



HURSTON/WRIGHT FOUNDATION

A WORLD OF BLACK WRITERS

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Hurston/Wright Foundation Announces 2024 Writers-in-Residence: simóne j banks and Taylor Johnson



simóne j banks



Taylor Johnson

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The Hurston/Wright Foundation is pleased to announce the 2024 Hurston/Wright Writers-in-Residence (WIR): simóne j banks and Taylor Johnson. The program, launched in 2022, is designed to provide dedicated space and funding to published Black writers, fostering their craft and allowing them to contribute meaningfully to emerging Black writers and the broader community.

The Hurston/Wright Writer-in-Residence Program serves as a vital pipeline for Black writers, offering intentional peer-supported engagement, culturally competent mentorship, and financial support. Each selected writer receives a \$15,000 honorarium and works with the Hurston/Wright Foundation for a six-month period, engaging in workshops, community events, and mentorship opportunities.

About the 2024 Hurston/Wright Writers-in-Residence:

simóne j banks:

simóne j banks, an Assistant Professor of English at Albright College, is a writer with a deep interest in exploring the spatial, aural, and optical perceptual planes of ancestral and present-day Black ecologies. Her work has been featured in esteemed publications such as the *Santa Fe Writers Project*, *About Place Journal*, and *eMerge Journal*. She is currently working on her debut poetry collection, *continuum*. She holds an MFA in creative writing from Louisiana State University, where she earned the William Jay Smith Thesis Award in poetry.

Taylor Johnson:

Taylor Johnson is from Washington, DC. He is the author of *Inheritance* (Alice James Books, 2020), winner of the 2021 Norma Farber First Book Award from the Poetry Society of America. His work appears in *Poetry Magazine*, *The Paris Review*, *The Baffler*, *Scalawag*, and elsewhere. Johnson is a Cave Canem graduate fellow and a recipient of the 2017 Larry Neal Writers' Award from the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities, and the 2021 Judith A. Markowitz Award for Emerging Writers from Lambda Literary. Taylor was the inaugural 2022 Poet-in-Residence at the Guggenheim Museum. He is the Poet Laureate of Takoma Park, Maryland. With his wife, Elizabeth Bryant, Taylor curates the Green Way Reading Series at People's Book in Takoma Park.

Hurston/Wright Foundation's executive director, **Khadijah Ali-Coleman**, expressed her admiration for the selected writers, stating, "We selected simóne and Taylor because their work is relevant to today's times, and their eyes are on the horizon of what community looks like for Black writers."

Quotes from the Writers-in-Residence:

Taylor Johnson shared his gratitude, saying, "It's an honor to be a 2024 writer-in-residence with the Hurston/Wright Foundation. As a young person, Hurston/Wright was one of the first organizations that fostered and held my curiosities, explorations, and experiments with poetic language."

Simóne j banks expressed her appreciation, saying, "I am so honored and grateful to have been selected as one of the 2024 Hurston/Wright Writers-in-Residence. As I continue to write my debut collection of poetry, I look forward to being in community with other Black writers."

Previous Hurston/Wright Foundation Writers-in-Residence:

Notable projects by previous Hurston/Wright Foundation Writers-in-Residence include the 2023 #ReadBlackBooks database created by 2023 Writer-in-Residence, B. Sharise Moore. She created a database of children's books and Young Adult (YA) books by Black authors with corresponding curriculum activities that she developed. She debuted this database in June 2023 during the inaugural #ReadBlackBooks conference presented by the Hurston/Wright Foundation.

Sponsorship and Support:

The 2024 Hurston/Wright Writers-in-Residence program is proudly sponsored, in part, by the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities. Historical support has been generously provided by Hachette Book Group and the Amazon Literary Partners fund.

For more information about the Hurston/Wright Foundation and its programs, please visit www.hurstonwright.org.

About the Hurston/Wright Foundation:

The Hurston/Wright Foundation is a national organization that seeks to discover, mentor, and honor Black writers. Through various programs, the foundation nurtures emerging voices, honors literary excellence, and promotes the literature of the African diaspora.

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