

**Interview of author Tenea D. Johnson at the Zora Neale Hurston Festival
in Eatonville, Florida**

1
2
3
4
5 Grace Chun: Hello. My name Grace Chun and today is January 31st and I'm here at Zora's
6 place doing interviews at the Zora Neale Hurston Festival. [00:12] Um, could
7 you please introduce yourself? [clicking]
8
9 Tenea Johnson: My name is Tenea D. Johnson., uh, speculative fiction author.
10
11 Grace Chun: Um, great. [00:23] Uh, will you share a little bit about, um, your up-,
12 upbringing? [background conversation]
13
14 Tenea Johnson: Upbringing. Um, born'n raised in Louisville, Kentucky. So, um, single-parent
15 household most of my life in between, um, very different economic classes
16 between [background conversation] my 2 parents, so it's a lot of.um, sub,
17 suburban upbringing with, um, [clicking] more poor people sensibility. And
18 I'm the youngest. [snapping]
19
20 Grace Chun: [00:52] How many siblings do you have?
21
22 Tenea Johnson: Three. [background conversation]
23
24 Grace Chun: Okay.
25
26 Tenea Johnson: Yeah. A brother and sister.
27
28 Grace Chun: [00:56] How long did you live in Kentucky?
29
30 Tenea Johnson: Until I graduated from high school. So once I graduated, I left Kentucky and
31 then – well – I visited, but I've never lived there since.
32
33 Grace Chun: [1:05] Where did you go next?
34
35 Tenea Johnson: Went to college in, um, Florida – Sarasota, Florida, in a place called New
36 College of Florida. Then I went to grad school in New York [background
37 conversation] to NYU, um, and after that, various other cities; Atlanta, D.C.,
38 um, someplace else I'm forgetting, and then eventually back to Florida.
39 [snapping]
40
41 Grace Chun: That's great. [1:29] Um, can you share how you came into your work with
42 Afrofuturism? [snapping]
43
44 Tenea Johnson: Well, I've always written stories. I've always written stories and songs. And
45 for me, the things that interest me – it's really creating my own world and
46 universes because I want to examine certain questions that, that speculative

1 fiction is large enough to encompass. And because I wanna tell the stories of
2 all kinds of people, and I'm particularly interested in stories a people of color,
3 um, and what the future holds – that has come to be called Afrofuturism. So I
4 feel like I started writing something and then one day someone labeled it this.
5

6Grace Chun: Hm.
7

8Tenea Johnson: So... [laughter]
9

10Grace Chun: [2:04] How would you define speculative fiction? [clicking] [background
11 conversation]
12

13Tenea Johnson: For me, speculative fiction is anything that's not realistic, so fantasy, science
14 fiction, alternative history, magic realism, weird fiction – anything that doesn't
15 have to, uh, abide by the rules of, you know, physics that we have to abide by.
16

17Grace Chun: Okay.
18

19Tenea Johnson: Yeah.
20

21Grace Chun: [2:22] And how would you define Afrofuturism? [background conversation]
22

23Tenea Johnson: Uh, that's a tricky one. I mean, I think, I think Afrofuturism is a convenient
24 term for Black speculative fiction. Now that's not the way the, the guy that
25 penned the phrase – that's not how he would define it, but that's what I – I
26 think it's a handy marketing label and it gives people like, um, just an easy
27 way to understand it and to be interested in it. [background conversation]
28 Yeah.
29

30Grace Chun: [2:46] What was your first ec-, encounter with Black speculative fiction or
31 Afrofuturism...
32

33Tenea Johnson: Um...
34

35Grace Chun: ...would you say?
36

37Tenea Johnson: ...for me, I read a lot of Octavia Butler when I was a kid, but I think it was
38 probably *Beloved*. I definitely consider Toni Morrison's *Beloved* to be
39 speculative fiction. I mean, it's not put in that category because it's "literary,"
40 [background conversation] so there's still that sort of divergence between what
41 people think is really valuable and they don't call that [genre 2:11] fiction, but
42 I think it was *Beloved*. And other than that, um, yeah, a lot of Octavia Butler,
43 and some Gabriel Garcia Márquez, but that's not Black speculative fiction.
44 Still, [it's 3:20] speculative fiction. [laughter]
45

46Grace Chun: Mm-hm. [3:24] Um, so did you pursue writing as a student?

