

Salon for Creative Expression
Guest Artists
2026

Carl Korfomacher started playing bass in the praise band at his church about 15 years ago. He co-founded The Straight 8's in 2019 along with Jim Gallagher. The band played bars and festivals up until 2022 when Carl moved to Minnesota. In 2022, the band played at the Monroe, Wisconsin Cheese days for a crowd of over 1,000. Admittedly, they weren't there just to see The Straight 8s. Gene Simmons, formerly of KISS, was there to introduce a signature vodka at the local distillery. The last song ended on an extended guitar solo and Jim took it to the last note as Gene walked on stage. (Jan. 2026)

Owin Korfomacher attends Northwestern Ohio University for high performance automotive. He has many interests including gardening, cooking, weight lifting and music. In high school he played a mean bari sax and had the distinction of being the only person in his school to play football and sing in the choir. He found the bari was not that popular among his generation so took up guitar a few years ago. He loves country music but can't stand some of the new stuff that sounds like pop. His favorite artists include Luke Bryan, Cody Johnson and Hardy. (Jan. 2026)

Octavio Quintanilla is the 2025 Texas Poet Laureate and the author of the poetry collections, *If I Go Missing* (Slough Press, 2014), *The Book of Wounded Sparrows* (Texas Review Press, 2024), which was longlisted for the National Book Award, and *Las Horas Imposibles / The Impossible Hours*, winner of the 2024 Ambroggio Prize of the Academy of American Poets (University of Arizona Press, 2025). His Frontextos (visual poems) have been published and exhibited widely, including in the Mexican Cultural Institute in San Antonio. He is the founder and director of the literature & arts festival, VersoFrontera, publisher of Alabrava Press, and former Poet Laureate of San Antonio, TX. Octavio is also the recipient of the Nebrija Creadores Scholarship which allowed him a month-long residency at the Instituto Franklin at Alcalá University in Alcalá de Henares, Spain. He holds a Ph.D. from the University of North Texas and teaches at Our Lady of the Lake University in San Antonio, Texas. He was recently inducted into the Texas Institute of Letters. (Feb. 2026)