



If you live in Texas, you can nominate the next people to be honored as Texas State Artists! This month, we're spotlighting Dario Robleto, who was named the 2016 Texas State Artist-3D, and currently has a show at the Amon Carter Museum of American Art in Fort Worth. Scroll down for how you can submit nominations, and for more on Dario Robleto!

Photo: Dario Robleto (b. 1972), *American Seabed* (detail), 2014, fossilized prehistoric whale ear bones salvaged from the sea (1 to 10 million years), various butterflies, butterfly antennae made from stretched and pulled audiotape recordings of Bob Dylan's "Desolation Row," concrete, ocean water, pigments, coral, brass, steel, Plexiglas, Courtesy of the artist, © Dario Robleto

New Grants Approved

On September 5, TCA Commissioners approved funding of **995 grants** in the first funding round for fiscal year 2025. The grants total over \$14.5 million and will go to nonprofits and units of government in 130 Texas cities. These grants include the Arts Create program, which provides operational support to established arts organizations; the Cultural District Project program; the first of two funding rounds for the Arts Respond Project program; the quarterly Arts Respond Performance Support program; and the quarterly Designated Funding and Commission Initiatives program. TCA's full list of fiscal year 2025 grants is [here](#).

[Arts Create](#) grants provide year-round operational support to Texas arts organizations with budgets over \$50,000. For fiscal year 2025, **439 Arts Create grants totaling just over \$4.5 million are allocated to 439 organizations in 88 Texas cities.**

Arts Respond [Cultural District Project](#) grants provide support to projects that use the arts to diversify local economies, generate revenue, and attract visitors and investment. These grants are available to arts organizations and government entities verified as based in TCA-designated cultural districts. For fiscal year 2025, **109 applicants from 36 different cultural districts in 27 Texas cities will receive funding totaling almost \$6.7 million.**

[Arts Respond Project](#) grants fund arts-based projects that address one of the priority areas of economic development, education, health and human services, natural resources and agriculture, or public safety and criminal justice. For the first round of these grants in fiscal year 2025, applications from **314 arts organizations in 68 cities will receive funding, for a total of almost \$1.3 million.**

Arts Respond [Performance Support](#) grants provide partial support to help applicants host an artist from the [Texas Touring Roster](#) in their community. **The 129 grants for this quarter total \$233,450 and will go to 108 organizations and units of government in 61 Texas cities.**

The [Designated Funding and Commission Initiatives](#) program for this quarter distributed \$60,000 received from the National Endowment for the Arts via one \$25,000 grant to conduct the Poetry Out Loud high school competition in Texas and another \$35,000 grant to conduct folk arts apprenticeships and related programs and documentation. A third grant for \$10,000 will go to Austin PBS to support the 50th Anniversary of Austin City Limits.

State Artist Nominations Open through October 15

On behalf of the Texas State Legislature, the Texas Commission on the Arts is now accepting nominations for the 2025 and 2026 Texas State Artists. [Nominations](#) are accepted for Texas State Musician-Nonclassical, State Musician-Classical, Texas Poet Laureate, Texas State Two-Dimensional Artist (visual arts), and Texas State Three-Dimensional Artist (visual arts). **Any Texas citizen is able to nominate a living artist in any of the five categories and self-nominations are welcome.** Nominees must be native Texans or have resided in the state for at least five years. They must have attained the highest levels of excellence and success in their respective disciplines and earned a statewide, regional or national reputation for their high caliber work. Nominations will be accepted online through October 15, 2024. The Texas Poet Laureate, State Musician and State Artist Committee, composed of members appointed by the Governor, Lieutenant Governor and Speaker of the Texas House of Representatives, will make the final selections for the Legislature's consideration and approval in 2025.

The positions, created by SB 1043 of the 77th Legislature and-- in the case of the new Texas State Musician-Classical designation-- SB 281 of the 88th Legislature (2023), are filled for one-year terms. Appointees are selected for the exceptional quality of their work and for their outstanding commitment to the arts in Texas. Each Texas State Artist reflects the state's diversity and high-quality artistic offerings. To learn more about the Texas State Artists nomination process, and to submit nominations, visit <https://www.arts.texas.gov/initiatives/texas-state-artist/>. Scroll down for a feature on 2016 Texas State Artist-3D, Dario Robleto!

