

The nomination shall demonstrate the merits of the candidate and include the following:

1. The candidate's established presence as a productive public poet in Madison with a history of advocacy for poetry.

Rob Franklin, also known as Rob Dz, is the Media Projects Bubblerarian for the Madison Public Library. As a Kennedy Center certified teaching artist for the Making Justice program, his primary focus is on creating workshops on Hip Hop, Spoken Word and Personal Branding as positive forms of self-expression. As a teaching artist Rob has held residencies with Madison youth at Huegel and Schenk Elementary Schools, Blackhawk and Toki Middle Schools, and all four high schools as well as Capital High. He has worked at several community centers, the Dane County Juvenile Detention Center, Juvenile Shelter Home, Neighborhood Intervention Program, Grow Academy, Madison Jazz Consortium and with The Black Star Drum Line. In 2016 he was named Madison Public Library's community recipient of the Medal Of Honor for Museum and Library Services. He taught the Spoken Word camp at the 2019 University Of Wisconsin Summer Music Clinic. He served as the primary teaching artist with the initial Hip Hop Architecture Camp as well as serving as a consulting social practice artist for downtown Madison's Mifflandia Neighborhood project and currently is working with city planning as a resident artist for the Law Park Project. As a musician, he has performed with the likes of Nas, Eminem, Common, Talib Kweli, Dead Prez and others. In 2017, he was inducted to the American Folklife Center at the Library Of Congress and The National Museum of African American History and Culture as a member of The Story Corps program.

He has been named a Madison Favorite for best in Hip Hop by Isthmus Magazine for multiple years, also named Best in Madison by Madison Magazine. He has presented poetry at both Martin Luther King Celebrations for both the city of Madison and the Wisconsin Historical Society as well as the Madison Museum Of Contemporary Art.

2. Evidence that the candidate possesses a large body of work, whether published, self-published or unpublished.

<https://www.localsoundsmagazine.com/2005/11/10/the-rob-dz-experience-soul-anthems/>

<https://www.allaboutjazz.com/love-wins-johannes-wallmann-fresh-sound-new-talent-review-by-dan-bilawsky.php>

<https://isthmus.com/music/song-a-day/madtracks-peace-dance-by-the-chicago-yestet/>

yaharamusic.org/artists/rob-dz

3. Selections from the candidate's works.

Community

My people, you people, people we see;
Living as one within our community-
My community is more than blocks and streets;
It is folks within it that gives it its heart-
That rhythm, it beats at multiple degrees;
That went from Mr. P's to Pearlie's-
Community, it's the way that we exist;
Through the struggles it allows us to uplift-
Through the tough times, mothers praying and crying;
Testifying from Fountain Of Life to Mount Zion-
It's on us, for we set the communal tone;
Helping one another so we never stand alone-
For me, it's a side of town we may choose;
Conversations over haircuts at Lord and Lou's-
We can bring it forward to Style and Grace;
And Lord knows how I miss R-Place-
See, community means interaction with others;
Where we all exist as sisters and brothers-
To commune is to live together;
Side by side working to make things better-
Since these are the days when so much is a mess;
To be in a community means we are communally blessed-
In my community everyone plays a part;
That is what gives a community its heart-
This is the community that I adorn;

I am, standing on the shoulders of someone that stood up for me;
So to share their love is my responsibility-
There so many that stood historically;
But it important to note that this starts locally and spreads globally-
For I am standing on the shoulders of someone that stood for me;
This is for James C. Wright, Eugene Parks, Betty Franklin Hammonds, Sister Betty Banks and Brother Gaddi-
I stand on the shoulders of my Mommy and Daddy;
Both held it down for my brother and I to be happy-
See, Pops worked at General Motors for 30+ years;
Worked himself to the grave just so I can be here-
And my Dear Mama had a love so pure;
Every mother does, look at **Afeni Shakur-**
Thats why I am, standing on the shoulders of someone that stood up for me;
I understand that I was raised to carry out a mission;
To fight for equality similar to **Frederick Douglass** during abolition-
Me, I let these words move discretely;
And take a poetic stance like **Phyllis Wheatley-**
Speak this truth of things I know for certain;
defining a modern renaissance like **Zora Neal Hurston-**
And I pour my soul into notebooks;
With stories to inspire like **Richard Wright** or **Gwendolyn Brooks-**

Because I am, standing on the shoulders of someone that stood up for me;
this is the time that there is much more to see-
It hurts at times when I walk through a school;
And some kids would rather be in the hallways being cool-
Not understanding knowledge is the path to a good life created;
And that **Thurgood Marshall** fought just so we can be in a classroom and get
educated-
But let me say on a similar note;
Its hard to want to learn when you don't see teachers that look like **W.E.B. Dubois**
or **Ta-Nehisi Coates-**
For me there was a Hugo Henry and a Booker Street;
That wouldn't allow me to just fall victim of the streets-

