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February 13, 2015

**Lewis Center for the Arts at Princeton Announces**

**Hodder Fellows for 2015-2016**

***Fellowships are awarded to writer Phil Klay, choreographer Beth Gill, performer and scenic artist Matt Saunders, and poet Natalie Diaz***

(Princeton, NJ) The Lewis Center for the Arts at Princeton University has announced the selection of four Mary MacKall Gwinn Hodder Fellows for the 2015-2016 academic year. Writer Phil Klay, choreographer Beth Gill, scenic designer and performance artist Matt Saunders, and poet Natalie Diaz are this year’s recipients of the Hodder, created to provide artists and humanists in the early stages of their careers an opportunity to undertake significant new work.

“The Hodder Fellowships are awarded to people who have begun to build a respected body of work, but have not yet received widespread recognition,” noted Lewis Center Chair Michael Cadden in making the announcement. “Mrs. Hodder created an enviable opportunity for a year of what she called ‘studious leisure’ during which the fellows would have the time to move their work to the next level. Hodder Fellows do not teach. Their only obligation is to their work.”

Hodder Fellows may be writers, composers, choreographers, visual artists, performance artists, or other kinds of artists or humanists who have, as the program outlines, "much more than ordinary intellectual and literary gifts.” While many have published a first book or created other work that has contributed to their fields, the fellowship provides them the opportunity to devote themselves fully to their current or next project. Artists from anywhere may apply in the early fall each year for the following academic year. Past Hodder Fellows have included poet Michael Dickman, novelist Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, playwright Will Eno, choreographer Nora Chipamurie, and composer and lyricist Michael Friedman.

**Phil Klay’s** short story collection, *Redeployment*, received the 2015 John Leonard Prize from the National Book Critics Circle Award and the 2014 National Book Award for Fiction and was shortlisted for the Frank O’Connor Prize. He was also named a National Book Foundation “5 Under 35” honoree. Klay is a graduate of Dartmouth College and a veteran of the U.S. Marine Corps, having served in Iraq’s Anbar Province from January 2007 to February 2008 as a Public Affairs Officer. After being discharged, he studied creative writing at Hunter College. His story “Redeployment” was originally published in *Granta* and is included in *Fire and Forget: Short Stories from the Long War*. His writing has also appeared in *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Newsweek*, and *Tin House*. He is currently working on a novel about U.S. involvement in Colombia.

**Beth Gill** is an award-winning choreographer whose body of work explores issues within the fields of contemporary dance and performance studies through the lens of aesthetics and perception. Gill has received commissions from New York Live Arts, The Chocolate Factory Theater, The Kitchen, and Dance Theater Workshop, and her work has toured nationally and internationally including: Fusebox (Texas), The Nazareth College Dance Festival (New York), and Dance Umbrella (United Kingdom). Gill was awarded two New York State Dance and Performance “Bessie” Awards in 2011 for Outstanding Emerging Choreographer, as well as the prestigious Juried Award. In 2012 *Dance Magazine* named her one of the top 25 artists to watch. A graduate of New York University’s Tisch School of the Arts, Gill has been a guest artist and teacher at Barnard College, Eugene Lang College the New School for Liberal Arts, Arizona State University, New York University’s Experimental Theater Wing, Bard College, the New York State Summer School of the Arts, and the American Dance Festival.

**Matt Saunders,** based in Philadelphia, is a Barrymore Award-winning performer, scenic designer, and a creator of new performance work. He is a co-founding member and Associate Artistic Director of the OBIE Award-winning New Paradise Laboratories (NPL), and he has been involved in the creation of NPL’s devised work including *Prom*, a co-production with the Tony Award-Winning Children’s Theatre Company in Minneapolis; *BATCH*, at the 2007 Humana Festival at the Actor’s Theatre of Louisville; and *Fatebook*, which was selected for the United States’ professional pavilion at the Prague Quadrennial 2011. Outside of NPL, Saunders has designed over ninety productions. Off-Broadway work includes *Good Person of Szechwan* and *The Tempest* at the Public Theater, and *As You Like It* for the Acting Company. Regionally, he has designed at The Guthrie Theater, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Yale Repertory Theatre, Arden Theatre Company, Pig Iron Theatre Company, and Philadelphia’s Headlong Dance Company. Saunders is a 2014 Pew Fellow, holds an M.F.A. from Yale School of Drama, and is the Assistant Professor of Design in the Department of Theater at Swarthmore College. Saunders plans to use the Hodder Fellowship as an intensive period of development on a design-based, devised performance work that he will write, design and direct.

**Natalie Diaz**’s first poetry collection, *When My Brother Was an Aztec*, was published by Copper Canyon Press in 2012. She was a 2012 Lannan Literary Fellow and a 2012 Native Arts Council Foundation Artist Fellow. In 2014, she was awarded a Bread Loaf Fellowship, as well as the Holmes National Poetry Prize from Princeton University, and a U.S. Artists Ford Fellowship. Diaz was born and raised in the Fort Mojave Indian Village in Needles, California, on the banks of the Colorado River. A former professional basketball player, she is Mojave and an enrolled member of the Gila River Indian Tribe. She teaches at the Institute of American Indian Arts Low Rez M.F.A. program and lives in Mohave Valley, Arizona, where she directs the Fort Mojave Language Recovery Program, working with the last remaining speakers at Fort Mojave to teach and revitalize the Mojave language. She will work on finishing her second poetry collection during her fellowship year.

In addition to creating new work, Hodder Fellows may engage in lectures, readings, performances, exhibitions and other events at the Lewis Center for the Arts, most of which are free and open to the public.

To learn more about the Hodder Fellows, the Lewis Center for the Arts, and the over 100 public events presented each year, visit [arts.princeton.edu](http://www.princeton.edu/arts).

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