

By: Senator(s) Horhn

To: Rules

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 19

1 A RESOLUTION EXTENDING THE RECOGNITION OF THE MISSISSIPPI
2 SENATE TO TUPELO MULTIMEDIA ARTIST KE FRANCIS AS THE RECIPIENT OF
3 THE 2023 GOVERNOR'S ARTS AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN VISUAL ARTS.

4 WHEREAS, the Governor's Arts Awards Program has announced its
5 2023 recipients, which include internationally known Tupelo
6 Multimedia Artist Ke Francis as the 2023 Governor's Arts Award
7 recipient for Excellence in Visual Arts; and

8 WHEREAS, established in 1988, Governor's Arts Awards are
9 given to individuals and organizations to recognize outstanding
10 work in the artistic disciplines, as well as arts-based community
11 development and arts patronage in Mississippi. The awards are
12 presented in partnership with the Governor's Office and signify
13 the important relationship between government and the arts; and

14 WHEREAS, Ke Francis of Tupelo is 40 years into a successful
15 and prolific career as a multimedia artist, writer and publisher;
16 and

17 WHEREAS, Mr. Francis has exhibited his art nationally and
18 internationally and is known as much for his striking visual works



19 as he is for his book imprint and his collaborations with leading
20 figures in the art world, including William Christenberry, Robert
21 Rauschenberg and Robert Stackhouse; and

22 WHEREAS, Francis was raised in Tupelo and returned there
23 after college and opened Francis Studios. He and his wife started
24 *Hoopsnake Press* in 1970. From 1969 through 1996, he worked as an
25 independent sculptor and printmaker. During this period, he
26 exhibited his work nationally and internationally and was
27 represented by Arthur Roger Gallery in New Orleans, Morgan Gallery
28 in Kansas City, Fendrick Gallery in Washington, D.C., and Bill
29 Lowe Galleries in Atlanta and Los Angeles. In 1980, Francis began
30 working on the "Reconstruction" series, which depicts the
31 destruction wrought by tornadoes and the rebuilding that goes on
32 afterward; and

33 WHEREAS, his idiosyncratic style-part Cubist, part
34 "primitive" and his particular vocabulary of images, including the
35 circular saw, combine to create quirky yet heroic paeans to the
36 human spirit. Francis has had more than 50 one- and two-person
37 exhibits, including a solo exhibit of 61 works at Terrace Gallery
38 in Orlando, Florida. His books, paintings, prints, photographs
39 and sculptures are in over 30 major public and private
40 international collections including the Getty Museum and the
41 National Gallery; and

42 WHEREAS, Francis served as a writer and regional editor for
43 *Untitled* in Memphis and *Atlanta Art Papers*. His poetry and short



44 stories have been published by numerous journals across the
45 nation; and

46 WHEREAS, Francis also helps operate *Hoopsnake Press* which
47 includes typesetting equipment, large etching and relief printing
48 presses, and two letterpresses to handle the design, illustration,
49 and printing of books. He runs the press in Tupelo with his wife,
50 Mary, and daughter, Kerry; and

51 WHEREAS, it is with great pride that we pay tribute and
52 express appreciation for the talent of a Mississippi multimedia
53 artistic leader who has made Mississippi a better place and
54 exemplifies the artistic and literary traditions of our great
55 state:

56 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF
57 MISSISSIPPI, That we do hereby extend the recognition of the
58 Mississippi Senate to Tupelo multimedia artist Ke Francis as the
59 recipient of the 2023 Governor's Arts Award for Excellence in
60 Visual Arts and extend our congratulations to a multimedia
61 artistic leader on this auspicious occasion.

62 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to
63 Ke Francis as part of the Governor's Arts Awards presentation and
64 made available to the Capitol Press Corps.

