteing for 3 minutes then add tomato, garlic, Worcestershire sauce, hot sauce, bay leaves, paprika, and cayenne
3. Stir in rice and broth. Simmer on medium until rice softens and absorbs most of the liquid, stirring occasionally.
4. Add shrimp, chicken, and andouille. Simmer until meat is cooked. Stir in ketchup and add salt and pepper. Garnish with chopped parsley.

BASED ON EMERIL LAGASSE'S
RECIPE

BANANA FOSTERING

a la Baron Samedi



INGREDIENTS

1. ¼ unsalted butter
2. ½ cup banana liqueur
3. ½ cup Rum (dark or spiced rum, preferably. Zacapa is a good choice)
4. ¾ cup brown sugar
5. ½ t ground cinnamon
6. 1 t vanilla extract
7. 3 large bananas, quartered
8. 6 scoops of vanilla ice cream

DIRECTIONS

In a skillet, melt butter on medium heat. Blend brown sugar and form a creamy paste and allow to caramelize. You should take no longer than 5 minutes. Stir in banana liqueur, vanilla, bananas, and cook until soft. Normally, this is where you'd add the Rum and flambé (ignite the Rum with fire). I do not recommend flambé unless you're a professional chef. Instead, you can simmer the rum in the sauce to cook off the alcohol. Scoop ice cream into 6 bowls and pour banana foster over the top.

Gemma Landry Gin Fizz

Ingredients

- 1/12 oz Old Tom Gin if you want a New Orleans style, otherwise most gins will do.
- 2 ounces heavy cream
- 1 ¼ ounce simple sugar
- ½ oz fresh lemon juice
- ½ oz fresh lime juice
- 1 medium egg white
- 2 dashes of Fee Brothers Orange Flower Water (any kind will do)
- 2 oz club soda—mattering on your taste

Method

1. In a cocktail shaker, pour gin, cream, simple syrup, lemon and lime juice, egg white, and flower water
- 2.. Shake. Don't add any ice. Do this dry.
3. After shaking then you add ice and shake again. Shake really hard. The harder the better. You have to mix the cream and egg white until the drink is silky looking.
4. Strain into a highball glass and add club soda. Enjoy!



Nevaeh's Café au Lait

Procedure :

1. Brew coffee with chicory coffee and water in either a drip coffee maker or, for best results, a French Press. If using a French Press, let coffee steep for 5 minutes.
2. While steeping, gently heat milk or milk substitute on low on the stove until its just below boiling (around 204 degrees F or 95 degrees C)
3. Pour equal parts coffee and milk into a mug. Garnish with cinnamon or nutmeg or both. Stirring in sugar is also an option.

Ingredients :

1 T Chicory Coffee (Café Du Monde has a good one and easy to find)

1 cup of water

1t Milk or Milk Substitute

A dash of cinnamon and/or nutmeg

Notes :

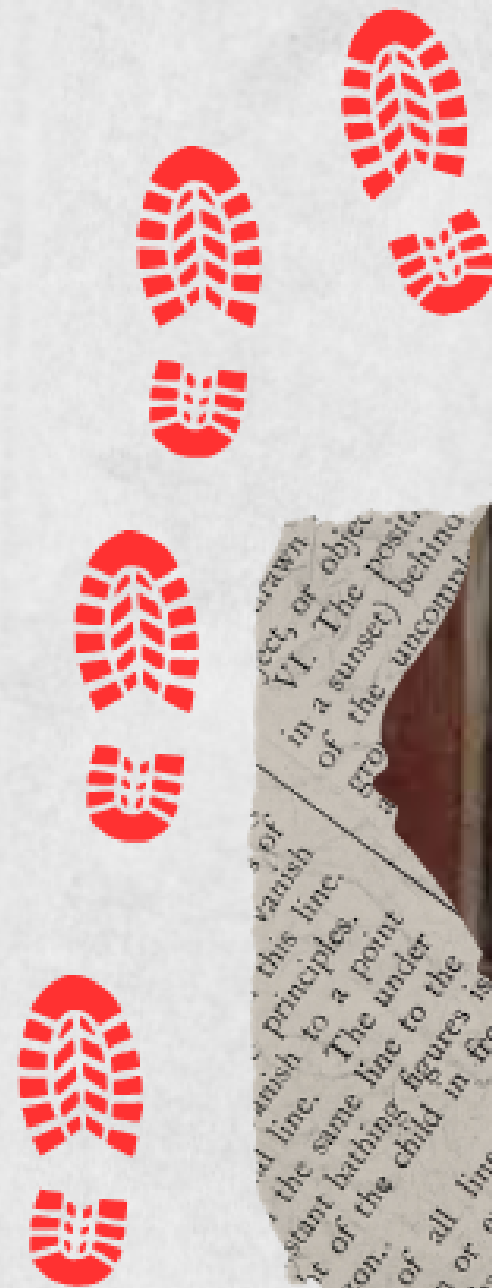
Enjoyed best when shared.



