



Texas  
Commission  
on the Arts

Investing in a Creative Texas

# Texas Touring Roster 2026 – 2028

Performances from September 1, 2026 – August 31, 2028

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>A'lante Flamenco</b>	7
<b>Aaron Stephens</b>	8
<b>Alda P. Dobbs</b>	9
<b>Alex Meixner</b>	10
<b>Alex Tha Great</b>	11
<b>Alley Theatre</b>	12
<b>Amalia Ortiz</b>	13
<b>Amie Maciszewski/Sangeet Millennium</b>	14
<b>Anel I. Flores</b>	15
<b>Angela Henderson Smith</b>	16
<b>Anuradha Naimpally</b>	17
<b>ARCOS Dance</b>	18
<b>Asleep at the Wheel</b>	19
<b>Austin Symphony Orchestra</b>	20
<b>Austin Taiko</b>	21
<b>Axiom Quartet</b>	22
<b>Azul Barrientos</b>	23
<b>Ballet Austin</b>	24
<b>Ballet Frontier of Texas</b>	25
<b>Ballet Nepantla</b>	26
<b>Bernadette Nason</b>	27
<b>Big Love Car Wash</b>	28
<b>Blue Lapis Light</b>	29
<b>Bob Livingston</b>	30
<b>Brave Combo</b>	31
<b>Brave Little Company</b>	32
<b>Bruce Wood Dance</b>	33
<b>Central Texas Philharmonic</b>	34
<b>Chelsea de Souza</b>	35
<b>Chibbi</b>	36
<b>Chloe de Souza</b>	37
<b>Chris Barton</b>	38
<b>Chris Espinosa-XYZ</b>	39
<b>Community Arts</b>	40

<b>Dallas Black Dance Theatre</b> .....	41
<b>Daniel Pardo</b> .....	42
<b>Danielle Talamantes, Kerry Wilkerson</b> .....	43
<b>Dave Meder</b> .....	44
<b>David Cox, Rhythm Path Interactive Drumming</b> .....	45
<b>Decee Cornish</b> .....	46
<b>Del Castillo</b> .....	47
<b>Diaz Music Institute</b> .....	48
<b>Dirty River Jazz Band</b> .....	49
<b>Donna Ingham</b> .....	50
<b>Double Vision Jazz Ensemble</b> .....	51
<b>Dr. Sunanda Nair and Sunanda's Performing Arts Center (SPARC)</b> ..	52
<b>Drum One, Drum All/Noah Mosgofian</b> .....	53
<b>Ebony Stewart</b> .....	54
<b>Eddie Vega</b> .....	55
<b>El Chanclazo</b> .....	56
<b>Elizabeth Kahura</b> .....	57
<b>Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra</b> .....	58
<b>George Ensle</b> .....	59
<b>Georgia Parker</b> .....	60
<b>Glass Half Full Theatre</b> .....	61
<b>Goodhearted Entertainment</b> .....	62
<b>Graham Reynolds</b> .....	63
<b>Grupo Fantasma</b> .....	64
<b>Guadalupe Dance Company</b> .....	65
<b>Guy Forsyth</b> .....	66
<b>Hope Shiver</b> .....	67
<b>Hot Club of Cowtown</b> .....	68
<b>Hot Pickin 57s</b> .....	69
<b>Houston Grand Opera</b> .....	70
<b>Houston Symphony Society</b> .....	71
<b>Ida y Vuelta Flamenco Dance Company</b> .....	72
<b>Indrajit Banerjee</b> .....	73
<b>Invincible Czars</b> .....	74
<b>Invoke</b> .....	75
<b>Iron Frog Press</b> .....	76
<b>J Muzacz</b> .....	77

<b>Javier Jara</b> .....	78
<b>Jelly Ellington</b> .....	79
<b>Joe McDermott</b> .....	80
<b>Joel Laviolette &amp; Rattletree</b> .....	81
<b>Jolie Rocke</b> .....	82
<b>Jomo &amp; The Possum Posse/Jomo Edwards</b> .....	83
<b>Jonathan Palomar</b> .....	84
<b>Juan Longoria Jr. y Conteño</b> .....	85
<b>Kam Franklin</b> .....	86
<b>Kamica King</b> .....	87
<b>Kathak Rhythms</b> .....	88
<b>Kim Lehman</b> .....	89
<b>Laser Spectacles</b> .....	90
<b>Le Theatre de Marionette</b> .....	91
<b>Light Crust Doughboys featuring Marek Eneti</b> .....	92
<b>Lone Star Circus</b> .....	93
<b>Loop38</b> .....	94
<b>Los Texmaniacs</b> .....	95
<b>Lucas Miller, the Singing Zoologist</b> .....	96
<b>Luke Bulla</b> .....	97
<b>Madam Radar</b> .....	98
<b>Magic in the Library</b> .....	99
<b>Magik Theatre</b> .....	100
<b>Main Street Theater</b> .....	101
<b>Mariachi Las Alteñas</b> .....	102
<b>MCP Shows/Margaret Clauder</b> .....	103
<b>Melissa Carper</b> .....	104
<b>Mercury Chamber Orchestra</b> .....	105
<b>Mexico 2000 Ballet Folklorico</b> .....	106
<b>Mezclada Dance Company</b> .....	107
<b>Monarch Chamber Players</b> .....	108
<b>Montopolis</b> .....	109
<b>Mr. Will/Will and The Wilderness</b> .....	110
<b>Nancy Churnin</b> .....	111
<b>Native American Cultural Center fka Great Promise</b> .....	112
<b>Natyanjali Kuchipudi Dance School</b> .....	113
<b>NobleMotion Dance</b> .....	114
<b>Oba William King</b> .....	115

<b>Oliver Rajamani</b>	116
<b>Open Dance Project</b>	117
<b>Pamela Hart</b>	118
<b>Paramount Story Wranglers</b>	119
<b>Pat Hazell/Sweetwood Creative</b>	120
<b>Percussion Things</b>	121
<b>Ramazinis Circus Theater</b>	122
<b>Ramblin' Rita</b>	123
<b>Raul Ayala Band</b>	124
<b>Riyaaz Qawwali</b>	125
<b>Rochelle &amp; the Sidewinders Duo</b>	126
<b>Rudi Harst</b>	127
<b>Russell Joe Thompson</b>	128
<b>Shasparay</b>	129
<b>Silambam Houston</b>	130
<b>Sofrito y Su Melao</b>	131
<b>South Austin Moonlighters</b>	132
<b>State Artist Alecia Lawyer</b>	133
<b>State Artist Amanda Johnston</b>	134
<b>State Artist Angelbert Metoyer</b>	135
<b>State Artist Carmen Tafolla</b>	136
<b>State Artist Carrie Fountain</b>	137
<b>State Artist Craig Hella Johnson</b>	138
<b>State Artist Cyrus Cassells</b>	139
<b>State Artist Dale Watson</b>	140
<b>State Artist Dario Robleto</b>	141
<b>State Artist David M. Parsons</b>	142
<b>State Artist Diana Kersey</b>	143
<b>State Artist Dornith Doherty</b>	144
<b>State Artist Emily Gimble</b>	145
<b>State Artist Emmy Perez</b>	146
<b>State Artist Eva Ybarra</b>	147
<b>State Artist Gaspar Enriquez</b>	148
<b>State Artist Ire'ne Lara Silva</b>	149
<b>State Artist James C. Watkins</b>	150
<b>State Artist James Dick</b>	151
<b>State Artist Jan Seale</b>	152
<b>State Artist Jimmie Vaughan</b>	153

<b>State Artist Karla Morton</b> .....	154
<b>State Artist Ken Little</b> .....	155
<b>State Artist Kevin Prufer</b> .....	156
<b>State Artist Laurie Ann Guerrero</b> .....	157
<b>State Artist Letitia Huckaby</b> .....	158
<b>State Artist Little Joe Hernandez</b> .....	159
<b>State Artist Marc Burckhardt</b> .....	160
<b>State Artist Marcia Ball</b> .....	161
<b>State Artist Margo Sawyer</b> .....	162
<b>State Artist Mary McCleary</b> .....	163
<b>State Artist Octavio Quintanilla</b> .....	164
<b>State Artist Sara Hickman</b> .....	165
<b>State Artist Shelley King</b> .....	166
<b>State Artist Steve Parker</b> .....	167
<b>State Artist Vincent Valdez</b> .....	168
<b>Stephanie Urbina Jones &amp; The Honky Tonk Mariachi</b> .....	169
<b>Storybook Theatre of Texas</b> .....	170
<b>Sue Foley</b> .....	171
<b>Sue Kuentz</b> .....	172
<b>Sue Young</b> .....	173
<b>Taylord</b> .....	174
<b>Terrence Taps</b> .....	175
<b>Terri Hendrix</b> .....	176
<b>Texas Cellos</b> .....	177
<b>Texas Folklife</b> .....	178
<b>Texas Gypsies</b> .....	179
<b>Texas Shakespeare Festival's Roadshow</b> .....	180
<b>The Bike Zoo</b> .....	181
<b>The Cliburn</b> .....	182
<b>The Grand Ol' Production Company</b> .....	183
<b>The Limelitters</b> .....	184
<b>The Peterson Brothers</b> .....	185
<b>The Vinyl Stripes</b> .....	186
<b>The Western Flyers</b> .....	187
<b>Tio Toto</b> .....	188
<b>Tish Hinojosa</b> .....	189
<b>Toni Simmons</b> .....	190
<b>Trio Los Vigilantes</b> .....	191

<b>Vocal Majority Chorus</b> .....	192
<b>WindSync</b> .....	193
<b>Yuck Show</b> .....	194
<b>Zak Mirz</b> .....	195



## A'LANTE FLAMENCO

flamenco  
dance and music

Thundering footwork, chattering castanets, soaring vocals and blazing guitars--A'lante Flamenco takes hold of an audience and won't let go! The company, directed by Olivia Chacon, features five dancers and four musicians who fill the stage with energy, enthraling audiences of all ages and backgrounds, and presenting flamenco to Texas audiences in fresh and creative ways. Flamenco is a music and dance form hailing from Southern Spain, with Roma (Gypsy), Arabic, Jewish, and Latin American influences. A'lante Flamenco has been hailed by audiences and critics for their dynamic and contemporary approach to flamenco, uniting tradition and innovation. Their programs can be customized for specific venues, events or audiences, including performance plus dance/music workshops, mini-performances, and lecture-demonstrations in Spanish or English, including discussion of history and cultural influences of flamenco. They are currently touring three programs: 'Flamencura' transports audiences into a traditional Spanish flamenco club, where performers show off their skills with fire and passion. 'Flamencura' is highly adaptable, best suited for smaller venues. 'Amor Flamenco' is a more theatrical work showcasing choreography for 3 to 5 dancers and 4 musicians. 'Flamenco Arabe' highlights the Arabic roots of flamenco, and features guest musicians from the Arab music tradition. Photo by Juliana Helton.

Discipline	Dance
City	Austin
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## AARON STEPHENS

soul fusion  
solo or full band

Born in Illinois, raised on the border in McAllen, and now residing in Bryan, soul singer-songwriter Aaron Stephens is a triple threat. Blessed with a warm, rich voice that hearkens to soul legends such as Bill Withers and Al Green, paired with bluesy, rootsy, Derek Trucks-inspired slide guitar, Stephens' sound is brought together through his own imaginative arrangements and methodical songwriting that can be both introspective and broad-reaching, drawing inspiration from soul, blues, roots, pop, and funk. The Austin Chronicle writes "Stephens executes all these styles well, gliding through genres and emotions." Over the last decade-plus, Stephens has entrenched himself as an exciting talent in not only Texas' musical landscape, but also successful tours across the US. Career highlights include an appearance at the 2021 Austin City Limits Music Festival, a nomination for Best R-and-B/Soul at the 2021 Austin Music Awards, and regular performances at venues such as Gruene Hall and Antone's. Aaron performs with a variety of formats, ranging from solo to varying full-band formats, up to a six-piece with bass, drums, keys, and horns. Aaron also can offer single-day or multi-week educational lectures and hands-on workshops demonstrating elements, sounds and techniques of the lap steel guitar across genres. Photo by Sarah Stephens.

Discipline	Music
City	Bryan
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## ALDA P. DOBBS

writing for young people  
bilingual programs

Alda P. Dobbs is the author of the middle grade novels *Barefoot Dreams* of Petra Luna – a Texas Bluebonnet Selection, Pura Belpre Honor Book, and NPR Book of the Year – and its sequel, *The Other Side of the River*. Her picture book, *The Giving Flower: The Story of the Poinsettia*, received a starred review from SLJ and is a Reading Rock Stars book. Alda offers programs in English and Spanish that integrate historical research with the arts—using visual storytelling and performance to help students connect cultures, generations, and the natural world. Programs include: *Barefoot Dreams*: Students see how historical photographs and primary sources become scenes on the page through imagery, structure, and voice. Includes a story-mapping or vignette activity; *The Other Side*: Alda shares her family's 1913 journey and shows how documents and setting details can be shaped into character-driven narrative, building empathy through point of view and sensory language; *Follow Your Passion!*: A motivational talk plus mini-workshop on the creative process of finding your voice; *The Giving Flower: Making Connections!*: An interactive program exploring culture, geography, and science while highlighting illustration choices and the art of translating a story into English and Spanish. Photo by Katherine O. Ryan.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences

School audiences

Venue size

Words  
Montgomery  
Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, Schools, Seniors  
Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences  
Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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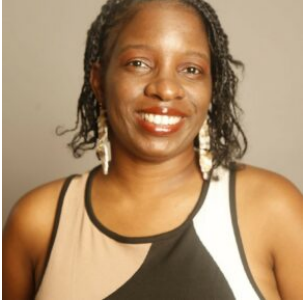
## ALEX MEIXNER

polka instrumentalist  
solo or ensemble

Based in New Braunfels, Texas, Alex Meixner is a versatile musician whose work bridges tradition and innovation. Raised in a family with four generations of Austrian and traditional folk musicians, he has built a career as an educator, bandleader, and accomplished multi-instrumentalist, performing on piano accordion, diatonic button accordion, and trumpet. He holds a master's degree in trumpet performance, bringing a high level of musicianship to every performance. Meixner is known for his engaging stage presence and ability to connect with audiences of all backgrounds. His performances range from intimate solo or duo settings to full-scale festival appearances nationwide. With ease, he transitions from traditional folk music to creative and unexpected arrangements, introducing new audiences to the breadth of the genre. As music journalist Jim Bessman of *Billboard* and *Variety* observed, "I saw the future of polka music, and it is Alex Meixner." Through performance and teaching, Meixner continues to honor cultural traditions while expanding their relevance for future generations. Photo by Jennifer Kopp.

Discipline	Music
City	New Braunfels
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## ALEX THA GREAT

poet and playwright  
performance and workshops

Alex Tha Great (Given Real Encouragement Amongst Turmoil) is a Black woman poet, playwright, and arts curator holding a Master's degree in Cultural Studies. She is the Executive Director of the Right 2 Write Poetry Slam Festival, fourth-ranked Woman Poet in the World, a TEDx speaker, and community organizer known in her current home of Dallas and earlier roots of East Palo Alto, CA. Her poems have been published in *The Cookout*, *Illya's Honey*, *The Voices Project*, *The Legendary*, and *Linden Avenue*. She is the author of the poetry collections *Black Souls Dance on Beat* (2015) and *Weeping in Public Spaces* (2022) and the creator of solo shows including *Passport to Womanhood*, awarded Best One Woman Show by the Houston Fringe Festival, and *Don't Let The Sun Beat You Home* (2023). Alex served as Artist in Residence for Arts Mission Oak Cliff (2023) and the City of DeSoto (2025). Her most gracious job is being mother to a vivacious nine-year-old girl and is balanced by a self-care routine involving peanut M and Ms, prayer, and much needed naps. She lives by the motto, Whatever you do, let it be bold! Photo by Lenz Noire Media.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences

School audiences

Venue size

Words  
Dallas  
Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, Schools, Seniors  
Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences  
Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Very large or outdoor venues

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## ALLEY THEATRE

theater for youth  
character education

Alley Theatre broadens perspectives through education and theater experiences for young people across Texas. The Education and Community Engagement department brings professional productions directly to schools, transforming cafeterias, libraries, community centers, gyms, and auditoriums into dynamic performance spaces. These engaging performances spark imagination, support curriculum goals, and make theater an unforgettable part of the school day. Designed for accessibility, each tour features a small cast, a portable and easy-to-assemble set, and an interactive digital guide that provides educators with tools for meaningful post-performance discussions in the classroom and beyond. In addition to touring productions, Alley Theatre also offers in-classroom programs such as Staging STEM (plus), First Draft Personal Narrative, and Slam Poetry, along with evidence-based professional development opportunities for educators. The Alley's statewide initiative, TYPE (Texas Young Playwrights Exchange), expands access even further through live or virtual engagement with students throughout Texas. Photo by Tasha Gorel.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences  
School audiences

Theater  
Houston  
Libraries, Schools  
Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences  
Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club)

Venue size

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## AMALIA ORTIZ

poet and playwright  
performance and workshops

Amalia Ortiz is a Tejana spoken word performer, playwright, and author of two award-winning books of poetry. She was awarded the 2020 American Book Award for Oral Literature, and appeared on three seasons of Def Poetry on HBO and the NAACP Image Awards on FOX. NBC Latino named her book Rant. Chant. Chisme. one of "10 Great Latino Books of 2015." It won the 2015 Writers' League of Texas Poetry Discovery Prize. Amalia was chosen to speak at TEDx McAllen 2015. She was awarded a City of San Antonio Individual Artist Grant. She was in the Spring 2025 cohort of Music to Life's Musician Changemaker Accelerator Academy. Amalia received her MFA in Creative Writing from The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley. Photo by Hector Hugo Garza.

Discipline

City

Special audiences

School audiences

Venue size

Words

San Antonio

Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, Schools

High school audiences

Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## AMIE MACISZEWSKI/SANGEET MILLENNIUM

sitarist  
indian classical music

Sangeet Millennium, founded and led by internationally acclaimed sitarist/teaching artist/creative culture-worker Amie Maciszewski, is a collective/project ensemble that presents South-Asian music for the world, performing repertoires that combine traditional South-Asian (classical/folk/devotional) and Indo-jazz fusion music and multidisciplinary performance. Comprised of Amie plus 1-4 artists (including Paarth Kuntawala-tabla, Amit Kelkar-voice/harmonium, Paul Klemperer-saxophone, Neel Sachdev-sarode, and sometimes dancer/s), Sangeet Millennium Ensemble offers themed and multidisciplinary concerts, lecture-demonstrations, and interactive workshops/master classes tailored to diverse, intergenerational audiences. Topics include: South-Asian Music in the World; Strings/Songs/Skins Along the Silk Road; Poetics Across Continents: Music/Words/Movement; "Raag-Rasa/Rang: Feeling the Color of South-Asian Musical Sound"; Songs of South-Asian Seasons; and Raga/Jazz/Bollywood. A studied musician/scholar with over a decade's immersion training in India (Santiniketan, Kolkata) and a career spanning five decades, Amie brings the authenticity of deep cultural experience and connection to Sangeet Millennium's musical offerings, including proficiency in Bengali-Hindi-Urdu. Amie has performed extensively in North America, India, Pakistan, Europe, and Japan; taught on faculties; conducted over 150 residencies/workshops; led South-Asian music/culture ensembles at dozens of universities, schools, museums, festivals, cultural and senior centers; and released 3 CDs. Supporters include Austin Cultural-Arts Division, Dallas Office of Arts and Culture, AT and T Performing Arts, Texas Commission on the Arts, Mid-America Arts Alliance, Teatro Dallas, Texas Asian Chamber. Photo by Saravana Creations.

Discipline	Music
City	Dallas
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## ANEL I. FLORES

poetry  
visual arts

Anel I. Flores' 30-year creative career has manifested as poetry, fiction, graphic memoir and paintings. Flores' awards include the Mellon Foundation's Democratizing Racial Justice Artists in Residence Award, the Radical Imagination Catalyst for Change Award, Distinguished Writer in Residence at OLLU, Participatory Action Research Project Fellow with SFA, the Catalyst for Change Award, Women's Advocate of the Year, Nebrija Creadores Award from the Universidad de Alcalá de Henares in Madrid, Spain, Chingona in Literature, Ancinas Award at Squaw Valley, NALAC Fund for the Arts, the Accion Women Inspiring Women, Yellow Rose Educator Award, and the Mentorship Leadership Award. Flores' work has been showcased and published in and at over 100 venues. Flores holds an MFA in Creative Writing and is the most recent author of the novel *Curtains of Rain*. Flores' teaching career includes 11 years in public high school, college, and university along with 4 years in arts administration, and various community literary workshops. Photo by Sofia Zuani.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences

School audiences

Venue size

Words  
San Antonio  
Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors  
Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences  
Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Very large or outdoor venues

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## ANGELA HENDERSON SMITH

children's author  
writing workshops

Angela Henderson Smith is a published children's author, educator, and literacy advocate with over thirteen years of experience teaching English Language Arts. She is passionate about helping readers and writers discover their voices through hands-on, interactive learning experiences that build confidence and creativity. Angela provides engaging author visits for elementary students that bring storytelling to life and hands-on writing workshops for intermediate and middle school students that develop creativity, writing skills, and confidence. Over the past two years, she has visited more than 20 schools across Texas and shared her expertise at key literacy conferences, including TALE, local ESC literacy events, and the Texas Library Association annual conference, demonstrating her commitment to supporting educators and students statewide. As the author of *Isaac's Ice Cream Tree* and two other children's books, Angela's programs combine storytelling, guided writing exercises, and interactive activities aligned with classroom learning goals. She is also the founder of Write College Prep, guiding high schoolers step by step in writing and college preparation, both in school group workshops and through individual sessions outside of school. Angela's Texas-based programs are designed to leave a lasting, meaningful impact, inspiring a lifelong love of reading and writing. Photo by Prestige Photography.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences  
School audiences

Words  
Sunnyvale  
Libraries, Schools  
Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences  
Medium-sized venues (theater),  
Smaller venues (library/club)

Venue size

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## ANURADHA NAIMPALLY

bharata natyam dance  
performer and educator

Anuradha Naimpally, Bharata Natyam dance soloist, collaborator, and educator, is an experienced performer worldwide. From concert halls to school cafeterias, libraries to universities, Anuradha connects this ancient Indian art to modern audiences of all ages through engaging explanations and moving performances. She is a recipient of numerous awards including the prestigious Jacqueline LeMieux Prize from the Canada Council and the title 'Artistic Jewel' in India. She is a 2018 inductee into the Austin Arts Hall of Fame. Anuradha offers a traditional formal solo concert introduced with demonstrative explanations, performed in authentic costumes to recorded music that can be modified for intimate spaces. This presentation is also offered as a group performance with her touring dance ensemble and suitable for larger venues as well. Her Arts in Education presentation is popular in schools, libraries, and museums. Moving Myths of India is an engaging, interactive children's show for all ages, highlighting mythology through storytelling embellished with creative hand symbols, rhythms, and cultural values of India, performed in colorful costume. Live musical accompaniment is available on request. Anuradha has an MFA in dance and also offers master classes, workshops, and lecture-demonstrations at the high school and university level. Photo by Steve Rogers Photography.

Discipline	Dance
City	Austin
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, Schools
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, Pre-K audiences
Venue size	Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Very large or outdoor venues

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## ARCOS DANCE

contemporary dance  
technology

ARCOS experiments with dance and everyday technologies to reimagine how we relate to each other. Performances layer dancing bodies and moving images livestreamed from smartphones, invite tactile interaction between dancers and audience guided by earbuds, and encourage participants to contribute to the performance using their own devices. ARCOS' internationally award-winning hybrid art is accessible, relevant, and engaging to a broad range of audiences, and recognized for its "kaleidoscopic artistry" (Austin American-Statesman) that is "fierce and weird and wonderful" (Austin Chronicle) and "thinks squarely outside the box" (Scotsman). ARCOS practices creative multiplicity, presenting throughout Texas, nationally, and abroad in public venues from art spaces and festivals to libraries and community centers, from studio theaters to alternative and outdoor venues. Available touring presentations range from solo to ensemble (1-7 performers), including the ongoing modular Ether series, newly developed pieces, site-specific works, and original commissions tailored to the communities where they are offered. ARCOS' open-level interdisciplinary workshops in movement and media arts complement its broadly accessible and participatory performances. Investigating how our contemporary technologies shape our lives, ARCOS' programs are rehearsals for the endurance and ingenuity we all need in an increasingly complex world. Photo by Sarah Annie Navarrete.

Discipline	Dance
City	Austin
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## ASLEEP AT THE WHEEL

western swing  
band

In February of 1974 Asleep at the Wheel made the move from the Bay Area to Austin, Texas after receiving encouragement from Willie Nelson and Doug Sahm to relocate – the band settled in and made Austin their home, where they remain 50 years later. "Austin was and has been everything I could have ever wished for and more," says Ray Benson, the band's leader and only original member. "It's been 55 years for AATW as a band, and 50 of them have been spent in Texas. We are known worldwide for being a Texas band and playing Texas and Western Swing music. It brings us great pride to carry this torch and responsibility. We don't take it lightly!" Asleep at the Wheel's lineup is ever changing. Since 1970 the band has had over 100 members come through. In the past, when a new lineup comes together, a new album has emerged. That still remains true. Photo by Andrew Dalton.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences  
Venue size

Music  
Austin  
Festivals/special events, Seniors  
Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Very large or outdoor venues

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## AUSTIN SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

classical orchestra  
arts education

Founded in 1911, the Austin Symphony Orchestra (ASO) is Austin's oldest performing arts group. Since its founding, ASO has evolved into a leading regional orchestra known for artistic excellence, strong community engagement, and deep educational impact. ASO brings orchestral music to life for more than 175,000 people each year through concerts, school field trips, and community events across Central Texas. The Masterworks Series features classic and contemporary compositions from the orchestral canon, and the Sarah and Ernest Butler Pops Series attracts diverse, intergenerational audiences with music from film, TV, and video games. Chamber ensembles perform in various locations around town in About Town performances. ASO's Young People Concerts provide enriching, multidisciplinary performances for 4-5th graders aligning with grade level-specific TEKS teaching objectives, and Building Blocks of the Orchestra engages K-3rd graders in-school with small ensembles, who teach students about their instruments. The annual music and literacy program Tuneful Tales offers interactive storybook readings coupled with live music presentations at local library branches for families of children ages 3-10. All ASO's education and community engagement programs have bilingual options. Photo by Joel Nesvadba.

Discipline	Music
City	Austin
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## AUSTIN TAIKO

Japanese drumming  
traditional music

Austin Taiko is a Japanese drumming ensemble dedicated to sharing the power, discipline, and joy of taiko through performance, education, and community engagement. Blending traditional taiko with contemporary expression, Austin Taiko delivers dynamic performances marked by thunderous rhythms, synchronized movement, and connection with nature and environment. Founded to build community through rhythm, Austin Taiko welcomes participants of all backgrounds and experience levels. The group emphasizes respect for Japanese cultural heritage, collaboration, and the belief that taiko is both a musical art form and a means of connection. Austin Taiko provides the following programs: Taiko Ensemble Performances - An ongoing adult performance group that rehearses regularly and performs at festivals, concerts, schools, and cultural events. Training Classes - Interactive taiko classes for future taiko drummers at different levels that ultimately elevate their proficiency to performing level. Photo by Austin Taiko.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences

School audiences

Venue size

Music  
Austin  
Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors  
Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences  
Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## AXIOM QUARTET

string quartet  
multi genre programs

From Pergolesi to Prince, Houston based Axiom Quartet is a dynamic touring string quartet known for electrifying performances that move effortlessly from classical masterworks to global traditions, bold contemporary works, and imaginative reinterpretations of familiar favorites. Their concerts are shaped by vivid storytelling, charismatic stage presence, and meticulously curated programs that invite audiences inside the music rather than keeping them at a distance. Axiom has built a statewide reputation for pairing adventurous repertoire with genuine audience connection. They blend historic context, personal insight, and scholarly perspective that create concerts that feel both sophisticated and immediately engaging. The ensemble performs in venues of every size, from major concert halls to rural community spaces and unconventional sites like caves, making high-level chamber music accessible to audiences across Texas. Active educators and community partners, Axiom regularly presents interactive concerts and workshops in schools, libraries, parks, and civic spaces through long-standing regional partnerships. Selected for the Texas Commission on the Arts Texas Touring Roster since 2022, Axiom has toured nationally and internationally, including a multi-city tour of China. Now in its twelfth season, the Quartet continues to attract presenters and audiences alike with ambitious projects, fresh programming, and performances that are vibrant, compelling, and unforgettable. Photo by Pin Lim.

Discipline	Music
City	Houston
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## AZUL BARRIENTOS

bilingual singer songwriter  
solo or ensemble

Azul Barrientos is a Texas-based singer, songwriter, and cultural music practitioner. Her performances draw on Mexican and Latin American oral traditions, including corridos, sones, boleros, and lullabies, as well as original compositions rooted in these forms. Presented bilingually in English and Spanish, her concerts combine song and contextual storytelling, inviting audiences into the living histories behind the music. Over the past 17 years, Barrientos has performed at museums, universities, cultural centers, festivals, and theaters throughout Texas and beyond. In 2007, she became Artist-in-Residence at the Esperanza Peace and Justice Center in San Antonio, where she created and produced the long-running Noche Azul de Esperanza concert series, presenting over 100 original multimedia programs. She has collaborated with presenters and ensembles, including Austin Classical Guitar and Agarita. Barrientos' touring programs are adaptable for a wide range of venues and audiences and may be presented as a solo performance or with a small ensemble. Her offerings emphasize cultural context, accessibility, and intergenerational engagement, making them suitable for community settings, educational environments, and formal performance spaces. Through traditional and original narrative song, her work explores themes of family, land, water, labor, and resilience, offering audiences an intimate and culturally grounded listening experience. Photo by Josh Huskin.

Discipline	Music
City	San Antonio
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## BALLET AUSTIN

classical ballet  
shows and workshops

Founded in 1956, Ballet Austin has been under the capable leadership of Artistic Director and choreographer Stephen Mills for 25 years. The company's repertoire is grounded in classical ballet and defined by a focus on innovation and the incubation of new work. Ballet Austin makes its performance home in Austin and extends its reach through regional, national, and international touring engagements. The company has performed at the Joyce Theater in New York; the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC; and in festivals, choreographic competitions, and on tour in Canada, France, Italy, Slovenia, Israel, and China. Ballet Austin's main company tours both full-length and mixed repertory programs. Full-length work includes Stephen Mills' celebrated *Light / The Holocaust and Humanity Project* and *Hamlet*. Mixed repertory programs include works by Mr. Mills, George Balanchine, and other internationally-recognized choreographers. Ballet Austin TWO tours family-focused original story ballets like *Peter and the Wolf*, original, culturally-specific ballets for youth like *Maria and the Mouse Deer* and *Donde Van Las Mariposas*, and mixed-repertoire productions featuring contemporary and classical dance works. Ballet Austin's touring programs also include school performances with accompanying curricula and on-campus kinesthetic-learning workshops and residencies for elementary students. Photo by Tony Spielberg.

