

Media Contact:

Steve Runk
Director of Communications
Lewis Center for the Arts
Princeton University
185 Nassau Street
Princeton, New Jersey 08544
srunk@princeton.edu
609.258.5262

For Immediate Release

February 6, 2017

**Award-Winning Fiction Writer Chinelo Okparanta Reads with Six Seniors in
Princeton's Creative Writing Program**

*Writer in series organized by Princeton students in collaboration
with Labyrinth Books*



Photo caption: Award-winning fiction writer Chinelo Okparanta

Photo credit: Kelechi Okere

What/Who: Reading by award-winning fiction writer Chinelo Okparanta and six seniors in Princeton's Program in Creative Writing, part of the C. K. Williams Reading Series

When: February 17 at 6:00 p.m.

Where: Labyrinth Books, 122 Nassau St., Princeton

Free and open to the public

(Princeton, NJ) Writer Chinelo Okparanta and six seniors in the Lewis Center for the Arts' Program in Creative Writing at Princeton University will read from their work on Friday, February 17 at Labyrinth Books. The reading is part of the C. K. Reading Series, which showcases senior thesis students of the Program in Creative Writing with established writers as special guests. Featuring student writers Harrison Blackman, Samantha Cody, Diana Liao, Zeena Mubarak, Robin Spiess, and Anna Windemuth, the reading begins at 6:00 p.m. at Labyrinth Books, located at 122 Nassau Street. The event is free and open to the public.

Chinelo Okparanta is the author of *Under the Udala Trees* (2015) and *Happiness, Like Water* (2013). Her honors include an O. Henry Prize, two Lambda Awards in Fiction, and finalist selections for the Etisalat Prize, the New York Public Library Young Lions Award, the Caine Prize, and the Rolex Mentor and Protégé Arts Initiative. Okparanta has held fellowships and faculty appointments at Columbia University, City College of New York, Purdue University, Colgate University (Olive B. O'Connor Fellow in Fiction), University of Iowa (Provost's Postgraduate Visiting Writer), Middlebury College (Bread Loaf's John Gardner Fellow in Fiction), and Howard University (Hurston/Wright Foundation Summer Writing Workshop Fiction Faculty), among others. She has also been awarded residencies by the Jentel Foundation, the Hermitage Foundation, the Civitella Ranieri Foundation, and Hedgebrook. Her stories have appeared in *Granta*, *The New Yorker*, *Tin House*, and elsewhere. She was born and raised in Port Harcourt, Nigeria, and is currently a Professor of English and Creative Writing at Bucknell University, where she is also a Grange and Rogers Faculty Research Fellow.

The six seniors, who are pursuing a certificate in Creative Writing in addition to their major areas of study, will read from their senior thesis projects. Each is currently working on a novel, a screenplay, translations, or a collection of poems or short stories as a part of a creative thesis for their certificate. Thesis students in the Program in Creative Writing work closely with a member of the faculty, which includes Jeffrey Eugenides, Jhumpa Lahiri, Paul Muldoon, Kirstin Valdez Quade, James Richardson, Tracy K. Smith, Susan Wheeler, Edmund White, and a number of

distinguished lecturers.

The series, hosted by the seniors in the program, is intended to present a public showcase for the work of the thesis students and give the senior class the opportunity to read with and learn from established writers they admire. The series is named in honor of Pulitzer Prize and National Book Award-winning poet C. K. Williams, who served on Princeton's creative writing faculty for twenty years.

The Program in Creative Writing also presents the Althea Ward Clark W'21 Reading Series on Wednesdays at the Berlind Theatre at McCarter Theatre Center. Upcoming guests include Douglas Kearney, Kirstin Valdez Quade, John Ashbery, and Jim Jarmusch.

To learn more about the reading, the Program in Creative Writing, and the more than 100 public events presented each year by Lewis Center for the Arts, visit arts.princeton.edu.

###