

**COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE  
DRAFT COMMITTEE REPORT**

1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20004

---

**TO:** All Councilmembers

**FROM:** Chairman Phil Mendelson  
Committee of the Whole

**DATE:** January 21, 2020

**SUBJECT:** Report on PR 23-581, “Commission on the Arts and Humanities Natalie Hopkinson Confirmation Resolution of 2020”

The Committee of the Whole, to which PR 23-581, “Commission on the Arts and Humanities Natalie Hopkinson Confirmation Resolution of 2020” was referred, reports favorably thereon with technical amendments, and recommends approval by the Council.

CONTENTS

I.	Background And Need.....	1
II.	Legislative Chronology.....	4
III.	Position Of The Executive.....	5
IV.	Comments Of Advisory Neighborhood Commissions .....	5
V.	Summary Of Testimony.....	5
VI.	Impact On Existing Law .....	5
VII.	Fiscal Impact.....	5
VIII.	Section-By-Section Analysis .....	5
IX.	Committee Action.....	6
X.	Attachments .....	6

**I. BACKGROUND AND NEED**

On November 26, 2019, Proposed Resolution 23-581, the “Commission on the Arts and Humanities Natalie Hopkinson Confirmation Resolution of 2020,”<sup>1</sup> was introduced by Chairman Phil Mendelson at the request of the Mayor. PR 23-581 would confirm the Mayor’s nomination of Ms. Natalie Hopkinson for appointment as a member of the Commission on the Arts and Humanities for a term to end June 30, 2021.

Dr. Hopkinson is a Ward 5 resident. She received her Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from Howard University, a Master of Arts in Public Affairs Journalism from the University of Maryland-College Park, and a Doctor of Philosophy in Journalism and Public Communication

---

<sup>1</sup> The title of the resolution has been updated to reflect that the resolution was introduced in 2019 but is being considered by the Council in 2020.

from the Philip Merrill College of Journalism at the University of Maryland-College Park. Dr. Hopkinson currently serves as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Communication, Culture, and Media Studies at Howard University, and is a fellow at the Interactivity Foundation where she directed a project called “The Future of the Arts & Society.” In addition, she has spent the past 25 years writing about the arts, cultural history, and issues of race and gender and society.<sup>2</sup> From 2012 to 2018 she served as a Contributing Scholar for the Humanities Council of Washington, DC where she researched and consulted on projects related to the history and culture of the District. Dr. Hopkinson is a member of the Caribbean Studies Association and the Association for Educators in Journalism and Mass Communication.

The Commission on the Arts and Humanities (Commission) was established by the Commission on the Arts and Humanities Act, effective October 21, 1975 (D.C. Law 1-22; D.C. Official Code § 39-201 *et seq.*). The Commission is an independent agency within the District government and is designated by the National Endowment for the Arts as the state arts agency for the District of Columbia. Its role is to evaluate and initiate action on matters relating to the arts and humanities and encourage programs and the development of programs which promote progress in the arts and humanities.<sup>3</sup>

The Commission consists of 18 members appointed by the Mayor for three-year terms, with the advice and consent of the Council.<sup>4</sup> The Commission is tasked with appointing an Executive Director who serves as the chief administrative office of the Commission.<sup>5</sup> In addition, the mission of the Commission is to provide grants, programs, and educational activities that encourage diverse artistic expressions and learning opportunities so that all District of Columbia residents and visitors can experience the District’s rich arts and humanities community.<sup>6</sup>

Members of the Commission must be District residents and must have displayed an interest or an ability in the arts and humanities or must be active in the furtherance of the arts or humanities.<sup>7</sup> Moreover, the Mayor has to give due consideration to recommendations made by the arts and humanities community, and has to ensure that there is reasonable representation of all the neighborhoods in the District when considering appointments to the Commission.<sup>8</sup> Further, no employee of the District government can serve as a member of the Commission.<sup>9</sup>

In the Fiscal Year 2020 Budget Support Act of 2019,<sup>10</sup> the Council approved additional qualification requirements for individuals to be eligible to serve as a member on the Commission. By July 1, 2019, six of the 18 members appointed to the Commission were required to meet the following requirements: (1) two members with specific interest, ability, or experience in the humanities; (2) two members with specific interest, ability, or experience in arts or humanities

---

<sup>2</sup> Natalie Hopkinson, Nominee, Testimony before the DC Council Committee of the Whole, 1, January 9, 2020.

<sup>3</sup> D.C. Official Code § 39-203(a).

<sup>4</sup> See D.C. Official Code § 39-203.

<sup>5</sup> D.C. Official Code § 39-205.

<sup>6</sup> Commission on the Arts and Humanities - About CAH, <https://dcarts.dc.gov/page/about-cah> (last visited January 11, 2020).

<sup>7</sup> *Supra* note 5.