Grant Reports and Revised Budgets Due

If your organization was approved to receive an Arts Create grant, a Cultural District Project grant, or an Arts Respond Project grant for fiscal year 2025 (September 1, 2024-August 31, 2025), you will have some paperwork to do before your new grant(s) can be paid.

Note that all forms and supporting materials should be completed and provided in TCA's online grants system. This **excludes direct deposit authorization forms**, which must be faxed or mailed to protect sensitive information.

Revised Budgets

Each funded FY25 Cultural District Project or Arts Respond Project grant will have a revised budget form that should be filled out and submitted online.

Grant Reports: Due September 30, 2024

Reports are due for grant activities that ended as TCA's prior fiscal year (September 1, 2023-August 31, 2024) concluded.

- Plan ahead—**the September 30 deadline is firm and there are no extensions.**
- Grant reports must be submitted, and successfully closed out by TCA staff, before new grants will be paid.
- To help ensure timely payment of your FY25 grants, submit your reports and supporting materials well before the deadline.
- Please note that the data collected from these reports is provided to the State of Texas and the National Endowment for the Arts as TCA's main funders. Receiving your complete report on time with appropriate supporting documentation helps TCA make a case for its grants budget.

Top five problems that prevent reports from being approved:

1. Payments made outside of the period of the grant (check your TCA contract for dates)
2. Missing data or typo in spreadsheet (check number, date, total amount of check, etc.)
3. Amounts in expense categories do not match the grant budget page of the online report
4. Check sequence variance--if you are using multiple checking accounts, include a note for staff
5. Payments to people are included in categories other than administrative or artistic salaries, contracts, benefits categories.

If you have any questions, please contact our program staff for help (scroll to the bottom of [this page](#) to see artistic discipline assignments by staff member).

TCA Speaker Series: Explore the Power of Fundraising Boards

Texas Commission on the Arts invites you to a **free** convening to **Explore the Power of Fundraising Boards**. This event is an opportunity to learn about fundraising boards and the enormous impact they can have on your organization. Our speakers will discuss the art of developing a fundraising board, what makes them different from working boards, and what considerations will help you take on this important work. The virtual meeting will be on **Wednesday, October 9** at 11 AM Central.

TCA staff will be joined by two arts nonprofit professionals with a wealth of experience to share:

Luis Purón has served as Executive Director for the Rockport Center for the Arts (RCA) since 2015, working to elevate the organization to new levels of prominence and recognition in the United States. The most notable accomplishment of Purón's tenure has been the development and opening of the new 1.2-acre campus featuring a 14,000-square-foot visual arts and education building, an 8,000-square-foot conference center, and a 16,000-square-foot sculpture garden, making the organization the first multidisciplinary arts organization in the Coastal Bend.



Cookie Gregory Ruiz has more than 30 years of experience in the areas of strategic planning, organizational development, and nonprofit fundraising/management. She has served as Executive Director of Ballet Austin since 1997. Ruiz is the immediate Past President and current member of the Board of Directors of Texans for the Arts, member of the Board of Directors of HousingWorks Austin, President of the Mayor's Better Austin Foundation Board, and is a Fellow of the National Arts Strategies International Chief Executive Program.

Mark your calendar and [register](#) today! TCA selected this topic using feedback from constituents, and we expect that future meetings in this series will continue addressing needs expressed by members of the Texas arts field.

Support Texas Arts with the *State of the Arts* License Plate



TCA's new black-and-silver *State of the Arts* minimalist design license plate is shipping and is available to order at <https://www.myplates.com/go/arts>. This plate design can go on a passenger car, motorcycle, trailer, or private bus (attention, Texas bands!). TCA will receive a portion of the sales of the plate. Note that this plate is

part of MyPlates' "Lone Star Series," but only the *State of the Arts* plate supports TCA. There is a price break for those ordering their plate for multiple years. Make a long-term commitment to the arts!