1
2Tenea Johnson: Uh, I did to a certain extent. Actually, my undergrad, funnily enough, said that
3 I'd be able to get a writing degree, but that was not the case. [laughter] So I
4 ended up doing more like anthropology and humanities, but my, um, my
5 undergraduate – my oral baccalaureate was actually about Octavia Butler.
6 And the school that I went to, New College, has a lot of, uh – it's a very free
7 program like you don't have core requirements. It's essentially – you create
8 your own program, so I put a lotta writing into the program. And then for grad
9 school, I continued to do that, and did oral history, actually.
10
11Grace Chun: Oh.
12
13Tenea Johnson: A little bit of that. Not just like a, a major, but I took quite a few classes in it.
14
15Grace Chun: That's great.
16
17Tenea Johnson: Yeah. [background conversation]
18
19Grace Chun: [4:06] Um, so from your perspective, what does Afrofuturism o-, uh, offer
20 society at this moment?
21
22Tenea Johnson: Mm. I think it offers society a lot of things. Um, for better or for worse, one a
23 the main things is people that aren't neces-, that didn't necessarily value the
24 perspective of – not just the Black community [in 4:28] my opinion like
25 people of color – it, it, it makes them value in a way where they had none
26 before, where like, "Oh, this is worth paying attention to," because they
27 happened to've liked Black Panther, so now they're interested in, "Oh, what a-,
28 what about everything else from someone else's perspective?" Like maybe
29 that's interesting, [background noise] which should've always been obvious,
30 but right now it's popular, so people are more open to it. [background
31 conversation]
32
33Grace Chun: Hm. [4:50] Do you think it acts as like a critique? [clicking]
34
35Tenea Johnson: Absolutely. Absolutely. Um, I think it's impossible for a cr-, a certain amount
36 of social critique to not be part of any literature to be perfectly honest. But
37 definitely Afrofuturism because you're trying to speculate about what's going
38 to happen from [snapping] this point we're at. Where could we go from here if
39 we continue on this same sort of, um, misguided path? Or if we make certain
40 changes? Or what does it look like when people have technologies or
41 opportunities that they wouldn't necessarily have, you know? It's just, uh,
42 more versions of, of the world that the world needs ta see, so it can decide
43 what it wants ta do.
44
45Grace Chun: Mm-hm. [laughter] [5:29] Uh, can you share some of your work [snapping]
46 that [you 5:33]...