Discipline	Dance
City	Austin
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club)

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## BALLET FRONTIER OF TEXAS

classical ballet  
school outreach

Established in 2009 as a nonprofit professional dance company, Ballet Frontier of Texas is dedicated to providing a powerful cultural experience, encompassing outstanding artistic quality and talent with critically acclaimed choreography. Founded by current Artistic Director Chung-Lin Tseng, Ballet Frontier consists of a phenomenal mix of dancers from around the world. Ballet Frontier's performance home is in Fort Worth and it expands its impact through regional and international touring opportunities. The company has performed in Dallas, Waco, Granbury, Kerrville, La Grange, Canyon Lake, and Greenville, Texas as well as Seoul, South Korea, and Taipei, Taiwan. Ballet Frontier is primarily a classical ballet company with a distinguished focus on the collaboration between high caliber professional dancers and the next generation of aspiring artists. The company performs and tours a diverse range of dance works such as classics like *The Sleeping Beauty*, *Swan Lake*, and *The Nutcracker*, in addition to newer works like *Carmen*, co-choreographed by Mr. Tseng. Beyond its productions, Ballet Frontier also offers special programs such as school performances and on-campus dance classes for elementary through high school students that are essential to the company's commitment to community outreach. Photo by Colin Woolums.

Discipline	Dance
City	Fort Worth
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## BALLET NEPANTLA

folklorico dance  
contemporary dance

Ballet Nepantla fuses contemporary dance with Mexican folklorico to explore new and interpretive ways of delving into cultural and historical "in-between-ness." Born from the historical vicissitudes of the Rio Grande Valley and the Texas-Mexico borderlands, Ballet Nepantla centers its storytelling on exploring experiences of violence and reconciliation, marginalization, and healing. The company fosters an understanding of the border's complexity through performance and community dialogue. Bookings include full-length and condensed performances with post-show Q and As, talkbacks and masterclasses (ballet, contemporary, folklorico, afro). Performances: *Valentina*: addresses the strength and resilience of women during Revolutionary Mexico. (Tours March-July); *Mistica*: honors and celebrates the creative and spiritual energies of Mexico's indigenous, Afro, and Hispanic roots. Commemorates traditions of Dia De Muertos and transports the audience into the afterlife using blacklight and unique fusion of ballet, folklorico, and contemporary dance. (Tours August-November); *Nacimiento*: fuses the history of the birth of the mestizaje with the emergence of Christianity and Christmas in the New World. It explores pre-Hispanic rituals, the impact of colonization on the Americas, and displays the festive nature of how Mexican Christmas traditions are celebrated today in greater Mexico. (Tours November-February); *Sin Fronteras*: a synergistic celebration crossing geographic, historical, and artistic borders (Tours all year). Photo by Tony Pena.

Discipline	Dance
City	Edinburg
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Very large or outdoor venues

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## BERNADETTE NASON

storyteller  
for all ages

Multiple award-winning storyteller, actress, and writer Bernadette Nason has studied all over the world, including Guildford Acting School, UK, and has performed on four continents. She received the 2025 John Henry Faulk Award for Storytelling Excellence. Nason has published two books: *Tea in Tripoli* and *Stealing Baby Jesus*, and appears in regional theatrical productions and movies like *Miss Congeniality*. Believing the power and influence of live storytelling can change the world, Nason produces thrilling programs of multicultural stories, mixing traditional telling with creative drama. Her acclaimed programs include ethnic world tales, holiday themes, and personal family yarns. With shows suitable for all ages, she presents in theaters, schools, libraries, festivals, conferences, retirement homes, and more. Working closely with educators, Bernadette offers entertaining, moral-based stories with content supporting STAAR requirements. If you need a specific program, Nason can tailor accordingly. With 35 years' experience, she has numerous collections available (and is always preparing new) but programs are carefully compiled seasonally for ease of selection and booking. Always available: stories for Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Chinese NY, Black History Month, Valentine's Day, Texas Flowers, St. Patrick's Day, Cinco de Mayo, and all four seasons. New selections: "Dinosaur Tales" and "English Legends." Photo by Sam Bond Photography.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences

School audiences

Venue size

Words  
Austin  
Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors  
Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences  
Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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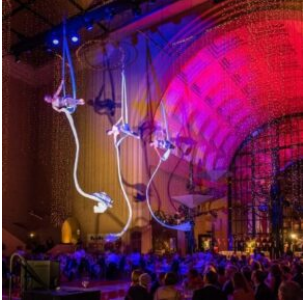
## BIG LOVE CAR WASH

americana bluegrass  
educational workshops

Big Love Car Wash blends Americana roots with adventurous songwriting, a sound they call "Heart-Forward Dreamgrass." The four-piece band met through the Austin music scene and found immediate chemistry. Their performances are built on tight playing, rich harmonies, and the kind of intuitive interplay often described as stage telepathy. Drawing from bluegrass, folk, jazz, Celtic, and rock influences, the band creates an Americana sound that honors its sources while pushing outward. Their self-produced debut album, *Daydream*, was recorded at Arlyn Studios and released in 2025. That same year, they embarked on their first national tour and earned second place in the world-renowned Telluride Bluegrass Band Competition. Big Love Car Wash emphasizes cultural connection, empathy, and exploration. Singing in Spanish and Hebrew as well as English, the band draws from diverse backgrounds to offer rich tapestries. Their shows are heart-forward experiences, and they have captivated rooms all over the country with their intimate and vulnerable performances. Big Love Car Wash also offers educational programs, including workshops in folk songwriting, arranging for small ensembles, collaboration and jamming, and instrument-specific sessions for mandolin, fiddle, guitar, bass, clogging, and singing. Their workshops are adaptable for children or adults and emphasize creativity, accessibility, and connection. Photo by Nicolla Gell.

Discipline	Music
City	Austin
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	High school audiences, Middle school audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## BLUE LAPIS LIGHT

aerial dance  
site specific

Blue Lapis Light (BLL) is a site-specific aerial dance company based in Austin, Texas, and founded by Artistic Director Sally Jacques. Using aerial techniques informed by classical, interpretive, and modern dance, BLL creates transcendent works of beauty, inspiring audience members of all ages and backgrounds. BLL offers aerial dance performances adapted to each location, making every show a unique event. The apparatuses used are determined by the site. The company specializes in aerial silks, harness work, Spanish web, and tiger stands. Custom music and costuming elements are chosen to reflect the theme of each event. BLL creates pieces on every scale, from one dance on a silk to an entire ensemble on the face of a building. Photo by Earl McGehee.

Discipline	Dance
City	Austin
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## BOB LIVINGSTON

folk rock musician  
shows and workshops

Texas-based Bob Livingston tours nationally and internationally, presenting concerts in theaters, folk clubs, dancehalls, libraries, schools, and performing arts centers. A founding member of Austin's legendary Lost Gonzo Band, Livingston toured and recorded with Jerry Jeff Walker, Michael Martin Murphey, and Ray Wylie Hubbard, helping to shape a distinct strand of American roots music. Regarded as a consummate storyteller, he engages audiences through songs and stories drawn from lived experience. His recordings have received wide acclaim, including Album of the Year at the Texas Music Awards for his album *Gypsy Alibi*. Livingston performs as a solo artist, duo, trio, or with a full band, adapting to venues of all sizes. He also offers workshops and lectures on songwriting, creative storytelling, and music history. In addition, he leads the multicultural ensemble *Cowboys and Indians (Where East Meets West)*, blending music, lore, and dance traditions from both East and West. He is the author of *Gypsy Alibi: A Gonzo Memoir* (Texas Tech University Press), with material from the book featured in select concerts. In recognition of his contributions to Texas music, Bob Livingston was inducted into the Texas Music Legends Hall of Fame and the West Texas Walk of Fame. Photo by Robbyn Dodd.

Discipline	Music
City	Austin
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## BRAVE COMBO

polka quintet  
fusion of styles

Based in Denton, Texas, the innovative quintet, Brave Combo, has mastered an eclectic world music fusion that encompasses salsa, polka, merengue, rock, cumbia, conjunto, zydeco, classical, cha-cha, blues and beyond. Renowned as America's foremost crazy dance band, they have even pioneered the genre of nuclear polka, earning their band leader, Carl Finch, induction into the International Polka Association Hall of Fame in 2016. Widely celebrated for their dynamic performances, Brave Combo's global presence extends across venues of all sizes. With an impressive repertoire of hundreds of songs showcased on over 40 albums, the band's flexibility allows them to tailor their shows for diverse audiences, from family-friendly gatherings to the grand stages of major festivals worldwide. The ensemble, honored with two GRAMMY Awards and six nominations, captivates audiences with infectious rhythms, inspiring one reviewer to note, "Even if you come for the party, you will leave with a musical education." Notably, Brave Combo's versatility extends to orchestral compositions, with over 50 of their unique arrangements scored for full symphony, including a complete Christmas/holiday program. And the band has even been animated in an episode of The Simpsons. Photo by Jane Beaver.

Discipline	Music
City	Denton
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	High school audiences, Middle school audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## BRAVE LITTLE COMPANY

young peoples theater  
bilingual plays

Brave Little Company is theater for everyone, creating original, highly interactive plays and musicals with small casts (1-3 performers). Many productions are in English/Spanish or offer versions for bilingual audiences. BLC prioritizes recruiting artists who are fluent in various languages; offers inclusive, creative opportunities for students with disabilities; and develops workshops, professional development, and residencies serving kids and educators. BLC received the 2023 National Award for Artistic Innovation from Theatre for Young Audiences/USA, reflecting BLC's national significance in the field of theater for young people. BLC creates theater the way kids play. When children engage in unstructured, imaginative exploration, their creativity is at full power, and they are at the center of the story. BLC's performances may include found object puppetry, storytelling that engages multiple senses, STEAM and literacy themes, and plot choices driven by audience input. Bookings include TEKS-aligned extension activities upon request. Representative productions include First Day, Nueva Escuela, in which a girl overcomes her reluctance to read by writing herself into stories; Wooden O, a Shakespeare adventure for ages 3-6; Lost Luggage: Major Cases, a STEAM mystery investigated through students' observations and inferences; and Run the Numbers, an interactive game show musical about math (currently in development). Lost Luggage photo by Alan Nguyen.

Discipline	Theater
City	Houston
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences
Venue size	Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club)

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## BRUCE WOOD DANCE

contemporary dance  
programs and classes

Hailed as Dallas' "shining star" by Arts and Culture Texas, nationally acclaimed Bruce Wood Dance Dallas (BWDD) is a contemporary dance company that harnesses the power of dance to entertain, enrich, and heal. BWDD is built on the prolific artistry of acclaimed Texas choreographer Bruce Wood (1960-2014). Artistic Director Joy Bollinger, named one of the 78 Women Who Make Dallas Great by D Magazine, leads the company. Consistently recognized as the Best Dance Company by D Magazine and Dallas Voice, BWDD offers programming described as "emotionally charged and highly kinetic" (ArtandSeek.org). Repertoire features a range of innovative works including 44 world premieres by acclaimed choreographers such as Omar Roman De Jesus, Norbert De La Cruz III, and Robert Battle and masterworks by legendary artists like Lar Lubovitch, Twyla Tharp, and Jiri Kylian. Touring activities include inspiring programs like movement classes, lecture demonstrations, workshops, and performances for audiences of any size and age. On TCA's Texas Touring Roster since 2016, BWDD has performed across Texas and the country at Jacob's Pillow, Palm Desert Choreography Festival, and in NYC at the Joyce Theater, Battery Dance Festival, and Guggenheim Museum in Lar Lubovitch at 80: Art of the Duet. Photo by Kent Barker.

Discipline	Dance
City	Dallas
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## CENTRAL TEXAS PHILHARMONIC

classical orchestra  
arts education

Central Texas Philharmonic (CTP) was founded in 2018 through the merger of the Round Rock Symphony and the Georgetown Symphony Society, uniting two long-standing traditions of musical excellence and community service. Under the leadership of Music Director Stefan Sanders, CTP launched its inaugural season in 2019 with six subscription programs and the establishment of a Youth Orchestra, now a cornerstone of the organization's educational mission. After returning to live performances in 2021, CTP has continued to expand its artistic reach and regional presence. The orchestra has performed live film scores in partnership with Texas Performing Arts (Austin), Majestic Theater (San Antonio) serves as Orchestra in Residence for the Texas State International Piano Competition (San Marcos), and regularly brings high-quality classical music to diverse venues throughout Central Texas. Photo by Gary Hook.

Discipline	Music
City	Georgetown
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## CHELSEA DE SOUZA

pianist  
western and indian influences

Concert pianist Chelsea de Souza is a Steinway Young Artist internationally acclaimed for her dynamic artistry and imaginative recital programming. Born in India and based in Houston, the four-time All-India Piano Competition winner brings together a diverse range of musical influences from Western and Indian classical to jazz in her genre-defying artistry. A captivating performer and lecturer, she weaves together personal anecdotes, historical context, and musical improvisation to create immersive concert experiences that are appealing to all audiences. Her recital project *The Silk Road: Musical Exchange between East and West*—praised on tour across the US and India—intertwines performance and storytelling to illuminate cultural identity and migration. Additional programs include *Crossroads*, examining the East-West duality of her heritage, and *Elemental*, inspired by the four natural elements. Recent performance highlights include the world premiere of "Do You Remember," a new piano concerto by Nicky Sohn; an artist residency on Performance Today's Rhone Valley cruise with radio host Fred Child; and an ongoing series of live improvised recital-experiments using EEG-based brain interfacing. De Souza is co-founder of the Houston Music Festival and a former Mitchell Scholar-in-Residence at the University of Houston. She holds a DMA from Rice University's Shepherd School of Music. Photo by Jeff Fitlow.

Discipline	Music
City	Houston
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues

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## CHIBBI

one person show  
poet and educator

M.R. "Chibbi" Orduna is a Mexican-born, Texas-raised poet, performer, and community organizer whose work lives at the intersection of identity, culture, and social reckoning. A 3x San Antonio Poetry Grand Slam Champion, Chibbi has performed and facilitated workshops across the US in theaters, schools, universities, libraries, and community spaces. Chibbi's work has been featured by Button Poetry, BuzzFeed, We Are Mitu, Texas Review, Wax Wing, and Acentos Review, among others, and has garnered over three million views online. Chibbi is the author of OTRO/PATRIA and the spoken word album The Target Shoots Back, a one-person performance work blending poetry, music, and theater. Available touring programs include: The Target Shoots Back - A one-person spoken word performance exploring borderlands identities, violence, and resilience, adaptable for theaters, festivals, and community events; Spoken Word Performance Sets - Curated performances ranging from 15-60 minutes, tailored for general audiences, schools, and literary events; Writing and Performance Workshops - Interactive workshops focused on voice, craft, revision, and writing from lived experience, suitable for middle school through adult learners; Talkbacks and Community Conversations - Facilitated post-performance discussions centered on art, identity, and civic engagement. All programs are scalable and adaptable. Photo by Cory Garcia.

Discipline	Theater
City	San Antonio
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	High school audiences, Middle school audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues

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## CHLOE DE SOUZA

solo piano  
south asian and western classical

Houston-based concert pianist Chloe de Souza is a soloist, chamber musician, and educator who engages audiences through warmth, expressivity, and storytelling. Born and raised in Mumbai, India, she brings a versatile musical voice shaped by her cultural heritage and classical piano and vocal training, blending Western Classical with South Asian traditions. A DACAMERA Young Artist and a recipient of the Houston Arts Alliance Support for Artists and Creative Individuals Grant, she performs widely across the U.S. and internationally. Highlights include appearances at the Wortham Theater Center, The Menil Collection, a flute-and-piano recital in San Miguel de Allende, and a masterclass tour for Steinway India. She was also featured as soloist at the 2024 Inter-Asian Cultural Exposition in Baltimore. De Souza holds a BM in Piano and Vocal Performance from Oberlin Conservatory, an MM in Piano Performance from the Eastman School of Music, and is a doctoral candidate at the Peabody Institute. She serves as adjunct faculty at Texas Southern University and Kinder HSPVA. Concert offerings include Scenes from Childhood, an interdisciplinary program exploring childhood through music and theater; Reflections in Sound, featuring Impressionist repertoire by Debussy and Charles Griffes; and Voices Unbound: Music by Women Composers, featuring American-Indian composer Reena Esmail. Photo by Sara Anderson.

Discipline	Music
City	Houston
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Libraries, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues

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## CHRIS BARTON

author workshops  
for young people

With 25 books, Chris Barton has been the first author that many thousands of young Texas readers have ever met. His fiction picture books include *We Match!* (2025) and bestseller *Shark vs. Train*. His nonfiction includes three biographies included on the prestigious Texas Bluebonnet Award Master List, among them *Whoosh! Lonnie Johnson's Super-Soaking Stream of Inventions* and *What Do You Do with a Voice Like That? The Story of Extraordinary Congresswoman Barbara Jordan*. Through his main program, "Write What You'd Love to Learn," Chris encourages audiences—preschool and up—to turn the things they're passionate about into the subjects of their own fiction and nonfiction writing. After reading from his host's choice of his books, Chris uses that story as a jumping-off point for an age-appropriate discussion of research, revision, and/or collaboration, followed by answering as many audience questions as time allows. In addition to keynote addresses for adult audiences, he also provides workshops to writers of all ages—fun, informative, engaging opportunities for students to work with a published author to improve their own writing. Chris is happy to customize workshops to meet his hosts' needs, zeroing in on techniques students can continue to use long after they have left the classroom. Photo by Elizabeth McGuire.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences  
  
School audiences  
  
Venue size

Words  
Austin  
Festivals/special events, Libraries,  
Schools  
Elementary school audiences, Middle  
school audiences, Pre-K audiences  
Medium-sized venues (theater),  
Smaller venues (library/club)

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## CHRIS ESPINOSA-XYZ

writing workshops  
using improv comedy

Students buzzing around like bees! Kings and queens fracturing fairy tales! A melodramatic storytelling performance! This is what you can expect (and more) when Chris EspinosaXYZ bursts into your classroom with his over-the-top drama and bins of costumes. His sessions are laugh-out-loud funny, but Chris is serious about providing drama experiences that support any state standard. He even has lessons in SOCIAL STUDIES (character-driven civil rights monologues), SCIENCE (acting like a Rube Goldberg machine to understand force/energy/motion), and MATH (Shakespearean Geometry). Chris always motivates a new level of student creativity and participation. Even your quietest students will want to perform! It will surprise and amaze you. One teacher wrote, "Chris Espinosa provided an engaging week...His exuberant personality hooked the fourth-grade students...The connections we made with him and the artistry we experienced have left a lasting impression." After a visit from Chris, many schools have experienced higher scores on state-mandated tests. Chris is a Kennedy Center Teaching Artist and a Certified Arts Integration Teaching Specialist; he has presented hundreds of assemblies and arts-integrated residencies at elementary and middle schools throughout Texas, Arkansas, and Mississippi. He's an actor, writer, director, and producer with over 30 years of experience.

Discipline	Theater
City	Keller
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, Schools
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, Middle school audiences
Venue size	Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club)

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## COMMUNITY ARTS

mosaic  
community-engaged art

Community Arts LLC is a Texas-based, community-engaged arts organization specializing in large-scale mosaic mural projects and art-based learning experiences across the state. Led by Founder and Senior Clinician Wanda Montemayor, the organization integrates public art, social-emotional learning, and collective storytelling to create accessible, inclusive creative spaces for participants of all ages. With deep roots in education, Community Arts LLC brings a strong foundation in curriculum design and facilitation. The organization works closely with schools, campuses, libraries, nonprofits, and community partners to deliver art-based workshops that support emotional literacy, collaboration, and resilience. Programming also extends to veterans, first responders, educators, and families, offering trauma-informed, strengths-based creative experiences tailored to each community's needs. Engagements range from short-form, one-day workshops and public art activations to long-term, year-long programming that embeds the arts into broader wellness, recovery, and community-building initiatives. Community Arts LLC also provides public speaking and professional development focused on community-engaged art, creative placemaking, educator wellness, and healing-centered practice. Through hands-on art-making and participatory facilitation, Community Arts LLC creates enduring public artworks and shared experiences that honor individual voices while building joy-filled, resilient communities across Texas. Photo by Wanda Montemayor.

Discipline	Visual & Film
City	Austin
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## DALLAS BLACK DANCE THEATRE

contemporary dance  
two ensembles

Founded in 1976 by Ann Williams and currently under the direction of Richard A. Freeman, Jr., Dallas Black Dance Theatre positively impacts lives and bridges cultures through the transformative power of dance from an African American perspective. As the largest and oldest professional dance company in Dallas, DBDT is the fourth-largest Black dance company in the nation and among the 10 largest contemporary modern dance companies and 50 largest ballet companies in the U.S. Touring has reached numerous Texas cities, 32 states, and 16 countries. Audiences have watched virtually in 35 states and 45 countries. DBDT's main professional company (12 dancers) and second professional company DBDT: Encore! (10 dancers), provide a variety of performance types and fee ranges to accommodate audiences of all sizes and ages. The company's repertoire is broad, from masterworks by nationally and internationally renowned choreographers to today's most talented emerging artists. Dance styles include modern, ballet, jazz, African, and tap. Multidisciplinary works incorporate various dance styles, projected images, and speaking/singing roles for the dancers. Multicultural collaborations authentically unite communities by reflecting America's rich cultural landscape. Student matinees include a TEKS-aligned educational study guide. DBDT received the Texas Medal of the Arts Award for Arts Education in 2017. Photo by Brian Guilliaux.

Discipline	Dance
City	Dallas
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Very large or outdoor venues

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## DANIEL PARDO

flutist  
jazz and world music

Daniel Pardo is a Colombian-American flutist whose vibrant programming blends classical music with Latin jazz and world music, engaging audiences of all ages. A former U.S. Military musician, he brings artistic excellence, professionalism, and a strong commitment to community engagement to every performance. Based in Houston, Texas, Pardo is Associate Professor of Flute and Interim Department Head of Music and Theatre at Prairie View A and M University. An award-winning performer and arranger, he is recognized for his imaginative fusion of world music with jazz and is in demand as a presenter and performer at festivals, universities, conferences, and concert series throughout the United States and abroad. His touring programs—including *The Flute Around the World*, *From Mozart to Corea*, and *Classical Boleros*—are designed to be flexible and accessible and may be presented in formats ranging from flute and guitar to flute with rhythm section and strings. Pardo's 2024 album *Ese Momento* earned two Gold Medals from the Global Music Awards and the Absolute First Prize and Innovation Award at the Beethoven International Competition (UK). He has appeared on National Flute Association Gala concerts and serves as Program Chair for the 2026 NFA Convention. Daniel Pardo is a Yamaha Performing Artist and Clinician. Photograph by Teresa Rafidi.

Discipline	Music
City	Hempstead
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Very large or outdoor venues

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## DANIELLE TALAMANTES, KERRY WILKERSON

soprano and baritone voice  
recital and ensemble performances

Danielle Talamantes and Kerry Wilkerson are a Texas-based vocal duo who regularly collaborate with orchestras and chamber ensembles. They are available for orchestral or large-scale performance partnerships with local and regional presenters and also offer intimate, engaging piano-accompanied recital programs for community audiences, municipalities, libraries, and educational presenters throughout the state. Their work focuses on creating welcoming concert experiences that connect high-quality vocal performance with shared human stories and regional cultural history. Through the Texas Touring Roster, they currently offer the following touring performance programs: Songs of Faith, Hope, and Love – A vocal duet recital exploring the emotional arc of human relationships through art song, opera, and musical theater repertoire. Greek Loves – A recital inspired by classical Greek concepts of love, including eros, philia, agape, and storge, presented through diverse art song and duet selections. German Song and Texas Roots – A unique program celebrating German art song and ensemble repertoire, highlighting the lasting influence of German immigration on Texas communities and the state's long tradition of community music-making. They also offer community-centered educational activities, including non-credit vocal workshops, lecture-demonstrations, and masterclasses for community singers and high school participants. Educational offerings may be paired with any touring performance. Photo by Roy Cox.

Discipline	Music
City	Boerne
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Libraries, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	High school audiences, Middle school audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## DAVE MEDER

jazz pianist  
solo or group

Pianist, composer, and educator Dave Meder is one of the prominent artists of his generation, known for a broad musical palette recognized in the Herbie Hancock International Jazz Piano Competition and the American Pianists Awards. He offers a variety of flexible ensemble configurations to suit presenter needs: solo piano, duo with Texas-based / French-American violinist Scott Tixier, trio with bass and drums, or his full working quartet featuring Texas-based trumpeter and one of DownBeat Magazine's "Top 25 Young Trumpet Artists" Philip Dizack. All groups feature jazz standards and Dave's music, known for a strikingly postmodern sense of stylistic adventure, challenging audience preconceptions of "jazz." He is described as "inventing his music freely, bringing honky-tonk, swing, blues, rock-and-roll—in other words a vibrant hybrid of the whole American spectrum—to bear" (All About Jazz, 2019), balancing "post-bop jazz harmonies with soulful gospel warmth and contemporary classical sophistication" (All Music Guide, 2021). Dave has released three albums to international critical acclaim and headlined stages or conducted educational residencies at Jazz at Lincoln Center, The Kennedy Center, and internationally in Beijing, Tokyo, and most recently Egypt as a US Fulbright Scholar. Dave is a Yamaha Artist and a professor at the University of North Texas. Photo by Anna Yatskevitch.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences

School audiences

Venue size

Music  
Denton  
Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools  
High school audiences, Middle school audiences  
Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## DAVID COX, RHYTHM PATH INTERACTIVE DRUMMING

interactive drumming circles  
school programs

"Drumming is easy!" is what Mr. David says after leading over 200 third graders on a rhythmical journey to discover for themselves that everyone has rhythm, a unique sound, and can play together as one big group. Through his company Rhythm Path, David Cox has facilitated thousands of interactive drumming circles since 2008. For the Day of Drumming program, Rhythm Path provides a drum for every student to play and most schools use their regular enrichment schedule to allow one whole grade at a time to drum. It really is a day of drumming! David uses his skills and experience as a drum circle facilitator to help students make real human connection. Students learn the sounds and rhythms of the djembe drum through echo patterns and "If you can say it, then you can play it." With some added shakers and bells, the rhythms quickly turn into a musical song. In addition to schools, David has programs for libraries, workshops, and various community events. David says, "Every drum circle is different. The moment someone hits the drum the music begins. As a facilitator, you are helping participants in the drum circle create and connect while beating a drum!" Photo by David Cox.

Discipline	Music
City	Wichita Falls
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues

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## DECEE CORNISH

storyteller  
multicultural stories

Texas born, raised in Houston's 5th Ward, and an army veteran, Decee has traveled globally listening to the stories and learning the customs of the people from five of the seven continents. During his decade plus in the military, Decee attended schools everywhere he could: Univ. of Alaska, Univ. of Guam, Univ. of Maryland in Japan and the Philippines, and the Hillcrest Institute Portland Maine. As a non-commissioned officer, Decee received two Presidential Citations. Upon separation from the military, Decee began working with at-risk youth at a youth facility, using stories to teach and motivate. Oral historian, researcher, and writer Decee's curriculum related programs on World History, Texas History, the Revolutionary War, Civil War and reconstruction, Martin Luther King, the Civil Rights era, Juneteenth, and Western Expansion are educational, informative and fun. Decee provides stories for audiences of all ages, with lots of audience participation for the younger listeners. Enjoy myths, fantasy and legends from Africa, Asia, Australia, the islands of the Pacific, Alaska, Central America, and more. Drumming, songs, games, stories, and music are an integral part of Decee Cornish's presentation for schools, libraries, workshops, festivals, and special events. Photo by Kathy Tran.

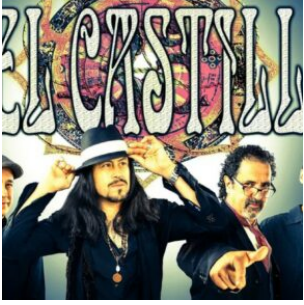
Discipline  
City  
Special audiences

School audiences

Venue size

Words  
Fort Worth  
Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors  
Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences  
Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## DEL CASTILLO

latin rock fusion  
shows and workshops

Del Castillo is a cross-cultural power uniting music lovers through a cinematic celebration of sound that blends old-world culture with new-day instrumentation. Founded in Austin by brothers Rick and Mark del Castillo, the ensemble's eclectic fusion of flamenco, rock, Latin, blues, and world music reflects their deep Texas roots. Often described as "classical Spanish speed-guitar" slathered in "high-drama vocals," their "dueling Spanish guitars" and Alex Ruiz's passionate stage presence have earned praise from filmmakers Robert Rodriguez and Quentin Tarantino. Their music is featured in major films such as *Once Upon a Time in Mexico*, *Kill Bill: Vol. 2*, *Alita: Battle Angel*, *The Green Ghost*, *Machete*, and *Sin City*. For years, the group has performed in various configurations, ranging from an intimate trio to their original 5-6 piece full Latin rock band featuring heavy percussion. Their high-energy live shows weave together fresh-faced flamenco, innovative originals, and reimagined classics, performed with infectious enthusiasm. They offer workshops in Latin guitar styling for audiences ranging from middle school students to adults, in settings from classrooms to festival workshops. As a symbol of cross-cultural unity, Del Castillo continues to deliver passionate material that captures the heat of their Texas heritage, alongside legends Willie Nelson and Santana. Photo by Mark Del Castillo.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences

School audiences

Venue size

Music  
Kyle  
Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors  
Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences  
Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## DIAZ MUSIC INSTITUTE

latin jazz  
bilingual programming

Diaz Music Institute (DMI) is a Houston-based nonprofit producing and touring organization that delivers high-quality music performances and arts education programs for communities across Texas. Grounded in Latin jazz and American music traditions, DMI offers flexible, presenter-ready programming designed for schools, libraries, community organizations, theaters, and festivals. DMI supports a range of performance scales and audience needs. Caliente, DMI's nationally recognized youth Latin jazz ensemble, is offered through the Texas Touring Roster and is ideal for educational and community settings. Programs may be presented as concerts, interactive performances, or combined with curriculum-aligned workshops and master classes. Touring programs are fully self-contained, with clear technical riders, adaptable instrumentation, and straightforward fee structures. DMI works closely with presenters to ensure accessibility, logistical efficiency, and strong audience engagement, including bilingual presentation options when appropriate. Diaz Music Institute connects Texas communities with vibrant, culturally meaningful live music experiences that advance access to the arts, education, and professional artistic excellence. Photo by Violeta Alvarez.