TCA Commissioner Appointed

TCA is pleased to share news of a new appointee to our board. On August 27, Governor Greg Abbott appointed **Robert "Bobby" Lee** of Amarillo to the Texas Commission on the Arts for a term set to expire on August 31, 2029. Mr. Lee is co-owner of The Big Texan Steak Ranch. He is also a member of the Route 66 Centennial

Commissioner's National Working Groups. Lee received a Bachelor of Science in Mass Communications from West Texas A&M University. We look forward to working with Commissioner Lee!

Beware of SAM-UEI Scams



If your organization has a SAM-UEI (System of Award Management-Unique Entity Identifier) issued by the federal government, TCA wants to remind you this service is **100% FREE**. Scammers are sending out convincing-looking “official” emails offering to help with SAM-UEI renewals for a fee. **Renewals are free**, so any mention of a fee should alert you that the email is a scam. TCA recommends marking those emails as junk, blocking those senders, and deleting those emails. Only organizations that apply directly to a federal agency for funding need to renew their SAM-UEI.

High Schools: Sign Up Now for Poetry Out Loud

TCA is signing up high schools and organizations across the state to participate in the [Poetry Out Loud](#) program. Interested educators should fill out [this form](#) soon to sign up and to receive materials to help them conduct the program during the fall semester.



The Poetry Out Loud recitation contest is a national project of the National Endowment for the Arts and the Poetry Foundation. This exciting program helps students master public speaking skills, build self-confidence, and learn about their literary heritage. High school students memorize poems and perform them in competition. Each participating high school/organization will hold its competition to determine its winner by December 15, 2024. Their winner will compete at the state competition in February 2025.

At the state level, the winner and runner up receive cash awards and their school libraries receive money to help them buy poetry books. The state winner will represent Texas in the national competition, which has a pool of \$50,000 in scholarships for students and cash awards for schools/organizations.

Dario Robleto, 2016 Texas State Artist-3D

Texans have through October 15 to [nominate](#) the next Texas State Artists! Want some inspiration? This month, we're turning the spotlight on 2016 Texas State Artist-3D, Dario Robleto!

Dario Robleto is a native of San Antonio. His



sculptures, prints and installations combine esoteric materials and processes to explore forgotten corners of history, art and science. He received his BFA from the University of Texas at San Antonio. Robleto has had numerous solo exhibitions since 1997 and has had works included in many prestigious group shows and collections. His work has been seen most recently in solo exhibitions at the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study at Harvard University; the Menil Collection

(2014); and the Baltimore Museum of Art (2014). His work has been profiled in numerous publications and media, including *Radiolab*, Krista Tippet's *On Being*, and the *New York Times*. He has received numerous awards, including the 2007 Joan Mitchell Foundation Grant, the 2009 USA Rasmuson Fellowship, and the 2011 Smithsonian Artist Research Fellowship. He lives and works in Houston.

The exhibition ***Dario Robleto: The Signal*** is at the **Amon Carter Museum of American Art in Fort Worth through October 27, 2024**. Known for his multidisciplinary, research-driven approach, Robleto's work probes questions about the order of the universe and the human-made systems we employ to perceive and describe it. Spanning film, sculpture, and works on paper, *The Signal* represents the culmination of Robleto's multiyear exploration of the Golden Record, the gold-plated phonograph disk containing sounds and images selected by a team at NASA to portray life on Earth to extraterrestrials. Supported by related sculptures and works on paper, the centerpiece of the exhibition is Robleto's newly commissioned work, *Ancient Beacons Long for Notice*, an immersive, 60-minute film based on the approved contents of the Record and the choice to exclude from the record a rare and forgotten document—the first audio recording of warfare. To see more about [this exhibition](#) and Dario Robleto, here's a recent [article](#) from *Glasstire*.

Dario Robleto, Photo by Sean Su Photography

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