

JUNE 2024 ISSUE

PUBLISH'D AFIKA

LITERARY MAGAZINE

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Prize For
Publishing In
Africa

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With Moeketsi
Mazibuko

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Designed & Compiled by Sukoluhle Nontokozo Mdlongwa
Edited by Thokozani Magagula

CONTACT DETAILS

Call/WhatsApp: +27 83 487 4440/ +27 74 643 0618

Email: info@publishdafrika.com

Website: www.publishdafrika.com

Facebook: Publish'd Afrika Magazine

From The Editor's Desk

The recent expose of a “scammer” self-publisher on Ther Devi Show on ENCA has once again shone the spotlight on self-publishing, and this has once again begged the question: **Should this industry be regulated? If yes, how and by who?**

Almost on cue, a feeding frenzy akin to vultures pouncing on the remnants of a lion's kill ensued, as a number of ‘opportunistic’ self-publishers began cannibalising on this publisher's already shredded image, in the process positioning themselves as better alternatives. Don't get me wrong, I am in no way sympathising with the so-called scammer publisher. I believe rooting out people like him is good for the industry. What I have a problem with is some self-publishers' determination to monopolise the industry, which in itself is giving the self-publishing space a bad rap.

How is monopolising the self-publishing space a bad idea? Most self-publishing agencies are small-scale, one or two-man operations. Very few are (if they are there) boost of a large staff component similar to traditional publishing houses, complete with people who are multi-skilled to handle the publishing of a book with ease. They often also lack the financial muscle to outsource services, such as graphic design, editing and the hiring of Readers (experts in the subject matter of your book). This is mainly because most authors do not have the money to afford this anyway.

The result is that the self-publisher, finding himself with over 50 manuscripts that have been paid for in one month alone, opting to simply package and print, having paid scant attention (if any) to the author's work. **Now here's a point to ponder:** With all the resources, a building full of experts and the financial muscle to boot, a traditional publisher publishes at least ten titles a year or less. Read our interview with Kwela Book's Stevlyn Vermeulen in our May 2023 edition of the magazine. Here's the link to the magazine: <http://publishdafrika.com/2023/05/28/publishd-afrika-magazine-may-edition/>

The internet today is littered with hundreds of self-proclaimed publishers, each one promising to make your dream of getting published come true – if you can afford it. Writing groups here on Facebook are battling to contain such publishers, as they flood walls and comment sections with their offerings, each one gunning for the new author – the gullible, desperate to be published debut author. Most of them, such as the ones who have shamelessly pounced on the carcass of the so-called scammer publisher, would do anything to monopolise the self-publishing space.

Almost every budding writer I have come across in the last six months, laments one thing – not having money to publish. Each one has been so brainwashed into thinking they have to

pay to publish, and that there is no other way. I thought we should re-visit the options open to writers, as far as publishing is concerned. Folks, you have various options to publish, and self-publishing is just one of them. You can submit your work to a traditional publisher, or self-publish. Naturally, a traditional publisher will not charge you money to publish your work, but it is not easy getting published the traditional way.

Traditional publishers opt for work that will give them returns on their investment. Often, they would have paid you an advance and would handle all the costs of publishing your work, including marketing and distribution. So, any writer hoping to publish traditionally, will have to work hard on their craft, and write a book that will sell. That, though, only gives you a foot in the door. Unknown writers rarely break into this sphere of publishing. Known writers guarantee sales because they already have an audience.

But it is not all doom and gloom, as some self-publishers would want you to believe. New authors hoping to convince a traditional publisher to sign them up will have to work hard at meeting the publisher halfway. Here are a few pointers:

1. Ensure your work is world-class and is sellable.

- A celebrity can write the worst book on earth but because they have an audience and a following, a traditional publisher can still give them a chance, can hire a ghost writer and a competent editor to help them out. You on the other hand only have one shot, so put everything you've got into that manuscript.

2. Do your research on what sells.

- Traditional publishers have been rejecting manuscripts in droves simply because the books are badly written, they are either too popular forms of writing, or there are books on the topics gathering dust on bookshelves. It's a delicate balancing act that defeats even seasoned authors. No publisher will publish a book that has already been written, so check if there are already similar books in the market and if you have to continue with the project, find ways of making your offering as unique and diverse as possible.

3. Build your author profile and grow your audience.

- If you want to convince a traditional publisher to sign you up, show them numbers. Prove that you have a following, because that guarantees sales. Just how many people do you have on your emailing list? Are you a recognisable expert in the subject you have chosen to write about? Do you have an author page? How many people are following your work and what is their interaction to the author and to the chapters you posted? Do you have a following on Twitter, TikTok, Instagram?

- Would anyone walking into a bookstore recognise your name on a book cover? As an aspiring writer, the best way of getting your name out there is to enter as many writing contests as you

possibly can. You don't have to win all of them. Getting longlisted or shortlisted is enough – it builds your author profile. This is more important especially for poets, who continually get shunned by traditional publishers.

But if you decide to self-publish, it is important to first learn the business of publishing as this will help you not to fall prey to the so-called scammers. Daily, I come across aspiring authors who merely want to publish, as if having your manuscript converted into a book is the promised land and an end to the journey. None of these writers know that getting published is just the beginning. Sadly, most of them are conditioned to think this way by predatory self-publish service providers, who convince them that their books will sell like hotcakes without any effort on their part.

Know that if you self-publish, the marketing and distribution of your work falls on you. Selling your book to family and friends does not count as sales. The real readers are out there, and if you haven't devised a game plan of reaching them by the time your book is out, you may just as well stack the books up in your garage. Ask any self-published author and they will tell you that it is not every book that lands on a bookstore shelf, least of all self-published books. You will have to prove that your book is in demand to be reserved space in any bookstore.