Discipline	Music
City	Houston
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Very large or outdoor venues

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## DIRTY RIVER JAZZ BAND

traditional jazz  
varying group sizes

The Dirty River Jazz Band is the new standard for traditional jazz in Texas, blending the sounds of 1920's New Orleans, the swing era, and Texas tradition all into one! They have been performing as a group since 2013 and have gone on to play for audiences all over the United States, spreading their love for early jazz and blues to people of all ages. In their early years, they were mentored by the late Jim Cullum, whose sound and style heavily influenced the band along with many other early jazz musicians including the great Louis Armstrong. Dirty River has many different configurations of the band, including their quartet, the main seven-piece band, and even a fourteen-piece jazz orchestra! All of these groups are under the direction of drummer, vocalist, and founder Chris Alvarado. Other notable members include Curtis Calderon, known for his fifteen-year tenure with The Four Freshman, and Faith Evangeline, a young, up and coming jazz vocalist! The band works closely with schools all over Texas in an educational capacity as well as nonprofits like the SA Swing Dance Society to help keep the connection of live jazz and swing dancing alive! Photo by Brandon Fletcher Photography.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences

School audiences

Venue size

Music  
New Braunfels  
Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors  
Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences  
Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## DONNA INGHAM

storyteller  
texas roots

As a certified "elder" in the storytelling community, Donna Ingham continues to offer her flexible program of Tall Tales and True for listeners and readers of all ages and stages through the stories she tells and the books she writes. With a focus on her Texas roots, she shares history, folklore, and personal narratives, always allowing for multicultural elements and geographic scope. A past president of both the Tejas Storytelling Association and the Texas Folklore Society, she is the recipient of the John Henry Faulk Award in Texas and a National Storytelling Network ORACLE Award. She's also a champion liar, with trophies and plaques to prove it. Author of six books and producer of five spoken word CDs, she can offer author visits, workshops, and residencies in addition to programs and performances for schools, libraries, conferences, and festivals. As a humorist and an accomplished public speaker, she is also available for keynotes and luncheon and after-dinner bookings. Photo by Chester Weems.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences

School audiences

Venue size

Words  
Bertram  
Festivals/special events, Libraries,  
Schools, Seniors  
Elementary school audiences, High  
school audiences, Middle school  
audiences  
Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-  
sized venues (theater), Smaller  
venues (library/club)

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## DOUBLE VISION JAZZ ENSEMBLE

contemporary jazz  
music education

Double Vision Jazz Ensemble is a contemporary jazz quartet co-led by composers and improvisers Hank Hehmsoth (piano) and John Mills (saxophone/flute). The ensemble presents engaging performances that blend original compositions with selections from the modern jazz canon, drawing on the music of composers such as Wayne Shorter, Herbie Hancock, Chick Corea, John Coltrane, and new works by Mills and Hehmsoth. Programs combine sophisticated contemporary jazz with brief spoken introductions that connect audiences to jazz history, composition, and the creative process. Interdisciplinary programs may include poetry or visual art, curated by the ensemble in collaboration with presenters to suit venue and audience needs. Double Vision performs primarily as a quartet, with flexible formats available for trio or small-ensemble presentations. The group has appeared at SXSW, FOX 7 Good Day Austin, the Supple Music Series, Parker Jazz Club, Elephant Room, the AJS Georgetown concerts, and in residencies and workshops at colleges, museums, and community venues across Texas. Educational offerings include jazz history and storytelling concerts, improvisation and composition workshops, interdisciplinary Art and Sound programs, and multi-day residencies serving students and community audiences. Double Vision is committed to presenting jazz as a living tradition—creative, accessible, and connecting to audiences through performance, education, and collaboration. Photo by Khang T Le.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences

School audiences  
Venue size

Music  
Austin  
Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors  
High school audiences  
Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## DR. SUNANDA NAIR AND SUNANDA'S PERFORMING ARTS CENTER (SPARC)

indian classical dance  
performances and workshops

Dr. Sunanda Nair and the artists of Sunanda's Performing Arts Center (SPARC) offer refined solo and ensemble performances in Bharatanatyam and Mohiniyattam, two of South India's most expressive classical dance traditions. Based in Stafford, Texas, SPARC ensemble dancers showcase precision, discipline, and a deep respect for the heritage of Bharatanatyam and Mohiniyattam. Guided by Dr. Nair, an internationally respected Mohiniyattam exponent with more than four decades of experience, SPARC's dancers embody traditional technique and artistic integrity. Their work remains rooted in classical vocabulary while thoughtfully shaped for audiences across Texas. The performances emphasize clean lines, expressive storytelling highlighting myths and tales from India, and thoughtful choreography. SPARC performances create an inviting, spiritual, and inspiring experience for seasoned and first-time viewers. SPARC's touring offerings include full-length concerts and shorter curated programs, presented as solo, duet, or ensemble performances. These performances embody artistic excellence, cultural representation, and meaningful community engagement. The ensemble's professionalism, adaptability, and commitment to high-quality presentation make them well-suited for theaters, arts venues, festivals, and educational settings across Texas. With every performance, Dr. Nair and the SPARC ensemble share the depth and beauty of Indian classical dance while contributing to the cultural vibrancy and diversity of communities in Texas. Photo by Murali Santhana Photography.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences  
  
School audiences  
Venue size

Folk Arts  
Stafford  
Festivals/special events, Schools,  
Seniors  
High school audiences  
Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-  
sized venues (theater), Very large or  
outdoor venues

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## DRUM ONE, DRUM ALL/NOAH MOSGOFIAN

interactive drumming  
workshops and performance

Drum One, Drum All uses ancient drumming traditions to educate, entertain, and engage minds and bodies. The interactive program explores drum traditions from Africa, South America, the Caribbean, and beyond. While musical arrangements come to life on authentic instruments, participants use body percussion and vocalization to mimic traditional drum patterns. In a highly engaging call-and-response format, students learn history, geography, vocabulary, and dance moves alongside fundamental rhythmic concepts--all integrated with TEKS curriculum. This global journey returns home with a funky orchestra created on household junk from the recycle bin. By connecting the ancient stories of distant people to our own lives, Drum One Drum All builds a bridge across our differences. Drum One Drum All also offers drum and body percussion workshops, lectures, and drum/dance performances in various styles including West African/djembe, Afro-Cuban rumba/congas, bucket drumming, Afro-Brazilian, and samba. Drum One Drum All is led by Noah Mosgofian, a veteran percussionist whose credits include STOMP, the Drum Cafe, San Francisco Ballet's Dance Outreach Program, Edinburgh International Festival, former director- Lannaya Drum and Dance, and director of Austin Samba (North America's largest samba group). Photo by Noah Mosgofian.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences

School audiences

Venue size

Music  
Austin  
Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, Schools  
Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences  
Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues

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## EBONY STEWART

poetry and storytelling  
performance

Ebony Stewart is a Baytown, Texas native currently based in Houston's historic Third Ward. She is an award-winning poet, educator, and performer whose work blends vulnerability, humor, and unapologetic truth. A former Woman of the World Poetry Slam Champion and internationally touring artist, Stewart brings a dynamic stage presence and a compelling voice that both challenges and inspires. Her work centers the lived experiences of Black women, exploring resilience, creativity, identity, and the intersections of joy and struggle. Audiences can expect an immersive experience rooted in reflection, storytelling, and poetry that celebrates brilliance, power, and complexity. Drawing from her life and artistic practice, Stewart creates space for laughter, introspection, and empowerment—leaving audiences with renewed purpose and actionable inspiration. Photo by Dangerfield Media.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences

Venue size

Words  
Houston  
Festivals/special events, Libraries,  
People with disabilities, Seniors  
Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-  
sized venues (theater), Smaller  
venues (library/club), Unplugged  
events/venues

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## EDDIE VEGA

writer  
taco poet

Eddie Vega is a poet, spoken word artist, storyteller, and educator. His poetry has been displayed on VIA buses, downtown San Antonio buildings, and along the San Pedro Creek Cultural Park. He is the author of two full-length collections of poetry, *Chicharra Chorus* (2019) and *Somos Nopales* (2024), the editor of *Asina is How We Talk*, a collection of poems written by South Texas poets, and has had poems published in various anthologies, collections, and literary magazines. Vega is a recipient of the Literary Arts Grant from the Luminaria Artist Foundation and a Macondista Fellow. Vega writes about food, Tejano culture, social justice, and the intersections thereof. Known as the Taco-Poet of Texas, he is the director and host of the Mouth Dakota Poetry Project, a biweekly open mic in San Antonio, and serves as the 7th Poet Laureate of San Antonio. Vega is available as an event host, storytelling and spoken word performer, and workshop facilitator in poetry, spoken word, and storytelling. Photo by Bria Woods.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences

School audiences

Venue size

Words  
San Antonio  
Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, Schools, Seniors  
High school audiences, Middle school audiences  
Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## EL CHANCLAZO

latin american classics  
full band

Formed in the DFW in late 2019, El Chanclazo is a musical collective that is made up of musicians who specialize in performing a variety of Latin American musical genres. Co-lead by Mariana Grahl (vocals) and Pepe Valdez (guitar and musical director), El Chanclazo is committed to rescuing a specific repertoire that they consider important to perform and that they enjoy playing. Working their way through boleros, vales, rancheras, sones, rumbas, cumbias, huapangos, and chacareras, El Chanclazo tries to bring to its audience the experience of a night of what they call "Bohemia." Bringing the best of each one's background, Mariana and Pepe developed a repertoire that is varied and significant to each one and comprised of music that they love and care for. With the collective experience of four of Dallas' most accomplished Latin musicians and the deep passion and love for the music that they play, watching El Chanclazo is a great way to experience the vibrant culture of Latin America. Photo by Cynthia Aime Photography.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences

School audiences

Venue size

Music  
Denton  
Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors  
Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences  
Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## ELIZABETH KAHURA

african stroytelling  
african culture

Elizabeth Kahura, originally from Kenya, regards Africa as "Mystical, Mesmerizing, and Magical." Through her African Safari Program, she has engaged more than 50,000 individuals in the past twenty years. Elizabeth is recognized for her expertise as a storyteller, performer, and educator. She utilizes folklore, music, languages, and the arts to connect with her audiences. She regularly presents at schools, libraries, museums, and festivals, exhibiting artifacts from the Masai, Zulu, Ashanti, and Yoruba communities. Elizabeth's programs explore various cultural attributes. "A Day in Africa" examines geography and traditions; "A Jungle Walk" illustrates the coexistence between humans and wildlife; "Folktales from Africa" includes interactive narratives, poetry, and chants; "African Art" presents exhibitions of attire, jewelry, and artifacts, while "Sound of Africa" focuses on drumming, rhythm, and dance. Elizabeth also conducts workshops on storytelling, Kwanzaa, and Kiswahili. Her captivating 45-minute curriculum-based programs align with social studies, languages, and fine arts. In addition, she performs seasonal-themed programs and events. Her programs are adjustable for all ages. Elizabeth's guiding principle is "Good Choices! Good Things!" She was honored with the 2017 Heroes Cultural Award from Kenyans in Austin and was featured in the 2025 ATX CITY LIFESTYLE article "Empowered Women Empower the World." Photo by Andrew Kamau John.

Discipline	Folk Arts
City	Hutto
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## FORT WORTH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

orchestral music  
educational programming

The Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra is made up of 72 internationally recruited musicians who have brought world-class performances of symphonic music to rural communities across Texas for over 35 years. The FWSO is nationally recognized for its artistic excellence and dynamic approach to music education programming. With the help of an experienced administrative and artistic staff, the FWSO frequently presents inspiring performances in concert halls, community centers, and schools to the general public and student-based audiences. Whenever possible, the FWSO seeks to make symphonic music accessible to children and adults who, due to geographic constraints, might not otherwise have the opportunity to attend a live, professional orchestral performance. The Orchestra regularly presents a wide range of traditional and contemporary works that are audience-specific and age-appropriate, both in Fort Worth and throughout neighboring communities in North Texas. Education programs also include study materials, provided in advance of each performance to help prepare students for their concert experience. Based on availability and the presenter's budget, community concerts can feature soloists, incorporate choral support, and take place in a variety of venues—indoor and outdoor. The FWSO's unique programs are constantly being updated. Please consult the FWSO's website or contact staff for current details. Photo by Karen Almond.

Discipline	Music
City	Fort Worth
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## GEORGE ENSLE

folk songwriter  
shows and workshops

A member of Houston's 1960s folk music scene, George has been performing for over 58 years. His focus is always on uplifting the listener, and he tailors each concert to connect with audiences of all ages, using his extensive repertoire and showmanship to deliver a concert filled with poignancy and a healthy dose of wit and wisdom. At festivals, nursing homes, schools, libraries, churches, theaters, concert halls, clubs, and listening rooms, he sings original story songs mixed with country, gospel, and folk standards. His performances are typically solo, duo, or trio, and he conducts songwriting workshops for songwriters at all levels. George has been a Texas Artist in Residence at schools, a songwriting mentor for Soldier Songs and Voices, won numerous songwriting awards, released 16 albums in the US and Europe, and been inducted into the Houston Folk Music Archives at Rice University. His original song "Build A Bridge" was adopted by the Build a Bridge Foundation for Healing through the Arts, and George is a strong believer in the healing power of music. Whether playing a festival or an intimate concert for one in hospice, his mission is always to deliver the message of hope. Photo by Brenda Ladd.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences

School audiences

Venue size

Music  
San Marcos  
Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors  
Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences  
Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## GEORGIA PARKER

western swing  
solo or ensemble

Georgia Parker is a country-western jazz singer and songwriter from the heart of the Texas Hill Country. Rooted in classic western swing and evolved with the landscape, Georgia Parker's music is the crossroads of Willie Nelson and Cindy Walker and Ella Fitzgerald. She has been touring Texas, the US, and internationally for over 10 years, and has won Ameripolitan Awards for Western Swing Band and Western Swing Female as well as an Academy of Western Artist Album of The Year Award. Georgia Parker's performance can range in size anywhere between a solo act to a full band performance with her group Georgia Parker Swing Band, and is suitable for seated listening crowds, dancing crowds, or conversational Q-and-A events or workshops. Photo by Mage Buse.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences

Venue size

Music  
San Marcos  
Festivals/special events, Libraries,  
Schools  
Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-  
sized venues (theater), Smaller  
venues (library/club), Unplugged  
events/venues, Very large or outdoor  
venues

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## GLASS HALF FULL THEATRE

theater with puppets  
social messaging

Glass Half Full Theatre was lauded by the Austin-American Statesman for an "inventive blend of puppetry and physical storytelling . . . to convey the narrative along with a variety of puppetry techniques." Based in Austin, Texas, the company reflects the state's multicultural heritage and creates original bilingual (Spanish/ English) works for youth and adults. Glass Half Full is known for their "precise, engaging, and humorous" approach to real world issues that enable audiences to experience complex ideas and imaginative solutions. Their original works (including *Cenicienta: A Bilingual Cinderella Story*, *Petra and the Wolf*, *Once There Were Six Seasons*, and *La Maleta de Maebelle*) have toured to Performing Arts Centers in over 30 states, from the Kennedy Center in D.C. to the Seagerstrom in Southern California. Current touring shows for theatrical venues include *Maebelle's Suitcase/ La Maleta de Maebelle/* (family audiences/ kinder and up) and *Yamel Cucuy* (Theatrical venues, thriller for adult and teen audiences). Touring shows for smaller venues/libraries/schools include "Natura Lista," a traveling naturalist accompanied by complex animal puppets, and for public/outdoor events, a luminary puppet experience, "The Serpents Fly at Sundown." Photos by Kate Taylor, Ulises Garcia, Dannie Snyder.

Discipline	Theater
City	Austin
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Schools
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## GOODHEARTED ENTERTAINMENT

puppetry  
clowning

Good Hearted Entertainment has been presenting family-friendly performances featuring puppetry, clowning and magic for over 20 years. Based in the Austin area, the current offerings feature Sock Monkey Circus, a full circus in miniature featuring marionettes and moving-mouth puppets! Clown host "Funny Honey" is outsmarted by her clever monkeys, who are trained to juggle, dance, and swing on a flying trapeze! Complete with miniature train car, this show debuted in Shanghai during fall 2017 with the International Clown Comedy Festival, and is now available to Texas audiences. Stewie's Magic Hat, developed with support from a Jim Henson Foundation Family Grant, uses rod and hand puppets to tell the tale of a young boy challenged to follow the family tradition or pave his own path. The story features magical messes, musical dragons, and many more amusements to help Stewie make the most of his talents! WORD PLAY is a literacy-based puppet show in which two friends clown around with giant letters on a journey though the alphabet. Good Hearted Entertainment believes in goodhearted fun for everyone, focusing on entertainment, workshops, and educational programming for guests three years old to 103 years young! Spanish/English programming is also available. Photo by Kirk Marsh.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences

School audiences

Venue size

Theater  
Pflugerville  
Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors  
Elementary school audiences, Pre-K audiences  
Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues

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## GRAHAM REYNOLDS

composer performer  
contemporary music

Called "the quintessential modern composer" by the London Independent, Austin-based composer-bandleader-improviser Graham Reynolds creates, performs, and records music for film, theater, dance, rock clubs and concert halls with collaborators ranging from Richard Linklater and Jack Black to DJ Spooky and Ballet Austin. He recently scored *Blue Moon* (Sony), *Hit Man* (Netflix), *Happy Jail* (Netflix), *Stop Hitting Yourself* (Lincoln Center Theater), *Out of Her Mind* (BBC), *POE / A Tale of Madness* (Ballet Austin), and a multi-year commission from Ballroom Marfa, *The Marfa Triptych*. From improvised workshop series, small watering holes to large scale performances such as Mozart's *Requiem Undead*, Reynolds' touring offerings are extensive, adaptable, and include commissions and scores. His Creative Capital Award-winning project, *Pancho Villa From a Safe Distance*, is a bilingual cross-border opera about the enigmatic general, legendary bandit, and hero of the Mexican Revolution, providing a lens into Mexico, the border, and the relationship between communities of both nations. Other touring options include an original live score for Alfred Hitchcock's *The Lodger*, experimental solo instrumental album *Mountain*, dungeon-synth castle themed performance *Portcullis*, Christmas jazz big band *Ruins the Holidays*, as well as commissions, private performances, workshops, or master classes, whether as a solo artist or group. Photo by Aaron Wharton.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences

Venue size

Music  
Austin  
Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Schools  
Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Very large or outdoor venues

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## GRUPO FANTASMA

latin fusion music  
nine piece band

Grupo Fantasma is widely praised as one of the most important independent acts in the Latin genre, forging one of the most distinctive musical voices to emerge from the United States in the 21st century. They earned their first GRAMMY Award nomination in 2008 for *Sonidos Gold* and won a GRAMMY in 2011 for their self-produced release *El Existential*, hailed by *The Wall Street Journal* as "Latin music both new and traditional...vibrant fusions that transcend easy classification." A pillar of Austin's music community, the band has won over a decade of consecutive Austin Music Awards, totaling 13 wins, and has been inducted into the Austin, Texas Music Hall of Fame. Renowned for their explosive live performances, NPR has called the band "seamless whenever and wherever they're on stage." Their extensive international touring includes major festivals and venues such as Bonnaroo, Austin City Limits, WOMAD, WOMEX, the North Sea Jazz Festival, London's O2 Arena, and the Kennedy Center. Beyond their own recordings, Grupo Fantasma has been an in-demand collaborator, including an extended collaboration with Prince, and has appeared on Austin City Limits three times. Entering their 25th year, the group is writing and recording a new album slated for release in 2026. Photo by Grupo Fantasma.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences

School audiences

Venue size

Music  
Buda  
Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors  
Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences  
Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## GUADALUPE DANCE COMPANY

folklorico dance  
shows and workshops

The Guadalupe Dance Company (GDC), founded in 1991, is the professional dance ensemble of the Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center in San Antonio. Committed to maintaining its rich cultural traditions and artistic excellence, the GDC is available for public performances and school lecture-demonstrations. Performances can include live music by Mariachi Azteca de America, the resident mariachi of the Guadalupe, as well as various flamenco musicians. The GDC prides itself in producing original dance theater such as "Nuestras Voces" which spotlights the Mexican American experience through music and dance. In addition to these original productions, the GDC offers three production variations: Celebrando Tradiciones - celebrates traditional folklorico dances of the beautiful regions of Mexico; Alma Flamenco - a soulful journey through the dance and music of Spain featuring sophisticated rhythms and choreography; Rio Bravo - a unique and original dance production offered exclusively by GDC: five dance suites explore the cultural exchanges between south Texas and Mexico from pre-Columbian times to the present day. Suites include Texas-based indigenous pieces, Mexican folklorico dance, European-influenced dances, and modern-day Tejano and cumbia dance and music. Rio Bravo is a perfect program for Hispanic Heritage Month or Texas history presentations. Photos by Richard Vasquez and Paul Casanova Garcia.

Discipline	Dance
City	San Antonio
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Very large or outdoor venues

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## GUY FORSYTH

blues musician  
solo duo or band

A seasoned fixture of the Texas landscape, Guy Forsyth is a consummate performer and master raconteur whose career spans decades of essential roots music. A perennial Austin Music Award winner, Forsyth incorporates the grit of Texas blues with the traditions of a modern American Songster, imbuing his work with a truth that bridges the gap between raw, Delta-born roots and heartfelt, narrative-driven songwriting. He commands the stage with a mesmerizing intensity, moving from the focused intimacy of a solo or duo performance to the rich, harmonic texture of an acoustic trio. His ensemble work expands to include a dynamic blues quartet and a spirited, larger group that echoes the acoustic swing Forsyth pioneered as a founding member of the legendary Asylum Street Spankers. Recent professional milestones include a high-profile Austin City Limits Festival appearance, the release of his acclaimed recording project *Rider*, and recurring international tours. While a virtuoso on many strings, he is most renowned for his blistering harmonica work and his signature, ethereal mastery of the musical saw. As a definitive ambassador of the Texas folk tradition, Forsyth continues to honor the state's musical legends while carrying the torch of modern roots music to global audiences everywhere. Photo by Nicola Gell.

Discipline	Music
City	Buda
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## HOPE SHIVER

storytelling and music  
school programs

Hope Shiver Soprano/Storyteller Hope Shiver enjoys a varied and diverse career having performed in opera, music theater, legitimate theater, commercials, voiceovers and film. A former Miss Alabama and Miss Congeniality in the Miss International Beauty Pageant, Ms. Shiver is a native of Mobile, Alabama and has a Bachelor of Music degree from the University of Southern Mississippi and a Master of Music degree from the University of Oregon, both in vocal performance. Ms. Shiver's original programs Harriet Tubman, Sojourner Truth and King Rhythm are very popular in schools and communities. In addition, she has performed nationally and internationally numerous times with the USO in Greenland, Iceland and Newfoundland and with Houston Grand Opera in Egypt, France, Italy, Japan, and Spain. A consummate teacher, choral director, and vocal competition judge, Hope Shiver has 20 years teaching experience at Trinity Valley Community College, University of Texas at Tyler, College of the Mainland, and Houston City College, Central. Hope Shiver is a resident of Houston, Texas along with her husband, musician/actor David Keepman. Ms. Shiver is on the artist rosters of Young Audiences of Houston and Northeast Texas. Photo by Hope Shiver.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences

School audiences

Venue size

Words  
Houston  
Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Seniors  
Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences  
Medium-sized venues (theater),  
Smaller venues (library/club)

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## HOT CLUB OF COWTOWN

western swing  
themed shows

For nearly thirty years, the Austin-based Hot Club of Cowtown's jaw-dropping musicianship and exhilarating live shows have been the band's global brand. Drawing inspiration from Bob Wills' Western swing and European hot jazz, the trio effortlessly combines vintage string music and three-part harmonies with extraordinary virtuosity and authentic Texas chops. This core trio—featuring Elana James on fiddle and Whit Smith on guitar—is celebrated for a "down-home elegance" that bridges these distinct art forms. Highly adaptable, they perform in configurations ranging from intimate solo/duo sets to their standard acoustic trio. Beyond their core show, they offer unique themed programs: "Way Out West," exploring the history of the American cowboy; a tribute to Elvis Presley's Sun Studio sessions; and a "Willie and Bob" celebration, honoring Willie Nelson and Bob Dylan. This program highlights Elana James' distinction as the first female instrumentalist in Dylan's touring band in over thirty years. To complement any scheduled event, they provide engaging workshops or masterclasses on American roots music and improvisational string techniques. Recently inducted into the International Western Music Association Hall of Fame, the band honors Texas legends and remains the world's premier ambassadors of the historic, high-energy sound of Texas Western swing. Photo by Ryan Saul.

Discipline	Music
City	Austin
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues

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## HOT PICKIN 57S

bluegrass fusion  
covers and originals

Hot Pickin 57s play a fun, energetic mix of bluegrass, classic country, and Americana. Set lists typically include well-known covers along with original compositions. The band covers a diverse group of artists, including Bill Monroe, Johnny Cash, Merle Haggard, Old Crow Medicine Show, Flatt and Scruggs, Ernest Tubb, Hank Williams, John Hartford, Bob Wills, and Doc Watson, among others. Whether performing at festivals or in intimate settings, Hot Pickin 57s love to establish a warm connection with their audience. They are available for listening-room venues, festivals, churches, libraries, house concerts, seniors, schools, and community or nonprofit events. Based in Austin, Texas, the band members have deep roots in the Austin music scene, reuniting in 2016 after their musical education at Berklee, South Plains College, and Texas State University. They've played in well-known bands like the Bastard Sons of Johnny Cash, Whit Smith's Hot Jazz Caravan, and Rosie and the Ramblers. On stage they've performed with artists such as Sierra Hull, Beppe Gambetta, Alan Munde, Mark Cosgrove (David Bromberg), Billy Bright (Wood and Wire), and Kym Warner (Robert Earl Keen, Greencards). Their discography includes a self-titled debut CD and 'Hot Picks,' which features GRAMMY Award winner Cindy Cashdollar. Photo by Diana Ost Photography.

Discipline	Music
City	Austin
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Libraries, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## HOUSTON GRAND OPERA

opera for children  
arts education

Houston Grand Opera, hailed as a "beacon of innovation" by the New York Times, transforms Texas schools into opera houses with performances that dazzle young audiences. From Storybook Opera—where beloved children's tales come to life for our youngest learners—to Opera to Go!, which brings 45-minute fully-staged productions to life for elementary and middle schoolers, HGO makes opera irresistibly accessible. Teachers and parents remark on how these performances keep students engaged, sparking conversations that continue long after the curtain falls. As one parent shared: "Thank you for building community and opening doors for young people. It made a real difference for our family." HGO offers hands-on programs designed for student participation. Meet an Opera Singer! is a thrilling interactive experience where students quiz professional vocalists about their careers and witness the astounding power of the human voice, while Music-Stories-OPERA! turns passive listening into active discovery through concerts that foster personal connection to the artform. Every performance features professionally trained singers selected for vocal excellence and their ability to captivate young audiences, including artists from the internationally recognized HGO Chorus. Many programs are offered in Spanish. With flexible staging for any venue, HGO brings world-class artistry directly to your students. Photo by Melissa Taylor.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences

School audiences

Venue size

Music  
Houston  
Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors  
Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences  
Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## HOUSTON SYMPHONY SOCIETY

orchestral music  
customizable programming

Founded in 1913, the Houston Symphony is an internationally recognized orchestra known for its artistic excellence, innovation, and service to the community. Each year, the 88 full-time musicians of the Houston Symphony perform more than 250 concerts, recitals, education, and community programs and events that impact the lives of more than 400,000 people, including over 97,000 children and students and more than 100,000 who attend performances free of charge. In addition to concerts in major performance spaces, the orchestra regularly performs in hospitals, schools, and other community centers throughout the city. The Houston Symphony offers a wide variety of programming options that can be customized to meet the diverse needs of its presenters. In addition to concerts featuring classical masterpieces and popular programming, the Houston Symphony can perform interactive family concerts, multicultural programs, and engaging educational concerts that are TEKS-aligned. Photo by Melissa Taylor.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences

School audiences

Venue size

Music  
Houston  
Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors  
Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences  
Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## IDA Y VUELTA FLAMENCO DANCE COMPANY

flamenco dance  
traditional and contemporary

Flamenco Fever (FF) is a Texas-based nonprofit performing arts organization dedicated to presenting professional flamenco dance and music through touring performances, festivals, and educational programming across the state under the company name "Ida y Vuelta Flamenco." From their home base in Dallas, FF brings authentic flamenco rooted in Andalusian tradition to communities of all sizes, emphasizing the healing power of the arts. Touring programs feature solo, duo, trio up to 25 artist options with professional dancers, guitarists, singers, and percussionists performing traditional and contemporary flamenco works that highlight rhythm, emotion, and history. Available options include full-length (2-hour) concert performances, festival showcases, lecture-demonstrations, and interactive community presentations. Programs are adaptable for theaters, schools, community centers, libraries, and outdoor venues. Flamenco Fever is known for being the first American flamenco company invited to perform in Malaga, Spain's International Festival. They specialize in audience engagement like lecture-demonstrations and audience participation, making performances accessible to diverse audiences. Touring engagements may also include workshops or residencies. FF's offerings are flexible, professionally produced, and well-suited for presenters seeking culturally rich, high-quality performing arts experiences. All touring programs feature incredible costuming, clear technical requirements, and responsive communication, ensuring positive experiences for partners, and audiences statewide. Photo by Gregory Martin.

Discipline	Folk Arts
City	Dallas
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## INDRAJIT BANERJEE

sitar  
Indian classical music

Indrajit Banerjee is an Austin-based sitar virtuoso and one of the foremost interpreters of North Indian classical music in the United States. A disciple of Pandit Kartick Kumar, he represents the revered Maihar Gharana with a style that blends tradition, imagination, and rhythmic vitality. His international career includes performances across India, Europe, and the United States, with appearances at major festivals such as SXSW, Levitation, the Joshua Tree Music Festival, and the Marquette Waterfront Festival. Banerjee has collaborated with acclaimed artists including guitarist Fareed Haque, saxophonist Jeff Coffin, members of the band Lettuce, and tabla maestros Anindo Chatterjee and Subrata Bhattacharya. He also leads his own fusion ensemble, Sitar-Ji, creating bridges between classical and contemporary soundscapes. In Austin, he directs the Antara School of Indian Classical Music, nurturing the next generation of musicians. As a Texas Touring Roster artist, Banerjee offers solo sitar recitals, sitar and tabla duets, and lecture-demonstrations that illuminate the structure and spirit of the raga tradition, enriching communities across Texas through authentic performances that connect audiences to the depth and beauty of Indian classical music. Photo by Amitava Sarkar.

