

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 642

WHEREAS, The Texas Commission on the Arts has announced the 2026 appointments for State Poet Laureate, State Classical Musician, State Nonclassical Musician, State Two-Dimensional Artist, and State Three-Dimensional Artist; and

WHEREAS, The state's highest accolade for excellence in the arts, the Texas State Artist designation is conferred on individuals who represent the best of the rich and diverse artistic community in the Lone Star State and who inspire others through their unique creative expression; and

WHEREAS, Kevin Prufer, the 2026 State Poet Laureate, is the author of the poetry collection *How He Loved Them*, which received the Julie Suk Award and was named to the long list for the 2019 Pulitzer Prize; his works have been included in year's best lists by *The New York Times*, *Booklist*, and *Publishers Weekly*, and his recent book, *The Fears*, was the winner of the 2024 Rilke Prize; his many honors include multiple Pushcart Prizes, selections to *The Best American Poetry* series, numerous awards from the Poetry Society of America, and fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Lannan Foundation; he currently serves as a professor in the creative writing programs at the University of Houston and Lesley University; and

WHEREAS, The 2026 State Classical Musician is Ana María Martínez of Houston; she is a Grammy Award-winning soprano and is best known for her work on stage in *Rusalka*, *Carmen*, *Florencia en el Amazonas*, *La Bohème*, *Madama Butterfly*, and *Otello*; over the years, she has performed with the Metropolitan Opera, the Houston Grand Opera, Opéra National de Paris, the Royal Opera House at Covent Garden, and the Vienna State Opera, among other companies and venues; she is a professor of voice at the Shepherd School of Music at Rice University; and

WHEREAS, Norah Jones has been named the State Nonclassical Musician for 2026; her debut record in 2002, *Come Away with Me*, earned Ms. Jones five Grammy Awards, including Album of the Year, Record of the Year, and Best New Artist; her subsequent studio albums have all achieved platinum status, and over the course of her career, she has sold more than 53 million records; raised in Grapevine, she is a graduate of the Booker T. Washington High School for the Performing and Visual Arts in Dallas; and

WHEREAS, The work of Letitia Huckaby, the State Two-Dimensional Artist, combines photographic prints and fabrics to reexamine history and its contemporary connection to the Black experience through portraiture; she has been included in exhibitions at the Amon Carter Museum of American Art in Fort Worth, Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art in Arkansas, the Studio School of Harlem, and Texas Biennial in Austin, and her pieces are included in the collections of the Library of Congress and the Samella Lewis Contemporary Art Collection at Scripps College; she is the cofounder of Kinfolk House, a collaborative project space in Fort Worth, and in 2022, she was named the Texas Artist of the Year by Art League Houston; and

WHEREAS, The 2026 State Three-Dimensional Artist, Linda Ridgway, is based in Dallas and creates bronze wall reliefs that convey both autobiographical and cultural imagery, with themes that include femininity, tradition, and heritage; her work juxtaposes the delicacy of the textures of lace and crochet work with the monochromatic and industrial fortitude of metalwork; she has participated in various solo and group exhibitions at the Museum of Fine Arts Houston, the Dallas Museum of Art, and the Amon Carter Museum of American Art in Fort Worth; and

WHEREAS, The artists who have been selected to hold these prestigious posts have all greatly contributed to the vibrant cultural life of our state, and Texas is indeed fortunate to be home to these talented individuals; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Senate of the State of Texas, 89th Legislature, hereby congratulate the 2026 Texas Commission on the Arts honorees and extend to them sincere best wishes for continued fulfillment in their creative endeavors.

Menéndez

President of the Senate

I hereby certify that the
above Resolution was adopted by
the Senate on May 31, 2025.

Secretary of the Senate

Member, Texas Senate