1
2Tenea Johnson: Um, I have – currently I have th-, 3 novels? I have a novel'n stories yet. I have
3 a novel and stories, uh, and [background conversation] a sequel that came out
4 last year, and those are essentially – it's about –it was, it began in genetic
5 reparations for slavery. So the first book is about this genius that creates, um,
6 genetic reparations for slavery. But then he eventually opens up – so it's not
7 just Black people, it's poor people – because at that point, in, uh, this
8 [futureverse 5:59] of the U.S., all people that don't have a lot of money are
9 suffering from, um, just the inequalities that are literally [background
10 conversation] killing them. So – and the – because biogenetic adaptations
11 have become a commodity and some of it's on the commercial market, rich
12 people can literally e-, evolve away from the rest of humanity and literally
13 survive things, um, that are going on in the environment that they created
14 where others can't. So it's – it becomes a survival mechanism.
15
16 So – and then in, in the second book, I explore what happens with one
17 particular, um, family that's affected by it's biogenetic adaptation. So that's
18 one thing. And then another novel that's, you know, anxiety and
19 nanotechnology and magic; actually almost short stories. I try to, um, I try ta
20 take things that interest me and inject some technology in it to, [background
21 conversation] um, to look at things that I think are important that don't get
22 enough attention. And sometimes – I don't really write escapist stuff but
23 sometimes I write things that are just to be enjoyed, you know.
24
25Grace Chun: [7:05] What is some of your main forms of inspiration? [snapping]
26
27Tenea Johnson: Hm. [background conversation] [snapping] What's my main form of
28 inspiration? I don't know. I write a lotta songs, so I have some storytelling to
29 music. Usually – I don't even know if I need inspiration. My – I just have one
30 of those brains that's always going, so sometimes you wanna capture
31 something like, "Oh, that's special. Let's, let's see what happens when I spend
32 some time on this." So, um – but if I did have ta choose something as an
33 inspiration, I would say my fellow human beings. And like, you know, when
34 people do extraordinary things – and certainly people in my family and people
35 that I've known or even people I've known of [clicking] that do incredible
36 things, um, and just [background conversation] have integrity and honor
37 beyond measure, I like to sorta put a spot light on that.
38
39Grace Chun: [7:52] Are there – do you encounter other writers who work in kinda Black
40 speculative fiction?
41
42Tenea Johnson: I do because, you know, [background conversation] I come to events, uh, like
43 this, and I've gone to [cons 8:01] over the years and just gotten to know
44 people somewhat socially and, um, social media – actually, you, you don't
45 know them well because you know that, know the virtual version of them. But
46 there is some amount of connection, so yeah, I would say so.

1
2 Grace Chun: [8:17] What are some of the – is it like other conferences? [background
3 conversation] generally
4
5 Tenea Johnson: Other conferences. Um, generally I would say conventions and conferences.
6 But social media – like this person knows that person, um, but I do better, or
7 I, I appreciate more meeting people face to face, so I think...
8
9 Grace Chun: Hm.
10
11 Tenea Johnson: ...that's why that's worked well for me.
12
13 Grace Chun: [8:37] Do you ever engage with like the academic world that...
14
15 Tenea Johnson: Yeah. I do because I was in academia for a wh-, [snapping] – I never taught
16 but, you know, [background conversation] went on to grad school and all that.
17 But I go to the, uh, International Conference for the Fantastic in the Arts in
18 Orlando. So I've been going to that for a decade. So, um, in that sense, I also –
19 I meet people there and it gives me an opportunity to see how people are
20 analyzing work that's, um, that's being produced [background conversation]
21 and then also gives you opportunity to see authors watch people talk about
22 their work?
23
24 Grace Chun: Hm.
25
26 Tenea Johnson: Which is an odd experience but really interesting. Yeah.
27
28 Grace Chun: Um, I guess – shifting over to Zora Neale Hurston...
29
30 Tenea Johnson: Mm-hm.
31
32 Grace Chun: [9:19] In your mind, what is the link between Zora Neale Hurston and
33 Afrofuturism? [background conversation]
34
35 Tenea Johnson: [snapping] I think [throat clearing] because I, I took a lot of cultural
36 anthropology – I, I'm interested in cultural anthropology. I really feel like
37 that's – and [background conversation] one of the, uh, um, downfalls
38 [laughter] – one of the problems with cultural anthropology is the idea of an
39 ethnography. Someone from the outside looking in, you know, and always
40 bringing their situated knowledge, their perspective, their, you know,
41 preconceived notions and trying to define another society through that. And I
42 think Zora Neale Hurston was very good at flipping that to a certain extent
43 because she wasn't the "other" that people were used to, so, um, she provided
44 a window into worlds that was a little bit more informed. And I think
45 Afrofuturism does that as well when it's done well. [background conversation]
46

1 Grace Chun: [10:09] Um, do you think the festival here – engagement with Afrofuturism,
2 continues Hurston's legacy?
3

4 Tenea Johnson: [snapping] Hm. I think it has the potential to do so, but since this is the first
5 year, I can't say for sure that it does or it doesn't.
6