NEW ORLEANS WALKING TOUR



RUADÁN



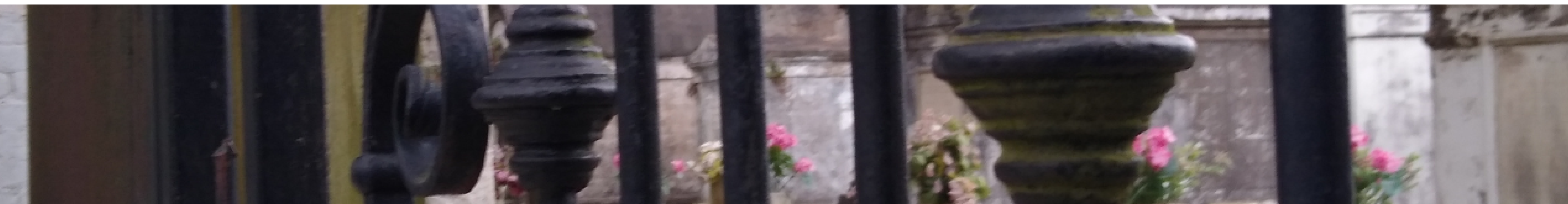


PORTRAITS OF DECAY

WALKING TOUR OF NEW ORLEANS



While visiting the great city of New Orleans, LA, you can slip on the shoes of horror author J.R. Blanes and take a walking tour of the sights that inspired his debut novel, Portraits of Decay. These are the places he specifically chose to include for various reasons, many of which he found while exploring the streets and neighborhoods during his time working for the railroad and on subsequent vacations with his wife during the research and writing of the book. Please enjoy your stay in the cultural mecca that is the Crescent City and be careful not to accidentally sip any witch's black magic potion.



841 Carondelet Street This three-story Art District Building was spotted by J.R. Blanes after he and his wife enjoyed a wonderful breakfast right next door at the Bearcat Café (if you're starting your tour here we highly recommend you try their Creole Crab Dip, Cat Daddy Biscuit, or Pulled Pork.) Now an event space, at the time, the place was abandoned, which made it the perfect outside façade for Blanes to imagine Camile's popular gallery. The street that it's on also gave the gallery its name, as the author thought all the other names he'd invented were terrible.

Gallery 600 Julia. The inside of the gallery is a mix of several different galleries in the Arts District, but specially 600 Julia which was the original sight of the Carondelet Street Gallery. It was only because Blanes preferred to create a gallery space of his own that would allow for the scenes he wanted in the novel that he created a fictional setting for the gallery in the novel. Still, much of the layout is based on 600 Julia Street.

Bar Marilou. The bar the krewe go to in Chapter 2 is at 544 Carondelet Street. At the time of designing this tour, the bar had already changed its name to Salon Salon, but it's pretty much the same interior design: a chic French-style bar in a former law library accessed through a hidden door on the side of the Maison de la Luz, now known as Maison Métier. Blanes wanted a sophisticated cocktail bar that would show the difference between the elegance and influence of Camile Davies, and the wealthy elitism of Gemma Landry. Also, who doesn't want to drink delicious alcoholic beverages in a fancy former library? If they still have it, I highly recommend the Gallic Spritz. It's very refreshing for those steamy New Orleans evenings. Or order yourself a Sazerac, kick back, and relax.