Discipline	Music
City	Austin
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## INVINCIBLE CZARS

music and film  
educational workshops

The Invincible Czars transform classic cinema and holiday traditions into bold, immersive live music events that feel part rock concert, part movie night, part theater. Renowned for their original scores to silent-era films and offbeat, festive holiday shows, the group fuses rock energy, classical textures, and theatrical storytelling to captivate audiences of all ages. Their programs are a strong fit for theaters, colleges, libraries, and community venues seeking memorable, arts-based experiences. Silent film performances pair iconic movies with intricately synchronized live scores, turning black-and-white images into a vivid, live experience framed by engaging introductions and post-show conversations. These shows are lively and fun, frequently incorporating audience participation, interactive moments, and humor that make even century-old films feel immediate and accessible. The Czars' holiday shows reimagine seasonal music-- particularly their whimsical version of Tchaikovsky's "Nutcracker Suite"-- with unexpected arrangements, dramatic dynamics, and playful audience interaction, easily tailored for families, schools, or general public events. Workshops in film scoring, composition, arranging, and silent film history can expand a single performance into a mini-residency that deepens community engagement. With extensive touring across the United States and Canada, they bring seasoned, road-tested professionalism and a track record of connecting with diverse audiences. Photo by Josh Robins.

Discipline	Music
City	Austin
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Very large or outdoor venues

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## INVOKE

bluegrass and classical  
original compositions

Described as "...not anything but everything: Classical, Folk, Bluegrass, Americana and a sound yet to be termed seamlessly merged into a perfect one" ((David Srebnik, SiriusXM), the multi-instrumental quartet Invoke seamlessly weaves together classical, folk, bluegrass, jazz, and minimalism. Fueled by a passion for storytelling, they create a unique contemporary repertoire featuring original works composed by and for the group. A winner of the Concert Artists Guild Victor Elmaleh Competition, Invoke also took First Prize at the M-Prize and Coltman competitions. They previously served as the Young Professional String Quartet in Residence at the University of Texas at Austin. Performance highlights include Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center, alongside collaborations with artists including the Enso and Miro Quartets. Their discography includes Souls in the Mud (2015), Furious Creek (2018), Fantastic Planet (2021), and Evolve and Travel (2023). They frequently collaborate with composer Graham Reynolds, contributing to the soundtracks for the films Where'd You Go, Bernadette (2019) and Hit Man (2023). Dedicated to championing diverse voices, Invoke's "American Postcards" initiative commissions new music that explores specific times and places in American history. Photo by Marshall Tidrick.

Discipline	Music
City	Austin
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## IRON FROG PRESS

print making  
adults and children

Through Matt Bagley's PrintShop a Go-Go program, thousands in Texas have gained access to hands-on relief printmaking and arts programming. As a master printmaker, teaching artist, and founder of Iron Frog Press in Dallas, he delivers these creative experiences to people of all ages and abilities in libraries, schools, museums, cultural centers, festivals, and both indoor and outdoor venues. PrintShop a Go-Go provides workshops, public demonstrations, classroom and library visits, and collaborative art projects. Programs prioritize accessibility, encourage hands-on participation, and produce professional artistic results using innovative press-free techniques. Matt earned a BFA in Printmaking from the University of North Texas and brings over 30 years of professional studio practice, along with 13 years of leading community arts workshops and lectures. In 2013, he invented the Print Frog Glass Baren, for hand printing without a press, used by artists worldwide. His work has been recognized and supported by the City of Dallas arts grants. Through his teaching and touring programs, participants develop creativity, visual literacy, and collaborative learning skills through printmaking. Photo by Kelley Cheek.

Discipline	Visual & Film
City	Dallas
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## J MUZACZ

large scale muralist  
mosaic workshops

J Muzacz is a muralist, public artist, and educator with nearly two decades of experience creating landmark artworks for public and private clients. He is also a published author/illustrator with three books to his credit. He co-founded The Mosaic Workshop in Austin in 2019, and is now owner and lead artist managing a team of local artists. The studio teaches the art of mosaics through hands-on classes, team-building activities, and free workdays where people can help create monumental public art. Born and raised in Houston and a graduate of the University of Texas in Sociology, Muzacz has since traveled extensively and lived abroad for many years, painting murals in places as far-reaching as Taiwan, New Zealand, and Japan. His programs include collaborative pixel art mosaics that can involve hundreds of community members, individual mosaic workshops, public art mosaics, sustainable mosaic scrap kits, mural painting and production, aerosol art workshops, and more! Connecting his passions for art, travel, and outreach, Muzacz is eager to tour and engage with schools and communities all over the state of Texas, making and facilitating ambitious painted mural projects and mosaic art to uplift, educate, and inspire people of all ages for generations to come. Photo by Tony Moreno.

Discipline	Visual & Film
City	Austin
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## JAVIER JARA

vocalist  
latin folk and roots music

Hailing from the Ecuadorian highlands, Javier Jara has been producing and performing Latin music of all genres for all kinds of audiences, both big and small, in the United States for over two decades. With a voice that is both soulful and melodic, Javier specializes in Latin folk and roots music ranging from Trova to Son Cubano to Bossa Nova and Tango. From 2016 through 2019, Javier produced more than twelve Latin ensemble concerts as an artist-in-residence at the Emma S. Barrientos Mexican American Cultural Center in Austin. Javier has two studio albums (De Una with Los Bohemios Perdidos and Canciones de Cuarentena as a soloist). He released his third studio album from the Our Rhythms, Our Voices project on February 20, 2026. He was one of six winners in the Kerrville Folk Festival's New Folk Competition in 2022. He is available to play as a soloist or accompanied by musicians. Photo by Rafael Idrovo.

Discipline	Music
City	Austin
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## JELLY ELLINGTON

singer songwriter  
blues rock guitarist

Claiming Texas home for the last decade and originally from North Carolina, Jonathan "Jelly" Ellington has been courageously crafting his unique sound as an American guitarist, singer, and songwriter since first picking up the nylon string classical guitar at a young age. An electrifying fusion of impassioned vocals and vivacious guitar playing, Jelly delivers his blues-centric rock and roll by way of his dynamic stage presence and evident classical training. Having shared the stage with GRAMMY Award-winning artists and Texan icons alike, it is no wonder he was voted into the Top 10 "Best Guitarists" in the Austin Chronicle's Austin Music Awards. Jelly has recently released his highly anticipated third full-length album, *Glow*. Jam with Jelly on all streaming platforms, and catch him on tour in a city near you! Photo by Ismael Quintanilla III.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences  
School audiences  
Venue size

Music  
Austin  
Festivals/special events, Schools  
High school audiences  
Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## JOE MCDERMOTT

music for youth  
shows and workshops

With four decades of experience in children's music, Joe McDermott is a celebrated figure in the entertainment industry. He gained acclaim after winning the Grand Prize in the Children's division of the John Lennon Songwriting Contest in 2006. Joe's distinctive approach to storytelling through music led him to collaborate with the renowned Stan and Jan Berenstain, setting ten of their beloved books to vibrant melodies. His talent has been recognized with a NAPPA Gold award and multiple Parent's Choice Awards, affirming his ability to create engaging and educational content for younger audiences. Over the years, he has released nine albums of original music, each filled with catchy tunes and meaningful lyrics. Beyond live performances, Joe enriches the lives of elementary school students through unique video workshops, where he guides them in writing, recording, and producing high-tech videos. His work includes symphony scores for both large and small ensembles, providing a full spectrum of musical experiences, including a delightful Christmas singalong. Whether performing solo or with his full band, Joe McDermott continues to inspire and entertain children and families, making him a beloved figure in the world of children's entertainment. Photo by Joe McDermott.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences

School audiences

Venue size

Music  
Austin  
Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools  
Elementary school audiences, Pre-K audiences  
Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## JOEL LAVIOLETTE & RATTLETREE

percussion group  
multimedia

Joel Laviolette and Rattletree offer a variety of offerings catering to the specific needs of the event. Rattletree is a must-see multi-sensory live show experience of electronic percussion and one-of-a-kind hand-built African marimbas triggering driving synth sounds, bursts of color, and dynamic live video projection. Rattletree primarily plays evening festivals and venues where their multimedia art experience and captivating electronic sounds shine. Kupira Marimba is their highly versatile fully acoustic family-friendly offering. Kupira's music is centered around traditional Zimbabwean marimba music and creates a foot-stomping, heart-pounding, and hand clapping experience for people of all ages. Kupira Marimba brings joy and cultural experience to schools, libraries, museums, city concert series, and outdoor community festivals. Joel Laviolette also offers solo interactive multi-media performances that incorporate live music, interactive video projection mapping, and audience participation. These installations are a big hit at lighted-arts festivals, museums, and art galleries. All performances may include an optional hands-on workshop or educational demonstration/assemblies. Every show is customized to the needs of the presenter, and they are excited to make your next event something that people will be talking about for years! Photo by Ismael Quintanilla III.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences

School audiences

Venue size

Music  
Austin  
Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors  
Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences  
Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## JOLIE ROCKE

versatile vocalist  
performer educator

Dr. Jolie Locke is a multi-genre vocalist whose dynamic artistry has been featured on American and international stages. Celebrated as "a gifted, versatile vocalist who's as much at home soaring on opera arias and celestial hymns as she is getting down with funky blues and earthy jazz," she brings exceptional range, depth, and authenticity to every performance. After she opened Dr. Maya Angelou's final national tour, Angelou praised her as a singer of profound "passion... and compassion." With more than 30 years as an arts educator, Dr. Locke trains and mentors emerging artists through Locke Vocal Studio and as Founder of HBCU Arts, serving as a producer, clinician, master class artist, and arts program innovator. Through Locke Arts, she creates unique original recitals, concerts, vocal and choral workshops, lecture-demonstrations, and fully staged productions. She collaborates with outstanding Texas-based musicians, actors, and multidisciplinary artists to deliver customizable programs for schools, nonprofits, and community venues. Signature programs include Singing HERstory; Sing Langston!; Songs of the African American Soul; Remembering Juneteenth; Triumphant Over Triple Negative; A Spiritual Christmas; Lasting Impressions; S'Wonderful; The 4 V's: Voice, Vision, Variety, and Value; The Science of Singing; Locke the Voice; and more. Photo by D.J. Cocroft, JetLife Productions.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences

School audiences

Venue size

Music  
Hockley  
Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors  
Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences  
Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## JOMO & THE POSSUM POSSE/JOMO EDWARDS

americana  
varying group sizes

Jomo and The Possum Posse is an Austin-based Americana band known for their high-energy live performances and lyric-driven songs shaped by dry wit and understated satire. Fronted by national songwriting award winner Jomo Edwards, the band draws on country, blues, and early rock and roll to create songs full of sharp storytelling and dry humor that reward close listening. Onstage, the band is known for engaging banter and improvisational audience interaction, creating unique, family-friendly performances that invite laughter while offering moments of insight and reflection. In solo and duo settings, the shows become even more intimate, allowing for conversational storytelling and spontaneous moments that respond directly to the room. Perfect for community and nonprofit events, Jomo and The Possum Posse offers shows that resonate with audiences of all ages, bringing people together through music and humor. This approach has helped make the band a three-time "Best of Fest" winner at Austin's Frontera Fest and rack up 18 years of successful touring throughout Texas and beyond. The band has performed at Lincoln Center in New York, released four full-length studio albums, reached over 40 million viewers on YouTube, and had music featured in national advertising, including a Super Bowl commercial. Photo copyright 2025 by Sarah M. Vasquez.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences

Venue size

Music  
Austin  
Festivals/special events, Libraries,  
Seniors  
Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## JONATHAN PALOMAR

mariachi  
solo vocalist

Jonathan Palomar is a solo vocalist and one of the most distinguished voices in mariachi music today. For the past nine years, he has served as the lead vocalist of the legendary Mariachi Vargas de Tecalitlan, widely recognized as the best mariachi in the world. But he is also actively focusing on expanding his solo career, bringing his voice and artistry to new audiences and projects beyond the ensemble. In addition to his artistic career, Jonathan is the Artistic Director of the nation's largest and most prestigious mariachi festival, the Mariachi Extravaganza, held annually in San Antonio. Under his artistic leadership, the festival has strengthened its educational and cultural mission, bringing together thousands of students, musicians, directors, vocalists, and mariachi enthusiasts for high-level competitions, workshops, and concerts. Recognized for his musicality, stage presence, and commitment to uplifting the next generation, Jonathan Palomar has become a key figure in contemporary mariachi—celebrated as a performer, educator, and cultural ambassador of the tradition. Photo by Gabriel Redondo.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences  
Venue size

Music  
San Antonio  
Festivals/special events, Schools  
Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Very large or outdoor venues

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## JUAN LONGORIA JR. Y CONTEÑO

conjunto  
varying group sizes

Juan Longoria Jr. is a renowned conjunto accordionist and educator with over 30 years of experience performing Texas-Mexican regional music. He won first place at Texas Folklife's Big Squeeze Accordion Competition in 2007 and was featured in the 2008 documentary *The Big Squeeze*. Since becoming director of Los Fresnos High School's Conjunto Halcon in 2012, he has grown the program to serve about 100 students annually and earned widespread media recognition and numerous state competition awards. Longoria also works with Texas Folklife to support young musicians. He was named a 2024 Taproot Fellow and selected to represent the United States at the 2025 World Expo in Osaka, Japan. Photo: Luis Sanchez Photography.

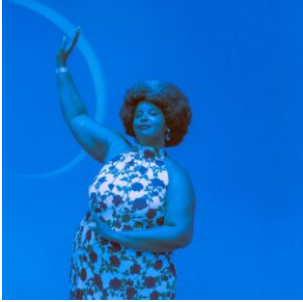
Discipline  
City  
Special audiences

School audiences

Venue size

Music  
Los Fresnos  
Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors  
Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences  
Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## KAM FRANKLIN

roots music  
educational workshops

Kam Franklin is an interdisciplinary artist best known as the powerhouse singer and songwriter of Gulf Coast soul band The Suffers. Franklin is also a writer, filmmaker, actress, producer, curator, and entrepreneur. She contributed to the GRAMMY Award-nominated regional roots album "The King of Zydeco." Her solo album, funded via Kickstarter, is complete and releasing this year. It is co-produced with Margo Price and guided by her production mentor Jim Eno, with support from Project Traction. Her short film "Byrd and Shepard" examines the 1998 killings of James Byrd, Jr. and Matthew Shepard, reflecting on collective responsibility in the face of hate. Since joining The Suffers in 2011, Franklin has performed on Letterman, Colbert, Kimmel, NPR's Tiny Desk, and most recently on ACL TV. She spent most of 2025 touring with Jimmie Vaughn, Bobby Rush, and John Primer as a part of Antone's 50th All-Stars, and she has collaborated with Chaka Khan, Brandi Carlile, Allison Russell, Jon Batiste, Bun-B, and La Mafia. She founded the "Bayou City Comeback Chorus," and has served on various nonprofit boards including HeadCount.org and the Recording Academy. Photo by Jonathan Burgos.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences

School audiences

Venue size

Music  
Houston  
Festivals/special events, Libraries,  
Schools, Seniors  
High school audiences, Middle school  
audiences  
Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-  
sized venues (theater), Smaller  
venues (library/club), Very large or  
outdoor venues

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## KAMICA KING

singer songwriter  
acoustic soul

Kamica King is a singer-songwriter and board-certified music therapist whose sound blends folk traditions with elements of soul, jazz, and her Afro-Caribbean roots. Known for her warm stage presence and ability to weave story, song, and audience connection together, the classically trained vocalist creates powerful, welcoming performances that resonate long after the final note. Kamica offers performances (solo through band), workshops, and residencies with expertise serving individuals with disabilities, seniors, students, professionals, and intergenerational communities. She facilitates engaging, community-centered programs, including music-making, songwriting, performance technique, arts entrepreneurship, music-based mindfulness and meditation, and cultural music programs for Black History, Juneteenth, Women's History, and MLK Day. An expert arts practitioner, Kamica was selected for the prestigious ArtsEnvoy (U.S. Dept. State) and served as a Cultural Ambassador for the United States. She has performed at Carnegie Hall and the U.S. Open (USTA), tours internationally in Africa, South America, and the Caribbean, and has been featured by The Kennedy Center. A National Endowment for the Arts sub-grantee, she holds a Master's in Music/Music Therapy from Texas Woman's University. Whether on stage or in the community, Kamica centers wellbeing, skills-building, and enrichment through music for audiences of all ages, abilities, and experience levels. Photo by Amy Hendricks Photography.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences

School audiences

Venue size

Music  
Dallas  
Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors  
Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences  
Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## KATHAK RHYTHMS

kathak indian dance  
shows and workshops

Traditionally attributed to the traveling bards of ancient northern India known as Kathakars, Kathak gained refinement and complexity in technique and aesthetics over two millennia. Kathak Rhythms, directed by Guru Akhila Rao, is a Kathak dance school and performing company based in Dallas-Fort Worth that uses the classical Indian dance form as a method for artistic and cultural engagement. Kathak Rhythms' presentations range from traditional to contemporary themes while maintaining the purity of the dance form. The company offers solo concerts, mini and full-length dance-theater productions set to live music accompaniment or recorded music tailored to fit a wide range of audiences, budgets, and time limits. Lecture-demonstration-workshops (Rhythms of North India) introduce participants to movement, traditional gestures for storytelling, and musical mathematics. Repertoire productions include Destination India (highlighting regional influences), Gharanas of Kathak (distinct features of the dance form nurtured through family lineage), Shakti (celebrating women in many avatars), Kathak on the Silver Screen (a journey of cinematic magic of Kathak from the golden sixties to the present) and El Dorado (90-minute ballet of dance-music-art-multimedia, commissioned by Renu Forum). With traditional, contemporary and diverse collaborative works, the dance company is sure to capture the hearts of Texas audiences. Photo by Your Lensman Photography.

Discipline	Folk Arts
City	Plano
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## KIM LEHMAN

storytelling and music  
science stories

Kim Lehman is a storyteller, musician, workshop presenter, honey bee educator, and author. For over 35 years, she has performed at hundreds of festivals, schools, libraries, and museums including being a featured teller at the Texas Storytelling Festival. Each entertaining and educational program includes a variety of stories, and songs that can be tailored to each audience, including very young children through adults. The "Stories and Songs" program combines songs, stories, props, poetry, puppets, and participation for preschool, elementary ages, and families. Possible themes include folktales around the world, pioneers, fairy tales, space, and more. "All Together Now" is an inter-generational program, bringing together children and senior citizens. Science Programs range from "The Science of Sound" to "The Buzz About Bees," a program about honey bees with participation, music, props, and optional hands-on activities. Kim is the author of *Beekeeper's Lab: 52 Family-Friendly Activities and Experiments Exploring the Life of the Hive*. Kim is a well-known educator best known for her dynamic, practical workshops featuring easy to implement activities for librarians, teachers and parents. She has presented over 160 workshops throughout Texas. Some popular topics include using music, storytelling, puppets, art, science, and literature with children. Photo by Nola Ray.

Discipline

City

Special audiences

School audiences

Venue size

Words

Smithville

Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors

Elementary school audiences, Pre-K audiences

Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club)

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## LASER SPECTACLES

laser light shows  
site specific

Laser Spectacles, Inc. uses laser light to create unique art and entertainment. Company president Tim Walsh is an accomplished composer and performer. Tim applies his talent to push the boundaries of laser art, with Laser Spectacles winning many awards over the last decades. Venues for lasers include fairs, festivals, rodeos, churches, meetings, libraries-- anywhere that large groups of people gather! Laser Spectacles energizes events with dancing laser beams and mesmerizing laser graphics. Lasers bring historical buildings to life using crisp laser outlines. Attendees interact and dance with the lasers, bringing personality to the laser performances. Laser Spectacles brings a sense of excitement to an event, and provides an alternative to fireworks for a "grand finale." Lasers communicate-- attendees can see sponsor logos and learn about the history of an event in laser light! As Phil Burks of the Green Acres Baptist Church says, "Working with Tim Walsh and Laser Spectacles can have a positive effect on your health!" Photograph by Pedro Luna.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences

School audiences

Venue size

Visual & Film  
San Marcos  
Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors  
Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences  
Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Very large or outdoor venues

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## LE THEATRE DE MARIONETTE

marionette puppets  
touring programs

Le Theatre de Marionette is an award-winning Texas original dedicated to reviving the rare and beautiful art of marionette puppetry. For more than 30 years, this Dallas-based company has hand crafted every puppet it performs—now more than 800 unique characters—each built for precision, expression, and storytelling. Blending European-style marionette tradition with modern theatrical design, Le Theatre creates productions ranging from classic fairy tales to large-scale stage spectacles. Performances are presented either cabaret-style, with puppeteers visible onstage, or in traditional European bridge style, where performers operate from a raised platform behind a proscenium. Le Theatre de Marionette performs in theaters, festivals, theme parks, museums, and large venues, creating unique experiences that delight children and adults alike. The company has a permanent installation at the State Fair of Texas and performs regularly at Six Flags theme parks. Beyond entertainment, the company is deeply committed to preserving a nearly lost art form. Many programs include a pre-show that teaches audiences how marionettes are built and how they move, followed by post-show activities such as behind-the-scenes tours and hands-on demonstrations. Touring productions include *The Wizard of Oz*, *Jack and the Beanstalk*, and *Winnie the Pooh*. Photo by Stephanie Stark.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences  
School audiences

Theater  
Fort Worth  
Festivals/special events  
Elementary school audiences, Pre-K audiences  
Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Very large or outdoor venues

Venue size

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## LIGHT CRUST DOUGHBOYS FEATURING MAREK ENETI

western swing band  
country and gospel

Light Crust Doughboys featuring Marek Eneti present Texas country and western swing music rooted in one of the most influential traditions in American music. Founded in 1931, the Light Crust Doughboys are among the longest-running bands in the United States and played a central role in shaping western swing and Texas dance-music culture. The current touring ensemble represents a living continuation of this legacy, combining historically significant repertoire with Texas country, country blues, Deep Ellum traditions, and gospel music. Featured violinist and fiddler Marek Eneti brings a distinctive musical voice shaped by classical training and American roots traditions, blending technical refinement with rhythmic drive, improvisation, and dynamic ensemble interplay. A centerpiece of the touring program is The Light Crust Doughboys 95th Anniversary Show Band Revue, which has been presented at universities, theaters, historic venues, and community spaces across Texas. The program balances historical context with engaging presentation and strong audience connection. Available performance formats include a full ensemble revue, trio, and duo configurations. Each format adapts to venue size and budget while maintaining artistic quality, stylistic authenticity, and accessibility for diverse audiences, including seniors and individuals with disabilities. Photo by Marek Eneti.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences

School audiences

Venue size

Music  
Mesquite  
Festivals/special events, Libraries,  
People with disabilities, Schools,  
Seniors  
High school audiences, Middle school  
audiences  
Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-  
sized venues (theater), Smaller  
venues (library/club), Unplugged  
events/venues, Very large or outdoor  
venues

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## LONE STAR CIRCUS

circus  
performances and workshops

Lone Star Circus is a Texas-based touring company presenting contemporary circus productions that blend acrobatics, dance, comedy, and live or electronic music in a family-friendly format. Performances are scalable for theaters, festivals, civic plazas, schools, and community venues throughout Texas, with flexible cast sizes and staging designed for audiences of approximately 200–1,000. The company presents a 50–70 minute contemporary circus performance with no intermission, adaptable for both indoor and outdoor environments and accessible to audiences of all ages. Productions may be presented in intimate big-top settings or traditional theater spaces. Lone Star Circus also offers a free 50-minute pre-show community workshop, Circus in the Square, featuring hands-on stations in juggling, balance, flexibility, and stagecraft. Workshops are open to all ages and include ADA-conscious modifications. Educational add-ons are available and include masterclasses (45–90 minutes), artist talks (20–30 minutes), and 1–5 day residencies. School programs may incorporate optional TEKS-aligned curriculum. Programming emphasizes creativity, safe physical literacy, teamwork, and cultural enrichment. Photo by Chris Baudo Owner, Flashback MediaWorks, LLC.

Discipline	Theater
City	Dallas
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## LOOP38

contemporary classical music  
varying group sizes

Loop38 is a Houston-based new music ensemble dedicated to building community around engaging, culturally relevant musical experiences. Named after Houston's 38-mile freeway ("the loop"), the ensemble specializes in contemporary classical music for chamber and large ensemble, creating distinctive aural experiences that push stylistic boundaries, elevate underrepresented voices, and foster meaningful collaborations with composers and artists across disciplines. Since its debut in 2016, Loop38 has presented works by local composers, emerging voices, and internationally recognized artists in venues across Texas. Touring programs are adaptable to a wide range of settings and include *Longleaf*, an evening-length multimedia work by Ben Morris tracing the history of the longleaf pine tree, as well as curated chamber programs exploring themes such as music and mathematics and musical traditions from across the Americas. A fluid ensemble ranging from a duo to a full 30-piece band, Loop38 works closely with presenters to tailor programs to their venues and audiences. In addition to performances, the ensemble offers college and university residencies (including master classes and composer readings), school workshops, and interactive community concerts. Photo by Natalie Gaynor.

Discipline	Music
City	Houston
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## LOS TEXMANIACS

texican conjunto  
trio or full band

Los Texmaniacs are global ambassadors for Texas roots music: pure roots, new boots, and the evolving sound of conjunto. Founded by legendary bajo sexto master Max Baca, the ensemble pushes the genre forward, building on a legacy that includes Max's work on eleven other GRAMMY Award-recognized projects, as well as the band's own GRAMMY Award-winning Smithsonian Folkways album, *Borders y Bailes*. Currently recording for WorldHaus Music, the group expands the creative benchmark set by that landmark release and its follow-up, *Cruzando Borders*. For decades, Max served as the premier apprentice to the iconic Flaco Jimenez; a landmark Texas Public Radio profile described their bond as "tighter than family," honoring Max's journey toward becoming a definitive Texas icon. The band redefines the genre by infusing traditional Tex-Mex with R-and-B, blues, and rock-infused polkas—an evolution cemented by Max's induction into the Texas Conjunto Music Hall of Fame. The group's signature groove thrives on the interplay between Max and his nephew, accordion virtuoso Josh Baca. Their reach spans performing at historic Texas dancehalls and citywide celebrations to leading interactive workshops that teach the history and styling of the music—preserving the art of Texas's indigenous folk form, conjunto—as a vital working-class cultural heartbeat for the next generation. Photo by Christian Moller.

Discipline	Music
City	San Antonio
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	High school audiences, Middle school audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## LUCAS MILLER, THE SINGING ZOOLOGIST

music for youth  
science themes

Elementary audiences adore Lucas Miller's multimedia programs about animal adaptations, life cycles, Texas ecosystems, ocean food chains, and more. His creative use of video keeps kids learning and laughing as he sings about ocelots, monarch butterflies, bluebonnets, cheetahs, and many more charismatic critters. With unbridled passion for wildlife and science, the "Singing Zoologist" aims to inspire the next generation of scientists and conservationists. He has performed for over three million students across over three decades at performing arts centers, museums, zoos, schools, and public libraries throughout Texas and beyond. In addition to live performances, Lucas offers educator workshops Visit [singingzoologist.com](http://singingzoologist.com) to explore his programs and book him at your venue. Photo by Michael Delott.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences

School audiences

Venue size

Music  
Austin  
Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools  
Elementary school audiences, Pre-K audiences  
Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues

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## LUKE BULLA

progressive bluegrass  
singer songwriter

GRAMMY and IBMA Award winner Luke Bulla is a virtuosic multi-instrumentalist and singer-songwriter whose career spans over three decades of elite performance. A child prodigy, Bulla began touring with his family band at age four and took up the fiddle at seven. He won the National Fiddle Contest six times in his age categories before becoming the youngest Grand Champion at sixteen. After moving to Nashville in 1999, he earned both a GRAMMY and an IBMA Award playing with Ricky Skaggs' Kentucky Thunder. For over fifteen years, Bulla has been a cornerstone of Lyle Lovett's Large Band, performing on major national television programs and international stages. Now based in Austin, his artistry effortlessly bridges bluegrass, Americana, and folk. His 2026 season highlights a solo evolution with the single "Mandolin Wind" and touring with the John Cowan Trio. Bulla has recorded with icons like Brandi Carlile, Alison Krauss, and Bela Fleck. A dedicated educator, he instructs at the annual Elmore and Julian Family Fiddle Camps and the 2026 Rockygrass Academy. Whether performing on national TV or in an intimate trio, Bulla remains a definitive ambassador of American roots music, blending jaw-dropping technique with soulful, contemporary songwriting. Photo by Nicola Gell.

Discipline	Music
City	Austin
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## MADAM RADAR

americana  
full band

MADAM RADAR is an Americana rock band that punches hard with its explosive harmonies, soaring guitar solos, and eclectic original tunes. The band is a tangled web of family and friends; Jace Cadle (rhythm guitar/vocals) is married to Kelly Green (lead guitar/vocals), the sister of Kody Lee (drums/vocals), married to Violet Lea (bass/vocals). Fronted by the trio of Kelly, Violet, and Jace, MADAM RADAR is a revolving door of high-energy singer-songwriters, each with their own perspective and style that magically seem to overlap like the layers of a kaleidoscope. With all four band members providing harmonies, MADAM RADAR is a wall of colorful sound that changes shape, demanding your undivided attention. Photo by Mark Del Castillo.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences  
Venue size

Music  
Dale  
Festivals/special events  
Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## MAGIC IN THE LIBRARY

magician  
literacy themes

Get ready for the wildest and most innovative magic you've ever seen! Magic in the Library with illusionist and sleight-of-hand artist Bronson Chadwick is where the world of reading and the art of magic collide! Students of all ages will interact with language arts topics through the dazzling presentation of interactive theatrical magic. Each onstage magic routine illustrates helpful hints that kids can use in the classroom and in the real world. Bronson uses magic effects to teach major State of Texas language arts topics such as: fiction versus nonfiction, literary genres, literary mediums, how to write a one-page paper, how to break down long passages on standardized tests, how to find books and literary mediums that appeal to the individual, and more. These concepts are taught with sleight-of-hand and mechanical/theatrical prop illusions as well. After the performance is over, a hands-on magic learning workshop is also available. Explore [www.magicinthelibrary.org](http://www.magicinthelibrary.org) to learn more about offerings and curriculum. Photo by Tom Steele Photography.