7 Grace Chun: You make a good point. Um, and then, [10:28] what can contemporary
8 Afrofuturists learn from Zora Neale Hurston?
9

10 Tenea Johnson: Hm. Be brave. Be open. Be articulate. [background conversation] Hm, and do
11 it exactly the way that you wanna do it, but let that be informed by best
12 practices. You know, she was not egotistical in what she did but she was
13 confident. And she did it well. And that's where confidence should come
14 from. [laughter] So...
15

16 Grace Chun: [10:54] Um, which, uh, Zora Neale Hurston's work do you...
17

18 Tenea Johnson: Uh...
19

20 Grace Chun: ...have you [background conversation] [inaudible 11:00]?
21

22 Tenea Johnson: I would...
23

24 Grace Chun: [Inaudible 11:02].
25

26 Tenea Johnson: ...have to say the ethnographies, honestly. Just because, um, I enjoy fiction
27 but sometimes I like seeing things that are not fictionalized at all like really
28 just seeing someone's observations of the world [background conversation]
29 and how they articulate them and organize them in a way that's just suppose to
30 communicate reality. So I can't pick one, but I would say just ethnographies in
31 general.
32

33 Grace Chun: [11:31] Um, so do you feel that the genre is growing?
34

35 Tenea Johnson: Yeah, definitely. It's definitely growing because it's commercial and because a
36 lotta people didn't know it existed and, and for some people, probably a good
37 number of people [background conversation] – if they don't know something's
38 an option, they don't pursue it.
39

40 Grace Chun: Mm-hm.
41

42 Tenea Johnson: So now that they know it's an option, "And maybe I can even make a living or
43 make a name for myself," then they're more open, um, to producing work and,
44 you know, it gives'm a little bit more hope. So that's good.
45

46 Grace Chun: [11:58] Are you able to focus [background conversation] fully on writing?

1
2Tenea Johnson: [clicking] No. I have a day job.
3
4Grace Chun: Okay.
5
6Tenea Johnson: I have a day job and I have a business of my own. I have, uh – some a my
7 work comes out through other presses and some of it comes through my own
8 press. And then because I do storytelling and music, and that's so odd in the
9 sense that if there's no infrastructure set up for that, then I need ta, ta put it out
10 myself. So...
11
12Grace Chun: [background conversation] [12:19] How did you kind of intersect the music
13 and storytelling?
14
15Tenea Johnson: For me, it was natural because, uh, I started writing songs and stories at the
16 same time.
17
18Grace Chun: Hm.
19
20Tenea Johnson: And for – there were portions of my life where I was known much more as a
21 musician than as a writer. So this is an interesting time 'cause now I'm sorta
22 known more as a writer, so it was more difficult for me to try to keep them
23 separate. So I just stopped doing that.
24
25Grace Chun: Hm. [laughter] [12:42] Have you met others that are doing similar – like
26 combining this?
27
28Tenea Johnson: I haven't, but that's not to say they're not out there. Because, I mean, if I listen
29 to certain jazz albums like "A Drum Is a Woman," you know, and certain, um,
30 even some performative poetry like – it gets close.
31
32Grace Chun: Mm-hm.
33
34Tenea Johnson: But because they're labeling it as something else, and it's not as narrative –
35 like they're looking at it as poetry or as music? They don't have as much of a
36 narrative [background conversation] arc, you know, but I think it's like, um,
37 storytelling at the end of the day. So it just happens to be a story that includes
38 music. [laughter]
39
40Grace Chun: [13:20] Um, so do you personally also consume a lot of speculative fiction?
41 [snapping]
42
43Tenea Johnson: I don't consume as much as others because I'm trying to create it all the time
44 [laughter] but I find, expecially now, I'm always – I'm more of a short story
45 reader, um, because I don't – like I like really [background conversation]
46 succinct novels that get ta the point. I'm sort of an impatient reader. [laughter]