Research about publishers who offer self-publishing services to you. Most of them are nothing more than glorified messengers, or middlemen. While they promise to help you publish your book, in essence what they do is to simply pass your manuscript and cover to printing companies, unedited most of the time. At times they can't help it – it is because of their dogged determination to monopolise the self-publishing space. The more writers who want to get published come their way, the less time they have to pay any attention to editing, proofreading or even typesetting. The quicker they can get the books out, the better, as this means more money into their pockets.

It is important for writers planning to go the self-publish route to know the business inside-out. Don't lower the standard of your work just because you are now self-publishing. One of the reasons self-published books are not getting the respect they deserve, is because most of them are not worth the paper they are printed on. The author often trusted the service provider with the editing of the manuscript, simply because they advertised that they also offer editing services, when they can't even spell 'manuscript'. Some budding writers would also shut the door on a self-publisher who tells them that the publishing process would take between four to six months. This, for them, is too long. The next self-publisher they turn to publishes the book within a week, and cheaper, too. A month down the line, it is the writer who complains about glaring grammatical errors, a bad cover and blurb, and poor typesetting and formatting.

If we want the self-publishing industry, and indeed self-published books, to be taken seriously and respected, the onus is on us self-publishers and self-published authors to treat our work

with the same respect we want to receive. If we should call each other out for mediocrity or poor workmanship, let's do so without being blatantly and shamelessly self-serving. There's absolutely nothing wrong with marketing yourself as a self-publisher, but it wouldn't hurt doing so with dignity.



INTWASA
Short Story Competition
THE YVONNE VERA LITERARY AWARD 2024

The **Yvonne Vera Literary Award** is the winning prize for the annual Intwasa Short Story Competition, named after the late Dr Yvonne Vera who was arguably one of the best writers writing in English out of Bulawayo and Zimbabwe. The annual literary competition seeks to promote and celebrate original prose writing talent in English.

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

- Entries for the competition should be new, fresh, unpublished pieces written in English.
- The competition is open, there is no theme.
- Entries must be typed, in Word format and must be between 2000 and 3000 words.
- No extracts from novels will be considered; ONLY one entry per person will be considered.
- All Zimbabwean citizens living and writing from anywhere in the world are eligible for the competition.
- All entries should have a cover page with the following information: **NAME, CITY/TOWN, EMAIL ADDRESS, TELEPHONE NUMBER**
- The writer's name should ONLY appear on the cover page
- Only short-listed candidates will be personally notified

HOW TO ENTER
Entries clearly marked '**YVONNE VERA AWARD 2024**' should be sent via email to **admin@intwasa.co.zw**

1st PRIZE US300

2nd PRIZE US200

Deadline for submissions
••••• **28 June 2024**

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RSA's Bauling Shortlisted for Commonwealth Prize – Again!



The frequent sight of people queueing for their social grants, both before and after the lockdown, prompted writer Jayne Bauling to craft a distinctly South African short story, and it is this short piece of fiction that has been shortlisted for the Commonwealth Short Story Prize 2024.

Jayne, from Mpumalanga, South Africa, is one of five African writers that have been shortlisted for the prize. She writes mostly for youth – novels primarily – and stories for Fundza Literacy Trust, where her short stories satisfy the need to write for adults as well.

The Commonwealth Short Story Prize is awarded annually for the best piece of unpublished short fiction from any of the Commonwealth's 54 member states. The stories on the 2024 shortlist were selected from a total of 7,359 entries. Small countries like Mauritius, Rwanda and St

Kitts and Nevis have authors on the shortlist for the first time.

Jayne, however, is no stranger to being shortlisted for the prize. She has been shortlisted twice before, and this is the third time. She spoke to **PUBLISH'D AFRIKA** about what it means for her personally as a writer, for South Africa and for the African continent.

PUBLISH'D AFRIKA: You have been shortlisted for the Commonwealth Short Story Prize – again! How does this feel?

JAYNE: It's a huge confidence boost. Like so many writers, I experience those imposter syndrome moments of feeling like a fraud, so being shortlisted for an international

prize enables me to remind myself that, “Hey, I really can write.”

PUBLISH'D AFRIKA: You have been shortlisted twice before and this is the third time. What lessons have you drawn from this experience three times over, and how has it helped your growth as a writer?

JAYNE: For a long time, I didn't really appreciate short fiction, but since first attempting it, I've learnt that you can tell a whole story in just a few thousand words. I believe I've become a subtler writer, while still being able to have a powerful impact on readers, moving them in both an emotional and an intellectual sense.

PUBLISH'D AFRIKA: How does being South African and living in South Africa, with its rich cultural diversity, influence your writing?

JAYNE: Being South African, and living here, is the greatest gift I've been given as a writer. The diversity is an inspiration, but I also draw stories from the desperate inequality still afflicting South Africa, although my characters and their personal stories must remain central, any social issues serving as scaffolding for the story.

PUBLISH'D AFRIKA: Do you think writers have any role to play in changing the country, and indeed the world, for the better? What kind of stories do you think Africa should tell?

JAYNE: I think the debate about what stories we should be telling, and about who has the right to tell them, will continue for some time to come. I believe that those writing fiction should be free to use their

imaginations, always with empathy and respect. There has also been some recent debate in the writing community about the kind of stories we should be telling, and I would say – all kinds of stories, stories of great depth and lighter, even frivolous stories, as people love to laugh and be entertained as much as they love to be moved or enlightened.

PUBLISH'D AFRIKA: Every writer starting out sees themselves publishing a book, becoming a bestseller, with fame and fortune. What would your advice be to young, upcoming writers, taking into consideration where we are as a continent with writing and publishing?

