

# American Academy of Arts and Letters

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## NEWS RELEASE

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### THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF ARTS AND LETTERS ANNOUNCES 2016 LITERATURE AWARD WINNERS

New York, March 22, 2016 – The American Academy of Arts and Letters announced today the names of 21 writers who will receive its 2016 awards in literature. The awards will be presented in New York at the Academy's annual Ceremonial in May. The literature prizes, totaling \$550,000, honor both established and emerging writers of fiction, nonfiction, drama, and poetry. The Academy's 250 members propose candidates, and a rotating committee of writers selects winners. This year's award committee members were John Guare, Sharon Olds, Anne Tyler, Rosanna Warren, and Joy Williams.

#### Arts and Letters Awards in Literature

Eight Arts and Letters Awards in Literature honor exceptional accomplishment in any genre. This year, the awards of \$10,000 each will be presented to

**TA-NEHISI COATES · JOSHUA FERRIS · STEPHEN ADLY GUIRGIS ·  
TERRANCE HAYES · LYNN NOTTAGE · KATIE PETERSON  
MARK POLIZZOTTI · SPENCER REECE**

#### Benjamin H. Danks Award

of \$20,000 given every three years to an exceptional young playwright

**BRANDEN JACOBS-JENKINS**

#### E. M. Forster Award

\$20,000 to a young writer from the United Kingdom or Ireland for a stay in the United States. Award jury: Alison Lurie, Colm Tóibín.

**SINÉAD MORRISSEY**

of Ireland

#### Sue Kaufman Prize for First Fiction

\$5000 for a work of first fiction (novel or short stories) published in 2015.

**KIRSTIN VALDEZ QUADE**

for *Night at the Fiestas*

#### Award of Merit Medal

and \$25,000 to an outstanding poet.

**HENRI COLE**

#### Katherine Anne Porter Award

of \$20,000 to a prose writer.

**KATHRYN DAVIS**

#### American Academy in Rome Fellowships in Literature

John Guare Writer's Fund Rome Prize

Joseph Brodsky Rome Prize

A one-year (2016-2017) residency at the American Academy in Rome.

**JACK LIVINGS**

**MATTHEW NEILL NULL**

**Rosenthal Family Foundation Award**

of \$10,000 to a young writer of considerable literary talent for a work published in 2015.

**ANTHONY MARRA**

for *The Tsar of Love and Techno*

**Mildred and Harold Strauss Livings**

of \$200,000 to each of two writers to enable them to devote time exclusively to writing.

**ADAM HASLETT**

**JESMYN WARD**

**Harold D. Vursell Memorial Award**

of \$20,000 to a writer whose work merits recognition for the quality of its prose style.

**RACHEL KUSHNER**

**Thornton Wilder Prize for Translation**

of \$20,000 to a practitioner, scholar, or patron who has made a significant contribution to the art of literary translation.

**JAMEY GAMBRELL**

**Morton Dauwen Zabel Award**

of \$10,000 to a fiction writer with progressive, original, and experimental tendencies.

**JAMES HANNAHAM**

The American Academy of Arts and Letters was established in 1898 to “foster, assist, and sustain an interest in literature, music, and the fine arts.” Election to the Academy is considered the highest formal recognition of artistic merit in this country. Founding members include William Merritt Chase, Kenyon Cox, Daniel Chester French, Childe Hassam, Henry James, Theodore Roosevelt, Elihu Vedder, and Woodrow Wilson. The Academy is currently comprised of 250 of America’s leading voices in the fields of Art, Architecture, Literature, and Music. The Academy presents exhibitions of art, architecture, and manuscripts, and readings and performances of new musicals. It is located in three landmark buildings designed by McKim, Mead & White, Cass Gilbert, and Charles Pratt Huntington, on Audubon Terrace at 155 Street and Broadway, New York City.