<sup>8</sup> *Id.*

<sup>9</sup> *Id.*

<sup>10</sup> Effective September 11, 2019 (D.C. Law 23-16; D.C. Code § 39-201 *et seq.*).

education; and (3) two members with specific interest, ability, experience in theatre and performing arts.<sup>11</sup> By July 1, 2020, four of the 18 members appointed to the Commission were required to meet the following requirements: (1) two members with specific interest, ability, or experience in public art; and (2) two members with specific experience in arts or humanities organizational administration or governance.<sup>12</sup>

**Table 1: Membership of the Commission on the Arts and Humanities**

<b>Resolution #</b>	<b>Commissioner</b>	<b>Term End Date</b>	<b>Ward</b>
PR 23-576	<i>Alma Gates</i> (specific interest, ability, or experience in public art)	June 30, 2022	3
PR 23-577	<i>Rhona Friedman</i> (specific interest, ability, or experience in theatre and performing arts)	June 30, 2022	2
PR 23-578	<i>Jose Alberto Ucles</i> (specific interest, ability, or experience in theatre and performing arts)	June 30, 2022	5
PR 23-579	<i>Mary Ann Miller</i> (specific interest, ability, or experience in arts or humanities education)	June 30, 2022	3
PR 23-580	<i>Cicie Sattarnilasskorn</i> (specific interest, ability, or experience in arts or humanities education)	June 30, 2022	1
PR 23-581	<i>Dr. Natalie Hopkinson</i> (specific interest, ability, or experience in the humanities)	June 30, 2021	5
PR 23-582	<i>Cora Masters Barry</i> (specific interest, ability, or experience in the humanities)	June 30, 2021	8
R.22-394	Edmund Fleet	June 30, 2020	7
R.22-185	Maria Rooney	June 30, 2020	4
R.22-181	Stacie Lee-Banks	June 30, 2020	3
R.22-186	Josef Palermo	June 30, 2020	1
R.22-182	Miles Gray	June 30, 2020	8
R.22-433	Chinedu Osuchukwu	June 30, 2020	7
R.22-557	Quanice Floyd	June 30, 2020	6
R.23-17	Gretchen Wharton	June 30, 2021	6
R.23-16	Kay Kendall (Chairperson)	June 30, 2021	2
R.23-15	Kymber Menkiti	June 30, 2021	4
R.23-62	Derek Younger	June 30, 2022	5

Dr. Hopkinson believes her experience travelling the world to write about art and artists of all kinds and about gallery exhibits would be useful for her service on the Commission.<sup>13</sup> Also, her work as a staff writer, editor, and culture critic and columnist for the Washington Post, The Root, and Huffington Post has given her the necessary experience to serve on the Commission.<sup>14</sup> Further, in 2012 Dr. Hopkinson wrote a book entitled *Go-Go Live: The Musical Life and Death of a Chocolate City*, an ethnography of the District's go-go music, political economy, and culture, and she has worked with the go-go community to protect and support its legacy.<sup>15</sup> She is excited to serve on the Commission because the arts are a critical part of her life.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>11</sup> *Supra* note 5.

<sup>12</sup> *Id.*

<sup>13</sup> Dr. Natalie Hopkinson, Written Responses to the Committee of the Whole's Prehearing Questionnaire, 3, January 3, 2020. (Attached to this Report).

<sup>14</sup> *Id.*

<sup>15</sup> *Id.*

<sup>16</sup> *Supra* note 2 at 2.

Dr. Hopkinson, if appointed, will look at what the Commission has done well and how to build upon that success.<sup>17</sup> She will advocate for the Commission to be a more inclusive institution that speaks to groups that have been left out of the conversation.<sup>18</sup> She plans to ensure that the Commission supports art that everyday people do in their lives, and to make sure the Commission is responsive to the needs of everyday people.<sup>19</sup>

The Committee believes Dr. Hopkinson meets the requirements to serve as a member of the Commission pursuant to D.C. Official Code § 39-203(a-1)(2)(A) as she has a specific interest, ability, or experience in the humanities. The Committee believes Dr. Hopkinson’s work with the Humanities Council, and her work with the go-go community to include being a co-founder of the #DontMuteDC movement makes her well-suited to serve on the Commission. Dr. Hopkinson’s experiences will allow her to bring a new and unique perspective to the Commission. The Committee recommends adoption of PR 23-581.

## II. LEGISLATIVE CHRONOLOGY

- November 26, 2019 PR 23-581, the “Commission on the Arts and Humanities Natalie Hopkinson Confirmation Resolution of 2020” is introduced by Chairman Mendelson at the request of Mayor Bowser.
- December 3, 2019 PR 23-581 is “read” at the December 3, 2019 Legislative meeting; on this date the referral of the PR to the Committee of the Whole is official and the 90-day period for Council review begins. If this measure is not acted upon by the Council before March 11, 2020, PR 23-581 will be deemed disapproved.
- December 6, 2019 Notice of Intent to Act on PR 23-581 is published in the *District of Columbia Register*.
- December 6, 2019 Notice of Public Hearing on PR 23-581 is published in the *District of Columbia Register*.
- January 3, 2020 Revised and Abbreviated Notice of Public Hearing on PR 23-581 is published in the *DC Register*.
- January 9, 2020 The Committee of the Whole holds a public hearing on PR 23-581.
- January 21, 2020 The Committee of the Whole marks-up PR 23-581.

---

<sup>17</sup> *Id.*

<sup>18</sup> *Id.*

<sup>19</sup> *Id.*

### III. POSITION OF THE EXECUTIVE

Ms. Natalie Hopkinson is the Mayor's nomination for appointment to the Commission on the Arts and Humanities.

### IV. COMMENTS OF ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSIONS

The Committee received no testimony or comments from any Advisory Neighborhood Commission on PR 23-581.

### V. SUMMARY OF TESTIMONY

The Committee of the Whole held a public hearing on PR 23-581 (and 6 other nominations to the Commission on the Arts and Humanities) on Thursday, January 9, 2020. The testimony summarized below is from that hearing. A copy of the written testimony provided to the Committee is attached to this report.