JAYNE: Study all aspects of the writing industry, and learn from established writers, plus editors and publishers, in order that you might have informed expectations. If you *know* you're a writer, then you need to keep writing. There are so many journals, both print and online, calling for submissions, so the opportunities are there. I'm also a great believer in entering competitions, because if your work is shortlisted, your name is out there, and people in the industry will start to recognise it and take an interest in your writing.

This year's shortlist hails from 13 countries. Five regional winners will be announced tomorrow, 29 May and the overall winner will be announced on 26 June. The shortlisted stories will be published in adda, the Commonwealth online literary magazine.

Chair of the judges, Ugandan-British novelist and short story writer Jennifer Nansubuga Makumbi says: "This is a dream list for lovers of the short story form. You'll

be amazed and thrilled, startled and shocked, and heartbroken and humbled in equal measure by the skill and talent, imagination and creativity."

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IN CELEBRATION OF
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Author With A Big Heart

Felicia Gives 10 Aspiring Authors Opportunity To Get Published



Launching a book is always about an individual – the author who has written the book – but not for Felicia Rikhotso.

The 28-year-old author, from Namakgale in Limpopo, will be officially launching her much-anticipated Swihungwani book on 15 June 2024, but has opted that the event not only be about her. She will be sharing the spotlight with 10 aspiring authors whom she has taken under her wing. The idea, she said, is to have them enlightened about the world of creative writing.

“I am hoping that after the book launch, I will be able to mentor them until we are able to have their work

ready for publishing,” she said. “Then I will feature their work in my sixth book free of charge. It is possible that we have two different books depending on my assessments of their strong points in creative writing. Some could be good in poetry some good in short stories.”

Felicia Rikhotso was born and bred in Namakgale. She finished her matric in 2014 at Vuxeni High School in Namakgale and completed her B-tech degree in Language practice from Tshwane University of

Technology. She joined the South African Police Service in 2022, and currently works at the Namakgale police station in Phalaborwa.

She is also the founder of Phalaborwa Wellness Crew and founded the Phalaborwa Writers Forum. She has published three books, the Swihungwani book being her fourth. The book is a Xitsonga collection of short stories.

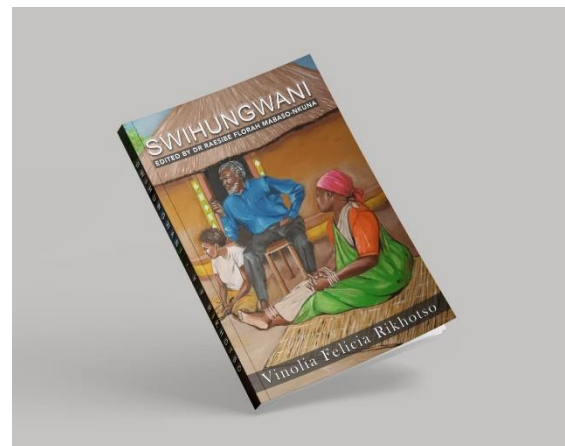
"I have been interested in writing from a young age, from my primary school years," she said. "I would write down everything about my life and turn it into poems or short stories. I then started a Facebook page called '*Nontando The Rural Girl*', that gained over 11 000 followers around 2016 to 2017. People enjoyed the story."

Felicia then wrote her first book in 2017 with the aim to enter a writers' competition, which was run by the Department of Arts and Culture. She ended up not entering. The good news, however, is that last year, she was one of the two Xitsonga judges of the same competition in the whole country. All the other books then followed. Felicia then started her own publishing company, born of the struggles she faced when she published her first book. "It was so expensive and I didn't have money. I knew what had to be done for a book to be out there. I studied Language practice and I had always followed the world of publishing, so I took a bold step and it worked out quite well."

Felicia says her inspiration comes from different things that life has to offer. She believes that after the reader has finished

reading her work, they realize that there's a need to seek knowledge, to develop and to take courage in doing all the things that will make them better people, for themselves and for other people.

"My poems teach people to be expressive about their feelings and their needs," she said. "The short stories and the novel, are so much entertaining, yet take the reader back in time, allowing them to learn from how life worked in the past and how things have changed, yet merging beautiful lessons that we can use to better ourselves up."



The launch will be held at the Phosphate Hall. Just JB of Giyani Land of Blood and Collen 'The Tiktokker' Mkhonto will be the programme directors. The main guest will be Percynah Ndlovu, the author of *Vukosi i Mberha*, *Ahi Peleni Nambu* and *Siyaya ePitirori*, amongst other books. There will also be prize money to be won by the audience, sponsored by Phalaborwa Logistics and Nonyane Foundation.

Mhlanzi Appointed Slam Awards Mali Ambassador



Multi-award-winning Mzansi poet Luleka Mhlanzi has signed a 3-year contract with the Slam Awards International from Mali as their ambassador in South Africa.

Hailing from Pietermaritzburg in Kwazulu-Natal, Luleka (31) is the founder of LMArts NPC and author of *Confiscated Identity* (2021). She is a performance poet, actress and programmes facilitator. She is an agent for change and her footprint is spotted in various African youth leadership programs. She also produced *Conversing Kingdoms*

One Woman Poetry Show in 2023, and has read and performed at national and international festivals.

In her work, she examines identity, challenges beauty standards and speaks for vulnerable groups. Mhlanzi was recently appointed as the South African Ambassador for the Slam Awards International from Mali. She believes in the development of communities from grassroots level. LMArts NPC offers young aspiring performers and writers a free

platform to explore themselves via the arts and literature.

Mhlanzi said there are 17 categories for the Slam awards, and that Mzansi needs to nominate candidates based on their impact and commitment.

“I would like to believe we have poets in all nine provinces of the country,” she said. “I need to interact with poetry hubs, groups, societies or even just individual poets/writers in your Province who are hard-working, influential about positive change and most of all, impactful.”