Discipline	Theater
City	Lubbock
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club)

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## MAGIK THEATRE

theater for youth  
TEKS aligned

For over 30 years, Magik has brought books, characters, and stories to life on stage for young people. As the only resident professional theater company dedicated to young audiences in San Antonio and South Texas, Magik feels a strong responsibility to ensure that the arts remain an integral part of students' education. They support teachers with classroom activity guides for every production. Guides provide cross-curricular lessons that integrate social-emotional learning and are aligned with Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). Magik on the Road fills your space with world-class theater that brings stories to life and inspires students' imagination, creativity, and empathy. Magik on the Road will arrive with the necessary equipment and enjoys performing in a variety of venues, from libraries to cafeterias to performing arts centers. Bring the joy of Magik to your students! Recent tour offerings include Red Riding Hood and Tomas and The Library Lady. Previous touring shows included Eddie and Vinnie, Carmella Full of Wishes, and Maddi's Fridge. Future touring options will include holiday-specific shows alongside other high-quality, educational touring productions that inspire young audiences and serve schools and communities. Photo by Michelle Godinez.

Discipline	Theater
City	San Antonio
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues

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## MAIN STREET THEATER

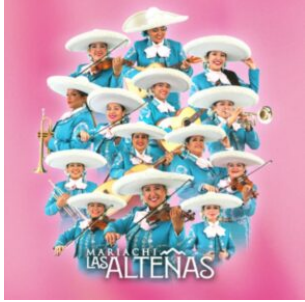
theater for youth  
shows with talkbacks

Main Street Theater (MST) is Houston's oldest and largest theater for youth, reaching over 100,000 children each season through their performances at the Midtown Arts and Theater Center Houston (MATCH) and through statewide touring. Recognized by American Theatre Magazine as one of the top 20 theaters for young audiences in the country, MST presents a repertory based on the most relevant and challenging literature for youth. MST began touring decades ago to reach schools who could not travel to Houston. Main Street regularly tours to Abilene, Bryan, Yoakum, Roma, Bastrop, Austin, and many more. Each season the tour is a new title appropriate for elementary age children; recent tours include Elephant and Piggie's "We are in a Play!," Click, Clack Moo, Cows That Type, Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus, and Dragons Love Tacos. Each school receives free education materials in English and Spanish to supplement the learning experience. Main Street Theater also offers 45 minute Character Visits for booking in which a title character from one of MST's productions presents a mini-interactive performance. Photo by Ricornel Productions.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences  
School audiences  
Venue size

Theater  
Houston  
Festivals/special events, Libraries,  
People with disabilities, Schools  
Elementary school audiences, Pre-K  
audiences  
Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-  
sized venues (theater), Smaller  
venues (library/club)

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## MARIACHI LAS ALTEÑAS

mariachi band  
all women

When you think of mariachi, you may imagine the deep, powerful sound of a man's voice, but Mariachi Las Altenas performs in a different key. Celebrating 24 years of music and performance, this all-female mariachi ensemble is making waves across the United States. Their mission is to achieve excellence as musicians and performers while raising the standard for women in mariachi music. Under the leadership of founder and director Valerie Vargas and musical director Angela Campos, Mariachi Las Altenas is composed of 14 accomplished female musicians and vocalists. The ensemble includes eight violinists, three trumpeters, a guitarronista, vihuelista, and guitarist, creating their iconic and respected mariachi sound. Known for their musical diversity, the group appeals to audiences of all generations. Beyond their musicianship, Las Altenas captivate with dynamic stage presence, rich vocal harmonies, and vibrant trajes de charro. Their philosophy goes beyond singing, they interpret each song's meaning and connect deeply with their audience. Named after Los Altos de Jalisco, the birthplace of mariachi, Las Altenas proudly share their Mexican heritage. In a predominately male industry, this all-female mariachi has paved a unique path in the mariachi world. Photo by Claudia Renee Gonzalez.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences

School audiences

Venue size

Music  
San Antonio  
Festivals/special events, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors  
Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences  
Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## MCP SHOWS/MARGARET CLAUDER

puppeteer  
character visits

Margaret Clauder is an internationally known award-winning ventriloquist/puppeteer/storyteller who provides these services for audiences of all ages. She is a costumed variety performing artist and performs as one of her original characters. Characters available to TCA include her original Mother Goose, Meteorologist Maggie, Masai Maggie (a safari clad performer), Senorita Margarita, Mother Nature, Paleo Maggie, Alpie the Elf, Mrs. Claus and many more. Her programs align with TEKS standards and encourage children to enjoy the wonder of reading by promoting books, stories and their imaginations. Children's imaginations burst with wonder when they see her puppets magically talk and sing with Margaret's outstanding ventriloquism, an art that she has worked at diligently for over 30 years. Special needs children especially connect with her puppets. As a columnist for various children's performer magazines such as *The Calliope* and *The Funny Paper* and a sought after lecturer for performance conventions, such as the International Ventriloquist Convention, The Texas Clown Association, The International Association of Kids Show Professionals and the Tejas Storyteller Association, she has mentored hundreds of variety arts performers from around the globe. She is open to travel in Texas or adjoining states. Photo by Aaron Stone.

Discipline	Theater
City	Arlington
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, Pre-K audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club)

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## MELISSA CARPER

country music  
singer songwriter

Celebrated for her profoundly observational lyrics, "homespun sensibility," and a voice that curls like a croon from a gramophone, Melissa Carper plays old school country music that resonates across time and place. Carper's repertoire weaves together the threads of old-time, bluegrass, western swing, jazz, and blues that all intertwined to form American country music. Veteran Nashville musician Chris Scruggs dubbed her "HillBillie Holiday," declaring, "She's as good as it gets. She has a quality that really transcends time and fashion." Carper's acclaimed debut solo album, *Daddy's Country Gold* (2021), is something of a greatest hits album born of those formative years, and her subsequent recordings *Ramblin' Soul* and *Borned in Ya* proved the staying power of her playful and profound songwriting. In 2026, Melissa released *A Very Carper Christmas*, which spins out a raft of instant holiday classics recorded with a bevy of friends. Released in February of 2026, *Havin' A Talk* is a duet album with Theo Lawrence, where they exchange playful banter with catchy, vibrant melodies. Melissa shines on stage, in workshops, and interacting with her audience in an intimate or educational setting. Photo by Liza Orozco.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences

School audiences  
Venue size

Music  
Driftwood  
Libraries, People with disabilities,  
Schools, Seniors  
High school audiences  
Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## MERCURY CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

chamber orchestra  
flexible ensemble

Founded in 2000, Mercury Chamber Orchestra has spent over 25 years bringing the best of baroque, classical and romantic music to stages across the greater Houston area and Texas. Performing on period instruments, the ensemble brings to life the sounds of each era, allowing audiences to hear the music as a composer imagined-- a fresh and vibrant experience. Mercury's touring performances have great flexibility in size and budget, ranging from two-hour orchestral concerts for large audiences, to smaller ensembles for intimate venues from galleries to churches to town halls. Recent touring repertoire includes masterpieces like Vivaldi's Four Seasons, Mozart Divertimentos, Handel's Concerti Grossi Op. 6, Bach's Concerto for Two Violins, Tchaikovsky's Serenade for Strings, and more. Programs can also be tailored for specific audiences such as family concerts, sensory inclusive performances, cultural programs, and more. Additionally, Mercury offers 45-minute educational presentations for school assemblies that combine curriculum topics such as science and history with classical music introductions. Mercury also provides teaching workshops that cater to school orchestral programs. Photo by Melissa Taylor.

Discipline	Music
City	Houston
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## MEXICO 2000 BALLET FOLKLORICO

mexican dance  
interactive shows

Bring the flare of Mexican culture to your event! Performances are fast-paced and nonstop, featuring dances from different regions with their European, Mayan/pre-Columbian, and South American influences. These dances highlight the beauty and romance of traditional Mexico. The programs "Fiestas de Mexico," "Dia de Muertos" and "Christmas in Mexico" are available in educational and concert-type options. At "Fiestas de Mexico," audiences will learn about Mexican holidays, connecting with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills in Spanish, language arts, social studies, fine arts, and music while enjoying the most beautiful and representative dances, costumes, and music from Mexico. During these interactive shows, audiences will participate by clapping and yelling (cheers of joy/gritos), and students will try out steps with music on stage. "Navidad in Mexico" is a compilation of Christmas traditions, dances, and songs. "Dia de Muertos" incorporates the traditions of the mystical altars to welcome the spirits that come back to visit their families. Performances are focused on preserving and promoting Mexican traditional heritage. These programs can be customized to meet the varied needs of different events: schools, educational performances, community festivals, massive and formal events, etc. Study guides and programs are available. Presentations range from twenty minutes to over one hour. Photos by Leopoldo Palencia.

Discipline	Dance
City	Wylie
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## MEZCLADA DANCE COMPANY

blending dance styles  
breakdancing and hip hop

Mezclada Dance Company celebrates diversity by blending cultures and dance styles into dynamic, original, and universally relatable performances. Mezclada is rooted in Hip Hop and modern dance alongside Latin music. The company presents evening-length concerts, educational performances, and workshops/residencies from local to international audiences. Mezclada's repertoire include full-length works: Mind, Body, and Soul, a Hip Hop-focused concert inspired by Breakdancing in the Olympics featuring an Olympian and Team USA coach; and Presente! A Spanglish Story, a celebration of Latin communities and their essential contributions to the countries' cultural fabric. Educational offerings range from modified concert experiences to series of shows, including Each One Teach One, which highlights foundational Hip Hop styles such as breaking, popping, and locking; and Percussive Movement, which explores the relationship between dance and percussion across styles including salsa, funk, jazz, and fusion. The company also provides masterclasses and teaching residencies for K-12 and college/university students. Mezclada collaborates on adaptable productions with orchestras, symphonies, and musical artists, with flexible performance length (30 - 90 minutes) and ensemble size (5 to 12 dancers) tailored to a variety of venues and audiences. "Mezclada's must-see concerts effortlessly fuse energy and culture, creating irresistible experiences for audiences of all ages."— TheDanceDiSH. Photo by Lynn Lane.

Discipline	Dance
City	Houston
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, Schools
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Very large or outdoor venues

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## MONARCH CHAMBER PLAYERS

classical chamber music  
flexible configuration

Monarch Chamber Players is a collective of Houston-based professional musicians committed to taking classical chamber music out of the concert hall and into accessible community spaces. Founded in October 2020 as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Monarch presents 50-80 concerts annually and has brought classical music to over 25 Houston neighborhoods, performing at a variety of venues including parks, churches, farms, gas stations, traditional indoor venues, and front porches. Monarch offers a flexible configuration from the core roster of winds, strings, harp, and percussion. Available ensembles include wind quintet, string trio, harp trio, woodwind trio, and various other unique ensembles ranging from 2-15 musicians. Monarch has been featured on many traditional concert series, including the Cypress Creek FACE Promenade Series, the Houston Methodist Center for the Performing Arts Crain Garden Series, and the Bayou City Art Festival. Monarch offers both traditional classical and seasonal holiday performances. Holiday performances include "Neighborhood Nutcracker," an original production of Tchaikovsky's score arranged for wind quintet and percussion accompanied by a video projection of the ballet, as well as special programs for Halloween, Hispanic Heritage Month, Women's History Month, Memorial Day, and more. Photo by Allison Asthana.

Discipline	Music
City	Houston
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## MONTOPOLIS

original chamber music  
film accompaniment

Montopolis is an indie chamber music group that performs the works of composer Justin Sherburn. Their music combines rock, folk, and electronic compositions into modern classical arrangements to create 'stunning and transcendent' (Austin Chronicle) concerts. Their programs combine live music with film and interactive storytelling. The group tours nationally with original live scores to silent films and presents concerts that highlight Texas history and culture at performing arts centers and museums across the state. Their multimedia concerts are themed around Big Bend National Park, Enchanted Rock State Natural Area, and the Texas coast. They tour live score performances to silent films at arthouse cinemas around the country and have most recently developed a planetarium concert featuring cellist Sara Nelson. They also perform a live score to the iconic children's film *Le Ballon Rouge* (The Red Balloon). "A night of beautiful chamber music, but with electric guitar and the twang of pedal steel giving a Texas kick to the keys and strings," --Texas Monthly. "A multimedia love letter to the Texas coast, with voices and images from the Gulf set to an original score," --NPR, Texas Standard. "Your summer blockbuster has arrived," --Austin Chronicle. Photo by Sunday Ballew.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences

School audiences

Venue size

Music  
Austin  
Festivals/special events, Libraries,  
People with disabilities, Schools,  
Seniors  
High school audiences, Middle school  
audiences  
Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-  
sized venues (theater), Smaller  
venues (library/club), Very large or  
outdoor venues

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## MR. WILL/WILL AND THE WILDERNESS

country americana  
youth or all ages

Known across the Lone Star State as the award-winning "Mr. Will," Will Dupuy shares an interactive musical spirit that's as big as Texas. His career grew from his time as a preschool music teacher and a father whose own children—now in junior high—inspired his early songs. Will is a familiar face at elementary assemblies and library summer reading programs, getting the younger crowd jumping to Americana tunes about dinosaurs, excavators, and Texas life. For "tweens" and high schoolers, he brings his Instrumental Petting Zoo, where his mastery of the upright bass, trombone, trumpet, drums, and guitar turns music theory into a hands-on experience. Will specializes in tailoring his sets to fit educational themes, weaving regional history and conservation into every performance. When he isn't in a school, he fronts Will and the Wilderness, delivering a signature blend of country and bluegrass for the whole community. An Austin fixture since 1999, Will has toured with greats like the South Austin Jug Band, Bruce Robison, and Bob Schneider. Whether he's leading a library singalong or thumping his upright bass at a festival, Will's infectious melodies bring folks together. He remains a premier musical ambassador, offering authentic Texas music for every generation. Photo by Nicola Gell.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences

School audiences

Venue size

Music  
Austin  
Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors  
Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences  
Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## NANCY CHURNIN

children's book author  
historical ties

Nancy Churnin is the author of many picture books including South Asia Book Award winner *Manjhi Moves a Mountain*, National Jewish Book Award and Sydney Taylor Honor *Dear Mr. Dickens*, both Junior Library Guild selections, *Martin and Anne*, a popular book in civil rights and Holocaust curriculums, and *The William Hoy Story*, a Texas 2X2 honoree on many state lists, available in Spanish, Japanese and Korean. Her newest is *A Teddy Bear for Emily - and President Roosevelt, Too*, which she presented on May 11, 2026 for the Theodore Roosevelt Presidential Library in North Dakota. Nancy's main program, *Be The Hero of Your Story*, explains why she became a writer and what inspired her to write the story she is presenting. She reads the story and follows with historical context and projects that address how kids can use the kindness highlighted in her stories as inspiration to be heroes of kindness. She personalizes presentations by celebrating kind acts by the kids to whom she is presenting and finishes with teaching sign language. She also offers a Young Authors program, teaching kids to write their own stories. She adapts her programs for preschoolers, elementary school, and middle school, adults and families. Photo by Kim Leeson.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences

School audiences

Venue size

Words  
Plano  
Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors  
Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences  
Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## NATIVE AMERICAN CULTURAL CENTER FKA GREAT PROMISE

indigenous culture  
music and dance

Since 2004, the Native American Cultural Center (formerly known as Great Promise for American Indians) has performed across the state of Texas with the mission of preserving the traditions, heritage, and culture of Native Americans. The Moving Moccasins powwow performance group offers culturally authentic programs that are both entertaining and educational. Traditions, stories, and history come alive through song and dance. Audiences are introduced to the sights and sounds of the modern-day powwow, which is a traditional form of cultural arts. Dance styles and regalia are explained and demonstrated. Narration, live singing and drumming, and audience participation enhance the overall experience. The Moving Moccasins offers programs that feature hands-on participation and the sharing of culture and experiences on a personal level with audiences of all ages. Programs are flexible and tailored to the needs of the presenter, ranging from one artist to a larger group. Presentation size, time length, and content can be adapted to fit most events, venues, audiences, and budgets. School and classroom programs complement Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills standards. Creative Director Nan Blessingame (Cheyenne/Arapaho), an accomplished dancer and craftsman, is also available for workshops. Photo by the Native American Cultural Center.

Discipline	Dance
City	Austin
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## NATYANJALI KUCHIPUDI DANCE SCHOOL

indian classical dance  
performances and workshops

Natyanjali Kuchipudi Dance School, under the direction of Srilatha Suri, is a Kuchipudi dance institution and performing ensemble based in the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex. Natyanjali is dedicated to preserving, propagating, and presenting Kuchipudi, one of India's major classical dance-theater traditions—as a vehicle for artistic discovery, cultural education, and community engagement. Kuchipudi originated in ancient temple rituals and the traveling Bhagavatha Mela storytelling tradition, integrating classical scriptures, Carnatic music, expressive abhinaya, and dramatic narrative. Natyanjali's work spans traditional repertoire and contemporary thematic productions while remaining firmly rooted in the form's codified technique. The institution presents solo concerts, ensemble works, thematic programs, and full-length dance dramas, offered with live or recorded music and adaptable to diverse venues, audiences, and time frames. Its educational initiatives include lecture-demonstrations and workshops introducing participants to principles from the Natya Shastra, dance anatomy, foundational movement vocabulary, expressive storytelling and the cultural and historical contexts of Kuchipudi. Repertoire productions include Kalyana Srinivasam, The Moon and the Water Lily, Meera (the life of the poet-saint), the traditional Kuchipudi Margam, and original works exploring women's empowerment. Through performance, education, and collaboration, Natyanjali fosters cultural continuity and meaningful engagement with diverse communities across Texas and beyond. Photo by Rishi Raj.

Discipline	Dance
City	Frisco
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Very large or outdoor venues

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## NOBLEMOTION DANCE

contemporary dance  
theater experience

NobleMotion Dance (NMD) exploded onto the Houston dance scene in 2009 and has since received critical acclaim for their "extraordinary athleticism" and "cutting edge" programming. NMD seeks to make work that is emotionally daring and honest; inspires discourse and understanding amongst diverse communities; and focuses on innovative collaborations in the arts and sciences with emphasis on emerging technologies. NMD has received over 30 positive local and national reviews for its work and was described as one of Houston's "A-list" dance companies in Dance Magazine. NMD strives to create a total theater experience. What makes their broad ranging repertory unique is that they can offer dance performances that integrate technology, light installations, artificial intelligence, and, most recently, neuroscience. This submerses the audience into new worlds, allowing them to see dance in fresh and exciting ways. NMD is a company of eight dancers and holds a repertory of over 35 works ranging from intimate to technical wow. NMD is available for choreographic and performance residencies, workshops, and masterclasses. Photo by Lynn Lane.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences  
School audiences

Dance  
Houston  
Festivals/special events, Schools  
Elementary school audiences, High  
school audiences, Middle school  
audiences  
Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-  
sized venues (theater)

Venue size

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## OBA WILLIAM KING

drumming storyteller  
adults and children

Oba King offers engaging performances for early childhood and school age youth. He is also a teaching artist with an ability to present workshops that can be scheduled as in-school field trips, after-school alternative programs, and community arts activities for all ages and a variety of educational entertainment scenarios. Experienced with middle and high school audiences, Baba Oba also presents parent-involvement storytelling and folk tale performances that are adaptable for family nights, holidays, or special celebration events. Most of his performances are interactive and include audience participation. Oba shares positive energy through the art of storytelling. Some programs include an intergenerational workshop performance component; all can be requested in the format of your choice from Building Bridges to Spinning A Yarn. His poetry/storytelling/drumming workshop/showcase is called Reading, Writing, and Rhythm for Tweens-Teens also We Speak in Rhythm. Oba teaches unity with We Are Connected, utilizing folktales and original stories and the djembe drum. For the little learners he has fun with sing-along songs--nursery rhymes and finger games. All performance materials as well as his educational entertainment productions, workshops, and residencies can be adapted to fit the age-range of the intended audience and time allotted. Photo by Raymond Boyd / Earl Calloway Fine Arts Editor, Chicago Defender.

Discipline	Words
City	Forest Hill
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences
Venue size	Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues

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## OLIVER RAJAMANI

indian romani fusion  
eclectic performer

Oliver Rajamani performs innovative soul-stirring original music drawn from the historic Romani (Gypsy) trail and Texas Americana, while bringing recognition to the historical Indian origins of the Romani people. He sings in various languages including English, Spanish, Romani, and languages of India. He is an Austin, Texas award winner, a 2008 US Artist Award nominee and 2014 nominee for the German music award "Preis der Deutschen Schallplattenkritik." He has toured internationally and recorded and performed with poets/artists wide-ranging in style including Jeronimo Maya, Gypsy Kings, Willie Nelson, Edie Brickell, L. Shanker, Eric Johnson, Diane Schuur, Ustad Shujaat Khan, Ustad Aashish Khan, Roby Lakatos, Jivan Gasparyan, Tomasa La Macanita, Robert Bly, Coleman Barks including performances for Maharaja of Jodhpur, India, Gaj Singh II. He has been a featured artist on NPR and BBC radio and KLRU PBS amongst other international radio shows, TV stations, magazines, and TEDx. Rajamani concert productions include: (1) FLAMENCO INDIA-an innovative musical journey into the historic Indian roots of Spain's Romani (Gypsy) Flamenco; (2) "VASI"-an original blend of Texas Americana and Indian/Romani music; with Western string orchestration, American jazz, exotic ballads; (3) Oliver Rajamani and his Texas Lone Stars-6 piece band performing a blend of Indian/Romani and Texas Americana music. Photo by German Muniz.

Discipline	Music
City	Austin
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## OPEN DANCE PROJECT

contemporary dance  
stylized theater

Open Dance Project's dance theater performance experiences break down conventional barriers between artist and audience, creating dance that is more accessible and meaningful. Annie Arnoult, one of Dance Magazine's "25 to Watch," directs this critically acclaimed troupe of dancers/actors bringing timely, thought-provoking subject matter to the stage. Arts and Culture Texas called ODP's work "...some of the most unique, audience intensive and truly theatrical productions dance lovers can experience in Texas and perhaps the nation." Performances for young audiences include: "Staging Stories Live," where dancers build a comic dance theater performance using audience suggestions; "ENGINuity," an educational romp through engine history and science; and beloved tales like "The Wonderful Wizard of Oz" and "A Midsummer Night's Dream," featuring ODP's signature athleticism, theatrical antics, and acrobatics. For general audiences, the company offers "Shortcuts," an evening of cutting-edge works blending dance and theater. Signature, ready-to-install, immersive performances include: "Panopticon," a retro-futuristic dystopian love story with a set that transforms around the audience throughout the show; "Bonnie and Clyde," based on the real people behind the romanticized anti-heroes; and "Red Landscape: Georgia O'Keeffe in Texas," where audience members walk through a dollhouse-inspired set of her life and work during her Texas years. Photo by Lynn Lane.

Discipline	Dance
City	Houston
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## PAMELA HART

jazz vocalist  
programs for seniors

Pamela Hart is a highly respected jazz vocalist based in Austin, Texas, known for her rich tone, expressive phrasing, and deep commitment to the jazz tradition. Recognized by Austin Woman Magazine as "Austin's First Lady of Jazz," Hart has devoted more than 25 years to performing, preserving, and advancing jazz for diverse audiences throughout Texas. Equally in intimate solo, duet or jazz combo settings or leading an all-star ensemble or orchestra, Pamela Hart is a versatile artist available for concert halls, festivals, museums, schools, cabaret venues, fundraisers, and community events. Her repertoire draws from the Great American Songbook, swing, blues, bebop, and jazz standards, delivered with musical integrity, warmth, and strong audience connection. Hart is co-producer of the annual Women in Jazz Concert Series and serves as Executive Director of Women in Jazz Association, Inc., a nonprofit dedicated to jazz performance, education, and cultural preservation. She presents vocal performance workshops, lecture-demonstrations, and masterclasses, and offers private coaching for developing vocalists. Committed to community engagement, Hart leads the Uplift Jazz Project, bringing live jazz to senior centers and nursing homes. She was inducted into the Austin Jazz Society Hall of Fame in 2018 and released her recording Happy Talk in 2021. Photo by ATX Digital Photography.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences

School audiences

Venue size

Music  
Cedar Park  
Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors  
Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences  
Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Very large or outdoor venues

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## PARAMOUNT STORY WRANGLERS

writing residencies and performance  
TEKS aligned

Paramount Story Wranglers is a seven-week in-school residency led by a team of professional teaching artists, where third graders learn the foundations of creative writing through arts-integrated lessons designed to motivate students and improve their writing skills, confidence, creativity, and storytelling. During residencies, each classroom writes hundreds of stories as a class, in small groups, and in individual journals. In the last week, students perform their original stories for their class. Following the classroom residency, professional actors — known as the Paramount Story Wranglers — transform students' original stories from page to stage in an original hour-long musical skit performance for the entire campus! This performance is the linchpin of the program. Each student author introduces themselves and proudly lets the audience know, "This is my story!" Residencies serve all 3rd grade classrooms on a campus, and each weekly lesson includes 75 minutes of instruction from three to four professional teaching artists. The TEKS-aligned lessons have consistently been shown to increase writing skills, improve attitudes towards writing, and grow collaboration skills. Classes are offered in English or Spanish depending on participating students' primary language. Stories that are written in Spanish are performed in that language during the final performance. Photo by Axel Buecker.

Discipline	Theater
City	Austin
Special audiences	Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, Pre-K audiences
Venue size	Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues

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## PAT HAZELL/SWEETWOOD CREATIVE

one man theater show  
humor with heart

Pat Hazell was voted one of the five funniest people in America by Showtime TV. His 37 years of experience as a writer and performer have kept him at the forefront of new American Theater. Pat is one of the original writers for NBC's "Seinfeld," a "Tonight Show," regular, a critically-acclaimed playwright and the host of the popular Arts and Cultural podcast "Creativity in Captivity." Hazell's signature work, "The Wonder Bread Years," is a fresh and funny salute to all things Americana. This fast-paced one person show is a hilarious salute to our collective memories. The show reignites our much-needed sense of wonder and leaves audiences savoring the past like never before. "The Wonder Bread Years" is a comic bullseye for Baby Boomers everywhere, and has been hailed by Jerry Seinfeld as "Milk-snorting funny!" Hazell's newest one-man show "Pat Hazell's Permanent Record" is a confessional night of humor, heart, and humanity where he opens the vault to all his faults, foibles and character flaws to turn a stroll down Memory Lane into a high-speed chase down Memory Highway. Culture Buzz hails the production as "A solo performance masterpiece." Additionally, Hazell offers workshops and master classes on creative writing. Photo by Andy Snow and Isen.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences

Venue size

Theater  
Austin  
Festivals/special events, Libraries,  
Schools, Seniors  
Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater)

[Read More](#)



## PERCUSSION THINGS

storytelling  
culture and rhythm

Percussion Things programs for children and families bring the excitement of stories from all over the globe to libraries, classrooms, festivals, community centers-- and even shopping malls-- throughout the state. Percussion Things tailors each performance to the age or grade level of the audience, engaging kids and adults alike with stories, high-energy percussion and family focused sketch comedy. Their programs, "Stories Grandma Told Me: Tales from West Africa and the Caribbean" and "Crystal Stair: Black Artists and Innovators" are targeted for lower grade audiences, first through fifth. In celebration of our country's 250th anniversary, Percussion Things introduces a new series called "JazzStories," for middle grades and high schoolers. Showcasing children's and YA literature with jazz underscoring, the program introduces young audiences to America's quintessential art form in a fun, interactive way-- in 2026 and beyond. Percussion Things' performances are a fun, fast-paced exploration of cultures around the world through words, sounds, music and movement. Storyteller Catherine Whiteman and Percussionist Len Barnett have a combined forty years of experience working in classrooms and libraries around the state and focus on sharing their love of culture and rhythm to bring joy to audiences of all ages. Photo by Tamytha Cameron Photography.

Discipline	Words
City	Plano
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences
Venue size	Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

[Read More](#)



## RAMAZINIS CIRCUS THEATER

circus  
performances and workshops

The Ramazinis are a dynamic circus artist duo based in DFW that perform exciting circus shows that will impress the whole family! Company owners Kelli and Julio Ramazini both toured the United States and Mexico for several years with Ringling Bros. and Barnum and Bailey Circus performing clown and aerial straps. Julio Ramazini, from Sao Paulo, Brazil, attended circus school at Escola Nazionale De Circo in Rio De Janeiro. Kelli Ramazini grew up in Texas and joined the circus at the young age of 19. Since they have put roots down in Texas, they established their production company in 2016, produced big and small productions, and have been performing their Two Person Circus at libraries, schools and festivals throughout Texas, bringing quality high impact family entertainment to communities big and small. They offer several show options including their Two Person Circus, Two Person Circus Extravaganza and Varal. They also offer summer camps and workshops. In 2024, they debuted their newest multi-cast member show titled "Varal," a circus theater show about a boy who gets his kite stuck in his tree and his community comes together to try and get it down in unique ways, including high flying aerialist and circus acts! Photo by Zorgimedia.