Nevaeh's apartment. 1231 Chartres Street in the Vieux Carree (or French Quarter). When he started this book, Blanes had planned to avoid writing about the French Quarter as much as possible. He felt like that neighborhood had been widely covered in many novels. Then he stumbled upon this weirdly salmon pink Creole Townhouse with its carriageway entrance and tiny balcony during his wanderings, and he knew immediately that it was Nevaeh's home. For him, it just seemed like the exact place she'd lived, a simple and cheap apartment on the outskirts of New Orleans's party neighborhood. The exact neighborhood that someone who, up until she was old enough to live on her own, existed in the tight grip of a conservative, religious household. Today the building is condos. Because it's a residential building, Blanes was not allowed to explore the inside. He based the interior of Nevaeh's place on photos he'd seen on the internet of Creole Townhouse apartments.

La Richelieu Motor Hotel. This is the hotel right across the street from Nevaeh's building at 1234 Chartres Street. Admittedly, the café where Gemma first catches Jefferson with Nevaeh was completely fictionalized. There is a café inside the building, but it doesn't give a view of the building across the street. Blanes used this to move the plot forward and to place Gemma somewhere where she'd not be easily seen by her boyfriend and his lover.

Jefferson's Art Studio. The School Art Studio is located on 1215 Japonica Street in the Bywater near the canal that separates the bohemian area from the Lower 9th. This is a bit of a hike, so we advise taking a bus or a taxi, but it's worth the trip. You will recognize the building immediately by the unique street murals painted on the façade of the former school. Blanes explored several art studios for settling on the School Art Studios. Initially, it was the diversity of the art and the artists represented which drew his attention. But the further he explored, he realized that for a young man Jefferson's age the School Art Studios was exactly the kind of space he'd need to create his art, an affordable space far away from distraction and bursting with inspiration.

Tree of Life Recovery Center. Formerly the Seaside Behavioral Center at 3601 Coliseum Street in Touru just outside the Garden District. Once you see this five-story hideous brown brick building you'll understand why Blanes chose it as the mental hospital where both Nevaeh and Angelique receive treatment. It'll give you shivers just looking at it, more so now that the building is abandoned, which it wasn't at the time Blanes wrote POD. He'd found the facility by reading reviews from former patients and staff who complained of poor treatment, unhealthy practices, and dangerous living conditions. In early versions of the novel, the Tree of Life was a terrifying hospital where everything was frightening. Though he kept some of those elements in the final version, Blanes needed a reason for Nevaeh to return, so he invented kindhearted Ms. Hebert and friends like Emery, focusing the true horror on the fifth floor and the room of Angelique Truehart. The idea of the flies actually came from a story he read from a patient review. The bugs collected in the windowsill of her room. A window that she could not open for it being barred. It put Blanes in mind of the Amityville Horror. It was that tone that he ended up going for in his final edits.

Gemma's apartment. 2919 Prytania. This stunning Garden District Greek Revival House was seen by Blanes as he was headed to Lafayette Cemetery No. 1 to take photos for the burial scene that starts Part 2 of Portraits of Decay. Was there anything specifically unique about this house? Actually, no it was the opposite. This style of house is common among the rich, but not uber wealthy who live in the Garden District. Though Blanes pictured Gemma's family as affluent in money and influence, but not so rich it'd seem impossible Gemma would ever date someone like Jefferson. This particular house had a grass strip between the house and fence for Nevaeh to slip down when she goes to speak to Jefferson at Nevaeh's place. Since the home was owned, Blanes used photos from websites like Zillow to reimagine the interior. One of the many times he was thankful for the existence of the internet in his writing.