After these have been nominated, Mhlanzi said they will then be helped by voting for

them to bring all 17 International Awards home as they will be up against other countries.

“I am interested to partner with organisations to make this great selection that will lead the South African poetry scene to victory,” she said. “If you are a South African and you can see this, please share. Let me know about a poetry hub, society, pair, groups, writers, and performers of poetry.

You can send an email to lulekamhlanzi@gmail.com with your nominations.



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Spread the love!
Tell us your
African stories
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Nal'ibali is looking for short, original children's stories in 11 of the official SA languages to publish in print and on air. Help us keep spreading the joy of reading far and wide. Send your story today in a Word document to stories@nalibali.org



IT STARTS WITH A STORY

Three African Authors In 2024 Wilbur Smith Adventure Writing Prize Longlist



THE WILBUR &
NISO SMITH
FOUNDATION

Three African authors have made it into the 2024 Wilbur Smith Adventure Writing Prize, igniting hope that the continent just might have a second winner of the lucrative international prize.

South Africa's own Kirsten Miller won the prize in 2016 with her book, *The Hum of the Sun*. Now, Chukwuebuka Ibeh, Wole Talabi and Craig Shreve may just clinch it for the continent, eight years after Miller's extraordinary achievement.

Miller couldn't contain her joy at the news that three Africans

have been longlisted for the prize, as the prospect of winning brings with it material things that can be gained like money and travel opportunities.

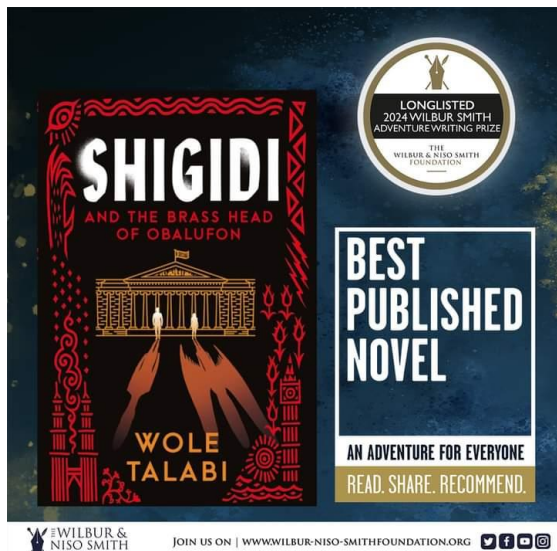
"I personally have been a recipient of literary prizes, longlisted as well as shortlisted," she said. "Early in my career I would be very disappointed if I didn't win, but I must say as I got older, I see being nominated as a kind of compass and as a barometer of how you are writing about the world we are living in, whether you are grappling with issues that are relevant to the world. I think the fact that people are nominated at all means that they are plugged into the current thinking, current

problems, current difficulties, current joys, current struggles that the world is experiencing. Being nominated alone is a check mark that they are developing their writing to the degree that they are noticed. It means their writing is well-developed and also that they are relevant globally at the moment. That in itself is an incredible part of the journey of being a writer."

The prize is curated by the Wilbur and Niso Smith Foundation, a charitable

organisation that was launched in 2015. It is dedicated to empowering young writers, the advancement of the adventure writing genre, and the promotion of literacy. The Wilbur Smith Adventure Writing Prize is an annual international prize that supports and celebrates the best adventure writing today. The prize is open to writers of any nationality, writing in English, and the winner receives £10,000.

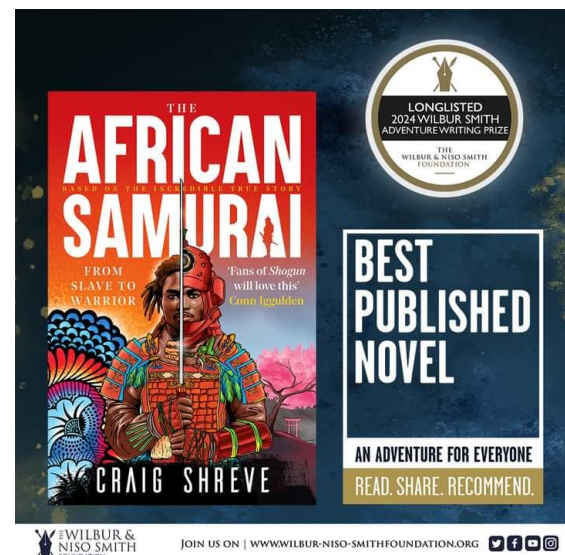
The 2024 longlist consists of 12 books selected by a panel of librarians and library staff from across the UK. It also comprises of works by British, Australian, American, Canadian, Georgian, Indian, Nigerian and South Korean authors. Five of the titles are debut works including Ibeh's *Blessings*. Wole Talibi entered the book *Shigidi and the Brass Head of Obalufon* and Craig Shreve submitted the masterpiece, *The African Samurai*.



Ibeh hails from Nigeria, and his story is told from the perspective of a mother and her son, at a time when the most populous country in the continent had outlawed homosexuality. Talibi is also from Nigeria,

and *Shigidi and the Brass Head of Obalufon* is a fast-paced crime novel involving Yoruba gods liberating a powerful artifact from London's British Museum.

Craig Shreve's *The African Samurai* tells the story of an East African slave who becomes the first foreign samurai. In 1579, a Portuguese trade ship sails into port at Kinchotsu, Japan, loaded with European wares and weapons. Also aboard is an East African slave. Taken from his village as a boy, sold to mercenaries and forced to fight in Indian wars that meant nothing to him, he is a young but experienced soldier.



