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Dallas Black Dance Theatre, architect Frank Welch and light sculptor Leo Villareal win top state arts award

By Michael Granberry

At a special ceremony in Austin on Wednesday, the Texas Cultural Trust will officially honor its 2017 recipients for the biennial Texas Medal of Arts Awards, and two -- architect Frank Welch and the Dallas Black Dance Theatre -- carry strong ties to Dallas.

A third, artist Leo Villareal created the massive light sculpture that serves as the signature artistic element in the atrium of the Dallas Cowboys' new 91-acre, \$1.5 billion headquarters, The Star in Frisco. Villareal also created The Bay Lights, which illuminate the bridge between San Francisco and Oakland in the San Francisco Bay Area.



Architect Frank Welch

In its ninth biennial year, the Texas Medal of Arts Awards stands as the signature event of the Texas Cultural Trust, which supports the programs of the Texas Commission on the Arts "and other qualifying state agencies." Since 2008, officials for the Texas Cultural Trust say they have invested more than \$3.2 million into "arts awareness and education, bringing the total investment to more than \$4.9 million."

The Texas Medal of Arts Awards seek to honor "amazing Texans who have made powerful contributions to the arts here at home and around the world."

The complete list of 2017 recipients is as follows:

The 2017 Texas Medal of Arts Awards Honorees:

Corporate Patron: John Paul & Eloise DeJoria, Paul Mitchell/Patrón Tequila, Austin

Multimedia: Kris Kristofferson, Brownsville

Individual Arts Patron: Lynn Wyatt, Houston

Dance: Lauren Anderson, Houston

Music: Yolanda Adams, Houston

Arts Education: Dallas Black Dance Theatre, Dallas

Theatre: Renée Elise Goldsberry, Houston

Foundation Patron: The Tobin Endowment, San Antonio

Visual Art: Leo Villareal, El Paso

Architecture: Frank Welch, Dallas

Literary: John Phillip Santos, San Antonio

Journalism: Scott Pelley, San Antonio

Lifetime Achievement: Kenny Rogers, Houston

Since its inception, the Texas Medal of Arts Awards has presented 99 medals to 105 Texas "legends and luminaries who have achieved greatness through their creative talents, as well as those whose generosity has opened doors to artistic opportunity for Texans of all ages."



Bassist Dusty Hill and ZZ Top perform at the Music Hall at Fair Park in Dallas on Sept. 4, 2015. (Rose Baca/The Dallas Morning News)

Staff Photographer

Past recipients include Jamie Foxx, Eva Longoria, ZZ Top, Willie Nelson, Dan Rather, Neiman Marcus, Margaret McDermott, Tommy Lee Jones, Bob Schieffer, Walter Cronkite, the Nasher Foundation, Lyle Lovett and Robert Edsel, among many others.

<http://www.dallasnews.com/arts/arts/2017/02/21/dallas-black-dance-theatre-architect-frank-welch-light-sculptor-leo-villareal-win-top-state-arts-award>