Discipline	Theater
City	Garland
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Very large or outdoor venues

[Read More](#)



## RAMBLIN' RITA

interactive storytelling  
literacy for youth

StoryTime Entertainment's Ramblin' Rita is an energetic, storytelling cowgirl who brings children's literature and original tales to life through highly interactive, character-driven performances for schools, libraries, and community events. Designed for preK–5th grade audiences, Ramblin' Rita's programs blend expressive narration, humor, and audience participation to support literacy, social-emotional learning, and a love of reading. With flexible formats that adapt easily to stages, gymnasiums, cafeterias, and library meeting rooms, StoryTime Entertainment offers turnkey assemblies and family programs that are engaging, curriculum-friendly, and simple for hosts to present. Unique among storytelling acts, Ramblin' Rita is not alone on stage. She recruits members of the audience to help tell her tales! She provides costumes and props on the spot and teaches volunteers their lines as they go. Those not onstage participate through frequent call-and-response sections and choreographed movements. Age-appropriate themes encourage positive character traits such as kindness, courage, and cooperation. At the same time, the unique format offers kids of all skill levels the opportunity to shine and gain confidence as future storytellers. Photo by Kelly James Ballagh.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences

School audiences

Venue size

Words  
Lindale  
Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, Schools  
Elementary school audiences, Pre-K audiences  
Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## RAUL AYALA BAND

contemporary rock  
full band

The Raul Ayala Band is a rising live music act rooted in Corpus Christi, Texas, known for high-energy performances and a growing local following. They're part of the vibrant South Texas music scene and have headlined events like Fish Fest alongside other notable regional talents. Fronted by Raul Ayala, the band blends engaging originals and covers with soulful, feel-good vibes that resonate with audiences at venues such as the Exchange and Friends in Corpus Christi, where they regularly play live. Their music and performances have earned them local media appearances, including on Domingo Live where they performed songs like "DO YOU" and "Laundry on the Floor." The group's presence on social platforms reflects an active commitment to sharing music with the community and pushing creative passion into the public sphere under the banner Raul Ayala Music. Fans describe the Raul Ayala Band as a talented, energetic ensemble that brings good vibes and authentic live sound to every stage. Whether on a festival stage or in an intimate venue, the Raul Ayala Band delivers heartfelt, rhythmic performances that capture the spirit of the Gulf Coast, making them a standout name in the evolving Texas music landscape. Photo by the Raul Ayala Band.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences  
  
School audiences  
  
Venue size

Music  
Corpus Christi  
Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Schools  
High school audiences, Middle school audiences  
Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## RIYAAZ QAWWALI

south asian sacred music  
educational programming

Riyaaaz Qawwali is a Houston-based South Asian American music collective specializing in qawwali, an 800-year-old devotional folk music tradition from the India/Pakistan region. Rooted in oral transmission and collective performance, the musicians bring this musical form, its poetry and cultural relevance, to audiences through concerts, educational programs, and community-centered engagements. Distinct from classical Indian music or fusion projects, Riyaaaz Qawwali works in the traditional ensemble format of qawwali, featuring lead vocals, chorus, harmonium, and percussion, and presenting repertoire in Urdu, Punjabi, Hindi, and Persian. Performances are welcoming and accessible, with spoken context that introduces audiences to the music's poetic, historical, and cultural foundations. Riyaaaz Qawwali offers a range of touring programs, including traditional concert performances; collaborative and interdisciplinary projects; lecture-demonstrations for schools and universities; and workshops exploring South Asian music, poetry, and history. The ensemble has been presented by museums, performing arts centers, universities, and civic organizations across Texas and the United States, and has received support from the Texas Commission on the Arts and national arts funders, including projects supported by the National Endowment for the Arts and US Regional Arts Organizations. Programs are adaptable for theaters, museums, schools, libraries, and community venues serving urban and rural audiences. Photo by Riyaaaz Qawwali.

Discipline	Music
City	Friendswood
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Very large or outdoor venues

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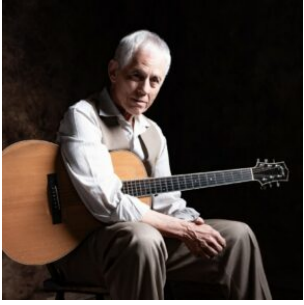
## ROCHELLE & THE SIDEWINDERS DUO

blues fusion  
vocalist and guitar

Rochelle and the Sidewinders are an award winning, high-energy blues rock band based out of Austin, Texas. The Sidewinders have performed as the headlining and support act at dozens of major music festivals throughout Texas, as well as many of the high-profile music venues around the state. Formed during the summer of 2015, the Sidewinders have released five full length albums. The Duo was formed as Rochelle and Tom realized that their strong musical connection translates well to the stripped down and bare sonic environment of vocals and guitar. The Duo performs both original music and a mix of classic blues, soul, pop and jazz standards. The highlight of the Rochelle and the Sidewinders Duo performance is the crystal-clear prominence of Rochelle's magical voice in all its natural glory unencumbered by the dynamic trappings of a full band. In addition, the playful and creative accompaniment of Tom's guitar becomes the perfect platform for Rochelle to weave her melodic enchantment! The musical and spiritual interplay between the two in a live setting is contagious and audiences are consistently captivated and charmed! Don't miss the opportunity to catch this act live and in person! We hope to see you soon! Photo by Tom Coplen.

Discipline	Music
City	Austin
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## RUDI HARST

theater with music  
one person show

"Ready or Not" is Rudi Harst's most recent and successful one-man theatrical piece exploring aging in a youth-oriented culture through original songs, storytelling, humor, and audience participation. Rudi has used words and music to uplift people since childhood. Conceived in Borneo and born in the Netherlands, his Indonesian-Dutch family immigrated to South Texas at age five and he became a naturalized US citizen at thirteen. Raised on the American Dream with a passion for learning, inclusivity, and creative expression, his work reflects an optimistic global perspective and a deep desire to connect people across cultures and generations. Naturally shy but gifted with a clear tenor voice, Rudi discovered early that the stage was a safe space to be. Singing solos in first grade led to the lead role in Amahl and the Night Visitors. After watching the Beatles on the Ed Sullivan Show in 1964, he picked up a guitar and never looked back, performing professionally for 50 years. Rudi earned a BA in psychology from Trinity University and continued independent study in psychology, spirituality, movement, and performance art touring the US and Europe. He has released nine albums and authored *Hurry Slowly*, later adapted into a theatrical production. Photo by Jojo Dancer Photography.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences

Venue size

Theater  
San Antonio  
Festivals/special events, Libraries,  
Seniors  
Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues

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## RUSSELL JOE THOMPSON

singer songwriter  
alternative rock

West Texas singer-songwriter Russell Joe Thompson is a shot of honky-tonk followed by a 90s grunge chaser. Just off the waters of Lake Arrowhead, Russell Joe grew up with a guitar in one hand and a fishing pole in the other. At the age of thirteen, he stepped into the world of songwriting and soon found himself performing original music in an alternative rock band throughout his hometown. What began as a teenage passion project in the early 2000s grew into a fifteen-year musical career spanning Texas and New York City. Russell Joe has been a finalist in the Blue Light Live Singer-Songwriter Competition in 2019, 2021, and 2025; a featured performer at the Lubbock Live Festival from 2022 through 2024; and a competitor in the South Plains College Singer-Songwriter Competition in 2024 and 2025, earning runner-up in 2025. He released his debut album, *Between Teeth*, in 2023 with Amusement Park Recording Studio and performed the album in full during a Lubbock Listening Room showcase. Russell Joe regularly performs across West Texas and New Mexico, delivering poetic, moody originals and 90s-inspired covers. Photo by Therese Barrett Fine Art Photography.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences  
Venue size

Music  
Lubbock  
Festivals/special events  
Medium-sized venues (theater),  
Smaller venues (library/club),  
Unplugged events/venues, Very large  
or outdoor venues

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## SHASPARAY

poetry and theater  
performances and workshops

Shasparay is a multi-hyphenate performing artist from Austin, Texas, and the founder of the Black Arts Matter Festival. A nationally recognized spoken-word poet and theater maker, she was the 2022 4th-ranked Woman Slam Poet in the World and, more recently, was the 2024 Austin Poetry Slam Grand Slam Champion. Her touring solo show, BODY POLITICS, has been praised by audiences throughout the US and internationally. BODY POLITICS examines fatphobia through theater, poetry, comedy, dance, and personal revelation. Shasparay received two awards for the six-show run of BODY POLITICS at The Vortex, one for Outstanding Playwriting and another for Outstanding Debut. Shasparay has been a finalist in national and regional slam competitions, including the Women of the World Poetry Slam, Stone Wall International Poetry Slam, Southern Fried Poetry Slam, and Texas Grand Slam, and is a two-time Lipstick Wars Poetry Slam Champion. She has been featured on platforms such as the New York Times, Button Poetry, Huffington Post, Youth Speaks, and BuzzFeed. She is an AudioVerse award-winning cast member of the highly acclaimed horror podcast Old Gods of Appalachia. Available programs: spoken-word/poetry performance (3-60 minutes), poetry workshops (1-2 hours), BODY POLITICS one-person show performance (1-1.5 hours). Photo by Deandre Acosta.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences

School audiences

Venue size

Words  
Pflugerville  
Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors  
Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences  
Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## SILAMBAM HOUSTON

indian classical dance  
educational programs

Silambam Houston uses the rich vocabulary of Indian classical arts, with their intricate footwork, sculpturesque poses, captivating facial and body language, and breathtaking costume forms, to reach new, diverse audiences. Under the artistic direction of Lavanya Rajagopalan, whose "choreographic style... is highlighted by beautiful ensemble work and an eye for rich composition," Silambam Houston has created a spectrum of artistic works that delights and intrigues audiences of all walks and ages. Repertoire performances can be tailored to any length and theme, and include repertoire pieces in the Indian classical dance forms of Bharatanatyam, Kathak, Kuchipudi, and Odissi. Evening-length original productions are listed at <https://www.silambamhouston.org/company>, range from 1-2 hours, and can be condensed or excerpted. Outreach programs for K-12 and community settings are listed at <https://www.silambamhouston.org/k12-programs> and include interactive performances such as Dance Across India (journey through diverse Indian customs and cultures), Kavya: Poetry in Motion (an exploration of poetry), Dancing Into STEM (an exploration of STEM concepts) and Storytime With Silambam (stories from Indian mythology and folk culture). They also offer a workshop/residency, 'Exploring Indian Classical Dance' in which students learn and experience Indian art forms. These programs are available both directly and through Young Audiences of Houston. Photo by Amitava Sarkar.

Discipline	Folk Arts
City	Houston
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Very large or outdoor venues

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## SOFRITO Y SU MELAO

band  
caribbean music

Sofrito y Su Melao is a live Cuban, Caribbean, and Latin band under the federal nonprofit All Rhythms, which has provided performances, interactive workshops, and enrichment programs to underserved communities since 2012. Sofrito specializes in music from Cuba and the Caribbean, including son, salsa, guajira, chachacha, cumbia, merengue, pilon, rumba, bolero, and more. They've performed at emblematic Austin venues such as Central Market, Radio Coffee, and Regal Rooms, and regularly perform and teach at Title I schools and Austin Parks and Recreation centers, as well as rehearse and mentor their own Youth Ensemble on Saturdays. The band is known for interactive performance-workshops that integrate Cuban and Caribbean music with cultural and historical context, bilingual literacy-based learning, dancing, and opportunities for volunteers to play alongside the band. Musical director Ian Fry is American and Latin GRAMMY Award-nominated and draws on numerous trips to Santiago de Cuba to lead a group of Austin's virtuosic Latin-jazz musicians. Sofrito also performs musical readings of Cuban folktales, and an original story the group wrote based in Eastern Cuba. Their preferred instrumentation is a nine-piece band, but they are just as engaging as a septet or as a more intimate Cuban trovador-style quartet. Photo by Zebadiah Badgett - ZB Imagery.

Discipline	Music
City	Red Rock
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## SOUTH AUSTIN MOONLIGHTERS

blues rock fusion  
band

If you have seen more than a handful of shows in Texas, you have likely encountered the musicians who comprise the South Austin Moonlighters. This "true Americana" ensemble features seasoned professionals who have collaborated with elite outfits like Fastball, Monte Montgomery, and Jimmy LaFave. Originally formed in 2011 as a collaborative residency at the Saxon Pub, the band evolved into a robust creative engine—often referred to as their "Sweet Machine"—defined by organic four-part vocal harmonies and a soulful blend of blues, rock, and country. With chart-topping albums like *Travel Light* and the Steve Berlin-produced *From Here to Home* (2023), they have emerged as definitive architects of the contemporary Austin music scene. Highly adaptable for diverse venues, the group performs as a full electric band or in intimate solo and duo configurations featuring principal songwriters Chris Beall and/or Lonnie Trevino Jr. In 2025 and 2026, the group solidified its status as a premier export of Texas roots music, successfully scaling its performances to major stages across Germany and the United Kingdom. Photo by Mark Del Castillo.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences

School audiences

Venue size

Music  
Austin  
Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors  
High school audiences, Middle school audiences  
Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## STATE ARTIST ALECIA LAWYER

oboist  
classical musician

Alecia Lawyer is the 2025 Texas State Musician-Classical. She is the Founder, Artistic Director, and Principal Oboist of ROCO, a professional music ensemble in Houston that has been called a trailblazer and arts disrupter and is leading the sector in innovation. Named by Musical America as one of classical music's Top 30 Influencers for 2015, Lawyer has recorded for John Cage, soloed with Rostropovich, given a recital at Carnegie Hall, recorded with the Sorbonne Orchestra, and performed with various orchestras and chamber groups in France and Germany. She has received numerous awards and recognitions, including the Sigma Alpha Iota Musician of the Year, and Outstanding Chamber Orchestra Founder from the Houston Chronicle. Photo: Daniel Ortiz.

Discipline  
City

Music  
Houston

[Read More](#)



## STATE ARTIST AMANDA JOHNSTON

poet and author  
spiritual imagism

2024 Texas Poet Laureate, Amanda Johnston, was born in East St. Louis, IL, and raised in Austin, TX. She began writing poetry while living in Kentucky. She earned an MFA in creative writing from the University of Southern Maine. She is the author of two chapbooks, *GUAP* and *Lock & Key*, and the full-length collection *Another Way to Say Enter*. Her work has appeared in *Callaloo*, *Poetry Magazine*, *Puerto del Sol*, *Muzzle*, and the anthologies, *Furious Flower: Seeding the Future of African American Poetry* and *Women of Resistance: Poems for a New Feminism*. She is the cofounder of *Black Poets Speak Out*, and founder of *Torch Literary Arts*. Named one of *Blavity's '13 Black Poets You Should Know,'* Amanda's work has been featured on *Bill Moyers*, the *Poetry Society of America's* series *In Their Own Words*, *The Moth Radio Hour*, and the *Academy of American Poets Poem-a-Day* series. She was commissioned to curate a collection of poems for the *Poetry Coalition* on the theme *Where My Dreaming and My Loving Life: Poetry & the Body*. Photo by Cindy Elizabeth.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences

School audiences  
Venue size

Words  
Round Rock  
Festivals, Hands-on activities,  
Libraries, People with disabilities,  
Schools, Seniors  
High, Middle  
Larger, Medium, Smaller, Unplugged,  
Very Large

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## **STATE ARTIST ANGELBERT METOYER**

Discipline

Visual & Film

[Read More](#)



## STATE ARTIST CARMEN TAFOLLA

poet and author  
dramatic performance

Dr. Carmen Tafolla, 2015 Texas Poet Laureate, is known internationally for her moving performances and powerful poetry readings. A poet, children's writer, performance artist, storyteller, motivational speaker, and Professor Emeritus at UTSA, Tafolla has performed her one-woman show, *With Our Very Own Names*, to more than a thousand audiences, with standing ovations in 12 countries. Dr. Tafolla offers performances, keynotes, readings, and workshops in English and Spanish to all age groups. The author of more than 40 books, her work appears internationally in five languages, in journals, magazines, anthologies, newspapers, college textbooks and elementary school readers, and she has won numerous awards including the Americas Award, the Charlotte Zolotow for best children's picture book writing, the Art of Peace Award, for works which promote peace and social justice, three A.L.A. Notable Books, three Tomas Rivera Book Awards, six International Latino Book Awards, and the Fred Rogers Corporation's 2010 Best Books for Babies. In 2023, Penguin released her 40th book, *Warrior Girl*, to wide acclaim. The National Association for Chicana and Chicano Studies has honored her for work which 'gives voice to the peoples and cultures of this land.'

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences

School audiences  
Venue size

Words  
San Antonio  
Festivals, Hands-on activities,  
Libraries, People with disabilities,  
Schools, Seniors  
Elementary, High, Middle, Pre-K  
Larger, Medium, Smaller, Unplugged,  
Very Large

[Read More](#)



## STATE ARTIST CARRIE FOUNTAIN

poet and author  
exploring personhood

Carrie Fountain's poems have appeared in *Tin House*, *Poetry*, and *The New Yorker*, among others. Her debut collection, *Burn Lake*, was a National Poetry Series winner and was published in 2010 by Penguin. Her second collection, *Instant Winner*, was published by Penguin in 2014. Fountain's debut novel, *I'm Not Missing*, was published in 2018 by Flatiron Books (Macmillan). Her forthcoming children's book on the life and legacy of poet W.S. Merwin will be published by Candlewick Books. Born and raised in Mesilla, New Mexico, Fountain received her MFA as a fellow at the James A. Michener Center for Writers at the University of Texas. Currently writer-in-residence at St. Edward's University, she is the host of KUT's *This Is Just to Say*, a radio show and podcast where she has intimate conversations with America's most influential poets. Fountain lives in Austin with her husband, playwright and novelist Kirk Lynn, and their two children.

Discipline  
City

Words  
Austin

[Read More](#)



## STATE ARTIST CRAIG HELLA JOHNSON

choral composer  
conductor arranger

Craig Hella Johnson is the founding artistic director and conductor of Conspirare. Beloved for crafting thought-provoking musical journeys that create deep connections between performers and listeners, Hella Johnson is also Artistic Partner at the Oregon Bach Festival. Hella Johnson is a celebrated guest conductor of choral and orchestral works, a published composer, arranger, and educator. Hella Johnson is an Artist in Residence at Texas State University, earning the 2022 Presidential Award for Excellence in Scholarly/Creative Activities. Hella Johnson's concert-length composition *Considering Matthew Shepard* was premiered and recorded by Conspirare and continues to have broad national and international reach, having been performed by more than 60 choirs worldwide. Hella Johnson's accomplishments have been recognized with numerous awards and honors. Notably among them, he and Conspirare won a 2015 GRAMMY Award for Best Choral Performance. His honors also include Chorus America's Michael Korn Founders Award for Development of the Professional Choral, Texas State Musician, the Matthew Shepard Foundation's Dennis Dougherty Award for Community Leadership and most recently, Wartburg College's 2023 Graven Award.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences  
School audiences  
Venue size

Music  
Austin  
Festivals, Schools  
High  
Larger, Medium, Small

[Read More](#)



## STATE ARTIST CYRUS CASSELLS

poet and professor  
lyrical and imagistic

Is There Room for Another Horse on Your Horse Ranch? (Four Way Books: March 2024) is Cyrus Cassells's ninth and latest volume. Everything in Life is Resurrection: Selected Poems, 1982-2022 (TCU Press) and Lorca to the Umpteenth Power (3: A Taos Press) are forthcoming in 2025 and 2026. He served as the 2021 Poet Laureate of Texas. Among his honors: a Guggenheim fellowship, a Lambda Literary Award, and the Poetry Society of America's William Carlos Williams Award. The World That the Shooter Left Us (2022) was a Housatonic Book Award finalist and The Gospel according to Wild Indigo (2018) a finalist for the NAACP Image Award. Still Life with Children: Selected Poems of Francesc Parcerisas (2019) and The Cypress Again and Again: Tribute to Salvador Espriu (2023), translated from the Catalan, were both awarded the Texas Institute of Letters' biennial Soeurette Diehl Fraser Award for Best Translated Book. Cassells teaches in the MFA program at Texas State University, where he is a Regents' and University Distinguished Professor of English. Photo by Eyoel Kahssay.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences  
School audiences  
Venue size

Words  
Austin  
Libraries, Schools, Seniors  
High  
Medium, Smaller, Unplugged

[Read More](#)



## STATE ARTIST DALE WATSON

country roots fusion  
solo or with band

Raised In Texas and named the 2007 Texas State Musician, Dale Watson has carved an undeniable niche in the Texas music landscape as a maverick artist, producer, writer and musician. With over 34 albums to his credit and national as well international touring, Dale Watson is a sought after entertainer. From Austin City Limits, the Grand Ol' Opry and national TV shows like the David Letterman Show, Dale has become, not just Lone Star State famous, but internationally recognized. He is also the founder of the Ameripolitan Music Awards held in Austin, Texas that awards legends and up-and-coming artists alike for keeping roots in their music. Honky tonk, rockabilly, western swing and outlaw are the cornerstones of his music. A Dale Watson show is a must see for any one wanting a Texas Show. Known as 'The Real Deal' Willie Nelson is quoted, 'I'm one of Dale's biggest fans.'

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences  
Venue size

Music  
Marshall  
Festivals  
Larger, Medium, Smaller, Unplugged,  
Very Large

[Read More](#)



## STATE ARTIST DARIO ROBLETO

visual artist  
esoteric materials

Dario Robleto, the 2016 Texas State Visual Artist - 3-D, 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 over 30 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 Menil Collection, Houston and the Baltimore Museum of Art. 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 is currently an Artist Research Fellow at Rice University in Houston, where he lives and works.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences  
School audiences  
Venue size

Visual & Film  
Houston  
Festivals, Hands-on activities, Schools  
High  
Medium, Smaller, Unplugged

[Read More](#)



## STATE ARTIST DAVID M. PARSONS

poet  
everyday life

David M. Parsons, 2011 Texas State Poet Laureate, poems are straightforward, vivid writing bringing settings alive, shaping intimate portrayals of everyday life. His poetry speaks from the past and the present, balancing ordinary and extraordinary experiences. Audiences and readers will find in his most celebrated works: award-winning poems found in as diverse locales as a romantic, historic house in England, a Marine Corps rifle range, mountain rivers, iconic Austin haunts, to another favorite about the poet running into President Lyndon Johnson in an iconic Austin restaurant. His latest works are also included with new revelations that will bring what has become a Parsons Poem trademark, the rewarding discovery of a transforming moment.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences

School audiences  
Venue size

Words  
Conroe  
Festivals, Hands-on activities,  
Libraries, People with disabilities,  
Seniors  
High  
Larger, Medium, Smaller, Unplugged,  
Very Large

[Read More](#)



## STATE ARTIST DIANA KERSEY

eclectic clay artist  
characteristic style

When Diana Kersey was growing up in Lubbock, her parents let her dig a mud pit in their backyard. Thirteen inches down, she hit clay, and she's been working with it ever since. Kersey is a visual artist working exclusively in clay, from small studio pieces to large architectural installations. Her work has become instantly identifiable, due to the muscular, spontaneous qualities of the material enhanced with her colorful, translucent glazes. Her public works have been commissioned by the City of San Antonio, VIA Metropolitan Transit, the San Antonio River Authority, and the City of Harlingen. In 2021 she completed her largest private commission to date, The Riparian Edge, for a San Antonio office tower. Kersey earned an MFA in ceramics from Washington State University in 1997, and a BFA in drawing from Texas Tech University in 1994. She is on faculty at Northwest Vista College and owns and operates Kersey Ceramics LLC in San Antonio. Workshops are available for beginner through advanced ceramic artists or structured as a community project for a specific location: pottery, sculpture, or architectural ceramics. Photo by Clara Lewis-Valero.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences

School audiences  
Venue size

[Read More](#)

Visual & Film  
San Antonio  
Festivals, Hands-on activities,  
Libraries, Schools  
High  
Medium, Smaller



## STATE ARTIST DORNITH DOHERTY

nature photographer  
eco collaboration

Dornith Doherty, 2016 Texas State Visual Artist in 2-D work, is inspired by the expressive possibilities of photography. Her work explores the ever more complex relationship between the natural environment and human agency through projects focusing on landscape stewardship and genetic resource preservation. Wide ranging travel to work in collaboration with biologists and institutions has resulted in an extensive body of work, Archiving Eden. A 2012 Guggenheim Foundation Fellow, Doherty was born in Houston, Texas and received a B.A. cum laude from Rice University and a MFA in Photography from Yale University. She currently resides in Southlake, Texas and is Distinguished Research Professor of Art at the University of North Texas. In addition to the Guggenheim Fellowship, she has also received grants from the Fulbright Foundation, the Japan Foundation, and the United States Department of the Interior. Her work has been extensively shown and collected, both nationally and internationally.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences  
Venue size

Visual & Film  
Southlake  
Festivals, Libraries  
Medium, Smaller, Unplugged

[Read More](#)



## STATE ARTIST EMILY GIMBLE

western swing piano  
solo or with band

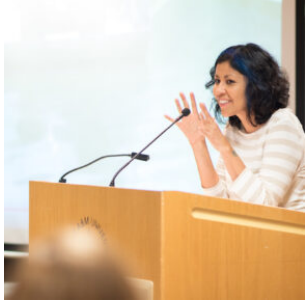
Emily Gimble has been singing and playing on stage since she was seven years old. Piano beckoned Emily early on-- the Austin Music Awards named her 'Best Keyboards' of the city four times (2013, 2014, 2018, & 2019)-- as did her voice, full of natural range and feeling. 'A Case of the Gimbles,' the 2005 album she recorded with her father and grandfather, showcased her vocals and launched Emily on a national family tour. With the Marshall Ford Band, Emily focused on western swing, and with Warren Hood and the Goods, she explored jazz, country, folk and pop. In 2014, Emily joined Asleep at the Wheel. With them, she played Austin City Limits twice and recorded a duet with one of her idols, Merle Haggard. In 2017 she released 'Certain Kinda,' her debut solo album. Emily continues to tour, teach, and record in the great state of Texas and beyond. Photo by Ashleigh Amoroso.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences

Venue size

Music  
Austin  
Festivals, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors  
Larger, Medium, Unplugged, Very Large

[Read More](#)



## STATE ARTIST EMMY PEREZ

poet and professor  
texas borderlands

Emmy Perez, 2020 Texas Poet Laureate, is the author of the poetry collections *With the River on Our Face*, *Solstice*, and the forthcoming *Paper america: New and Selected Poems*. Her work also appears in anthologies such as *Other Musics: New Latina Poetry*, *Ghost Fishing: An Eco-Justice Poetry Anthology*, and a forthcoming *Anthology/Handbook for Writing Past the Checkpoints*. She has received poetry fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Academy of American Poets, United States Artists, and CantoMundo. A graduate of Columbia University and the University of Southern California, Perez has been a member of the Macondo Writers Workshop for socially engaged writers since 2008. Currently, she is a professor at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley where she also serves as chair of the Department of Creative Writing. Photo: Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences

Words  
McAllen  
Festivals, Libraries

[Read More](#)



## STATE ARTIST EVA YBARRA

conjunto accordionist  
composer and education

Eva Ybarra, 2022 Texas State Musician, is a conjunto accordionist, composer, music educator, and bandleader. Ybarra hails from San Antonio, Texas. She grew up in a musical family. At the age of four, Eva received her first accordion. A self-taught accordionist, she picked up most of the early tunes she learned how to play by listening to the radio. Ybarra's accordion playing pushes the boundaries of the conjunto genre. Dramatic, passionate, and captivating, Eva Ybarra moves her audience to gritos from the heart. Known professionally as La Reina Del Acordeon, Ybarra takes her fans through a blend of conjunto, mariachi, and to the edge of jazz with a passion that translates across generations. Her powerful voice and soul-playing accordion style have made her a legend in conjunto music. Over her storied career, Ybarra has received numerous lifetime achievement recognitions and is a multi-time Hall-of-Famer. In 2015, a sold-out play based on Ybarra's life story was produced titled, 'La Reina del Acordeon: Eva Ybarra's Life on Stage.' In 2017, the National Endowment for the Arts named Ybarra a National Heritage Fellow. Eva is currently the bandleader, accordionist, and lead vocalist for Eva Ybarra Y Su Conjunto Siempre.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences  
Venue size

Music  
San Antonio  
Festivals  
Larger, Medium, Smaller, Unplugged,  
Very Large

[Read More](#)



## STATE ARTIST GASPAR ENRIQUEZ

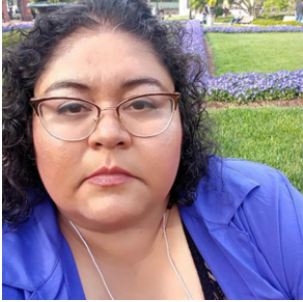
portrait artist  
airbrush style

Born in 1942 and raised in El Paso's Segundo Barrio, Gaspar Enriquez earned a BA in art from the University of Texas at El Paso in 1970 and an MA in metals from New Mexico State University in 1985. His dramatic portraits range from works on paper of writer Rudolfo Anaya, artist Luis Jimenez, and artist John Valadez for the National Portrait Gallery at the Smithsonian, to 24-foot-high pieces commissioned for the San Antonio Convention Center, to illustrations for Rudolfo Anaya's *Elegy on the Death of Cesar Chavez*. No matter their size, his powerful, acrylic, air-brushed portraits reveal his subjects' dignity and demand the viewer's attention. His works are held by museums including the Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery, the Tucson Museum of Art, the El Paso Museum of Art, and by private collectors such as Cheech Marin. Mr. Enriquez is the recipient of the Father Rahm Segundo Barrio Person of the Year Award (2016) and a Mid-America Arts Alliance Fellowship (1994). In 2015, he was named a Distinguished Alumnus of the University of Texas at El Paso.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences  
School audiences  
Venue size

Visual & Film  
San Elizario  
Festivals, Libraries, Schools  
High  
Medium, Smaller, Unplugged

[Read More](#)



## STATE ARTIST IRE'NE LARA SILVA

poet and author  
talks and workshops

Ire'ne Lara Silva, the 2023 Texas State Poet Laureate, is the author of five poetry collections, *furia*, *Blood Sugar Canto*, *CUICACALLI/House of Song*, *FirstPoems*, and *the eaters of flowers*; two chapbooks, *Enduring Azucares* and *Hibiscus Tacos*; and a short story collection, *flesh to bone*, which won the Premio Aztlan. Ire'ne is the recipient of a 2021 Tasajillo Writers Grant, a 2017 NALAC Fund for the Arts Grant, the final Alfredo Cisneros del Moral Award, and was the Fiction Finalist for AROHO's 2013 Gift of Freedom Award. Most recently, ire'ne was awarded the 2021 Texas Institute of Letters Shrake Award for Best Short Nonfiction. ire'ne is currently a Writer at Large for *Texas Highways Magazine*. Her first comic book, *Vendaval*, was released in April 2024 from Scout Comics/Chispa. Tour offerings include keynote addresses, readings of all her published work, including poetry, essays, and short stories, and various writing workshops of varying lengths open to writers of all skill levels and genres. Topics include *Gritos as the Source of Our Voices*, *Writing the Difficult*, *Dismantling Doubt*, *Forget Discipline: Wanting Your Way Through Writing*, *Contemplating Mortality*, and *The Stories Our Bodies Tell*.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences

School audiences  
Venue size

[Read More](#)

Words  
San Antonio  
Festivals, Hands-on activities,  
Libraries, People with disabilities,  
Schools, Seniors  
High  
Larger, Medium, Smaller, Unplugged