*Natalie Hopkinson, Nominee*, testified and answered questions from Chairman Mendelson regarding her background and experience as it pertains to the Commission on the Arts and Humanities and her interest in serving on the Commission.

The Committee received no testimony or comments in opposition to Ms. Hopkinson's appointment.

### VI. IMPACT ON EXISTING LAW

Members of the Commission on the Arts and Humanities are appointed pursuant to section 4 of the Commission on the Arts and Humanities Act, effective October 21, 1975 (D.C. Law 1-22; D.C. Official Code § 39-203).

### VII. FISCAL IMPACT

PR 23-581 will have no fiscal impact on the District of Columbia budget or financial plan. Pursuant to D.C. Official Code § 39-203(e), members of the Commission on the Arts and Humanities are not entitled to compensation.

### VIII. SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS

Section 1 States the short title of Proposed Resolution 23-581.

- Section 2 Confirms the appointment of Natalie Hopkinson a member of the Commission on the Arts and Humanities for a three-year term to end June 30, 2022.
- Section 3 Requires that a copy of the resolution, upon adoption, be transmitted to the nominee and to the Office of the Mayor.
- Section 4 Provides that the resolution will take effect once approved by the Council.

## **IX. COMMITTEE ACTION**

## **X. ATTACHMENTS**

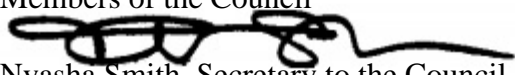
1. PR 23-581 as introduced.
2. Nominee's response to Committee questions.
3. Written testimony.
4. Legal Sufficiency Determination.
5. Committee Print for PR 23-581.

**COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**  
**1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.**  
**Washington D.C. 20004**

Memorandum

---

To : Members of the Council

From :   
Nyasha Smith, Secretary to the Council

Date : December 02, 2019

Subject : Referral of Proposed Legislation

Notice is given that the attached proposed legislation was introduced in the Office of the Secretary on Tuesday, November 26, 2019. Copies are available in Room 10, the Legislative Services Division.

TITLE: "Commission on the Arts and Humanities Natalie Hopkinson Confirmation Resolution of 2019", PR23-0581

INTRODUCED BY: Chairman Mendelson at the request of the Mayor

The Chairman is referring this legislation to the Committee of the Whole. This resolution will be deemed disapproved on Wednesday, March 11, 2020 without Council action.

Attachment

cc: General Counsel  
Budget Director  
Legislative Services



2019 NOV 27 AM 9:47

OFFICE OF THE  
SECRETARY

MURIEL BOWSER  
MAYOR NOV 27 2019

The Honorable Phil Mendelson  
Chairman  
Council of the District of Columbia  
John A. Wilson Building  
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Suite 504  
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Chairman Mendelson:

In accordance with section 2 of the Confirmation Act of 1978, effective March 3, 1979 (D.C. Law 2-142; D.C. Official Code § 1-523.01), and pursuant to section 4 of the Commission on the Arts and Humanities Act, effective October 21, 1975 (D.C. Law 1-22; D.C. Official Code § 39-203), I am pleased to nominate the following person:

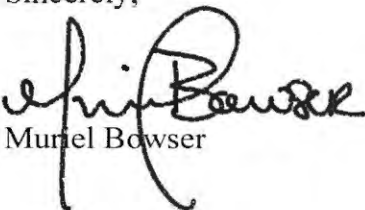
Dr. Natalie Hopkinson  
57 Randolph Place NW  
Washington, DC 20001  
(Ward 5)

for appointment as a member with specific interest, ability, or experience in the humanities of the Commission on the Arts and Humanities, replacing Haili Francis, for a term to end June 30, 2021.

Enclosed you will find biographical information detailing the experience of the above-mentioned nominee, together with proposed resolution to assist the Council during the confirmation process.

I would appreciate the Council's earliest consideration of this nomination for confirmation. Please do not hesitate to contact me, or Steven Walker, Director, Mayor's Office of Talent and Appointments, should the Council require additional information.

Sincerely,

  
Muriel Bowser





Chairman Phil Mendelson  
at the request of the Mayor

A PROPOSED RESOLUTION

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Chairman Phil Mendelson, at the request of the Mayor, introduced the following resolution,  
which was referred to the Committee on \_\_\_\_\_.

To confirm the appointment of Dr. Natalie Hopkinson to the Commission on the Arts and  
Humanities.

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this  
resolution may be cited as the "Commission on the Arts and Humanities Natalie Hopkinson  
Confirmation Resolution of 2019".

Sec. 2. The Council of the District of Columbia confirms the appointment of:

Dr. Natalie Hopkinson  
57 Randolph Place NW  
Washington, DC 20001  
(Ward 5)

as a member with specific interest, ability, or experience in the humanities of the Commission on  
the Arts and Humanities, pursuant to section 4 of the Commission on the Arts and Humanities  
Act, effective October 21, 1975 (D.C. Law 1-22; D.C. Official Code § 39-203), replacing Haili  
Francis, for a term to end June 30, 2021.

Sec. 3. The Council of the District of Columbia shall transmit a copy of this resolution,  
upon its adoption, to the nominee and to the Office of the Mayor.

Sec. 4. This resolution shall take effect immediately.