Therefore I am, standing on the shoulders of someone that stood up for me-

In this month we celebrate history, through struggles to find positive outcomes;
Not to say this journey hasn't come without its problems-
But we have to talk about it, look at **James Baldwin**;
That's why these are notes of a native son here in Wisconsin-
We live this, we continue to work and prosper;

"Reach"

You diggin deeper when you discover it/
Some been on the same old, I been on some other licks/
Cause I ain't never been designed to follow/
It's lead today young man since there's no promise of tomorrow/
the days we living in are so alarming to me/
feel in my bones it's time for thugs to come and live in harmony/
power plays of the privileged haven't gotten to me/
though I have had the thought of slapping the piss out of some folks quite honestly/
find myself clutching to my Bible more/
alt-righters versus life fighters in this new civil war/
big business seem to care less about the poor/
and y'all got the nerve to wonder why we Kapernickin more/
Now the haves getting mad that we wanna take a knee/
like the field the plantation and the goal post is the tree/
but if you well off you really can't see/what it means to be someone like me, that's why I reach

Mike Ford told me the projects was an experiment/
So now these words architect that there's more for us to get/
not knocking on what's more hood but want to give what's more good/
so I use this Hip Hop to make sure hope more understood/
Lord knows, we done made some mistakes/
but now it's sculpt and rebuild like Theaster Gates/
Its a cold world like winter in The Great Lakes/
wit more ups and downs than cliques rakin it up in they set rakes/
we gotta make a change from all of this heartache/
seem too often it's either funerals or wakes/
its time to break bread and give this future some shape/
scooter pushing like the n.e. heartbreak/
its time to reach in and dig a little deeper/
be a leader not just an lGer Chatter or a tweeter/
The days ahead are gone be so sweeter/
if we keep the faith that it's time to be a reacher/

So to the feeling of wanting to give up/
In the mist of our country about to erupt/
And leaders getting busted for being corrupt/
and all the lies have become enough, that enough is enough/
so this that call to action to every hood/
first thang we gotta do is make it back a neighborhood/
but there's gentrification and nobody wanna talk about it/
we owe it to our own blocks to do the walk about it/
It's time now to take some more pride in it/
Stop looking at the gloom and think of how we can provide in it/
Reinvest in our blocks instead of polluting them up/
Reach the kats we grew up with so they quit shooting it up/
Change a street then a block then change a whole community/
Reach for love to overtake the scrutiny/

We in the days of you better speak your mind/I stand on the shoulders of my history so someone else can
stand on mine/
We can right the wrongs and now's the time to speak for it/
It starts within man all we gotta do is reach for it/

4. Personal and professional references for the candidate.

Greg Mickells, Colleague. 608-267-1184

(Professional reference. Executive Director Of Madison Public Library. Both received Medal Of Honor for Museum and Library Services at White House in 2016)

Jesse Vieau. Teen Librarian, Madison Public Library. 608-234-3882

(Professional reference. Work together in the Making Justice program and Media Academy)

Amy Campbell. Renewing Futures Program Leader. 608-669-6737

(Professional reference. Work together in all four high schools in Renewing Futures program)

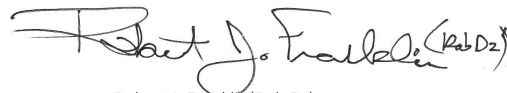
Mike Ford. Friend. 313-433-7176.

(Personal reference. Worked together in Hip Hop Architecture Camp and currently working together on Law Park Project)

6. A signed statement from the candidate that includes intent to accept the nomination and affirms that they plan to reside in Madison for the two-year term.

Poet Laureate Letter Of Intent

This letter is to serve as my letter of interest to accept the Poet Laureate nomination. I understand that the term is a two year term and that by stating my interest that it would be a commitment for the full two year term.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert J. Franklin (Rob Dz)". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "R" and "F".

Robert J. Franklin (Rob Dz)

September 26, 2019

7. Documentation of established relationships that will enable the Poet Laureate to further develop the community partnerships necessary for effective service.

As a resident teaching artist with the Making Justice Program, we have partnered with the Neighborhood Intervention Program(NIP), Juvenile Detention Center, Shelter Home, Grow Academy and Capital High. These partnerships have been in effect for at least three years.

NOTE: The 2018-2019 school year programming at capital high marked the first year that students in MMSD received credit for curriculum that I created.

Host Of Genna's Open Mic Night for 4 years.

Poet Presenter. A Night With Nathaniel Mary Quinn at Madison Museum Of Contemporary Art

Featured Poet for Gil Scot Heron Tribute with New Breed Jazz Jam at North Street Cabaret

Poet for Strollin' Series sponsored by Madison Jazz Consortium

Guest Poet. Jazz at Five, downtown Madison

Featured Poet. Urban League Jazz Cabaret.

Featured Poet. A Night of The Improvisor. Cafe Coda.

Presenter. Hip Hop In The Heartland at the University Of Wisconsin