The young man joins an expedition pushing inland towards the capital city of Kyoto. There he meets Oda Nobunaga, the most powerful warlord in Japan, who is preparing a campaign to unify the country after more than a hundred years of civil war. Under the tutelage of Nobunaga, the young African soldier becomes the great warrior Yasuke, Japan's first foreign samurai, and the only one ever of African descent. His preoccupation is not a

question of power, as it is for Nobunaga, but one of freedom.

This timeless, epic story by Craig Shreve is a magnificent reconstruction and moving study of a lost historical figure, and a truly enthralling narrative, thrilling in its dramatisation of the making of modern Japan, from which rises the most unlikely of heroes.

Shigidi by Wole Talabi will take you from the boisterous streets of Lagos to the rooftop bars of Singapore and the secret spaces of London, as Shigidi and Nneoma

encounter strange creatures, rival gods and manipulative magicians. They are drawn into a spectacular heist that spans two realms and which could turn their own worlds upside down.

Find out more about the novels on the 2024 Wilbur Smith Adventure Writing Prize longlist and buy your copy at bit.ly/4bmDNoo


The shortlist will be announced on 30 May, while the winner will be awarded in September.

LAVINNE ALLICINE THEYS

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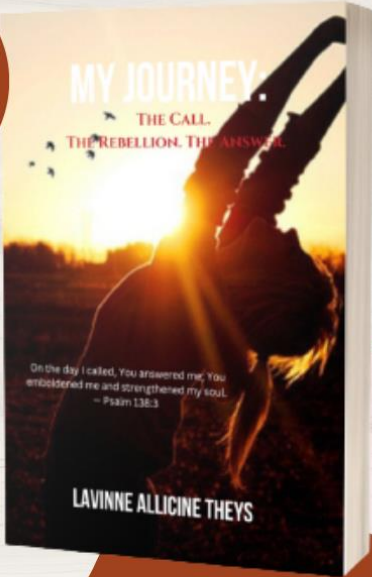
The Call. The Rebellion.
The Answer




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Contact Lavinne on: +27 81 747 9206

Afreximbank Announces Launch Of Canex Prize For Publishing In Africa

CANEX PRIZE FOR PUBLISHING IN AFRICA

CANEX invites publishers in Africa to submit published trade books for the inaugural CANEX Prize for Publishing in Africa.

The following books are eligible:

- Full-length books of fiction and nonfiction
- Collections of short stories by a single author or several authors
- Collections of essays by a single author or several authors
- Collected and selected poems by a single author or several authors
- Books published in the official languages of the African Union, namely, English, French, Swahili, Portuguese, Arabic, and Spanish.

✉ @CANEXAfrica 📷 @CreativeAfricaNexus

Submission dates: 27 May 2024 to 30 June 2024

**CANEX
WKND 2024**

PROMOTED BY



IN COLLABORATION WITH



HOSTED BY ALGERIA



Afreximbank has officially announced the launch of the CANEX Prize for Publishing in Africa, a partnership between the CANEX Book Factory and the Narrative Landscape Press Limited.

The CANEX Book Factory, a key intervention under the CANEX programme, aims to promote a vibrant literary culture across Global Africa and encourage the development of a sustainable business ecosystem in the literary sector. CANEX was

launched in 2020 by Afreximbank as a key driver for development and job creation in Africa, having recognised the relevance and opportunities provided by the creative and cultural industries.

The CANEX Book Factory will spotlight and elevate the African book value chain through a Pan-African writing workshop, an e-newsletter highlighting African literature and the prize for publishing in Africa. This will culminate in the Award Ceremony at the CANEX WKND to be held in Algiers, Algeria between 16-19 October, 2024.

A USD20,000 prize will be awarded to the publisher of the best trade book. Trade books refers to books published for a general audience, including fiction, non-fiction, and poetry and excludes textbooks and academic books. Additionally, four finalists will each receive USD2,000 in prize money.

Commenting on this announcement, Mrs. Kanayo Awani, Executive Vice President-Intra African Trade and Export Development Bank at Afreximbank, said: "We are thrilled to announce the launch of The CANEX Prize for Publishing in Africa, a pioneering initiative by Afreximbank aimed at promoting and celebrating excellence in African publishing. This prize underscores our commitment to nurturing Africa's creative industries and supporting the vibrant literary landscape across the continent. Through the CANEX Prize, we aim to recognise and empower African authors and publishers who play a vital role in shaping our cultural identity and

enriching our communities through literature in what is a multi-billion-dollar industry."

On the importance of initiatives such as CANEX, renowned writer and novelist, Ms. Chimamanda Adichie said: "Imagine being an African, dreaming about being a writer, surrounded by people in a room who share the same interests. It propels you; it gives you hope. I've always believed that there is nothing more essential to the human spirit than hope. For me, CANEX is about hope – the hope of many more African stories."

Submissions will be judged on the quality of writing, editing and production. Priority will be given to books printed and produced on the African continent as well as to books published in indigenous African languages. A key concession for the inaugural year (2024) is that books published in the preceding two years will be considered.

By supporting the enabling environment for various creative sectors like fashion, music, film, art, literature, gastronomy, and sport; CANEX seeks to support the advancement and expansion of the creative and cultural economy, both within Africa and the diaspora, utilising various financial and non-financial tools and initiatives.

CANEX invites publishers in Africa to submit published trade books for the inaugural CANEX Prize for Publishing in Africa. For enquiries, please email info@creativeafricanexus.com. To submit your entry, please visit: <https://canex.africa/canex-book-factory>.