1 So short stories work well for me. And they have to be done so well that, um,
2 it can teach me something about craft as well.
3
4 Grace Chun: Mm-hm. [13:52] Is film ever play into that?
5
6 Tenea Johnson: Oh, I love – yeah. I watch movies more than almost [background
7 conversation] – more than one should almost. I [inaudible 13:58] [laughter]
8 And I've been told, strangely, that my work is, "Oh, this is very cinematic," or
9 some other piece like, "This is very musical." Things that I never thought of
10 and didn't think were in there, but apparently are showing up anyway. But
11 yeah, yeah. And then [snapping] from the sp-, from – for the science fiction
12 angle? That's my favorite movie genre and I've probably seen more science
13 fiction movies than I've read science fiction books.
14
15 Grace Chun: Hm.
16
17 Tenea Johnson: 'Cause I read a lotta classics for sci-, like straight science fiction and not
18 speculative fiction...
19
20 Grace Chun: Hm.
21
22 Tenea Johnson: ...which were, you know, *Oxford Book of* this and that – they were very, um,
23 some of them are r-, really well-written but they're, they're really from like 1
24 or 2 perspectives, which is crazy considering that uni-, universe upon universe
25 to choose from and it's kinda the same thing. But in my experience, movies
26 have been a little bit better about that, expecially when they're not from the
27 U.S.
28
29 Grace Chun: [14:46] What are some of your favorites?
30
31 Tenea Johnson: Oh, uh, I gotta go with "Aliens," 'cause that was probably, you know – when I
32 was a kid, that was a-, that was so, um, classic. That was a great protagonist.
33 Um, uh, now that you're asking me, I can't think of the name of the movie.
34 What was the one - something with 9 – South Africa. I can't remember what
35 it is but, um, yeah, now that you're asking me, they've all just flown outta my
36 head. [laughter]
37
38 Grace Chun: Sorry.
39
40 Tenea Johnson: That's okay.
41
42 Grace Chun: You said that you watched a lot of international films?
43
44 Tenea Johnson: Yeah. Well, a good number of international films, let's say.
45
46 Grace Chun: Mm-hm.

1
2Tenea Johnson: Yeah.
3
4Grace Chun: [15:17] Um, have you come across any [background conversation] work in
5 Afrofuturism that are from abroad? [clicking]
6
7Tenea Johnson: Fr-, for Af-, – I wanna see "Atlantics." I have not seen it yet.
8
9Grace Chun: Hm.
10
11Tenea Johnson: But I've heard very good things about it. And that one that I can't think of
12 now, that's, uh, something 9. But it is a South African film essentially, where
13 – it's kind of a parable for apartheid.
14
15Grace Chun: Hm.
16
17Tenea Johnson: But they happen to be aliens as opposed to Black people and White people.
18 And then, you know, one of them becomes an alien, which is something that,
19 you know, we can't change races. So it's, um, an, an opportunity to explore
20 that, so that's another that I would choose. [background conversation] But
21 Afrofuturism, unfortunately, is probably a little less represented. I've probably
22 seen more Asian films that are spec.
23
24Grace Chun: Hm.
25
26Tenea Johnson: So – just 'cause there's a bigger market, um, and just more movies out.
27
28Grace Chun: Right.
29
30Tenea Johnson: Yeah.
31
32Grace Chun: [16:09] Um, are you working on any writing projects currently?
33
34Tenea Johnson: I am. I'm working on a fiction album and, um, also a collection, a linked
35 collection called *Blueprints For Better Worlds*. So, uh, I've become
36 somewhat, um, impatient with the world moving forward and I feel like
37 [honking] dystopian tales don't work. Cautionary tales don't work. They don't
38 actually change anything. It just gives you a language to explain the way in
39 which things are deteriorating, you know? Doublespeak – look at the Trump
40 era, you know? So with all these nice catchphrases, we don't, we don't have
41 any actual inspirational work that shows you how to do something.
42 [background conversation] Like [no one 16:51] knows what should be done.
43 We – even know how to do it, but maybe if, um, if you can actually place it in
44 people's minds in a way where it's as exciting as cosplay or this or that, it'll
45 actually help you do something. So I'm just taking technologies that already
46 exist or ar-, have already been designed and showing how, in these worlds, it