Executive Office of the Mayor - Office of Talent and Appointments  
John A. Wilson Building | 1350 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Suite 600 | Washington, DC 20004

## Natalie Hopkinson, PhD



Dr. Natalie Hopkinson is an award-winning essayist and critical-cultural scholar. She is an assistant professor in the doctoral program in Howard University's Department of Communication, Culture and Media Studies, and a fellow of the Interactivity Foundation. Her work asks questions about cultural identity, cities and Diaspora, postcolonial history, gender, and media.

Dr. Hopkinson has authored two nonfiction books on culture, *Deconstructing Tyrone* (co-authored with Natalie Y. Moore, Cleis Press, 2006) and *Go-Go Live*, (Duke University Press, 2012) which SPIN magazine named a top-10 book on music for 2012. Dr. Hopkinson began her career as a writer and editor in the Washington Post's Style and Outlook (Sunday Opinion) sections and later joined the Post-owned Slate Group as a member of the founding team of editors of the web journal of politics and

culture, [The Root](#).

A working journalist and adjunct faculty member of Georgetown University's Master in Journalism program, Dr. Hopkinson frequently writes, speaks and consults on culture and education. Her commentary and writing have appeared in the *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, *The Atlantic.com*, *NPR*, *Essence* magazine and the BBC. She is also a former staff writer, editor and media/culture critic at the *Washington Post* and *The Root*.

A Ward 5 resident, Dr. Hopkinson received her Bachelor of Arts degree from Howard University, and a Master of Arts and Doctor of Philosophy degree from the University of Maryland-College Park.

NATALIE HOPKINSON, PhD.

### EDUCATION

Doctor of Philosophy, journalism and public communication, Philip Merrill College of Journalism, University of Maryland-College Park. December 2007.

Master of Arts, public affairs journalism, University of Maryland-College Park, 1999.

Bachelor of Arts, political science, Howard University, Washington, D.C., 1998

### BOOKS

*A Mouth is Always Muzzled: Six Dissidents, Five Continents and the Art of Resistance* (The New Press, 2018)

*Go-Go Live: The Musical Life and Death of a Chocolate City* (Duke University Press, 2012)

*Deconstructing Tyrone: A New Look at Black Masculinity in the Hip-Hop Generation* with co-author Natalie Y. Moore. (Cleis Press, 2006)

### TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Assistant Professor. Howard University, Department of Communication, Culture and Media Studies. Teaching and advising dissertations in this doctoral level-program. August 2016 to present.

Adjunct Professor, Georgetown University. Summer, 2008-2016. Designed curriculum and taught Feature Writing, Cultural Criticism, and Cultural Reporting courses. Advises masters' theses.

Visiting Professor, University of Maryland, Spring 2005 to Spring 2007. Teaching JOUR 371 feature writing for junior and senior undergraduates, and an independent study course on arts journalism.

### PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

*The Interactivity Foundation*. Fellow. March 2010 to present. Conceptualizes and leads civic engagement projects for the nonprofit across the United States, South America and the World Wide Web with an emphasis on the arts, gender and urban life.

*Huffington Post*. Columnist. January-December 2018. Bimonthly column on general topics with a focus on culture, family life for communities of color.

*Humanities Council of Washington, D.C.* Contributing scholar. June 2012-2018. Panelist, researcher and consultant on projects related to the history and culture of Washington, D.C.

*The Freshwater Project*. Co-Founder. August 2009-2016. This family-run 501c3 nonprofit explored the impact of racial segregation on the built environment in West Palm Beach, FL.

*The Op-Ed Project*. Facilitator. January-August 2014. Mentor-editor and seminar leader for a select group of Emory University professors in a movement to increase representation of women and minorities in public thought leadership.

*The Root*. Associate Editor, media & culture critic. January 2008-November 2010. Assigned, edited and produced commentary and analysis, and multimedia essays as one of the team of founding editors of *The Root*, the web magazine edited by Henry Louis Gates, Jr. and owned by Slate magazine/The Washington Post Co.

*Washington Post* Writer/Editor. Outlook, Style and Weekend sections. 1999-January 2008. Assignment editor for the Sunday debate and commentary section; Staff writer covering youth culture and the arts.

### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROJECTS**

#DontMuteDC. Co-Founder of a collective of cultural activists fighting against urban displacement for vulnerable communities.

Advisory Board Member. District of Columbia Africana Archives Project. The George Washington University. March 2015-2017.

Board Member, Hurston Wright Foundation. August 2016-present.

What's Going On? The 2014 Remix Lead scholar and director of a transmedia project exploring the life of Marvin Gaye through the eyes of Washington, D.C. youth (Humanities Council of Washington D.C.)

Art.Change.Community 2013. An inclusive dialogue about the role of art in social change during one of the most exclusive art fairs in the world. (Teach for America, Freshwater Project, Interactivity Foundation)

Race, Class, Culture and Education Reform. 2013. Transmedia project including blogs, print newspaper columns, web radio show, and live community forums around Washington, D.C. about different aspects of equity in education reform. (Washington Post, Allison Brown Consulting and Interactivity Foundation.)

Education Equity Project: Yu Ying Public Charter School. 2013. Months-long exploration of equity in the Chinese-immersion public charter school among parents, faculty and staff. (Allison Brown Consulting, Interactivity Foundation)

### HONORS

2019 Longlist, PEN America Diamonstein-Spielvogel Award for the Art of the Essay—*A Mouth is Always Muzzled*

2018 Gold medal. Independent Publishers' Association "Independent Spirit Award" – *A Mouth is Always Muzzled*

2018 Best Human Rights Books of 2018 (list). *Hong Kong Free Press. A Mouth is Always Muzzled.*

2013. Best Books About Washington, D.C. Washington Post (List) *Go-Go Live*

2013 Hurston/Wright Legacy Award Honoree in nonfiction *Go-Go Live*

2012 SPIN magazine Top-10 Best Music Books (list) *Go-Go Live*

2012. *The Root* "15 Best Books of 2012" *Go-Go Live*

Journalism Fellow, Aspen Ideas Festival. 2010. Aspen, Colorado.

