

## ARTS & CULTURE QUESTIONNAIRE FOR CITY COUNCIL CANDIDATES

Please take a moment to answer the DACAC Arts & Culture Questionnaire for City Council Candidates. Be as thorough as possible as these responses will be shared not only with the general membership, but also with the public and posted in its entirety online at [DallasNeedstheArts.com](http://DallasNeedstheArts.com). Provide your answers in the space indicated; space will automatically adjust to accommodate your complete answers.

Please return these completed questionnaires to [AVD@ArtsDallas.org](mailto:AVD@ArtsDallas.org) as soon as possible. Thank you!

#DallasNeedstheArts #ArtsVoteDallas #TXArtsMatter

### YOU AND THE ARTS

*Give us a sense about your relationship with the arts.*

**QUESTIONS:** Is there an arts genre or form you particularly enjoy, and what is it? What arts and cultural events or performances have you attended in the last year? What arts organizations or commissions have you supported as a Board member, volunteer, contribution or season ticket holder. Please list cultural groups and experiences, even if not in Dallas.

As a full time community activist, I protest through performance on a regular basis. All forms of art intrigue me. Art to me is human emotion in a tangible form. There are too many events I've attended to account for over the past year, mainly music. But the most honorable relationship I have is with 2 local young artists who graduated from Lincoln High School Arts Program, Daniel & Carlos.

These 2 grads made a beautiful mural on my Art House. Every city I've been to has a few art houses. It's a place for free thinking, creativity, and inventions. My Art House, located behind Lincoln High School has solar panels and rain water gathering to create a perma-culture that's a rent & bill FREE environment for Artists who want to be Activists. Anyone who wants to use their talent to change policy is welcome here. I have been leading by example and I've worked very hard over the past 5 years, and still am, to get the house up and running to accomodate 4 people at a time. The goal is for these four to branch off to make another arthouse of their own, and on and on. It's a sustainable, effective lifestyle for our "kind".

I'm the leader of the "Will Rap 4 Weed" movement that changed the law in Dallas making 4 ounces of cannabis a ticket with no jail time. "Will Rap 4 Weed" is also winning against the city in a class action lawsuit in Federal court. I'm representing 40,000 unconstitutional arrests that targeted the homeless. It was illegal to ask for help, street perform for donations, or hold a sign. These unlawful local laws were made to target the homeless, many who chose the lifestyle to follow their dreams, and are starving artists. I've traveled all over the country & the starving artist is revered, here in Dallas we need to bring honor back to what's Real!

### ADVOCACY

*The role of an elected leader is in large part being a cheerleader for the City of Dallas and the things that make our city special. Dallas mayors such as Annette Strauss and Mike Rawlings, and former Councilmember Veletta Lill understood the importance of the arts to the city's economic development,*

*tourism, vibrancy, cultural brand and quality of life. (See attached one-pager.) They made the arts a centerpiece of their agenda and legacy.*

**QUESTION:** What role do you envision for yourself as an elected Dallas leader when it comes to the arts? Where will arts and culture fit within your priorities? And what are the ways you would advocate for the arts in and out of Dallas?

As Council Member over District 7, I will be hands on and create events that encourage community education and togetherness through the arts. I want public Art exhibits reflecting the culture and history of South Dallas all the way from Deep Ellum straight down to Bonton Farms. I will demand a music and laser light show over the lake back here at Rochester park (HUGE). This tourist attraction will be a visually moving production of the history of District 7 from Joppa, South Dallas & Bonton, how the race relations have evolved and are still needing work, and what JFK & MLK stood for.

I demand the MLK Library have a real arts program and real literature for ALL artforms. All forms of art will have workshops with reputable speakers in the industry. I want for people to be able to check out instruments when enrolled in free online music class.

I want to use Fair Park to have events the people from District 7 will actually be able to be a part of. The community needs more access to the museum & other events.

I want to help reputable dance/gymnastics programs in the area. I was a cheerleader and tumbler at the University of Houston & competed at nationals after walking on at 17 yrs old. I know how tough the career is and how disposable the dancer is in the industry. Professional NFL cheerleaders just recently getting minimum wage honored after suing for it. I want transparency in the industry, preparation, & protection for these young people. It's nothing nice in Hollywood or New York and these kids need to be prepared for a dangerous business. Human trafficking is Huge in all forms of entertainment. these kids are Beautiful, Young, Ambitious, and Naive. We can save lives here.

I'm done with the lude presentations by the schools in the MLK Parade with little girls in provocative outfits "dancing" inappropriately. There's a lack of skilled trained dance schools and teachers in District 7. Skyline High School and a few other programs are the exceptions. We need to promote and spread the same vibe these appropriate programs exhibit.

## **EQUITY**

*The 2018 Dallas Cultural Plan – just approved **unanimously** by the City Council – placed Equity at the top of priorities for the arts. This includes equity in funding, providing cultural experiences in underserved parts of our city, supporting both the new and emerging arts community as well as our historic institutions. Additional resources will be required to reach this goal.*

**QUESTION:** Given the many needs of the city, how will you support the goal of sustaining and growing the City's current investment in the arts, and ensure the Cultural Plan does not gather dust on the shelf?

I will be hands on and all over the Cultural Plan, making sure funds for District 7 are not being

swindled. I already prioritize the Arts in my community, that's why the Art House is so important to me. Segments of history where art flourished reflected times of peace and prosperity of a community. When the basics like food and shelter aren't so difficult to achieve, then the artists in the area can relax and breathe long enough to create and invent.

This will NOT collect dust under my watch! My neighbors and I are done having the beauty of our cultures, feelings, and experiences shut out and hidden.

**HOTEL OCCUPANCY TAX**

*To help fund its implementation, the Cultural Plan calls for an increase in the arts portion of the City's Hotel Occupancy Tax (HOT) to align with peer cities. HOT funds are paid by tourists, not Dallas taxpayers. Currently, 2.6% is dedicated to the arts (about \$1.6M.) Houston is 19%, San Antonio is 11%, Austin is 15%.*

**QUESTION:** Would you support a *significant* increase of the arts portion of the HOT to create and sustain a major cultural tourism marketing program, repairs and maintenance of neglected cultural venues, and increased support for arts programs that add to the cultural vibrancy and attractiveness of Dallas as a destination?

Yes I support a significant increase, at least up to 10%. At 10% will still be receiving a smaller percentage than all the other major cities in Texas.

**ARTS IN YOUR DISTRICT**

Name three areas of your council district where you think arts and cultural programs and experiences are most needed and would be welcomed the most.

1. Buckner Terrace/ Pleasant Grove - Art, events, and programs to BRIDGE the gap
2. South Dallas (including Bonton/Rochester Park Lake/& Joppa) Programs to educate about the rich history
3. Fair park - Mainly the MLK Library

**Yvette Gbalazeh District 7**

**Received 3/11/19**

*Join us for a Candidate Reception for all Mayoral and City Council Candidates at The Perot on 4/29 from 6:30 – 8:30  
PM*