



The City of
OKLAHOMA CITY

City Council hires OKC's first Artist-in-Residence

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Oklahoma City has its first Artist-in-Residence.

The [City Council](#) voted Tuesday to hire [Erica Bonavida](#) for the launch of the Artist-in-Residence program, managed by the [Planning Department's Office of Arts and Cultural Affairs](#). Bonavida, a painter who uses a realistic style, will work for the rest of 2019 from a studio in historic [City Hall](#).

"Erica Bonavida's work will stand out in contrast with the marble and art deco style of City Hall's architecture," said City Arts Liaison Robbie Kienzle. "Realism is one of the most accessible forms of painting, and we are thrilled that Bonavida was selected as the City's first Artist-in-Residence."

About the program

The City started the Artist-in-Residence program to promote and accelerate the arts in our community, incubate an artistic career and foster an entrepreneurial approach to the business of art. Eligible artists are in the City's [Pre-Qualified Artist Pool](#).

A selection committee met twice to consider submissions and interview finalists, selecting Bonavida as the artist for the inaugural year of the program.

The City will pay Bonavida a \$750 monthly stipend. From her studio on the first floor of City Hall, [200 N Walker Ave.](#), she'll work on art projects and display finished pieces for sale, engage with the public, cooperate with partners downtown to market and promote events and activities, and work to grow her career as a professional artist.

Bonavida will be on site for at least 12 hours per week and plan and present quarterly public education and engagement activities.

The program is funded by the General Fund. The plan is to gauge the program's success this year, and ideally for at least another two years, before making it permanent if it goes well, Kienzle said.

Artist-in-Residence programs have been used in public and private settings across the U.S. to support local artists. City residents benefit from the artist's new knowledge, ideas, experience and audiences, and the artist gets special access to community

leaders, visitors, expertise and public spaces. Visitors to City Hall can enjoy the new displays, experiences and approaches produced by the artist, which can lead to engaging, imaginative and resonant interactions.

The program complements the City's [1% for Art ordinance](#). It requires 1 percent of the construction budget for City projects to be spent on public art, and the artist is often chosen from the Pre-Qualified Artist Pool.

Artists in the pool were selected based on submissions of their work and remain in the pool for three years. They can be selected for public projects with budgets under \$25,000 and are recommended by the [Arts Commission](#) for private projects as well. The pool is one of the recommendations of [AMP UP OKC](#), the public art master plan for Oklahoma City funded by [National Endowment for the Arts Our Town Grants](#).

About the artist

Bonavida is a native of the Oklahoma City metro whose realistic paintings use still life settings as subjects. She's a graduate of the University of Central Oklahoma with degrees in painting and French.

The unending possibilities of textures and color inspire Bonavida's paintings, in which she pairs individual fabrics and textures based on personal, tactile and experiential memories. The paintings incorporate fluid movement and scale, subtle shifts in color, undulating forms and distinct, limited color harmonies.

Still life paintings date to at least as early as ancient Egyptian tombs. In the Middle Ages, symbolic arrangements depicted Biblical scenes and to decorate illuminated manuscripts. And during the Renaissance, artists popularized still life paintings of flower arrangements. Still life artwork continues to inspire contemporary artists, including paintings of modern-day food and objects in a hyper-realistic style that prove even the most mundane objects can be made into beautiful masterpieces.

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