

Austin American-Statesman

25 Austinites to watch in 2025: Chefs, artists and community leaders on our radar

Matthew Odam Michael Barnes Ana Gutierrez Mars Salazar

As we open the curtain on a new year in Austin, we stand amazed, as always, by the rich talent within our city limits. We asked our entertainment staff to name 25 Austinites to watch this year, and the list they produced sets the stage for a thrilling year. Here you will find chefs who are redefining the flavor of Austin alongside community leaders and preservationists working each day to make sure our city's character remains intact. We mix in musicians keeping the Live Music Capital bumping with influencers and artists who each, in their own way, push us toward the next big thing.

Here are 25 Austinites who we are tracking in 2025: Eric Ramos, Kira Small and the Rude Mechs



This troupe's staging of "Our Town" at Crashbox — along with a half dozen other shows I've seen during the past six months — reminded me of the enormous wealth of talent embedded in the city's theater scene. Director Shawn Sides put us directly into the lives of Thornton Wilder's small-town characters, who remain as universal as they must have seemed when introduced in 1938. Everything is specific, concrete; yet nothing is dated. As the central couple, Eric Ramos and Kira Small were incandescent. Every single other actor was indispensable. — *M.B.*

<https://www.statesman.com/story/entertainment/2025/01/06/people-to-watch-austin-2025-artists-chefs-community-leaders/76863901007/>