## STATE ARTIST JAMES C. WATKINS

ceramic artist  
lectures and demos

James C. Watkins is a ceramic artist who has worked with clay for over 40 years. His work is held in 25 permanent collections, including the White House Collection of American Crafts at the Clinton Library, the Shigaraki Institute of Ceramic Studies in Shigaraki, Japan, the Renwick Gallery of the Smithsonian Institution, the Everson Museum, the Tweed Museum, the Eiteljorg Museum, and the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. Watkins' work has been widely exhibited in 47 solo exhibitions and 172 group exhibitions. Watkins is a Texas Tech University, Horn Distinguished Professor Emeritus and the 2019 recipient of the HCCC Texas Master Award presented by the Houston Center for Contemporary Craft. Watkins is the author of *Reflections Made of Memories* and the co-author of two books: *Alternative Kilns & Firing Techniques* co-authored with Paul Andrew Wandless, and *Architectural Delineation: Presentation Techniques and Projects*, co-authored with James T. Davis. His work is the subject of the book *A Meditation of Fire: The Art of James C. Watkins* by Kippra D. Hopper. Watkins has also written numerous articles for national and international magazines. He received his BFA from the Kansas City Art Institute and his MFA from Indiana University. Mr. Watkins offers lectures, wheel throwing pottery demonstrations, and alternative firing workshops based on his book, 'Alternative Kilns & Firing Techniques' co-authored with Paul Andrew Wandless. Photo by Bonni Oakes.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences  
School audiences  
Venue size

Visual & Film  
Lubbock  
Festivals, Libraries, Schools  
High  
Medium, Smaller, Unplugged

[Read More](#)



## STATE ARTIST JAMES DICK

classical pianist  
international renown

James Dick is recognized as one of the truly important pianists of his generation, bringing keyboard sonorities of captivation, opulence, and brilliance to performances that radiate intellectual insight and emotional authenticity. He was recognized as one of the University of Texas Distinguished Alumni in 2009. Major prizes in the Tchaikovsky, Busoni and Leventritt International Competitions were a prelude to an eminent career highlighted by acclaimed recitals and concerto performances in the world's premier concert halls, including New York's Carnegie Hall, Alice Tully Hall, Town Hall, and 92nd Street Y; London's Queen Elizabeth Hall, Wigmore Hall, and Purcell Room; Le Theatre du Chatelet and Salle Gaveau in Paris; Academy of Music in Philadelphia; Kennedy Center and National Gallery of Art in Washington, DC; and Orchestra Hall in Chicago. He has performed with Chicago Symphony, Philadelphia Orchestra, National Symphony, and many major orchestras, with such conductors as Ormandy, Barbirolli, Levin, Maazel, Kondrashin, Spano, Oue, Sanderling, Hogwood, de Preist, and Verrot. He has been a guest soloist with Cleveland, Tokyo, Parisii, Ravel, Debussy, and Cassatt quartets, and Dorian and Moragues wind quintets, concertizing as well with Yo-Yo Ma, Regis Pasquier, Young Uck Kim, Raphael Hillyer, Rostislav Dubinsky, Martin Lovett, Andrew Marriner, Guy Deplus, and Carol Wincenc. Photo provided by the artist.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences  
Venue size

Music  
Round Top  
Festivals  
Larger, Medium

[Read More](#)



## STATE ARTIST JAN SEALE

poet and author  
southwest motifs

Jan Epton Seale, 2012 Texas Poet Laureate, is a native Texan. She is familiar with much of Texas, having lived in north and central Texas as a youth, with summers spent in the Panhandle, and living in South Texas all of her adult life. Seale received her education at Baylor University, the University of Louisville, and the University of North Texas. She has taught English and creative writing at three Texas universities. Her life's work includes ten books of poetry, two of short fiction, three of nonfiction, and several children's books and dramas. Apparent in her writing is her interest in the people and places of Texas, as well as those of the Southwest and the wider world. Her short stories have been described as a 'capable evocation of peculiar personalities' with a 'sense of nostalgia and richly drawn places', 'all ending in epiphany.' Her poems are said to be 'both beautifully witty and serious.' Seale is at home with many types of audiences. She particularly enjoys college groups, civic and writers' organizations, nature lovers, elder learners, women, and church lay-groups. Comfortable on stage or in small gatherings, with sensitivity to and rapport with her audiences, her presentations are noted for their humor and accessibility. Seale is a member of the Texas Institute of Letters, the Texas Folklore Society, and the Poetry Society of Texas.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences  
Venue size

Words  
McAllen  
Festivals, Libraries, Seniors  
Medium, Smaller, Unplugged

[Read More](#)



## STATE ARTIST JIMMIE VAUGHAN

blues guitarist  
solo or with band

Dallas native Jimmie Vaughan, 2015 Texas State Musician, is one of the most respected and critically acclaimed guitarists in the world of contemporary music. His groundbreaking band, The Fabulous Thunderbirds, introduced the Texas blues to the MTV generation and a universal audience. Vaughan has been nominated for GRAMMY Awards for his work with The Fabulous Thunderbirds, as well as his work as a solo artist, in addition to the critically acclaimed 'Family Style' record he recorded with his younger brother Stevie Ray Vaughan, which sold over one million copies worldwide. Jimmie has performed and recorded with legends such as Muddy Waters, Buddy Guy, B.B. King, Albert King, Eric Clapton, Bob Dylan, Willie Nelson, Carlos Santana, Don Henley, and his younger brother Stevie Ray Vaughan. Throughout his career, Jimmie has carried on the Texas blues tradition of T Bone Walker, Clarence 'Gatemouth' Brown and Lightning Hopkins, while creating his own unique sound and style. Jimmie Vaughan is proud and honored to be a Texas musician.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences  
Venue size

Music  
Austin  
Festivals  
Larger, Medium, Very Large

[Read More](#)



## STATE ARTIST KARLA MORTON

poet and author  
shows and workshops

Karla K. Morton, the 2010 Texas Poet Laureate, is an award-winning poet and sought-after keynote speaker. She has been described as 'one of the more adventurous voices in American poetry,' but don't let the title 'poet' fool you. Karla is an outgoing, warm and energetic ball of fire who loves to promote poetry and the arts. She has spoken, offered workshops, and performed her poetry at venues and events across the country. From large corporate conferences to national parks, major fundraising events, small classrooms and international literary festivals, Karla is comfortable in front of any crowd. Her poetry spans many subjects and forms and evokes laughter, tears, and inspiration. With 16 published books of poetry (as of 2024) and widely published in literary journals, Karla has won numerous awards, including a Western Heritage Wrangler Award, Betsy Colquitt Award, Spur Award, Indie Book Award, Eric Hoffer Award and more. She is a nominee for the National Cowgirl Hall of Fame and has been featured on Good Morning Texas, NPR, PBS, ABC News, CBS News and in countless newspapers, blogs and magazines. A native Texan, two-time cancer survivor, Mother Jones impersonator, avid photographer, and a graduate of Texas A&M University, Karla has explored, photographed and written about all 63 U.S. National Parks (culminating in the award-winning book, *The National Parks: A Century of Grace*). She currently divides her time between Fort Worth, Texas and Raton, New Mexico.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences

School audiences  
Venue size

Words  
Fort Worth  
Festivals, Hands-on activities,  
Libraries, People with disabilities,  
Schools, Seniors  
High, Middle  
Larger, Medium, Smaller, Unplugged,  
Very Large

[Read More](#)



## STATE ARTIST KEN LITTLE

figurative sculptor  
singer songwriter

Ken Little, 2014 Texas State Visual Artist - 3-D, is a visual artist and a musician. Since 1988, he has maintained an art studio in San Antonio. He has exhibited his work in sculpture, nationally, and internationally. He has received many awards and honors, including his current designation as the 2014 Texas State 3 Dimensional Artist of the year.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences  
School audiences  
Venue size

Visual & Film  
San Antonio  
Festivals, Hands-on activities  
High  
Smaller, Unplugged

[Read More](#)



## STATE ARTIST KEVIN PRUFER

poet  
prose writer

Kevin Prufer is the 2026 Texas Poet Laureate. His recent book of poetry, *The Fears*, was the winner of the 2024 Rilke Prize. Others of his books have been listed as among the year's best by *The New York Times*, *Booklist*, and *Publishers Weekly*. His poetry collection *How He Loved Them* was long-listed for the 2019 Pulitzer Prize and received the Julie Suk Award. Among Prufer's awards and honors are many Pushcart prizes and Best American Poetry selections, numerous awards from the Poetry Society of America, and fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Lannan Foundation. He is a professor in the Creative Writing Program at the University of Houston and the low-residency MFA at Lesley University. Photo: Wyatt McSpadden.

Discipline  
City

Words  
Houston

[Read More](#)



## STATE ARTIST LAURIE ANN GUERRERO

poet and author  
latina perspective

Laurie Ann Guerrero, 2016 Texas State Poet Laureate, was born and raised in the Southside of San Antonio. She holds a B.A. in English Language & Literature from Smith College, where she received the Academy of American Poets Prize, and an MFA in poetry from Drew University. Her first full-length collection, *A Tongue in the Mouth of the Dying*, received the 2012 Andrés Bello Montoya Poetry Prize and an International Latino Book Award, and was listed as one of 14 must-read works of Chicano literature by Rigoberto Gonzalez. Guerrero's work has also been honored with the Panhandler Chapbook Award, and grants from the Artist Foundation of San Antonio and the Alfredo Cisneros del Moral Foundation. In 2014, Guerrero was appointed poet laureate of San Antonio by Mayor Julian Castro. Her latest collection, *A Crown for Gumecindo*, was released by Aztlan Libre Press in spring 2015.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences

Words  
San Antonio  
Festivals, Hands-on activities,  
Libraries, Schools  
Medium, Smaller, Unplugged

Venue size  
[Read More](#)



## STATE ARTIST LETITIA HUCKABY

photographer  
visual artist

Letitia Huckaby is the 2026 Texas State Artist-2D. Her research-based practice combines photographic prints and fabrics to reexamine history and its contemporary connection to the black experience through portraiture. Huckaby has been included in various exhibitions, notably at Art League Houston, Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, the Studio School of Harlem, and the Texas Biennial. Her work is included in several collections, including the Library of Congress and the Samella Lewis Contemporary Art Collection at Scripps College. Huckaby was named the 2022 Texas Artist of the Year by Art League Houston. She is the co-founder of Kinfolk House, a collaborative project space in Fort Worth. She is available to give talks or lectures. Photo: Paul Leicht.

Discipline  
City

Visual & Film  
Fort Worth

[Read More](#)



## STATE ARTIST LITTLE JOE HERNANDEZ

tejano music legend  
solo or with band

Tejano artist 'Little Joe' Hernandez, 2019 Texas State Musician, is a five-time GRAMMY Award-winning performer and humanitarian. Little Joe launched his career in 1955 in Temple with the formation of the band initially known as Little Joe and the Latinaires. Later transitioning to the name Little Joe y La Familia, the band established a genre-blending sound that united elements of Latin, norteno, blues, jazz, country, and rock-and-roll music. During the 1970s, Little Joe y La Familia lead the Onda Chicana (Chicano Wave), a movement that melted rancho and jaiton sounds to create a Tejano orquesta genre. His 1972 album Para La Gente included what would be his most beloved tune, 'Las Nubes,' a track that detailed the Chicano experience of migrant farm work. Joe has been hailed as 'King of the Brown Sound' for his musical innovations in the Tejano genre. Little Joe continues to tour nationwide, showcasing new and past musical arrangements to audiences as generationally expansive as his music.

Discipline  
City  
Venue size

Music  
Temple  
Larger, Medium, Very Large

[Read More](#)



## STATE ARTIST MARC BURCKHARDT

painter  
juxtaposed styles

Marc Burckhardt is the 2010 Texas State Visual Artist in 2-D work. Born in Germany and raised in Texas, Marc Burckhardt's work juxtaposes old world styles and symbols with contemporary American themes. As a youth, he spent summers in Europe with his family, a tradition he continues today. The paintings, architecture, and perspectives he encounters there combine with his studies of art history to inform his work, which utilizes old masters' techniques to achieve the texture and luminosity that distinguish his paintings. Marc lives and works in a 1910 farmhouse in the shadow of downtown Austin Texas.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences  
Venue size

Visual & Film  
Austin  
Festivals, Libraries  
Smaller, Unplugged

[Read More](#)



## STATE ARTIST MARCIA BALL

blues pianist  
singer songwriter

Texas-born, Louisiana-raised pianist, songwriter and vocalist Marcia Ball, the 2018 Texas State Musician, has won worldwide fame and countless fans with her ability to captivate an audience every time she performs. Whether she's igniting a full-scale roadhouse rhythm and blues party with her full band or casting a spell over the room as a solo artist or special guest, Ball's rollicking Texas boogies, swampy New Orleans ballads and groove-laden Gulf Coast blues have made her a favorite with music lovers worldwide. Over the course of her five-decade career, Ball has recorded 17 albums -- five of them GRAMMY Award-nominated -- including six for Alligator Records. Ball is a profoundly soulful singer, a boundlessly creative pianist and a courageous, inventive songwriter. Her love of the road has led to years of soul-satisfying performances at festivals, concert halls and clubs. In 2023, the Texas Songwriters Association named Ball a Texas Music Legend. That same year Ball won the Living Blues Award for Most Outstanding Musician (Keyboards). The New York Times says, 'Marcia Ball plays two-fisted New Orleans barrelhouse piano and sings in a husky, knowing voice about all the trouble men and women can get into on the way to a good time.' Photo by Mary Keating Bruton.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences  
Venue size

Music  
Austin  
Festivals  
Larger, Medium, Smaller, Very Large

[Read More](#)



## STATE ARTIST MARGO SAWYER

sculpture artist  
large public art

Margo Sawyer, 2015 Texas State Visual Artist in 3-D works, investigates the relationship between color, space and transcendence through her sculpture. Art and architecture converge in her works to transform mundane structures into euphoric icons, marrying exquisite materials in unexpected ways to form large public spaces that become intimate refuges. Her recent body of work, *Synchronicity of Color*, includes the lauded work that is a focal point at Houston's Discovery Green. Margo Sawyer holds a B.A. Honors Degree from the Chelsea School of Art in London and an M.F.A. in sculpture from Yale University. Sawyer has been the recipient of numerous awards including a National Endowment for the Arts Artist Fellowship, two Fulbright Research Awards, the Japan Foundation Fellowship for Artists, and the Louis Comfort Tiffany Award. She has been a fellow of the American Academy in Rome and an ArtPace resident artist in San Antonio. Her sculpture is in the public art collections of the Cities of New York City, Austin, Dallas, San Antonio, and Houston, and at Eskenazi Health in Indianapolis, Indiana. Sawyer is a Professor of Sculpture and Extended Media in the Department of Art & Art History at the University of Texas at Austin.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences  
School audiences  
Venue size

Visual & Film  
Elgin  
Festivals, Libraries, Schools  
High, Middle  
Smaller, Unplugged, Very Large

[Read More](#)



## STATE ARTIST MARY MCCLEARY

visual artist  
figurative collage

Mary McCleary makes collages of great complexity that combine painterly craftsmanship and striking iconography. Her subject matter comes from religion, science, history, and literature. McCleary has participated in over 350 one-person and group exhibits in museums and galleries in 29 states, Mexico, Canada, and Russia. These venues include the Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, National Museum of Women in the Arts, Museum of Biblical Art, Boston Museum of Art, Dallas Museum of Art, Contemporary Arts Museum Houston, and Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art. McCleary's works are in the collections of the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art; El Paso Museum of Art; San Antonio Museum of Art; Art Museum of South Texas; and Art Museum of Southeast Texas. She is Regents Professor of Art Emeritus at Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches, where she taught from 1975 to 2005. In 2011, she was named Texas Artist of the Year by Art League Houston.

Discipline  
City

Visual & Film  
Nacogdoches

[Read More](#)



## STATE ARTIST OCTAVIO QUINTANILLA

poet  
writer

Octavio Quintanilla is the 2025 Texas Poet Laureate and the author of the poetry collections, *If I Go Missing* (Slough Press, 2014), *The Book of Wounded Sparrows* (Texas Review Press, 2024), which was longlisted for the National Book Award, and *Las Horas Imposibles / The Impossible Hours*, winner of the 2024 Ambroggio Prize of the Academy of American Poets (University of Arizona Press, 2025). Octavio is the founder and director of the literature & arts festival, VersoFrontera, publisher of Alabrava Press, and former Poet Laureate of San Antonio, TX. His *Frontextos* (visual poems) have been published and exhibited widely. He teaches Literature and Creative Writing at Our Lady of the Lake University and was recently inducted into the Texas Institute of Letters.

Photo: Paris Quintanilla

IG: @writeroctavioquintanilla

Twitter: @OctQuintanilla

Discipline

City

Special audiences

School audiences

Venue size

Words

San Antonio

Festivals, Hands-on activities,

Libraries, People with disabilities,

Schools, Seniors

Elementary, High, Middle

Larger, Medium, Smaller, Unplugged,

Very Large

[Read More](#)



## STATE ARTIST SARA HICKMAN

singer songwriter  
solo or with band

Texas State Musician Sara Hickman is a singer/songwriter who has performed at house concerts, hospitals, prisons, theaters, children's events, conferences, festivals and all the way to Carnegie Hall and the Tonight Show. Her concerts are uplifting, connective and full of joy whether with 50 people or 5000. She has released 14 albums for adults and 3 for children, winning multiple awards for her music and humanitarian efforts in the U.S. and abroad. She performs solo, duo or with band and has taught songwriting, creativity and music industry workshops at the Kerrville Folk Festival, Boys & Girls Club, Swannanoa Gathering, Sisters Folk Festival and for corporate and private events. She has performed, recorded or toured with Willie Nelson, John Prine, Shawn Colvin, Terri Hendrix, Dan Fogelberg, Jimmy LaFave, Robert Earl Keen, Eliza Gilkyson, Asleep at the Wheel, Nanci Griffith, Billy Bragg, Richie Havens and many others.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences  
  
School audiences  
Venue size

Music  
Austin  
Festivals, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools  
Elementary, High, Middle, Pre-K  
Larger, Medium, Smaller, Unplugged, Very Large

[Read More](#)



## STATE ARTIST SHELLEY KING

blues rock songwriter  
solo duo or band

Shelley King is Royalty in Texas. 2008 Texas State Musician, Shelley King has been an ambassador of the Austin, Texas sound for over twenty years. Noted vocalist and songwriter, studio musician, touring side musician and producer King is also a successful solo artist and leads her own band of A-list musicians. King's blend of blues, folk, country, soul and rock led her to be the first woman appointed by the Texas Legislature to represent the state as it's Official Musician. She has won Austin Music Awards for Song of the Year and Best Roots Rock Band. Shelley has released ten albums of original music to rave press reviews and radio chart success. King tours Texas and the US performing almost nightly at intimate concerts, clubs and major venues and festivals. Her songs have been recorded by numerous national and international artists. She is available to perform as a solo, duo, trio or band, acoustic or electric. She has also conducted songwriting and team building workshops at schools, festivals and major corporations.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences  
School audiences  
Venue size

Music  
Austin  
Festivals, Hands-on activities, Schools  
High, Middle  
Larger, Medium, Unplugged, Very  
Large

[Read More](#)



## STATE ARTIST STEVE PARKER

performance art  
sound sculpture

Steve Parker is an artist and musician based in Austin, Texas. He is the recipient of the Rome Prize, the Pollock-Krasner Award, the Tito's Prize, a Fulbright Fellowship, and grants from the National Endowment for the Arts. He is currently a McKnight Visiting Composer with the American Composers Forum. Parker makes social sculptures: large-scale performances that facilitate meaningful exchanges between the public, densely-layered sculptural objects, and the environment. His projects include an outdoor opera for 1.5 million bats, megaphone choir, and echolocation devices; monumental ear trumpets inspired by obsolete WWII surveillance tools; an outdoor bird sanctuary made of acoustic mirrors, bird feeders, and 12th-century liturgical chants; cathartic transportation symphonies for pedicabs, automobiles, and bicycles; and sonic healing meditations played by NCAA marching bands. His work often situates the viewer as a performer, engaging them in new forms of listening. Exhibition and performance highlights include the American Academy in Rome (Italy), Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art (Arkansas), CUE Art Foundation (New York), the Fusebox Festival (Texas), Gwangju Media Art Festival (Korea), the Lincoln Center Festival, Los Angeles Philharmonic inSIGHT, the Lucerne Festival (Switzerland), MASS MoCA (Massachusetts), Rich Mix (London), SXSW, and Tanglewood (Massachusetts). Photo courtesy of Blanton Museum of Art.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences  
  
School audiences  
Venue size

Visual & Film  
Austin  
Festivals, Hands-on activities,  
Libraries, People with disabilities,  
Schools, Seniors  
Elementary, High, Middle, Pre-K  
Larger, Medium, Smaller, Unplugged

[Read More](#)



## STATE ARTIST VINCENT VALDEZ

multimedia artist  
visual storytelling

Vincent Valdez, 2015 Texas State Visual Artist in 2-D work, grew up in San Antonio and demonstrated talent for drawing at an early age. He received a full scholarship to the Rhode Island School of Design, where he earned his B.F.A. in 2000. In 2004 at age 26, Valdez was the youngest artist to have a solo exhibition at the McNay Museum in San Antonio when Stations, his suite of monumental charcoal drawings, was shown. Other exhibition venues include the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the Snite Museum of Art, Parsons Paris, the Smithsonian Museum of American Art, OSDE Buenos Aires, and the David Winton Bell Gallery at Brown University. A recipient of residencies at the Skowhegan School of Painting and the Kunstlerhaus Bethania in Berlin, Mr. Valdez is available for visiting artist workshops/lectures and also for audio/visual projects such as this one:

<http://livestream.com/wlu/strangest-fruit-radio-hour>.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences

Visual & Film  
San Antonio  
Festivals, Hands-on activities,  
Libraries, Schools  
Medium, Smaller

Venue size

[Read More](#)



## STEPHANIE URBINA JONES & THE HONKY TONK MARIACHI

texican fusion  
big band

Stephanie Urbina Jones and her history-making Honky Tonk Mariachi are telling a new story in American music, blowing hearts and minds wide open with their mix of classic country rock with a twang and the intoxicating sounds of Mexico. This new style fondly called "Country Music with Chili Peppers" is inspiring and building bridges between worlds. From the first gritos to the last yee haws, from the hallowed stage of the Grand Ole Opry to the two-stepping dance halls of Texas to festivals around the world, Jones and her fiesta platter of love (percussion, trumpets, violins, vihuelas, guitarrons, guitars y mas) are sharing culture, stories and songs that bring people together. Stephanie tours internationally, having performed in fourteen countries, including appearances at the prestigious Montreux Jazz Festival, Magic Town Music Fest in Mexico, Festival Country Rendezvous in France, Country Gold in Japan, Gstaad Festival in Switzerland and the Belladrum Tartan Heart Fest in Scotland, plus the CMA Music Festival, Americana Music Festival, Wille Nelson's 4th of July Picnic and performances on the Grand Ole Opry. Stephanie is a Kerrville New Folk Finalist, Number 1 Texas Country Artist and Number 1 Billboard Country Songwriter. Photo by Dfaniks.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences

School audiences

Venue size

Music

Austin

Festivals/special events, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors  
Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences

Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

[Read More](#)



## STORYBOOK THEATRE OF TEXAS

theater for youth  
edutainment

Storybook Theatre (SBT) is an award-winning touring company that has delivered uplifting, family-friendly performances to millions of children since 1991. Performing in theaters, schools, libraries, and community venues across the U.S. and internationally, SBT is dedicated to promoting literacy and helping children and families grow as confident, courageous, and positive members of their communities. SBT has been honored with the China Children's Theatre Festival "Excellent in Play Award" and recognized as an NEA American Masterpieces Artist. The company offers live productions lasting 30–45 minutes and performs year-round. Current programs include *Two Pigs and T.H.E. Wolf*, *The New Little Red Riding Hood*, *Doing What's Right Can Never Be Wrong*, *Cooking Up Fun with Idioms*, *Goldifox and the Two Hares*, *Allie in Historyland*, and *Country Mouse, City Mouse*. All productions feature original scripts designed to engage and inspire young audiences. Each performance explores meaningful themes such as character development, bullying awareness, wise decision-making, friendship, nutrition, environmental stewardship, diversity, and history. Audiences praise SBT's dynamic mix of music, puppetry, interactive participation, and sign language. Extension lessons aligned with Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) are available online at [www.sbtheatre.com](http://www.sbtheatre.com). Photo by Steve Slate/Captured Keepsakes.

Discipline	Theater
City	New Braunfels
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, Pre-K audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club)

[Read More](#)



## SUE FOLEY

singer songwriter  
blues rock guitarist

GRAMMY Award-nominee and 5x Blues Music Award winner, Sue Foley is a virtual triple threat as a lead guitarist, singer and songwriter. Foley spent her early years in Austin, TX recording for the esteemed record label Antone's. Foley tours extensively worldwide with her band and as a solo acoustic artist. Whether it's a festival audience of 10,000, an intimate listening room gathering or delivering her solo show about female pioneering guitar women to a university classroom, her breadth of knowledge and technique are unmatched. Workshops on Texas Blues history, Women in Guitar, songwriting, and guitar techniques are also offered. Examples include the world music workshop with Vieux Farka Toure and Sona Jobarteh at The Edmonton Folk Festival, and her solo acoustic presentation at the Notodden Blues Festival in Norway. A 5x Blues Music Award winner "Traditional Blues Female Artist (Koko Taylor Award)" 2025/24/23/22/20, her GRAMMY Award-nominated album One Guitar Woman won "Best Traditional Acoustic Album" at the 2025 Blues Music Awards. Foley has shared the stage with greats like B.B. King, Buddy Guy, Jimmie Vaughan and Billy F Gibbons. Her shows combine music from her fifteen-album catalogue including Live in Austin Vol. 1, and One Guitar Woman. Photo by Scott Doubt.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences  
Venue size

Music  
Austin  
Festivals/special events  
Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Very large or outdoor venues

[Read More](#)



## SUE KUENTZ

eclectic storyteller  
youth and families

Sue doesn't just tell stories—she whisks family and adult audiences away on unforgettable journeys through multicultural folktales, fairy tales, urban legends, and personal stories from around the world. Blending spoken word with music, puppetry, and even string figures, she creates an interactive experience that invites listeners to lean in, laugh, wonder, and become part of the story. Her infectious passion for storytelling grew over 32 years as an elementary teacher and librarian in San Antonio, where stories were powerful tools for connection, inspiration, and empowerment. A featured regional teller at the Texas Storytelling Festival, Sue has captivated audiences of all ages in schools, libraries, festivals, and conferences across Texas, including the Grand Kids Fest in Galveston, the Tejas Storytelling Conference, and the Texas Storytelling Festival. Sue delights in collaborating with educators and librarians to design custom performances and workshops—whether for summer reading programs or curriculum-based learning. As a sought-after presenter, she helps schools and libraries weave storytelling into their programs, sparking creativity and empowering participants to find and share their own voices. She is the proud recipient of TSA's John Henry Faulk Award (2023) and the Colson-Herndon Storytelling in Education Award (2016). Photo by Chuck Kuentz.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences

School audiences

Venue size

Words  
Bulverde  
Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, Schools, Seniors  
Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences  
Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Very large or outdoor venues

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## SUE YOUNG

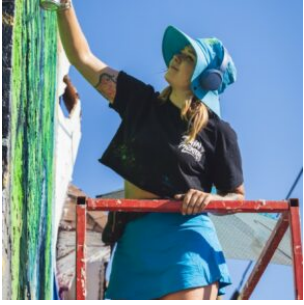
storyteller singer  
bilingual

Bilingual storyteller Sue Young has delighted audiences at museums, festivals, schools, and libraries around Texas and the US since 1994. An accomplished singer and songwriter, she received a 2013 Texas Music Awards nomination for Female Vocalist of the Year. Her CD, *The Legend of the Quetzal*, received a 2007 Parents' Choice Silver Honor Award and she wrote the 2009 and 2011 Texas Summer Reading Club theme songs. Her interactive programs include *Cantos Y Cuentos: Tales and Tunes of Latin America*, a fun trip around Latin America through legends, folktales, traditional and original songs; *Viva Mexico! Celebrate Mexico* through songs and stories; and *Texican Tales and Tunes*, cowboy songs, Mexican cantos, and stories showcasing the diverse cultural heritage of Texas. Sue offers an annual summer reading program tailored to the collaborative theme. Coming in 2027 - *Courageous Cowgirls*, featuring real life stories of women who ran ranches, rode cattle trails, and raced in rodeos - for upper elementary through middle school. Sue's picture book *Courageous Cowgirls* comes out in Fall of 2026. Staff development sessions and workshops for adults, teens, and children are available, including *Create Your Own Song*, a songwriting workshop for 3rd graders through adults. Photo by Brenda Ladd.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences  
School audiences  
Venue size

Words  
Austin  
Festivals/special events, Libraries,  
Schools  
Elementary school audiences, Middle  
school audiences, Pre-K audiences  
Medium-sized venues (theater),  
Smaller venues (library/club), Very  
large or outdoor venues

[Read More](#)



## TAYLORD

large scale murals  
public art

Taylor is a Texas-based muralist and visual artist whose work blends realistic portraiture with bold, dynamic design and storytelling. Her large-scale murals often feature human figures, wildlife, and symbolic natural elements, creating visually striking compositions that reflect place, identity, and community. Taylor offers touring programs centered on public art, including live mural painting demonstrations, artist talks, and community engaged mural workshops. Programs are adaptable for schools, libraries, universities, and community organizations, and can be tailored to a range of ages and settings. Educational components include an overview of the mural-making process, design development, public art careers, and collaborative storytelling through visual art. With experience painting murals across Texas and nationally, Taylor brings a professional, accessible approach to public art that emphasizes creative process, collaboration, and meaningful connection to place. Touring engagements can be structured as single-day events or multi-day residencies, depending on host needs and site conditions. Photo by Adarryll Jackson Sr.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences

School audiences

Venue size

Visual & Film  
Austin  
Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors  
Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences  
Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## TERRENCE TAPS

tap dance  
performances and workshops

Terrence Taps is an acclaimed tap dancer, educator, and performer trained in the rhythm tap tradition of the Tommy Sutton lineage. With over 20 years of performance experience, he blends technique, humor, and storytelling to engage audiences of all ages, making tap dance a joyful vehicle for creativity, connection, and learning. His signature library program, *The Amazing Tap Experience*, invites audiences to explore rhythm, opposites, and musical dynamics through laughter and participation. It's a favorite among librarians seeking an energetic and educational family event. For schools, Terrence offers *Beat and Rhythm: The Evolution of Tap Dancing*, a lively performance that traces tap's cultural history and musical influence, perfect for elementary through high school assemblies. He also leads *The Tap Movement Workshop*, a hands-on program for elementary students that turns rhythm into teamwork and creative expression. For dance companies and festivals, Terrence offers *The Terrence Taps Intensive*, an advanced rhythm tap program featuring instruction, choreography, and improvisation. He has collaborated with organizations like the Art Beat Foundation and Legacy Tap Project, bringing specialized training to tap communities across Texas. From libraries to schools to dance organizations, Terrence brings the joy of tap to life, reminding every audience that rhythm lives in everyone. Photographer unknown.

