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Mississippi Novelist Greg Iles Dies at Age 65

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Greg Iles, the bestselling Mississippi author known for the *Natchez Burning* trilogy and other works of historical fiction and suspense, has died at the age of 65. His passing was confirmed on Friday after a decades-long struggle with multiple myeloma, a form of blood cancer.

The news was announced by Iles's longtime literary agent, Dan Conaway, who paid tribute to the writer in a Facebook post on Saturday. "He was warm, funny, fearless, and completely sui generis," Conaway wrote. "To be on the other end of the phone as he talked through

character and plot, problem-solving on the fly, was to be a witness to genius at work, plain and simple.”

Born in Stuttgart, Germany, in 1960, Iles moved with his family to Natchez, Mississippi, at the age of three. The region shaped his identity and became the backdrop for much of his work. His acclaimed *Natchez Burning* trilogy examined race and class tensions during the civil rights era in the Deep South, cementing his reputation as a writer who combined gripping storytelling with historical depth.

Iles kept his cancer diagnosis private for years, revealing it publicly only after completing his final novel, *Southern Man*, published in 2024. Despite the challenges of his illness, he continued to write prolifically, blending suspense with complex characters and moral questions.

Iles faced other life-threatening challenges beyond his cancer battle. In March 2011, he was critically injured in a car accident on Highway 61 near Natchez when another vehicle struck his car. The crash led to a ruptured aorta, a partial leg amputation, and an eight-day medically induced coma. After a long recovery, he eventually returned to both writing and performing music.

Outside of literature, Iles also had a passion for music. He performed with the Rock Bottom Remainders, a band made up of bestselling authors including Stephen King and Amy Tan. The group performed at literary and charity events, highlighting its connection to the broader creative community.

Conaway praised Iles’ precision and dedication to craft, describing him as a “master watchmaker” of storytelling. His blend of historical awareness and suspense won him a loyal readership in the United States and beyond.

Greg Iles leaves behind a legacy as one of Mississippi’s most distinctive voices in contemporary American literature. His works, often rooted in the history and struggles of the South, remain a testament to his resilience, creativity, and commitment to storytelling.

He is survived by family, friends, and a readership that will continue to honor his work for generations.