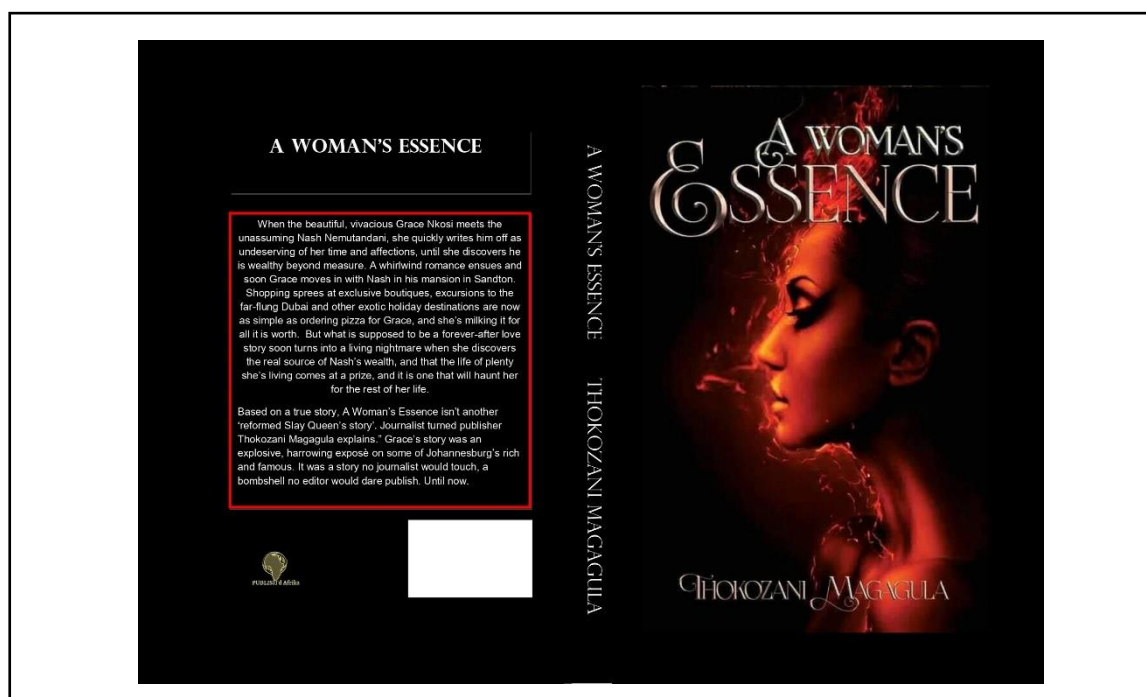
About Afreximbank:

African Export-Import Bank (Afreximbank) is a Pan-African multilateral financial institution mandated to finance, facilitate and promote intra and extra-African trade. For over 30 years, the Bank has been deploying innovative instruments to deliver financing solutions that support the transformation of the structure of Africa's trade, accelerating industrialisation and intra-regional trade, thereby boosting economic expansion in Africa. A stalwart supporter of the AfCFTA, Afreximbank has in partnership with the African Union Commission and AFCFTA Secretariat launched a Pan-African Payment and Settlement System (PAPSS) that was adopted by the African Union (AU) as the payment and settlement platform to underpin the implementation of the Free Trade Agreement. The AFCFTA Secretariat and the Bank have created a USD 10 billion

Adjustment Fund to support countries to effectively participate in the AfCFTA.

At the end of December 2023, Afreximbank's total assets and guarantees stood at US\$ 37.3 billion, and its shareholder funds amounted to US\$ 6.1 billion. The Bank disbursed more than US\$ 104 billion between 2016 and 2023 through various interventions for the advancement of the continent. Afreximbank has investment grade ratings assigned by GCR (international scale) (A), Moody's (Baa1), Japan Credit Rating Agency (JCR) (A-) and Fitch (BBB). Afreximbank has evolved into a group entity comprising the Bank, its impact fund subsidiary called the Fund for Export Development Africa (FEDA), and its insurance management subsidiary, AfrexInsure, (together, "the Group").

For more information, visit: www.afreximbank.com



Keep Dating Beyond Wedding Bells

In Conversation With Moeketsi 'The Force' Mazibuko



A common myth about long-term relationships is that passion is only for the honeymoon phase, or at the beginning of the relationship or marriage. Many believe that is nearly impossible to recapture that spark or to keep the relationship alive and happy long-term.

Well, Moeketsi 'The Force' Mazibuko disagrees, and he feels so passionate about the subject, he has written a book about it. Titled *Keep Dating... Beyond Wedding Bells*, the book is a guide for married couples seeking to reignite the spark in their relationships. He spoke to PUBLISH'D AFRIKA about the inspiration for the book as well as his publishing journey.

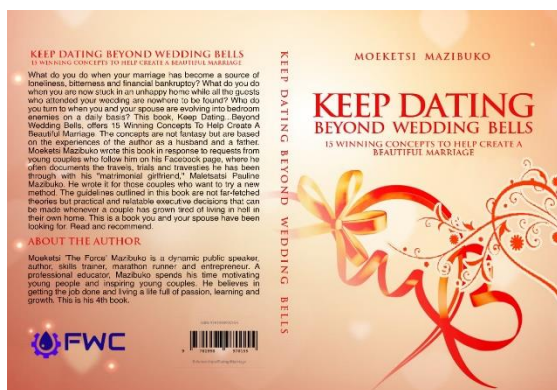
PUBLISH'D AFRIKA: Who is Moeketsi Mazibuko?

Moeketsi: Moeketsi 'The Force' Mazibuko is a multi-faceted powerhouse. I'm a seminar speaker, author, educator, and philanthropist who's passionate about empowering individuals and communities. I've written four books, co-hosted an inspirational radio show, and founded Keep Going Community Development NPC. My mission is to help people align with their purpose, achieve their goals, and live fulfilling lives.

PUBLISH'D AFRIKA: What is the book '*Keep Dating... Beyond Wedding Bells*' about?