Scripps Howard Doctoral Fellow, 2004-2007.

Cox Scholar, 1994-1998. Full tuition journalism scholarship. Cox Enterprises.

Phi Beta Kappa, Howard University (1998)

Magna Cum Laude, Howard University (1998)

Pi Sigma Alpha, (Political Science Honors Society) (1998)

NATALIE HOPKINSON, PhD.

## EDUCATION

Doctor of Philosophy, journalism and public communication, Philip Merrill College of Journalism, University of Maryland-College Park. December 2007.

Master of Arts, public affairs journalism, University of Maryland-College Park, 1999.

Bachelor of Arts, political science, Howard University, Washington, D.C., 1998

## BOOKS

*A Mouth is Always Muzzled: Six Dissidents, Five Continents and the Art of Resistance* (The New Press, 2018)

*Go-Go Live: The Musical Life and Death of a Chocolate City* (Duke University Press, 2012)

*Deconstructing Tyrone: A New Look at Black Masculinity in the Hip-Hop Generation* with co-author Natalie Y. Moore. (Cleis Press, 2006)

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Assistant Professor. Howard University, Department of Communication, Culture and Media Studies. Teaching and advising dissertations in this doctoral level-program. August 2016 to present.

Adjunct Professor, Georgetown University. Summer, 2008-2016. Designed curriculum and taught Feature Writing, Cultural Criticism, and Cultural Reporting courses. Advises masters' theses.

Visiting Professor, University of Maryland, Spring 2005 to Spring 2007. Teaching JOUR 371 feature writing for junior and senior undergraduates, and an independent study course on arts journalism.

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

*The Interactivity Foundation*. Fellow. March 2010 to present. Conceptualizes and leads civic engagement projects for the nonprofit across the United States, South America and the World Wide Web with an emphasis on the arts, gender and urban life.

*Huffington Post.* Columnist. January-December 2018. Bimonthly column on general topics with a focus on culture, family life for communities of color.

*Humanities Council of Washington, D.C.* Contributing scholar. June 2012-2018. Panelist, researcher and consultant on projects related to the history and culture of Washington, D.C.

*The Freshwater Project.* Co-Founder. August 2009-2016. This family-run 501c3 nonprofit explored the impact of racial segregation on the built environment in West Palm Beach, FL.

*The Op-Ed Project.* Facilitator. January-August 2014. Mentor-editor and seminar leader for a select group of Emory University professors in a movement to increase representation of women and minorities in public thought leadership.

*The Root.* Associate Editor, media & culture critic. January 2008-November 2010. Assigned, edited and produced commentary and analysis, and multimedia essays as one of the team of founding editors of *The Root*, the web magazine edited by Henry Louis Gates, Jr. and owned by Slate magazine/The Washington Post Co.

*Washington Post* Writer/Editor. Outlook, Style and Weekend sections. 1999-January 2008. Assignment editor for the Sunday debate and commentary section; Staff writer covering youth culture and the arts.

### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROJECTS**

#DontMuteDC. Co-Founder of a collective of cultural activists fighting against urban displacement for vulnerable communities.

Advisory Board Member. District of Columbia Africana Archives Project. The George Washington University. March 2015-2017.

Board Member, Hurston Wright Foundation. August 2016-present.

What's Going On? The 2014 Remix Lead scholar and director of a transmedia project exploring the life of Marvin Gaye through the eyes of Washington, D.C. youth (Humanities Council of Washington D.C.)

Art.Change.Community 2013. An inclusive dialogue about the role of art in social change during one of the most exclusive art fairs in the world. (Teach for America, Freshwater Project, Interactivity Foundation)

Race, Class, Culture and Education Reform. 2013. Transmedia project including blogs, print newspaper columns, web radio show, and live community forums around Washington, D.C. about different aspects of equity in education reform. (Washington Post, Allison Brown Consulting and Interactivity Foundation.)

Education Equity Project: Yu Ying Public Charter School. 2013. Months-long exploration of equity in the Chinese-immersion public charter school among parents, faculty and staff. (Allison Brown Consulting, Interactivity Foundation)

### HONORS

2019 Longlist, PEN America Diamonstein-Spielvogel Award for the Art of the Essay—*A Mouth is Always Muzzled*

2018 Gold medal. Independent Publishers' Association "Independent Spirit Award" – *A Mouth is Always Muzzled*

2018 Best Human Rights Books of 2018 (list). *Hong Kong Free Press. A Mouth is Always Muzzled.*

2013. Best Books About Washington, D.C. Washington Post (List) *Go-Go Live*

2013 Hurston/Wright Legacy Award Honoree in nonfiction *Go-Go Live*

2012 SPIN magazine Top-10 Best Music Books (list) *Go-Go Live*

2012. *The Root* "15 Best Books of 2012" *Go-Go Live*

Journalism Fellow, Aspen Ideas Festival. 2010. Aspen, Colorado.

Scripps Howard Doctoral Fellow, 2004-2007.

Cox Scholar, 1994-1998. Full tuition journalism scholarship. Cox Enterprises.