Lafayette Cemetery No.1: Founded in 1833, this is one of the oldest and most historic and haunted cemeteries in New Orleans. There are 500 wall vaults, which are sealed. In Portraits of Decay, Gemma buries Jefferson in one of these vaults, which in reality wouldn't be possible, but that's why it's called fiction. The cemetery is the home of 1100 family vaults, which is the main reason Blanes chose it. He pictured Gemma coming from a long line of powerful New Orleanians. Hence, why Mallory Landry, Gemma's mother, is part of the Women's Republican Party. The cemetery is also used in another famous horror book: The Witching Hour by Ann Rice. Blanes saw his use of the cemetery in his own horror novel as a little homage to the late great writer.

Bayou St. John. When Blanes was searching for a voodoo shop in New Orleans, he was disappointed that the majority of them were within the French Quarter or surrounding area. It made sense, since the French Quarter is often the main attraction for tourists, but he was hoping for something more local. But everyone he asked pointed him in the direction of the French Quarter. Then he heard a story about the Bayou St. John, a waterway located within the Mid-City area. In 1817, City Council forbid large gathering of black people, causing the Haitian refugees to practice their voodoo religion in hiding in the swamps of the bayou. Long before the city drained and developed the cypress forests not what the neighborhood is today, one of those places for voodoo practice was the Bayou St. John. Reputedly it's where the infamous Marie Laveau conducted many rituals. To honor this part of New Orleans history, it chose the Bayou St. John as the location for the Vodou Temple of Bondye. Because the specific voodoo shop Blanes based it on was on a main street in its area, he searched for a similar location that gave off the same vibe and found the building on 2762 Orleans, which had a structure similar to what he imagined in his head. By happenstance, years later he discovered that this particular building is home to the New Orleans Pride Center.

Voudou Temple of Bondye is based on three different stores.

The first is the **Voodoo Spiritual Temple** on 1428 N. Rampart Street. Though it's housed inside a Creole Cottage, Blanes took much of the exterior look—including the distinct yellow paint color—from the temple's façade. The sign hanging above the doorway of the Spiritual Temple he incorporated into the creation of his voodoo temple. Because the Voodoo Spiritual Temple mission is to provide services that “meet the needs of mankind and to fulfill their quest in their divine plan of the universe.” Because many stories—including Portraits of Decay—concentrate on false beliefs and misconceptions that voodoo focuses on sacrifices and zombies, Blanes was determined to show the true nature of voodoo in his book that the temple practices, which is “the mixing of energies of the universe with the omnipresent creator and that which manifests inside all humans,” and so created the character Rolando. Just like the Voodoo Spiritual Temple's goal, Rolando attempts to educate Gemma and Nevaeh on the true beliefs of voodoo and dispel the myths associated with the religion, which is why he considers Mirlande St. Pierre a witch and not a voodoo practitioner.

The downstairs interior is an almost exact replica of the **Island of Salvation**, 2372 Claude Avenue #100. Here you can buy vodou religious supplies: everything from medicinal herbs, crystals, candles, statues and books. They have vodou flags and paintings hung on the walls. Their merchandise is organized on nice wooden shelves and tables. It is owned by a Ukrainian Jew from Maine named Sallie Glassman. She is one of the few white Americans ordained via the traditional Haitian initiation. Though they are nothing alike in appearance nor personality, Sallie Glassman was the inspiration behind the creation of Isabel Lovelie because she offers crystal readings as one of her services. This was why Blanes decided to have a scene in the shop where a ritual is performed. Originally, it was a crystal reading, but after Blanes researched the Lwa Baron Samedi he decided to change it to possession ritual where a Lwa uses a practitioner, which are called the Chwal, body to communicate. The ritual in the book is not like the actual ceremony practiced in voodoo and was heightened for dramatic effect.

