The Program in Creative Writing presents

AL THEA WARD CLARK W’21
READING SERIES 2015–16

Wednesday, September 30
HODDER FELLOWS:
Natalie Diaz
Phil Klay

Wednesday, October 14
Jhumpa Lahiri
Mary Szybist

Wednesday, November 18
Dorianne Laux

Wednesday, December 16
Student Readings

Wednesday, February 10
Claudia Rankine

Wednesday, March 9
Edwidge Danticat
Robert Hass

Wednesday, April 6
Ciaran Berry
Nell Zink

Wednesday, April 27
Student Readings
Chancellor Green Rotunda

Monday, May 2
Thesis Readings in Poetry, Screenwriting, and Translation
Prospect House

Wednesday, May 4
Thesis Readings in Fiction
Prospect House

Tuesday, October 27
Marie Howe delivers the Theodore H. Holmes ’51
and Bernice Holmes Holmes Lecture

All readings take place at 4:30 p.m. at the Berlind
Theatre, McCarter Theatre Center unless noted otherwise.
Free and open to the public.

For more about the Program in Creative Writing visit
arts.princeton.edu

The Berlind Theatre
McCarter Theatre Center
Claudia Rankine


She won the PEN Open Book Award and National Book Critics Circle Award for Poetry for Citizen, the first book ever to be named a finalist in both the poetry and criticism categories. Citizen also holds the distinction of being the only poetry book to be a New York Times bestseller in the nonfiction category. In 2014 Rankine was awarded the Poets & Writers’ Jackson Poetry Prize and was a National Book Award Finalist. She has also been a recipient of the Academy of American Poets Fellowship. She co-edited the anthologies The Racial Imaginary: Writers on Race in the Life of the Mind and American Women Poets in the 21st Century: Where Lyric Meets Language, and her work is included in several anthologies, including Great American Prose Poems: From Poe to the Present, Best American Poetry 2001, Giant Step: African American Writing at the Crossroads of the Century, and The Garden Thrives: Twentieth Century African-American Poetry. She lives and teaches in California.

Her work often crosses genres as it tracks wild and precise movements of mind. Noting that “hers is an art neither of epiphany nor story,” critic Calvin Bedient observed that “Rankine’s style is the sanity, but just barely, of the insanity, the grace, but just barely, of the grotesqueness.” Discussing the borrowed and fragmentary sources for her work in an interview with Paul Legault for the Academy of American Poets, Rankine stated, “I don’t feel any commitment to any external idea of the truth. I feel like the making of the thing is the truth, will make its own truth.”

Rankine has been awarded fellowships from the Academy of American Poets, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the Lannan Foundation. In 2013, she was elected as a chancellor of the Academy of American Poets, and in 2014 she received a Lannan Literary Award. She has taught at the University of Houston, Case Western Reserve University, Barnard College, and Pomona College.

“Marrying prose, poetry, and the visual image, Citizen investigates the ways in which racism pervades daily American social and cultural life, rendering certain of its citizens politically invisible. Rankine’s formally inventive book challenges our notion that citizenship is only a legal designation that the state determines by expanding that definition to include a larger understanding of civic belonging and identity, built out of cross-racial empathy, communal responsibility, and a deeply shared commitment to equality.”

—National Book Award Judges’ Citation