Phi Beta Kappa, Howard University (1998)

Magna Cum Laude, Howard University (1998)

Pi Sigma Alpha, (Political Science Honors Society) (1998)





Executive Office of the Mayor - Office of Talent and Appointments  
John A. Wilson Building | 1350 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Suite 600 | Washington, DC 20004

## Natalie Hopkinson, PhD



Dr. Natalie Hopkinson is an award-winning essayist and critical-cultural scholar. She is an assistant professor in the doctoral program in Howard University's Department of Communication, Culture and Media Studies, and a fellow of the Interactivity Foundation. Her work asks questions about cultural identity, cities and Diaspora, postcolonial history, gender, and media.

Dr. Hopkinson has authored two nonfiction books on culture, *[Deconstructing Tyrone](#)* (co-authored with Natalie Y. Moore, Cleis Press, 2006) and *[Go-Go Live](#)*, (Duke University Press, 2012) which SPIN magazine named a top-10 book on music for 2012. Dr. Hopkinson began her career as a writer and editor in the Washington Post's Style and Outlook (Sunday Opinion) sections and later joined the Post-owned Slate Group as a member of the founding team of editors of the web journal of politics and

culture, *[The Root](#)*.

A working journalist and adjunct faculty member of Georgetown University's Master in Journalism program, Dr. Hopkinson frequently writes, speaks and consults on culture and education. Her commentary and writing have appeared in the *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, *The Atlantic.com*, *NPR*, *Essence* magazine and the BBC. She is also a former staff writer, editor and media/culture critic at the *Washington Post* and *The Root*.

A Ward 5 resident, Dr. Hopkinson received her Bachelor of Arts degree from Howard University, and a Master of Arts and Doctor of Philosophy degree from the University of Maryland-College Park.

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
Executive Office of Mayor Muriel Bowser



Office of the General Counsel to the Mayor

**To:** Gianelle Rivera, Steve Walker  
**From:** Betsy Cavendish  
**Date:** November 22, 2019  
**Subject:** Legal sufficiency review of Resolutions nominating Cora Masters Barry, Natalie Hopkinson, Cicie Sattarnilasskorn, Mary Ann Miller, Alma Gates, Jose Alberto Ueles, and Rona Friedman as members to the Commission on the Arts and Humanities.

---

**This is to Certify** that this office has reviewed the above-referenced legislation and found it to be legally unobjectionable. If you have any questions in this regard, please do not hesitate to call me at 202-724-7681.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Elizabeth A. Cavendish'.

---

Elizabeth Cavendish



COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
1350 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE, N.W.  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20004

Phil Mendelson  
Chairman

Office: (202) 724-8032  
Fax: (202) 724-8085

December 18, 2019

Dr. Natalie Hopkinson  
57 Randolph Place, NW  
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Dr. Hopkinson,

Congratulations on being nominated for appointment to the Commission on the Arts and Humanities (Commission). As you know, the appointment is subject to confirmation by the Council. The Committee of the Whole has scheduled a public hearing on your nomination for **Thursday, January 9, 2020 at 12:00 p.m. in Hearing Room 412**. Enclosed is a copy of the hearing notice. It is standard for the Council to submit questions to nominees. I request your response to the following questions no later than close of business Friday, January 3, 2020.

1. Please provide a copy of the Financial Disclosure Statement you filed with the Office of Campaign Finance or the Board of Ethics and Government Accountability. If you have not filed a Financial Disclosure Statement, please provide answers to questions 2-8 in lieu of that statement.
2. Please provide the name of each business entity transacting any business with the District Government in which you have a beneficial interest valued in excess of \$5,000, including publicly traded stock.
3. Please provide the name of each business entity transacting any business (including consulting) with the District Government from which you or your immediate family have received (or are receiving) income for services rendered in excess of \$1,000 during the past two years.
4. Please provide the name of each business entity transacting business with the District Government in which you or any member of your immediate family serves as an officer, director, partner, or agent. Also list the position(s) held, a brief description of the entity, and any other pertinent details.
5. Please provide the name of any lender and the amount of liability for each outstanding liability borrowed by you or any member of your immediate family in excess of \$5,000. Do not include loans from a federal or state insured or regulated financial institution, or from any business enterprise regularly engaged in the business of providing revolving credit or installment accounts.
6. Please list the location of all real property located in the District of Columbia in which you have an interest with a fair market value in excess of \$5,000.
7. Please list all professional and occupational licenses held by you.
8. Please list any professional organizations of which you are currently a member.
9. Please list all boards and commissions connected with the District government on which you are or have been a member, and include the term of service for each.

10. Please list any other boards (e.g. Boards of Directors of a non-profit) on which you are a member.
11. Do you have any outstanding liability for taxes, fees, or other payments to the District, federal, or other state or local governments, either contested or uncontested? If so, please provide documentation of attempts to pay the amount owed or to resolve the disputed claim.
12. Do you or any member of your immediate family have any interest, financial or otherwise, that may directly or indirectly pose a conflict of interest for you in performance of your duties as a member of the Commission?
13. Please describe any local political activity (i.e. the District of Columbia local elections or campaigns) that you have engaged in over the past five years, including any campaign contributions to a local candidate or political action committee.
14. Are you registered with any local, state, or federal government to lobby? If so, list the jurisdiction(s) in which you are registered.
15. Do you understand how much time will be required of you to serve on the Commission and do you commit to spend that time?
16. Why have you agreed to serve, and how do you plan to help the Commission fulfill its role and mission during your time on the Commission? Include in your answer what you believe should be the priorities of the Commission and specific challenges you see for the agency.
17. Please discuss any past and present experiences not already mentioned that you believe are relevant to support your appointment as a member of the Commission.