1 can save a world or make it a better world. Not a utopian world, just a better
2 world.
3
4 Grace Chun: Hm.
5
6 Tenea Johnson: So that's my current project. [background conversation] And then, you know,
7 try to link that to actual, real world, real world platforms and apps and tools to
8 actually help people. So...
9
10 Grace Chun: That's great.
11
12 Tenea Johnson: Yeah.
13
14 Grace Chun: [17:26] Um, so if someone was trying to find [clicking], um, [background
15 conversation] – I guess like where can people find you? [clicking]
16
17 Tenea Johnson: Google me. [laughter] So I have a website, all that good stuff, um, [clicking]
18 but yeah. I am, uh, I'm in Amazon, all those things. Now brick'n mortar
19 stores? It's gonna be harder, so I would say go online because, um,
20 distribution – the small press stuff, you'll be able to find. But the things that
21 I'm putting out through [Counterpoise 17:53] Records? You're gonna find
22 electronic versions of them or it's going to be print-on-demand. So the
23 simplest thing would just be put my name in, Tenea D. Johnson. [laughter]
24
25 Grace Chun: [18:02] Um, do readers engage with you on social media? [clicking]
26 [background conversation]
27
28 Tenea Johnson: Yeah, they do. M-, mostly what they say is that I need to say more or do more.
29 'Cause I'm not, I'm not a natural social media sp-, sorta person.
30
31 Tenea Johnson: Uh-huh.
32
33 Tenea Johnson: So – but anytime that someone takes the time to reach out and say that or
34 agree or be positive about whatever you're doing or encourage you to do it
35 more, I see that as, uh, sort of a gift. They didn't have to take time out of their
36 day to e-mail me or ping me or do all these things, so obviously [snapping] it
37 was, it was engaging enough for them to, to do that.
38
39 Grace Chun: Mm-hm.
40
41 Tenea Johnson: So I appreciate it.
42
43 Grace Chun: Yeah. [18:38] Um, do you have any other, I guess, thoughts you wanna share
44 about Afrofuturism [clicking] or... [background conversation]
45
46 Tenea Johnson: I hope that it can become a greater force than entertainment.

1
2 Grace Chun: Hm.
3
4 Tenea Johnson: I mean – but I hope that for all speculative fiction. I hope that for all futurism.
5 That it's not just an idea. That we do something with the idea.
6
7 Grace Chun: [18:58] Do you feel like you've seen that happen?
8
9 Tenea Johnson: Not the – I mean, there's a material difference if you're an actor or if you're a
10 director or if you're a writer. If you work in a, in the entertainment field, you
11 have more opportunities 'cause are more open to that. But outside of
12 entertainment? I have not yet seen that. No. So – but I hope to. [background
13 conversation]
14
15 Grace Chun: And it sounds like the genre is growing, so hopefully more people...
16
17 Tenea Johnson: Yeah.
18
19 Grace Chun: ...um, engage with the work.
20
21 Tenea Johnson: Yeah. And I think some of it is about defining – like sort of m-, making that
22 identity one that does something. That makes it powerful in a way where it's
23 not. Because it's just like potential, you know? [snapping] Everything's got
24 potential. It's just what you do with it. So I think there's a possibility. Make it
25 cool and – yeah, that's all you need. Make it cool.
26
27 Grace Chun: Mm-hm.
28
29 Tenea Johnson: 'Cause if someone's willing ta meticulously, uh, create some sort of a costume
30 – I don't – no disrespect by calling it a costume for cosplay and like immerse,
31 and immerse themselves in that? Then they can take that same energy and do
32 something more than pretend. Like what if you could actually make them a
33 little bit – like 10 percent of whatever it is they're trying to be by dressing up
34 this way? Like actually change some material part of their life that makes
35 them feel more [snapping] powerful [background conversation] and like the
36 world is bigger. 'Cause that's – I think, I think that's why people do those
37 things, 'cause they're not satisfied with the current state of the world. Like this
38 is so much cooler than what we live in, so I'm gonna go pretend to live in this
39 world for a little while, so...
40
41 Grace Chun: [20:26] So if someone is new ta Afrofuturism...
42
43 Tenea Johnson: Mm-hm.
44
45 Grace Chun: ...what would you recommend? Where...
46

