

I.B.14 – QUEENS COLLEGE - RESOLUTION TO AWARD HONORARY DEGREES

RESOLVED, that Queens College award Ira Katznelson, Misty Copeland and Darren Walker the degree of Doctor of Humane Letters, *honoris causa*, at the college's annual commencement ceremony on June 2, 2016.

EXPLANATION:

Ira Katznelson is a public intellectual who co-founded, *Politics and Society*, one of the foremost journals of the social sciences and humanities. He has been a Guggenheim Fellow and was elected as a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and of the American Philosophical Society. Dr. Katznelson has written widely on the state of the disciplines of political science and the social sciences and his most passionate concerns have been devoted to issues of race, class and inequality.

Misty Copeland is an accomplished ballerina who has made history for being the first black woman to perform the lead role of "Odette/Odile" in American Ballet Theatre's *Swan Lake*. She is also an author and an advocate for children and youth. Ms. Copeland dedicates her time to work with and mentor young girls and boys. Her exemplary work has led to her induction into the Boys & Girls Club National Hall of Fame. She has also received the "Breakthrough Award" from the Council of Urban Professionals and has been named National Youth of the Year Ambassador for the Boys & Girls Clubs of America. Ms. Copeland has also been appointed by President Obama to serve on the President's Council on Fitness, Sports, and Nutrition.

Darren Walker heads the nation's second largest philanthropic organization. He has been a leader in the nonprofit and philanthropic sectors for twenty years, working on an array of social justice issues including education, human rights, urban development, and free expression. Prior to his work at the Ford Foundation, Mr. Walker had a decade-long career in international law and finance at Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton and UBS. As COO of Harlem's leading community development organization, the Abyssinian Development Corporation, he oversaw development of over 1,000 new units of low-income housing and Harlem's first commercial development in twenty years. Mr. Walker graduated from the University of Texas at Austin in 1982 with a Bachelor of Arts in government and a Bachelor of Science in speech communication. In 1986, he graduated from the University of Texas School of Law, with a Juris Doctor. Darren Walker's leadership, professional achievements, civic consciousness, and global impact make him an ideal recipient of this award.

Ira Katznelson

Ira Katznelson is a public intellectual who co-founded, *Politics and Society*, one of the foremost journals of the social sciences and humanities. Dr. Katznelson, was president of the American Political Science Association, and is currently president of the Social Science Research Council and Ruggles Professor of Political Science and History at Columbia University.

He has been a Guggenheim Fellow and was elected as a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and of the American Philosophical Society. Dr. Katznelson has written or co-written ten books, co-edited several others, and published over sixty journal articles. His book *Liberalism's Crooked Circle: Letters to Adam Michnik*, won APSA's Michael Harrington Prize. His other publication, *Desolation and Enlightenment*, won the David and Elaine Spitz Award of the Conference of Political Thought, given to the best book in liberal or democratic theory, as well as the David Easton Award of APSA's Foundations of Political Thought Section.

The David and Elaine Spitz award originated at the Graduate Center of CUNY where David Spitz was a long time faculty member. This was only one of several ties that Katznelson had with CUNY. Early in his career, one of his first teaching jobs was as an adjunct at Queens College. Katznelson graduated from Columbia University with a B.A. and completed his PhD in history at the University of Cambridge.

Although Katznelson has written widely on the state of the disciplines of political science and the social sciences, his most passionate concerns have been devoted to issues of race, class and inequality. The many books that he has written on these topics have dissected patterns of urban politics, analyzed the nature of failures of schooling and the democratic ideal, enabled us to better understand working class formation in Europe and the United States, and shed light on paths of emancipation of Jews through history.

His most recent book, *Fear Itself: The New Deal and the Origins of Our Time*, (Norton, 2013) dissects the sectional, class, international and political interests that interacted to produce the foundations of the prolonged racial disparities and economic inequalities of our present society.

Misty Copeland

Misty Copeland's extraordinary talent, professional achievements, civic consciousness, and global impact make her especially worthy of this award. She is not only an accomplished ballerina who has made history for being the first black woman to perform the lead role of "Odette/Odile" in American Ballet Theatre's *Swan Lake*, but is also an author and an advocate for children and youth.

Ms. Copeland's accomplishments are most impressive given her non-traditional professional and personal trajectory. Born in 1982, and one of six children, Ms. Copeland began her ballet studies at the late age of thirteen. Her remarkable talent catapulted her to join the American Ballet Theatre as a member of the corps de ballet only six years later. By 2007 she became the company's second African American female Soloist and in 2015 was promoted to principal dancer, making her the first African American woman to ever be promoted to the position in the company's 75-year history.

Particularly consistent with Queens College's motto of learning in order to serve, Ms. Copeland meaningfully fuses her artistic prowess with civic engagement. Never forgetting that her young ambitions and talent were first identified and supported by a teacher's encouragement to take ballet classes at the local Boys and Girls Club in San Pedro, California, Ms. Copeland dedicates her time to work with and mentor young girls and boys. Her exemplary work has led to her induction into the Boys & Girls Club National Hall of Fame. She has also received the "Breakthrough Award" from the Council of Urban Professionals and has been named National Youth of the Year Ambassador for the Boys & Girls Clubs of America. Ms. Copeland has also been appointed by President Obama to serve on the President's Council on Fitness, Sports, and Nutrition.

Ms. Copeland is the author of the New York Times Bestselling memoir, *Life in Motion*, co-written with award-winning journalist and author Charisse Jones, published March 2014. She also has a picture book titled *Firebird* in collaboration with award-winning illustrator and author Christopher Myers, published September 2014. In addition to her successful publications, she has received an honorary doctorate from the University of Hartford for her contributions to classical ballet and helping to diversify the art form.

Darren Walker

Darren Walker heads the nation's second largest philanthropic organization. For two decades he has been a leader in the nonprofit and philanthropic sectors, working on an array of social justice issues including education, human rights, urban development, and free expression. Mr. Walker's humble beginnings, having been raised by a single mother in Ames and later Goose Creek, Texas have continually informed and inspired his academic and career choices. His personal and professional trajectory exemplifies Queens College's motto of the critical link that must be forged between our own intellectual pursuits and the human causes in need of advancement in our world.

Prior to his work at the Ford Foundation, Mr. Walker had a decade-long career in international law and finance at Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton and UBS. As COO of Harlem's leading community development organization, the Abyssinian Development Corporation, he oversaw development of over 1,000 new units of low-income housing and Harlem's first commercial development in twenty years.

Mr. Walker is a member of the boards of Carnegie Hall, New York City Ballet, the High Line, and the Arcus Foundation. He is also a member of the Council on Foreign Relations, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and the recipient of several honorary degrees. He has received the Distinguished Alumnus Award, the highest honor given by his alma mater, the University of Texas at Austin.

Mr. Walker graduated from the University of Texas at Austin in 1982 with a Bachelor of Arts in government and a Bachelor of Science in speech communication. In 1986, he graduated from the University of Texas School of Law, with a Juris Doctor.

Darren Walker's leadership, professional achievements, civic consciousness, and global impact make him an ideal recipient of this award. It would be a tremendous honor for the City University of New York and Queens College in particular to recognize and honor him through the granting of an honorary degree.