At the January 9<sup>th</sup> hearing, you will be asked to make an opening statement indicating your interest in serving as a member of the Commission. The testimony of persons interested in supporting your nomination is helpful but not necessary. Interested parties may call the Committee office to register to testify (724-8196) or, alternatively, may submit written comments to the Committee regarding your nomination via letter mail or e-mail (COW@dccouncil.us).

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to call me or Peter Johnson on my staff at (202) 724-8083.

Sincerely



Phil Mendelson  
Chairman

enc.

PM/pj

December 30, 2019

To: Phil Mendelson  
Chairman  
Council of District of Columbia

Natalie Hopkinson, Ph.D.  
Mayoral nominee, DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities  
[NHopkinson@gmail.com](mailto:NHopkinson@gmail.com) 202-352-3160

Dear Chairman Mendelson,

It is my honor to be considered as a mayoral nominee to the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities. I have attached my written testimony I plan to deliver at the hearing 10 a.m. January 9, 2020. In addition, I have answered the following questions **in RED** per your request:

1. Please provide the name of each business entity transacting any business with the District Government in which you have a beneficial interest valued in excess of \$5,000, including publicly traded stock.

**NONE.**

2. Please provide the name of each business entity transacting any business (including consulting) with the District Government from which you or your immediate family have received (or are receiving) income for services rendered in excess of \$1,000 during the past two years.

**NONE.**

3. Please provide the name of each business entity transacting business with the District Government in which you or any member of your immediate family serves as an officer, director, partner, or agent. Also list the position(s) held, a brief description of the entity, and any other pertinent details.

**NONE.**

4. Please provide the name of any lender and the amount of liability for each outstanding liability borrowed by you or any member of your immediate family in excess of \$5,000. Do not include loans from a federal or state insured or regulated financial institution, or from any business enterprise regularly engaged in the business of providing revolving credit or installment accounts.

**NONE.**

5. Please list the location of all real property located in the District of Columbia in which you have an interest with a fair market value in excess of \$5,000.

**My primary residence that I own with my husband is located:**



57 Randolph Place NW, Washington, D.C. 20001

6. Please list all professional and occupational licenses held by you.

NONE.

7. Please list any professional organizations of which you are currently a member.

Caribbean Studies Association

Association for Educators in Journalism and Mass Communication

8. Please list all boards and commissions connected with the District government on which you are or have been a member, and include the term of service for each.

NONE.

9. Please list any other boards (e.g. Boards of Directors of a non-profit) on which you are a member.

NONE.

10. Do you have any outstanding liability for taxes, fees, or other payments to the District, federal, or other state or local governments, either contested or uncontested? If so, please provide documentation of attempts to pay the amount owed or to resolve the disputed claim.

NO.

11. Do you or any member of your immediate family have any interest, financial or otherwise, that may directly or indirectly pose a conflict of interest for you in performance of your duties as a member of the Commission?

NO.

12. Please describe any local political activity (i.e. the District of Columbia local elections or campaigns) that you have engaged in over the past five years, including any campaign contributions to a local candidate or political action committee.

NONE.

13. Are you registered with any local, state, or federal government to lobby? If so, list the jurisdiction(s) in which you are registered.

NO.

14. Do you understand how much time will be required of you to serve on the Commission and do you commit to spend that time?

YES.

15. Why have you agreed to serve, and how do you plan to help the Commission fulfill its role and mission during your time on the Commission? Include in your answer what you believe should be the priorities of the Commission and specific challenges you see for the agency.

I believe this nomination creates an opportunity to close some gaps across our city. The world of the arts is often an intimidating and rarified space, a playground for the elite. Then there is the actual art that everyday people do in their lives. If confirmed, my mission for serving on the Commission on the Arts and Humanities would be the Akan notion of Sankofa: critically examine the past, while looking to the future. If confirmed, my biggest priority will be looking at what the board has done well, and then learning how to build upon that success. I see the most important work that policy makers can do is to find ways that our institutions can be the most responsive to the needs of everyday people. I seek to make a more inclusive institution that speaks to groups that have been left out of the conversation.

16. Please discuss any past and present experiences not already mentioned that you believe are relevant to support your appointment as a member of the Commission.

Currently, I am an assistant professor in the Department of Communication, Culture and Media Studies at Howard University; as well as, a fellow at the Interactivity Foundation, a nonprofit organization that works to engage citizens in the exploration and development of possibilities for public policy. As a fellow, I directed a project called “The Future of the Arts & Society.” I have also spent the past 25 years writing about the arts, cultural history, and issues of race and gender and society. I have been a staff writer, editor, and culture critic and columnist at the *Washington Post*, *The Root*, and *Huffington Post*, and have academic publications with Duke University Press, *Communication, Culture and Critique*, and *Journalism Practice*.

My book, *Go-Go Live: The Musical Life and Death of a Chocolate City*, an ethnography of Washington, D.C.’s go-go music, political economy, and culture, was published in 2012—the same year Chuck Brown, the “Godfather of Go-Go,” unfortunately passed away. In the years since, I have continued to research and lecture on go-go music and have worked with the go-go community to protect and support its legacy. My most recent book, *A Mouth is Always Muzzled: Six Dissidents, Five Continents and the Art of Resistance*, a global narrative about art and resistance, was longlisted for the PEN/America 2019 PEN/Diamonstein-Spielvogel Award for the Art of the Essay.