The upstairs interior of the Voudou Temple of Bondye is constructed after **Voodoo Authentica** at 612 Dumaine Street. This store is too practitioner owned and operated but is a little more in line with what people envision when they think of a voodoo shop. Though it markets itself as cultural center, temple, and education space, if you're looking to purchase spells, gris-gris, dolls, this would be the place to go. The employees are friendly and very knowledgeable and passionate about their religion. When you visit you will understand how the shop influenced the setting in the scene between Isabel Lovelie and Nevaeh.

Women's Republican Club of New Orleans. 141 Robert E. Lee Blvd. #384. This was a happy accident. While doing research for Gemma's character, Blanes stumbled upon the Women's Republican Club of New Orleans. He went to their website and noticed that their only event was a monthly luncheon. This sparked the idea for the confrontation between Gemma and her mother at Drago's Seafood Restaurant at 3232 N Arnoult (Blanes only chose this restaurant because it was close to the Club and had a funny mascot). He based Mallory Landry's appearance on a particular board member, using her photo to describe the portrait hanging in the hall of the club and imagined what her personality would be like: stern, manipulative, and apathetic until she realizes her daughter is in real danger and in her own matriarchal way tries to save Gemma. Though a minor character, Blanes enjoyed delving into Mallory as she exhibits traits that reveal where Gemma inherited and developed parts of her personality. The Club was the perfect location for Gemma to find out about Mirlande. Admittedly, Blanes never went to the club because he didn't think he'd be welcome. Though the location and club are real, how it appears in the novel was entirely invented.

End of the World. **Warning: Please take precaution while visiting this sight.** That being said, the End of the World, an artistic public space on a levee near an abandoned East Bank Naval Clinic at the eastern end of the Bywater is a special area. Along the base is a graffitied mural two stories tall that reads "Open Your Eyes." When Blanes heard about it from locals he knew he had to see it. And he was not disappointed. Across a set of deserted rails and through a barbwire fence, you head up a hill toward the Mississippi and there you'll find the 12-acre urban outdoor gallery. Near a graffiti wall is a tin shack where people trade goods like they did in the olden times. You're allowed to take something as long you give something back. Occasionally there is someone manning the shack, usually a homeless person, but otherwise its trusted you'll honor the rule. So don't be a jerk. Not far from there is a walking labyrinth painted on a cement lot with painted stones along the path. Just like in the novel, it ends with you facing the mural on the base of Naval Clinic. There are handmade shrines and pyramids and a doghouse with photos of deceased pets. Blanes felt the End of the World was a spiritual haven far from the hustle-and-bustle of urban life. Its why he set, what for him, is the most heart wrenching moments of the novel.

City Park is a self-supporting public park in New Orleans and the 87 largest in the United States. It is near the New Orleans Museum of Art that is mentioned in the novel as a place that Nevaeh and Jefferson wandered when they were in school together. This is the park where Jefferson and Nevaeh picnicked after they first became friends. There are several of its attractions mentioned in Portraits of Decay. The Singing Oak is a tree with wind chimes hanging off the branches, the Sydney and Walda Besthoff Sculpture Garden, and Langles Bridge, which is in the painting Jefferson gave to Nevaeh that hangs on her wall. We highly recommend visting City Park as it is one of the beautiful natural areas the city.



Bayou Sauvage. Though this is called a walking tour, we highly advise you to drive to this site. As Blanes describes in POD, the bayou is a frightening wilderness that can be dangerous. That being said, there is one area to check out and the landscape offers beautiful views unlike you'll see anywhere else. Near the Crabbing Bridge on Frontage Road is a little path that leads to the water of the Irish Bayou Lagoon. This is the area where Gemma and Jefferson drown Camile and Marcel's bodies. All the other places—the dock of the boatman and the witch's hut--were from Blanes' imagination. He simply used the terror he felt while in the bayou to explore darkness of witchcraft, black magic, and New Orleans folklore. He chose Bayou Sauvage for its name. It just sounded like somewhere you wouldn't want to go.

This concludes the tour. We hope that you enjoy exploring the magical city of New Orleans and the world author J.R. Blanes built within it for Portraits of Decay. As they say in the Crescent City, “Laissez les bons temps rouler!”