Moeketsi: My book is a guide for married couples seeking to reignite the spark in

their relationships, hence the idea of “dating”. We have to keep dating, even after exchanging vows. This book is a heartfelt and practical tool, emphasising that a happy marriage is not a fantasy, but an achievable reality. I offer 15 Winning Concepts, drawn from my own experiences, to help couples navigate the complexities of marriage and choose happiness as a fundamental principle.



PUBLISH'D AFRIKA: What inspired you to write the book?

Moeketsi: My own happy marriage inspired me. I wanted to share the lessons I've learned and show that even amidst challenges, couples can create a fulfilling partnership. I believe in being a "motivational doer", living the principles I advocate for and inspiring others through my actions.

PUBLISH'D AFRIKA: Take us through your writing and publishing journey.

Moeketsi: It has been a challenging and rewarding journey, spanning over a decade. I have written four books, as stated earlier. The journey began with a clear vision. I had a clear vision of what I wanted to share with the world, but I was unsure of

the path to take. That's when I reached out to media and publishing experts in the country. We made an appointment and met. The rest is history.

That's why I truly believe that when you pursue your dreams, it's important to connect with experienced individuals. Inspire others with your wisdom and they will reciprocate with their own. That's how you thrive and reach your full potential. And of course, in all the networking and the book writing, it is your personal journey that holds the greatest significance. What you perceive as your lowest point in life has the potential to become your greatest asset, especially when you surround yourself with experts. Just like Oprah once said, the key to success is transforming your pain into power. The Great Nelson Mandela is who he is today, 11 years after his passing, due to the challenges he overcame. Just like Joseph the Dreamer, he faced adversity and emerged stronger, ultimately becoming a leader. Embrace the obstacles you face, for they are the steppingstones to your victories.

PUBLISH'D AFRIKA: What would you like a reader to take away from reading your book?

MOEKETSI: The 15 chapters each hold valuable messages. I encourage every married or dating couple to read it and discover the insights within.

PUBLISH'D AFRIKA: Why do you think the message contained in your book is important, considering the high rate of divorces in South Africa?

MOEKETSI: My book offers a counter-narrative to the prevalent negativity around marriage. It provides practical tools and hope, reminding couples that lasting love is possible.

PUBLISH'D AFRIKA: Are there parts of your personal married life captured in the book?

MOEKETSI: Absolutely. My marital experiences are the foundation of the book. I share openly and honestly, believing that my journey can resonate with and help others.

PUBLISH'D AFRIKA: How are you tackling the marketing and distribution of the book?

MOEKETSI: I leverage marketing and distribution through marriage seminars, courier services, and word-of-mouth. I welcome anyone willing to contribute to marketing and promoting the book to contact me.

PUBLISH'D AFRIKA: In a nutshell, what would you say encompasses a happy marriage, using your own marriage as a barometer?

MOEKETSI: I am a happily married husband and father, filled with joy and gratitude. It wasn't just about finding happiness in my marriage, it was about fully committing my mind, body, and soul to the idea of building a joyful life together with my wife, who I affectionately refer to as my matrimonial girlfriend. It was that understanding that laid the groundwork for us to co-create our joyful co-existence. Of course, maintaining a happy marriage doesn't guarantee a life

free of challenges. It's important to have personal space to nurture your talents and pursue your career goals. Discovering true happiness in a marriage involves embracing personal fulfilment and giving your partner the space to contribute to that fulfilment, while still honouring your own individuality, and vice versa.

To be honest, I could have easily settled for the mediocrity that marriage has been reduced to. I could have easily succumbed to the temptation of imitating my parents' broken marriage. I refused to buy into the misconceptions that some men often spread about women. Instead, I took charge of my own narrative by building a life with my wife. Together, we are shaping our own future and instilling important values in our three children. We believe actions speak louder than words. I am not just someone who talks about motivation, but someone who takes action and inspires others to do the same. I strive to create a fulfilling life for myself, not only for my own enjoyment but also to serve as a source of inspiration for others. I believe in finding joy and contentment in every aspect of my life, including my marital experience. A day came in my life when I told myself that I can have the kind of marriage my parents never had. I always say, "Beyond the exchanging of vows, the wearing of rings, the ululations, the jubilant songs, and the feasting of guests on your wedding day, there is a marriage to attend to." This is what I've gathered from my personal experiences since I got married many years ago.

CALL FOR AUTHORS TO SUBMIT MANUSCRIPTS

The Department of Sport, Recreation, Arts and Culture is calling on all budding writers in the Eastern Cape to submit their manuscripts to the department for possible publication in the 2024-2025 financial year. The manuscripts can be in any of the following languages: IsiXhosa, Sesotho, Afrikaans and English.



ELIGIBILITY

- Must be an Eastern Cape resident
- Manuscripts must have a minimum of at least 100 pages
- Must not be in the employ of government of any government entity or State-Owned Entity
- Must not earn more than R350 000 per annum

NOTE WELL

- Only manuscripts sent via email will be accepted
- The department will only accept manuscripts that have been completed
- Only one book per author will be published

MANUSCRIPT PRODUCTION

Successful manuscripts will be published in the 2024-2025 financial year

SUBMISSIONS TO

Languages@ecsrac.gov.za
For enquiries, please contact
Ms Dineo Sello on: (043) 492 0220