Thanks so much. Please let me know if you have any additional questions.

Best,



NATALIE HOPKINSON

**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**  
Commission on the Arts and Humanities



**Public Roundtable on**

**PR23-0581, the “Commission on the Arts and Humanities Natalie Hopkinson  
Confirmation Resolution of 2019”**

**Testimony of  
Natalie Hopkinson**

Before the

Committee of the Whole  
Council of the District of Columbia  
The Honorable Phil Mendelson, Chairman

January 9, 2020  
10:00 AM  
Room 412  
John A. Wilson Building  
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20004





Good afternoon, Chairman Mendelson, councilmembers, and staff of the Committee of the Whole. My name is Natalie Hopkinson, and I am honored to be nominated by Mayor Muriel Bowser for this important appointment to serve on the Commission on the Arts and Humanities. Thank you, Chairman Mendelson, for convening this hearing today.

I have been a District resident since 1994, when I arrived as a college student. I hold a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science from Howard University and earned my Master's and PhD degrees from the University of Maryland-College Park. I have two beautiful children, Maverick and Maven, who are both teenagers born and raised in Ward 5, where I and my husband, Rudolph McGann Jr., have lived since 2000.

Currently, I am an assistant professor in the Department of Communication, Culture and Media Studies at Howard University; as well as, a fellow at the Interactivity Foundation, a nonprofit organization that works to engage citizens in the exploration and development of possibilities for public policy. As a fellow, I directed a project called "The Future of the Arts & Society." I have also spent the past 25 years writing about the arts, cultural history, and issues of race and gender and society. I have been a staff writer, editor, and culture critic and columnist at the *Washington Post*, *The Root*, and *Huffington Post*, and have academic publications with Duke University Press, *Communication*, *Culture and Critique*, and *Journalism Practice*.

My book, *Go-Go Live: The Musical Life and Death of a Chocolate City*, an ethnography of Washington, D.C.'s go-go music, political economy, and culture, was published in 2012—the same year Chuck Brown, the "Godfather of Go-Go," unfortunately passed away. In the years since, I have continued to research and lecture on go-go music and have worked with the go-go community to protect and support its legacy. My most recent book, *A Mouth is Always Muzzled: Six Dissidents, Five Continents and the Art of Resistance*, a global narrative about art and



resistance, was longlisted for the PEN/America 2019 PEN/Diamonstein-Spielvogel Award for the Art of the Essay.

I have had the privilege of traveling all over the world to write about art and artists of all kinds: visual artists, musicians, poets, actors, playwrights, novelists, and dancers. I have written about gallery exhibits all over the world. I have facilitated discussions about the role of the arts in my mother's village on the Pomeroon River in Guyana, South America. I have had the absolute privilege of talking to the people who make go-go music: the artists, the promoters, the historians, journalists, the shopkeepers, the music traders, the sound engineers, graphic designers, clothing designers, deejays, and the thousands of fans that comprise a go-go performance.

I am excited about being nominated to the Commission because the arts are a critical part of everything I have done since I was born. My ancestors are from all over the world, but the largest chunk are from West Africa and the Indigenous parts of the Americas, where many languages do not have a word for "art." They don't have a specific word for "art" because it is not something that you pause to admire on a wall, but is a way of life.

I believe this nomination creates an opportunity to close some gaps across our city. The world of the arts is often an intimidating and rarified space, a playground for the elite. Then there is the actual art that everyday people do in their lives. If confirmed, my mission for serving on the Commission on the Arts and Humanities would be the Akan notion of Sankofa: critically examine the past, while looking to the future. If confirmed, my biggest priority will be looking at what the board has done well, and then learning how to build upon that success. I see the most important work that policy makers can do is to find ways that our institutions can be the most



responsive to the needs of everyday people. I seek to make a more inclusive institution that speaks to groups that have been left out of the conversation.

Again, thank you for this opportunity. This concludes my testimony and I welcome any questions you may have.



1 **DRAFT COMMITTEE PRINT**

2 Committee of the Whole

3 January 21, 2020

4  
5  
6  
7 A PROPOSED RESOLUTION

8  
9 23-581

10 \_\_\_\_\_  
11  
12 IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

13  
14 \_\_\_\_\_  
15  
16 To confirm the appointment of Dr. Natalie Hopkinson as a member of the Commission on the Arts  
17 and Humanities.

18  
19 RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this  
20 resolution may be cited as the “Commission on the Arts and Humanities Natalie Hopkinson  
21 Confirmation Resolution of 2020”.

22 Sec. 2. The Council of the District of Columbia confirms the appointment of:

23  
24 Dr. Natalie Hopkinson  
25 57 Randolph Place, NW  
26 Washington, DC 20001  
27 (Ward 5)

28  
29 as a member with specific interest, ability, or experience in the humanities of the Commission on  
30 the Arts and Humanities, pursuant to section 4 of the Commission on the Arts and Humanities Act,  
31 effective October 21, 1975 (D.C. Law 1-22; D.C. Official Code § 39-203), for a term to end June  
32 30, 2021.

33 Sec. 3. The Council of the District of Columbia shall transmit a copy of this resolution,  
34 upon its adoption, to the nominee and to the Office of the Mayor.

35 Sec. 4. This resolution shall take effect immediately.