

ARTIST BIO

FAYLITA HICKS (she/they) is the author of *HoodWitch* (Acre Books, 2019), a finalist for the 2020 Lambda Literary Award for Bisexual Poetry, the 2019 Julie Suk Award, and the 2019 Balcones Poetry Prize. A queer Afro-Latinx activist, writer, interdisciplinary artist, and cultural strategist, they were born in South Central California, raised in Central Texas, and are now based in Chicago where they are currently working on the forthcoming poetry collection *A Map of My Want* (Haymarket Books, 2024), and a debut memoir about their carceral experience *A Body of Wild Light* (Haymarket Books, 2025). In 2023, they starred in Cara Mia Theatre's national touring production of the Whiting-Award winning one-person show *Your Healing Is Killing Me* written by Virginia Grise and directed by Kendra Ware. The former Editor-in-Chief of *Black Femme Collective* and *Borderlands: Texas Poetry Review*, their digital art, poetry, essays, and interviews have been published or are forthcoming in *the Academy of American Poets' Poem-A-Day Series*, *Adroit*, *American Poetry Review*, *AfroPunk*, *Ecotone*, *Foglifter*, *Hayden's Ferry Review*, *Kenyon Review*, *Longreads*, *Poetry Magazine*, *Scalawag*, *Slate*, *Texas Observer*, *The Slowdown Podcast*, *Yale Review*, among others.

Throughout their 20+ year career, they have used their intersectional experiences to advocate for the rights of BIPOC and LGBTQIA+ people by interpreting policy's impact on the individual via various arts mediums. Their personal account of their time in pretrial incarceration in Hays County was featured in the ITVS Independent Lens 2019 documentary *45 Days in a Texas Jail*, and the Brave New Films 2021 documentary narrated by Mahershala Ali *Racially Charged: America's Misdemeanor Problem*. In 2022, their untitled text-based collage was included in Art At A Time Like This' touring "8 x 5" billboard exhibit, and in 2023 they received a Special Mention for their digitally altered portraits of previously incarcerated and formerly detained people in the "Re: Touch Smartphone Photography Contest" hosted by Kultur Projekte Berlin. Their poem entitled "A Liberation All My Own," was featured in the Spring 2023 "No Justice Without Love" Exhibit curated by Daisy Desroiers at the Ford Foundation Gallery.

A voting member of the Recording Academy/GRAMMYS and the 2022-2023 Songwriters and Composers Committee for the Texas Chapter, Hicks is the recipient of fellowships, grants, and residencies from the Art for Justice Fund, Black Mountain Institute, the Tony-Award winning Broadway Advocacy Coalition, Civil Rights Corps, Lambda Literary, Texas After Violence Project, Tin House, and the Right of Return USA. Their sixth spoken word album, *A Name Name for My Love*, was released independently in 2021 in support of the #EndTheException campaign lead by Worth Rises and in 2023, they were featured on Benjamin Boone's jazz-infused spoken word album *Caught in the Rhythm* alongside Kimiko Hahn, Edward Hirsch, T.R. Hummer, Tyehimba Jess, and Patrick Sylvain. Hicks is an inaugural member of the Center for Art and Advocacy where they support previously incarcerated emerging and established writers and artists from around the nation. Their work has been anthologized in *Poemhood: Our Black Revival* (Harper Collins, 2024), *Mid/South Sonnets Anthology* (Belle Pointe Press, 2023), *The Long Devotion: Poets Writing Motherhood* (UGA Press, 2022), *When There Are Nine* (Moon Tide Press, 2022), and others.

CONSULTANT BIO

With an appreciation for powerful narratives that lead to cultural shifts and community safety, Faylita Hicks (she/they) works with justice-focused nonprofits, arts and literary organizations, and performance venues throughout the US to actively engage in anti-carceral liberation efforts through dynamic storytelling. An award-winning writer, performance artist, editor, and consultant with over 20 years of experience in event production, grant writing, publishing, PR, and nonprofit strategy, Hicks is the founder of Infinite. Creative. Lit. (formerly known as Arrondi Productions)—a professional development agency for creatives from underrepresented backgrounds.

Using the principles outlined in [transformative justice theory](#) to guide their practice, Hicks seeks to empower new and emerging brands by fostering messaging and methods that align with each client's unique principle and mission, identifying along the way holistic strategies to long-term sustainability. This is accomplished through the development of targeted grant-writing and fundraising initiatives, the coordination of innovative cross-media programming and healing support services, and the establishment of anti-racist professional practices.

Currently based in Chicago, their previous leadership roles have included editor-in-chief, managing editor, program director, lead organizer, adjunct faculty, curator, and keynote speaker.

Former partners and clients include a wide range of organizations such as *Mano Amiga*, *Detention Watch Network*, *Con Mi Madre*, *Texas Center for Justice and Equity*, *Living Cities*, *Texas Fair Defense Project*, *City of San Marcos Arts Commission*, *Texas State University-San Marcos*, *University of Texas-Austin*, *Sierra Nevada College-Lake Tahoe*, *The National Poetry Slam*, *The Recording Academy/GRAMMYs*, *Black Mountain Institute*, *Los Angeles Review of Books*, *Borderlands: Texas Poetry Review*, *Black Femme Collective*, *Anful Good Writers*, *Austin Interfaces*, *The Dots Between*, *Breakthrough Collaborative*, *Lambda Literary*, *Taboma Literary*, *Tin House*, *PBS*, *Write About Now*, and others.