

By: Ashby

H.R. No. 2402

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, The Texas Commission on the Arts has announced the
2 2023 appointments for State Poet Laureate, State Musician, State
3 Two-Dimensional Artist, and State Three-Dimensional Artist; and

4 WHEREAS, The state's highest accolade for excellence in the
5 arts, designation as a Texas State Artist is conferred on those
6 individuals who represent the best of our rich and diverse artistic
7 community and who inspire others through their unique creative
8 expression; and

9 WHEREAS, The 2023 State Poet Laureate is ire'ne Lara Silva;
10 she is the author of two full-length poetry collections, *furia* and
11 *Blood Sugar Canto*, that were both finalists for the International
12 Latino Book Award in Poetry; her most recent poetry collection,
13 *CUICACALLI/House of Song*, was a finalist for the Texas Institute of
14 Letters Poetry Prize, and she has also published three chapbooks
15 and a short story collection, *flesh to bone*, that won the 2013
16 Premio Aztlan and was named a runner-up for the 2014 NACCS Tejas
17 Foco Award in Fiction; the recipient of a number of grants and
18 literary awards, she had the distinction of being inducted as a
19 member of the Texas Institute of Letters in 2020; her poetry, short
20 stories, and essays have appeared in more than 70 journals and
21 anthologies, and she currently serves as a writer at large for *Texas*
22 *Highways* magazine; and

23 WHEREAS, Gary Clark Jr., the 2023 State Musician, achieved
24 critical acclaim with his debut album *Blak and Blu*, where he

1 introduced his brand of blues rock that would gradually transform
2 into a fusion of contemporary funk, rock, and hip hop; the
3 Austin-born singer-songwriter won a Grammy Award for his top-10 hit
4 "Please Come Home," and he later scored three more Grammy wins,
5 including Best Contemporary Blues Album, for his politically
6 charged fifth studio album *This Land* and its title track; he has
7 earned a reputation as a soulful live performer, and in addition to
8 touring with the Rolling Stones and the Foo Fighters and
9 collaborating with recording artists like Alicia Keys and Childish
10 Gambino, he has played alongside Beyoncé, Ed Sheeran, and other
11 well-known musicians for tributes to Stevie Wonder and the Beatles;
12 and

13 WHEREAS, Painter Gaspar Enriquez is the 2023 State
14 Two-Dimensional Artist; after growing up in El Paso's Segundo
15 Barrio, he made his living as an art educator while developing a
16 body of work primarily composed of acrylic, air-brushed portraits
17 of individuals who typify the Chicano community in which he was
18 raised; his paintings have been featured at the El Paso Museum of
19 Art, the Tucson Museum of Art, the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library,
20 the de Young Museum in San Francisco, and the San Antonio Convention
21 Center, where he was commissioned to paint a 24-foot-tall piece
22 titled *cholos*; he has had a profound impact on many students
23 throughout his career as an educator, and he has been an inspiration
24 for nationally recognized artists such as Vincent Valdez and Alex
25 Rubio; and

26 WHEREAS, James C. Watkins, who has been exhibiting his work
27 as a ceramic artist for over four decades, has been named the 2023

1 State Three-Dimensional Artist; best known for his large,
2 double-walled stoneware vessels, he has experimented with
3 alternative firing techniques to craft black pottery with varying
4 tones and depth; his work is represented in a number of notable
5 collections, including the White House Collection of American
6 Crafts at the William J. Clinton Presidential Library and Museum in
7 Little Rock, Arkansas, the Shigaraki Institute of Ceramic Studies
8 in Japan, and the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C.; he
9 was named a Horn Distinguished Professor Emeritus at Texas Tech
10 University, and he has received the Texas Tech President's
11 Excellence in Teaching Award; and

12 WHEREAS, The artists who have been selected to hold these
13 prestigious posts have all greatly contributed to the vibrant
14 cultural life of the Lone Star State, and Texas is indeed fortunate
15 to be home to these talented individuals; now, therefore, be it

16 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 88th Texas
17 Legislature hereby congratulate the 2023 Texas Commission on the
18 Arts honorees and extend to them sincere best wishes for continued
19 fulfillment in their creative endeavors.