1Tenea Johnson: Oh....
2
3Grace Chun: ...would you recommend they start?
4
5Tenea Johnson: Well, I'd ask them what kinda stuff they like. I tend to like things that are – I
6 like difficult things. I like – I'm a big proponent of, "We get through things,
7 we don't get over things." So like – I mean I, uh, read *Beloved* as a kid, you
8 know, liking – so I was really into it. That's not gonna be the book for a lotta
9 people. [laughter]
10
11Grace Chun: Mm-hm.
12
13Tenea Johnson: It's pretty heavy, [laughter] so I would have to ask them what sort of things
14 they enjoy. And then, you know, I'd probably, I'd probably still go
15 [background conversation] – Márquez or, um, Kurt Vonnegut, Octavia
16 Butler, hm, [pause] [tsk] and some others. But yeah, I try to get a read for their
17 personality first. And if they like literary or wordier stuff or if they want – if
18 they want space opera, I'm gonna have ta ask'm what else because I don't read
19 as much space opera. But yeah, that's what I would say. [background
20 conversation]
21
22Grace Chun: All right. Um, those are all of my questions. [21:31] Do you have any more?
23
24Tenea Johnson: No.
25
26Grace Chun: Any final thoughts or...
27
28Tenea Johnson: Hm.
29
30Grace Chun: ...um...
31
32Tenea Johnson: Final thoughts on Afrofuturism. I would say, um, onward, you know? Let's...
33
34Grace Chun: Hm.
35
36Tenea Johnson: ...not be a commodity. Let's not be a flash in the pan. Let's be something more
37 [background conversation] and find that way that Afrofuturism can become
38 collaborative, you know? Because I would like to see it expand a bit more, so
39 that it's, it's marginalized peoples in general. Like what is our future?
40
41Grace Chun: Hm.
42
43Tenea Johnson: What are we gonna define and what are – how are we going to do this? Uh,
44 but I do think it is very important [background conversation] for, for whatever
45 group it is to have their, their time and their moment and not just be lost and
46 like, "Well, it's not about just you. It's all of us." No, no. It really is about

1 both. Like I feel like that's the strength [and puricity 22:20]. It is what makes
2 us different, but take what makes us the same and gets [inaudible 22:26].
3
4 Grace Chun: Mm-hm.
5
6 Tenea Johnson: So...
7
8 Grace Chun: [22:27] So you feel hopeful about that [inaudible 22:28]?
9
10 Tenea Johnson: Yeah, sure. I mean, 'cause what's the alternative? [laughter] That's not, I know,
11 a super positive way of looking at it, but, you know, I would choose hope. I
12 would choose more than hope. I would choose actual change, but hope is an
13 absolutely essential part a that.
14
15 Grace Chun: Uh, thank you so much.
16
17 Tenea Johnson: Thank you, Grace.
18
19 Grace Chun: Yeah.
20
21 Tenea Johnson: Good questions.
22
23 Grace Chun: And if you're – if there's anything else during the day...
24
25 Tenea Johnson: Yeah.
26
27 Grace Chun: ...that you'd like to share or add more, if you have more thoughts...
28
29 Tenea Johnson: Okay.
30
31 Grace Chun: ...we'll be around.
32
33 Tenea Johnson: All right. Sounds good. [snapping]
34
35
36/lb