Discipline	Dance
City	Cedar Park
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

[Read More](#)



## TERRI HENDRIX

folk guitar music  
solo or group

Terri Hendrix is a singer-songwriter, educator, and author with over 25 years of experience as a nationally touring artist, performing both solo and with other distinguished artists (including legendary Texas musician and producer Lloyd Maines, her studio and frequent stage collaborator for nearly 30 years). She conducts year-round, statewide songwriting and music workshops for children, adults, and individuals with special needs, with experience that includes in-school residencies, camps, and community programs. Hendrix co-wrote the GRAMMY Award-winning instrumental "Lil' Jack Slade" for the Chicks and has received a star on the South TX Music Walk of Fame, the Art of Peace Award from St. Mary's University, and the Distinguished Alumni Award from Hardin-Simmons University. Additionally, she was honored with a SMART Award for artistic excellence, inducted into the Women's Hall of Fame, and received a lifetime achievement award for her contributions to the arts in San Marcos. In addition to her own longtime career in the music industry, she has run the nonprofit "Own Your Own Universe" Center for the Creative Arts since its launch in 2012. Her master recordings and archives are housed at the esteemed Wittliff Collections at Texas State University. Photo by Kim Maguire.

Discipline	Music
City	Martindale
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues

[Read More](#)



## TEXAS CELLOS

cello ensemble  
wide music selection

The Texas Cellos have joined the ranks of a beloved institution in Texan musical life. In 2020, a pandemic cello choir became the impetus for founding a cello ensemble. Its exceptional tonal and virtuosic qualities soon took concert audiences by storm, and now the Texas Cellos enjoy a remarkable following, selling out at every concert they have given. Whether they're playing classics from baroque to modern, jazz, tango, movie tunes, or avant-garde, listeners are invariably fascinated by the wide range of unique and intoxicating timbres that these cellos can produce, and their mixture of seriousness and humor, of depth and lightness, appeals to audiences of all ages. Texas Cellos is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and gives back to the community by inspiring and cultivating excellence in youth through music education, ensemble building, and through performance opportunities. Photo by Joseph Kuipers.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences

School audiences

Venue size

Music  
Dallas  
Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors  
Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences  
Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## TEXAS FOLKLIFE

folk musicians  
cajun tejano polka

Texas Folklife is a statewide organization dedicated to presenting, promoting, and preserving the diverse living heritage of the Lone Star State. As the National Endowment for the Arts-designated folk and traditional arts organization of Texas, Texas Folklife stages projects around the state, including free and low-cost events that attract multi-generational audiences and educational programs for students and teachers in a variety of art forms. Additionally, Texas Folklife's media projects bring national attention to extraordinary Texas talent, and the organization's touring roster exemplifies the unique musical traditions of Texas: Cajun, zydeco, conjunto/tejano and polka. Artists on the current roster: Grupo Alamo, Juan Trevino, Marcus Ardoin and the Da Zydeco Legendz, CJ Chenier, and the All-Around Czechs. Musician-led workshops and related Accordion Kings and Queens photo exhibition celebrating the diversity of Texas accordion music are also available. The project can be scaled to the presenter's budget.

Discipline	Music
City	Dallas
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Libraries, Schools
School audiences	High school audiences, Middle school audiences
Venue size	Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club)

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## TEXAS GYPSIES

jazz and swing band  
varying group sizes

For more than 20 years, the Texas Gypsies have captivated audiences with an award-winning signature sound—a stylish blend of vintage jazz and swing inspired by the Roaring '20s, Great Gatsby glamour, and the Big Band era of the 1930s–40s. Rooted in classic American jazz and delivered with a fresh, contemporary edge, their music resonates with audiences of all ages. Blending Texas western swing, Django Reinhardt-influenced gypsy jazz, and classic Big Band traditions, The Texas Gypsies deliver a polished, high-energy concert experience that is both entertaining and accessible. Performances feature violin, horns, guitars, upright bass, and vintage-style drums, showcasing exceptional musicianship, dynamic instrumental and vocal selections, and an engaging high energy stage presence. Well suited for performing arts centers, theaters, and festivals, the band offers flexible ensemble configurations—from an intimate 4-piece combo to a swinging 6-piece group or a full 12-piece big band—allowing presenters to align artistic impact with venue size and budget. In addition to concerts, the Texas Gypsies offer educational workshops that combine live performance with lively historical insight into traditional American jazz and swing. These programs bring the music to life through storytelling, demonstration, and optional hands-on experiences for student musicians. Photo by Coppell Arts.

Discipline	Music
City	Allen
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Very large or outdoor venues

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## TEXAS SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL'S ROADSHOW

shakespeare  
for all ages

The Texas Shakespeare Festival has provided high-caliber professional theater to the eastern Texas region for over four decades, producing nearly 300 productions for over 290,000 people. The festival has been featured in the New York Times, Nation Magazine, hundreds of newspapers and magazines in Texas, and the Austin American-Statesman named it "indisputably the best Shakespeare Festival in Texas." The Texas Shakespeare Festival's Roadshow brings abridged productions of Shakespeare into schools and communities throughout the tri-state area. Since it began in 2016, the tour has reached over 60,000 students, traveling as far as 700 miles from the Festival's home in Kilgore, Texas. The TSF Roadshow has been honored with numerous grant awards from the Texas Commission on the Arts, Humanities Texas, Arts Midwest, and the National Endowment for the Arts. Production offerings change every season, with multiple productions available for middle and high school students. Photo by John Dodd.

Discipline	Theater
City	Kilgore
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, Schools
School audiences	High school audiences, Middle school audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues

[Read More](#)



## THE BIKE ZOO

immersive sculpture  
bicycle animals

Ringleader, co-founder, and UT Austin mechanical engineering graduate Jeremy Rosen and The Bike Zoo create life-long memories. Since unveiling their creations at the 2005 Austin First Night Parade, The Bike Zoo has presented a magical, immersive, and interactive environment for people of all ages. A unique and truly original addition to any festival, public space, corporate event, family gathering, or school/educational event, the menagerie of giant playful, interactive, hand-built creatures includes an 80-foot rattlesnake, many beautiful butterflies, a colorful moth, a beloved bat, a fanciful owl, a majestic bald eagle, a stately preying mantis, a whimsical bicycle carousel, a giant armadillo, and the newest creation, the dazzling longhorn! The Bike Zoo captivates the imaginations of both children and adults who experience the larger-than-life creatures. The one-of-a-kind hand-built animal bikes can be static or moving backdrops, give rides for patrons or VIPs, act as stages or mobile activity booths, and include opportunities for guests with special needs and a spectrum of biking skills. Millions of people have experienced The Bike Zoo across the US and Mexico. The Bike Zoo looks forward to entertaining people throughout the country and proudly representing Texas! Photo by Edgar Valdes.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences

School audiences

Venue size

Visual & Film  
Austin  
Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors  
Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences  
Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

[Read More](#)



## THE CLIBURN

classical pianists  
competition winners

At each edition of the quadrennial Van Cliburn International Piano Competition-- widely considered "one of the most prestigious contests in classical music" (The New York Times)-- a vast global audience in the tens of millions watches with anticipation as the world's next classical music stars distinguish themselves by sharing their unique artistic voices. The Cliburn is proud to provide representation to the 2025 Cliburn Competition medalists- Aristo Sham (Gold Medalist), Vitaly Starikov (Silver Medalist), and Evren Ozel (Bronze Medalist)- helping to launch their careers as significant touring musicians. This commitment to supporting young artists and directly connecting them with audiences across the country builds on a rich tradition that began in 1962 in honor of Van Cliburn and his vision for using music to serve audiences and break down boundaries. The Cliburn laureates are available for solo, chamber, and concerto performances, as well as outreach and residency programs. Photo by Lisa Marie-Mazzucco.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences

School audiences  
Venue size

Music  
Fort Worth  
Festivals/special events, Libraries,  
People with disabilities, Schools,  
Seniors  
High school audiences  
Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-  
sized venues (theater), Smaller  
venues (library/club), Unplugged  
events/venues

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## THE GRAND OL' PRODUCTION COMPANY

musical variety show  
americana nostalgia

For more than 20 years, the Grand Ol' Production Company has been creating and performing original, all-American, all-Texan musical variety shows staged as live retro radio broadcasts—cleverly blending multi-genre music and classic entertainment traditions with contemporary wit and a style all their own. Grand Ol' Productions epitomize the performing arts and are a favorite among presenters seeking high-quality, multi-generational programming. The company's three marquee productions—The Grand Ol' Christmas Show, The Grand Ol' Americana Show, and The Grand Ol' Halloween Show—offer fast-paced evenings of original musical arrangements and laugh-out-loud sketch comedy. Musical styles span Americana, jazz, gospel, country, and even operatic selections, all performed by an incredibly talented group of accomplished Texas-based artists. The Grand Ol' Christmas Show, the flagship production, playfully blurs the line between heartfelt holiday nostalgia and pop-culture satire. The Grand Ol' Americana Show, set within the fictional studio of 1776 AM "Liberty" Radio, celebrates the music, comedy, and culture that define the American spirit. The Grand Ol' Halloween Show delivers a ghoulish, delightfully spell-binding performance, family-friendly and perfect for that spooky time of year. Each production is flexible in scale, family-friendly, technically efficient, and designed to create memorable experiences that resonate with audiences of all ages. Photo by Bill Vinson.

Discipline	Theater
City	Salado
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## THE LIMELITERS

folk trio  
musical time machine

When music fans remember '60s folk music, they remember the iconic songs of The Limelitters. After six decades and over 25 albums – including three top 10 – the trio still brings American folk classics into the modern age, with high energy, thrilling three-part harmonies, and zany humor. Since 2018, the band has been based in Texas. Award-winning singer-songwriters Andy Corwin, Steve Brooks and Daniel Boling carry on the signature vocal sound of founders Lou Gottlieb, Alex Hassilev and Glenn Yarbrough. Their concert programs transport baby boomers of all ages into a musical time machine, as they mix historical songs like "There's a Meetin' Here Tonight," "John Henry" and "Wabash Cannonball" with '60s standards like "If I Had a Hammer" and "Those Were the Days." They include "Take My True Love by the Hand," viewed more than 3 million times on YouTube after appearing in the TV hit "Breaking Bad." Today's Limes tour coast-to-coast and around Texas, including halls like the Brauntex, the Bugle Boy, the 04 Center, and four appearances at the Kerrville Folk Festival. As Time Magazine puts it, "If the Kingston Trio are the undergraduates of big-time folk singing, the Limelitters are the faculty." Photo by Steve Wood.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences  
Venue size

Music  
Austin  
Festivals/special events, Seniors  
Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Very large or outdoor venues

[Read More](#)



## THE PETERSON BROTHERS

blues soul fusion  
duo

The Peterson Brothers, from Austin, Texas, have captivated audiences for over a decade with their unique blend of Soul, Funk, Blues, and Jazz. The duo features Glenn Jr. on vocals and guitar, and GRAMMY Award-winning bassist Alex on bass, vocals, and violin. Their love for music was sparked by a collection of classic albums from their family. Influenced by legends like The Isley Brothers, B.B. King, and Earth, Wind and Fire, they developed a high-energy stage show that blends musical skill with infectious enthusiasm. They've shared the stage with icons such as Gary Clark Jr., Willie Nelson, and Buddy Guy, continuing to honor classic American music while making their own lasting impact. Photo by Michael Davila.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences

School audiences

Venue size

Music  
Bastrop  
Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors  
Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences  
Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

[Read More](#)



## THE VINYL STRIPES

50s and 60s music  
covers and originals

The Vinyl Stripes are a Texas-based band delivering a high-energy show inspired by the sound, look, and style of the 1950s and '60s. Drawing from 1950s rockabilly, vintage rock and roll, 1960s California surf music, and the classic artists of Sun Records, their performances capture the excitement of mid-century American popular music while remaining fresh for today's audiences. Performing as a trio of guitar, upright bass, and drums, the band showcases tight three-part harmonies, superb musicianship, and period-authentic instrumentation. Their repertoire blends iconic songs by artists such as Elvis Presley, Roy Orbison, and Buddy Holly with a strong collection of original songs that fits seamlessly within the era's sound. The show also features engaging visual moments—most notably the bassist leaping onto and percussively slapping his upright bass—an audience favorite! Adorned with skinny ties, pork pie hats, vintage guitars, upright bass, and drums, the band brings an authentic visual and musical experience to the stage. They can expand to a four-piece lineup with tenor saxophone, adding extra energy and sound. With over a decade of touring across Texas and the United States, the Vinyl Stripes deliver a reliable, family-friendly production ideal for performing arts centers, theaters, festivals, and curated cultural events. Photo by Tyler Cogburn.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences

School audiences

Venue size

Music  
Allen  
Festivals/special events, Libraries,  
People with disabilities, Schools,  
Seniors  
Elementary school audiences, High  
school audiences, Middle school  
audiences, Pre-K audiences  
Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-  
sized venues (theater), Smaller  
venues (library/club), Very large or  
outdoor venues

[Read More](#)



## THE WESTERN FLYERS

western swing  
vintage country music

Dubbed "The Biggest Little Band in the Land," powerhouse Western swing trio the Western Flyers serve up an irresistibly hot, unmistakably Texas-style sound popularized by Bob Wills in the 1940s with an electrifying energy all their own. Featuring an all-star lineup led by archtop guitar slinger Joey McKenzie, two-time National Champion fiddler Ridge Roberts, and bassist Matthew Mefford, the trio also can perform with guest 'frequent flyer' GRAMMY Award telecaster master Redd Volkaert (Merle Haggard band fame.) As US State Department Cultural Exchange Alumni, the trio performs their Texas flavored music coast to coast and internationally. Appearances at the World's Fair Dubai, Library of Congress, and even with a ukulele slingin' Warren Buffett! Performances are tailored for a family audience, rowdy dancehall, theater, community event or festival stage. In addition, eight Flyers arrangements have been scored for full symphony orchestra-- past appearances include the Reno Philharmonic, Fort Worth Symphony and Dallas Symphony Orchestra. Delivering a blend of western swing, vintage country, swing classics and electrifyin' fiddle tunes, the Ameripolitan Western Swing Group of the Year is guaranteed to have even the shyest of wallflowers tappin' their toes or swingin' on the dance floor. Photo by LoMo Photo.

Discipline	Music
City	Burleson
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## TIO TOTO

music for youth  
bilingual programming

Tio Toto is an Austin-based bilingual children's music artist who transforms every performance into a joyful, co-created adventure. Blending English and Spanish in a playful Spanglish flow, Tio Toto's shows invite children and caregivers to sing, dance, and help write songs live—so audiences learn together through music, movement, and laughter. Led by artist and educator Antonio F. Delgado, Tio Toto combines rhythm, storytelling, and imagination to spark curiosity and connection. His signature Musical Instrument Petting Zoo encourages hands-on exploration of instruments from around the world, from African hand drums to interactive banana pianos. Performances are designed for festivals, libraries, museums, and schools, and adapt easily to varied audience sizes, ages, and language levels. Past appearances include the Thinkery, San Antonio Zoo, Laguna Gloria, and the Round Rock Arts Festival. Available programs: Spanglish Family Singalong (ages 0-8) interactive bilingual concert for children and caregivers; Musical Instrument Petting Zoo (ages 3-10) guided global sound exploration; and Storytime Songs/Cuentacuentos Musicales (ages 2-7) musical retellings supporting early literacy. Photo by Jacob Weber.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences

School audiences

Venue size

Music  
Pflugerville  
Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools  
Elementary school audiences, Pre-K audiences  
Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## TISH HINOJOSA

singer-songwriter  
english and spanish songs

Tish Hinojosa is a renowned singer-songwriter from San Antonio, Texas. She has recorded 17 studio albums in both English and Spanish under A and M Records, Warner Bros Records, Rounder Records, and on her own independent label. She has toured extensively throughout the US, Europe, and S. Korea, where her album "Homeland" went multi-platinum. She was honored to be invited to perform at the White House for the Clintons and for Ann Richards' Texas Gubernatorial Inauguration. She was spokesperson for the National Latino Children's Agenda and in 2019 was inducted into the prestigious Texas Institute of Letters. Tish has made presentations for schools, universities, and cultural arts centers where she includes traditional Latino songs and stories, and her own country, western, pop, and Spanish compositions. She recently was a keynote speaker for Arizona bi-lingual Teachers Association, and will be keynote speaker for the Texas Women's Songwriter festival in September 2026. Tish performs solo with an acoustic guitar, or accompanied by her long-time accompanists on guitar, piano, and accordion, either as a duo, trio, or band format. Her latest album is titled "With A Guitar And A Pen." Photo by Matt Lankes.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences

School audiences

Venue size

Music  
Buda  
Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors  
Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences  
Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## TONI SIMMONS

storyteller  
creative drama

Toni Simmons is an award winning, dynamic, and engaging storyteller and author who brings new life to her stories with songs, rhythms, chants and audience participation. Toni is a former librarian and drama teacher who has presented her multicultural tales throughout the US and internationally. She has captivated audiences at many festivals, community events, schools, museums and libraries. She has performed at the National Storytelling Festival Exchange Place, the National Black Storytelling Festival, the Texas Storytelling Festival, and the American Library Association Conference. Her interactive sessions also use creative drama with a variety of age-appropriate folklore. The audience is taken on an imaginary story trip to different continents while helping to tell the stories. Her programs are designed to motivate, inspire and educate while being entertaining. These programs include library summer reading events, Black History Month and multicultural events, and Read Across America activities. Young and old listeners are enchanted by Toni Simmons' stories. Toni is the recipient of the National Storytelling Network ORACLE Award and the Tejas Storytelling Association John Henry Faulk Award for outstanding contributions to the art of storytelling. Photo by Rex Nash.

Discipline	Words
City	Cypress
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## TRIO LOS VIGILANTES

bolero  
from trio to orchestra

Trio Los Vigilantes is dedicated to the romantic song traditions of Latin America, particularly the bolero. Based in Austin, Texas, they present bilingually and sing primarily in Spanish, with select repertoire in English and Brazilian Portuguese. This allows them to remain culturally grounded while engaging a wide range of audiences. Recognized for their balance of tradition and innovation, they honor giants of the genre such as Trio Los Panchos without treating historical precedent as a boundary. They support their vocals with a distinctive instrumental approach: the requintista switches to trumpet for some songs, and the cellist plays bass lines while simultaneously providing percussion on the body of the instrument, allowing a compact lineup to produce a broad, layered sound. They have performed extensively across Texas and have appeared as featured artists at the Havana Jazz Festival in Cuba. Expanded presentations with string quartet accompaniment are available, scalable to larger sections and adaptable to a wide range of venues. They have also served as artists-in-residence and guest lecturers at the University of Texas Butler School of Music. Trio Los Vigilantes offers presenters a refined, flexible ensemble that creates immersive musical experiences, educational value, and genuine connection with diverse audiences. Photo by John Pointer.

Discipline	Music
City	Austin
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues, Very large or outdoor venues

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## VOCAL MAJORITY CHORUS

barbershop music  
male chorus

The Vocal Majority is a chorus of more than 100 volunteer singers united by a shared love of harmony and performance. These men come from all walks of life, bringing varied musical backgrounds but a common passion for creating extraordinary music together. For over 50 years, the Vocal Majority has delighted audiences around the world with its rich sound and emotional delivery. The Vocal Majority has performed throughout Texas, the United States, and internationally. They are 14-time Gold Medal winners of the Barbershop Harmony Society chorus competition. The chorus has performed pro bono for high school choir programs, as well as a benefit concert for victims of the Texas Hill Country floods where nearly \$52,000 was raised. In addition, the chorus supports Power of Harmony, a program that brings music to incarcerated youth at the Gainesville (Texas) State School. As a previous Texas Touring Roster member, they have performed for the Plano, Irving, and San Angelo symphonies, and have traveled to Crockett, Greenville, Tyler, and Kilgore. The Vocal Majority has recorded 25 albums, showcasing a diverse repertoire spanning classic barbershop, Broadway favorites, jazz standards, pops, patriotic, sacred, and holiday music. Vocal Majority recordings are available on all major streaming platforms. Photo by Andy Whalen.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences  
  
School audiences  
Venue size

Music  
Dallas  
Festivals/special events, Schools,  
Seniors  
High school audiences  
Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Very large or outdoor venues

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## WINDSYNC

wind quintet  
arts education

Over nearly two decades of performing, WindSync has proven itself "a major force in the American chamber music landscape" (Arts and Culture Texas). The wind quintet--made up of flute, oboe, clarinet, French horn, and bassoon--has appeared on some of North America's most prestigious stages, including Carnegie Hall, the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Library of Congress, at Chamber Music Northwest and the Ravinia, Moab, and Phoenix Chamber Music Festivals, and internationally in China, Taiwan, Panama, Mexico and Canada. Their repertoire covers classic, familiar, and newly commissioned pieces, all aiming to share captivating stories from music history and human experiences. WindSync was founded at Rice University's Shepherd School of Music and maintains an artistic home base in Houston. The ensemble embarked on a touring career after winning the Concert Artists Guild's 2012 Competition and the 2016 Fischhoff National Chamber Music Competition, while continuing their work in Houston through a main stage classical series, the annual Onstage Offstage Chamber Music Festival, and a year-round educational partnership with the Houston Youth Symphony. WindSync has served as guest faculty at universities and festivals across the country and in 2022 was honored with the Fischhoff National Chamber Music Association's Ann Divine Educator Award. Photo by Philip Greenberg.

Discipline	Music
City	Houston
Special audiences	Festivals/special events, Hands-on/participatory activities, Libraries, People with disabilities, Schools, Seniors
School audiences	Elementary school audiences, High school audiences, Middle school audiences, Pre-K audiences
Venue size	Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-sized venues (theater), Smaller venues (library/club), Unplugged events/venues

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## YUCK SHOW

art and science  
visual spectacles

The Yuck Show combines science spectacles, silly audience stunts, and comedy in an imaginative production to both entertain and inspire wonder about the science of the world around us. Ping pong balls explode into the air, slime oozes, and wild visual effects engage audiences. Performer Brian Whittington's focus for the last 25 years has been creating visual spectacles at the intersection of art and science, with the objective of inspiring a sense of awe, whimsy, and wonder in the audience and presenting science in an accessible way. As the producer and principal performer of the Yuck Show, Brian performs 300 shows a year at schools, museums, and theaters across the US, and has also toured 47 cities across China. The Yuck Show is available as both a school assembly program or as a larger production scaled for theater audiences. Workshop options are also available. Photo by Andrew McKay.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences

School audiences

Venue size

Theater  
Houston  
Festivals/special events, Libraries,  
People with disabilities, Schools  
Elementary school audiences, Middle  
school audiences  
Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-  
sized venues (theater), Smaller  
venues (library/club), Very large or  
outdoor venues

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## ZAK MIRZ

magician  
stories and magic

Zak Mirz is an America's Got Talent Season 20 semifinalist, Penn and Teller Fool Us winner, magic advisor to David Blaine's "The Magic Way," and the 2024 Rising Star in Magic Award recipient. His latest tour "Kid at Heart" is the world's first interactive magic show where YOU decide what happens next. Rainbows and butterflies or action and adventure? Whether you're a believer or a skeptic, every audience member will leave feeling the magic of what it means to be a kid again. With various production options, Zak's shows can fit into small and large spaces alike. Kid at Heart was created for families, but is a fantastic experience for audiences of all ages. Zak has a variety of illusions and stories he pulls in and out of each show to create a tailored experience for each unique audience. Zak is a first-generation American whose father was murdered when he was only one year old. Growing up in Texas, Zak turned to magic as an escape from reality, and he found it was something he could share. Now, his work has taken him around the globe. He's known for both his emotional storytelling and the unconventional ways he approaches the art of magic. Photo by Paul Rogers.

Discipline  
City  
Special audiences  
School audiences

Theater  
Bedford  
Festivals/special events, Schools  
Elementary school audiences, High  
school audiences, Middle school  
audiences  
Larger venues (concert hall), Medium-  
sized venues (theater), Unplugged  
events/venues, Very large or outdoor  
venues

Venue size

[Read More](#)



# INDEX

## A

A'lante Flamenco 1  
Aaron Stephens 2  
Alda P. Dobbs 3  
Alex Meixner 4  
Alex Tha Great 5  
Alley Theatre 6  
Amalia Ortiz 7  
Amie Maciszewski/Sangeet Millennium 8  
Anel I. Flores 9  
Angela Henderson Smith 10  
Anuradha Naimpally 11  
ARCOS Dance 12  
Asleep at the Wheel 13  
Austin Symphony Orchestra 14  
Austin Taiko 15  
Axiom Quartet 16  
Azul Barrientos 17

## B

Ballet Austin 18  
Ballet Frontier of Texas 19  
Ballet Nepantla 20  
Bernadette Nason 21  
Big Love Car Wash 22  
Blue Lapis Light 23  
Bob Livingston 24  
Brave Combo 25  
Brave Little Company 26  
Bruce Wood Dance 27

## C

Central Texas Philharmonic 28  
Chelsea de Souza 29  
Chibbi 30  
Chloe de Souza 31  
Chris Barton 32  
Chris Espinosa-XYZ 33  
Community Arts 34

## D

Dallas Black Dance Theatre 35  
Daniel Pardo 36  
Danielle Talamantes, Kerry Wilkerson 37  
Dave Meder 38  
David Cox, Rhythm Path Interactive Drumming 39  
Decee Cornish 40  
Del Castillo 41  
Diaz Music Institute 42  
Dirty River Jazz Band 43  
Donna Ingham 44

Double Vision Jazz Ensemble 45  
Dr. Sunanda Nair and Sunanda's Performing Arts Center (SPARC) 46  
Drum One, Drum All/Noah Mosgofian 47

## **E**

Ebony Stewart 48  
Eddie Vega 49  
El Chanclazo 50  
Elizabeth Kahura 51

## **F**

Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra 52

## **G**

George Ensle 53  
Georgia Parker 54  
Glass Half Full Theatre 55  
Goodhearted Entertainment 56  
Graham Reynolds 57  
Grupo Fantasma 58  
Guadalupe Dance Company 59  
Guy Forsyth 60

## **H**

Hope Shiver 61  
Hot Club of Cowtown 62  
Hot Pickin 57s 63  
Houston Grand Opera 64  
Houston Symphony Society 65

## **I**

Ida y Vuelta Flamenco Dance Company 66  
Indrajit Banerjee 67  
Invincible Czars 68  
Invoke 69  
Iron Frog Press 70

## **J**

J Muzacz 71  
Javier Jara 72  
Jelly Ellington 73  
Joe McDermott 74  
Joel Laviolette & Rattletree 75  
Jolie Rocke 76  
Jomo & The Possum Posse/Jomo Edwards 77  
Jonathan Palomar 78  
Juan Longoria Jr. y Conteño 79

## **K**

Kam Franklin 80  
Kamica King 81  
Kathak Rhythms 82  
Kim Lehman 83

## **L**

Laser Spectacles 84  
Le Theatre de Marionette 85  
Light Crust Doughboys featuring Marek Eneti 86  
Lone Star Circus 87

Loop38 88  
Los Texmaniacs 89  
Lucas Miller, the Singing Zoologist 90  
Luke Bulla 91

## **M**

Madam Radar 92  
Magic in the Library 93  
Magik Theatre 94  
Main Street Theater 95  
Mariachi Las Alteñas 96  
MCP Shows/Margaret Clauder 97  
Melissa Carper 98  
Mercury Chamber Orchestra 99  
Mexico 2000 Ballet Folklorico 100  
Mezclada Dance Company 101  
Monarch Chamber Players 102  
Montopolis 103  
Mr. Will/Will and The Wilderness 104

## **N**

Nancy Churnin 105  
Native American Cultural Center fka Great Promise 106  
Natyanjali Kuchipudi Dance School 107  
NobleMotion Dance 108

## **O**

Oba William King 109  
Oliver Rajamani 110  
Open Dance Project 111

## **P**

Pamela Hart 112  
Paramount Story Wranglers 113  
Pat Hazell/Sweetwood Creative 114  
Percussion Things 115

## **R**

Ramazinis Circus Theater 116  
Ramblin' Rita 117  
Raul Ayala Band 118  
Riyaaaz Qawwali 119  
Rochelle & the Sidewinders Duo 120  
Rudi Harst 121  
Russell Joe Thompson 122

## **S**

Shasparay 123  
Silambam Houston 124  
Sofrito y Su Melao 125  
South Austin Moonlighters 126  
State Artist Alecia Lawyer 127  
State Artist Amanda Johnston 128  
State Artist Angelbert Metoyer 129  
State Artist Carmen Tafolla 130  
State Artist Carrie Fountain 131  
State Artist Craig Hella Johnson 132  
State Artist Cyrus Cassells 133

State Artist Dale Watson 134  
State Artist Dario Robleto 135  
State Artist David M. Parsons 136  
State Artist Diana Kersey 137  
State Artist Dornith Doherty 138  
State Artist Emily Gimble 139  
State Artist Emmy Perez 140  
State Artist Eva Ybarra 141  
State Artist Gaspar Enriquez 142  
State Artist Ire'ne Lara Silva 143  
State Artist James C. Watkins 144  
State Artist James Dick 145  
State Artist Jan Seale 146  
State Artist Jimmie Vaughan 147  
State Artist Karla Morton 148  
State Artist Ken Little 149  
State Artist Kevin Prufer 150  
State Artist Laurie Ann Guerrero 151  
State Artist Letitia Huckaby 152  
State Artist Little Joe Hernandez 153  
State Artist Marc Burckhardt 154  
State Artist Marcia Ball 155  
State Artist Margo Sawyer 156  
State Artist Mary McCleary 157  
State Artist Octavio Quintanilla 158  
State Artist Sara Hickman 159  
State Artist Shelley King 160  
State Artist Steve Parker 161  
State Artist Vincent Valdez 162  
Stephanie Urbina Jones & The Honky Tonk Mariachi 163  
Storybook Theatre of Texas 164  
Sue Foley 165  
Sue Kuentz 166  
Sue Young 167

## **T**

Taylord 168  
Terrence Taps 169  
Terri Hendrix 170  
Texas Cellos 171  
Texas Folklife 172  
Texas Gypsies 173  
Texas Shakespeare Festival's Roadshow 174  
The Bike Zoo 175  
The Cliburn 176  
The Grand Ol' Production Company 177  
The Limelitters 178  
The Peterson Brothers 179  
The Vinyl Stripes 180  
The Western Flyers 181  
Tio Toto 182  
Tish Hinojosa 183  
Toni Simmons 184  
Trio Los Vigilantes 185

## **V**

Vocal Majority Chorus 186

**W**

WindSync 187

**Y**

Yuck Show 188

**Z**

Zak Mirz 189