Submission Deadline

06th June 2024

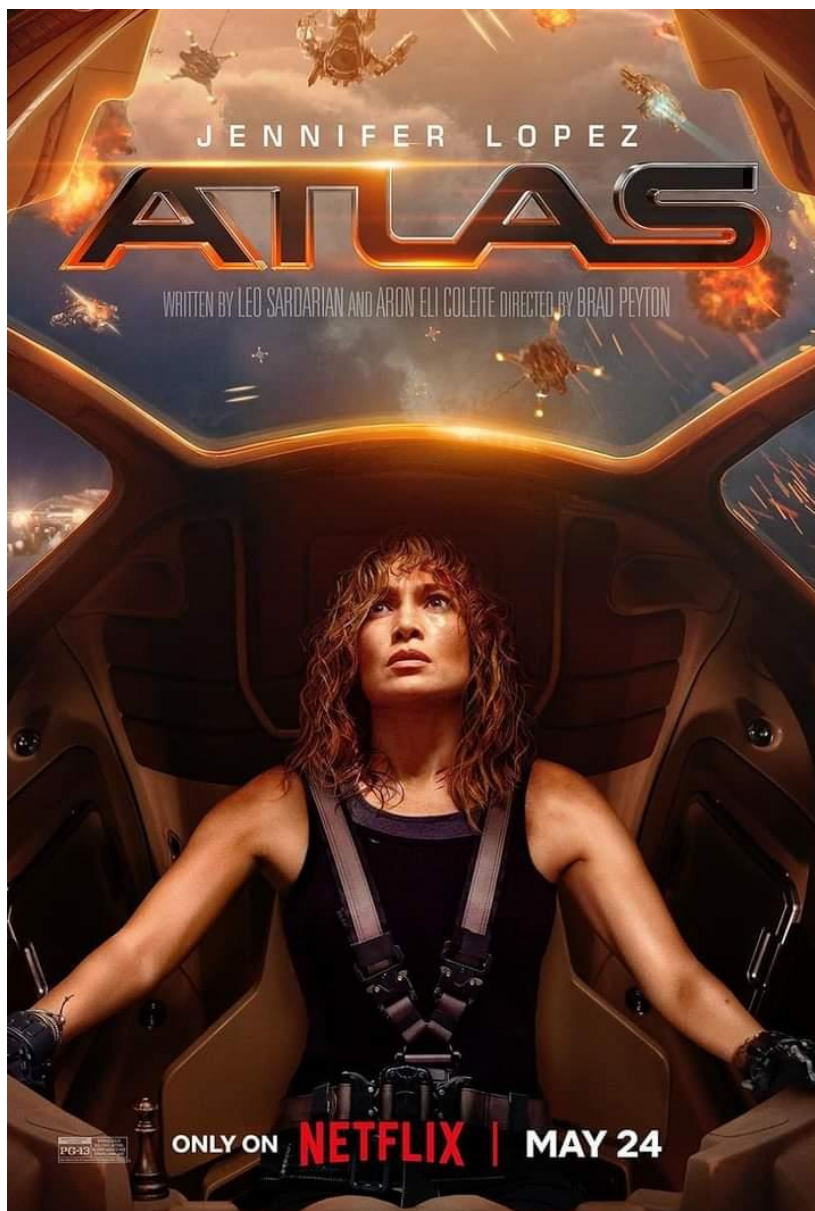


'A United, Active and Winning Province Through Sport, Recreation, Arts, Culture & Heritage'



Science Fiction: Entertainment Or A Peek Into The Near Future?

By Stanley Umezulike, Nigeria



I encourage you to watch the movie, *Atlas*, which was released on Netflix on 24th May 2024.

Atlas is an original screenplay written by Leo Sardarian and Aron Eli Coleite. It was produced by ASAP Entertainment, Safehouse Pictures; Nuyorican Productions and Berlanti-Schechter Films. The movie is distributed by Netflix.

However, don't focus so much on its doomsday scenario. Rather, observe the advanced AI-driven tech tools the characters used in the movie. Observe the AI tools *Atlas Shepherd* (Jennifer Lopez) used in her house. That's the very near future. It's not year 2050, we already have some of these technologies right

now. Others are being developed right now.

Before April 2025, we will have a functional AI Agent. That's an Artificial Intelligence that can perform several high-capacity

tasks for you without your supervision and that's the AI Assistant that was helping *Atlas* in her house.

The government and movie industry know what they are doing. You get to see these technologies first in science fiction novels.

Why?

After watching many movies like this, you'd get used to those technologies and to that kind of world so that you won't panic when they are required for everyday use in real life. They use such movies to prepare your mind for the reality of life in the near future.

People who lived 50 years ago would not believe that what we are experiencing today is possible: chatting and doing video calls online with someone in another part of the world, streaming live physical events online so that anyone from any part of the world can connect and participate at the same time, building a business on AI-powered platforms online, connecting and doing digital business with a virtual audience, transferring huge amount of money online within seconds, etc.

In the next five to 10 years, the technologies we use today will look like relics. That's how fast our world is moving. And yet, most of these technologies are

Later, you'd see them in movies, before you start seeing them in real life.

discovered, not created. It means that God has already put everything in the universe but we don't know they exist yet.

There are so many things scientists have not discovered yet. Humans have not tapped into more than 10 percent of their potential. The task of human beings is to 'discover new things' which are already in existence but no one knew before, and connect them with new properties in order to create new technologies that humans can use.

Yes, new technologies make life better. Every technology has advantages and disadvantages. In the hands of a good person, a powerful technology can be used to create a better life. In the hands of the a bad person, such technology can be used for destruction.

Watch Atlas but don't just watch it to be entertained. Watch the movie critically and observe everything.

I'm Stanley Umezulike. I support AI Literacy and the ethical use of AI.

AVBOB POETRY CORNER

Enough Space For All Of Us



Most advice about how to write is written for people who sit alone in a room; searching for memorable words that could connect with a receptive audience.

But this is not the only, or even necessarily the best, way for inspiration to find us.

Haroldene Tshienda is the author of eight collections of poetry and executive producer of Shofar Books (www.shofarbooks.co.za), a self-publishing house that supports and celebrates the work of both aspiring and established writers and

poets. Earlier this month, Tshienda crowned and honoured 135 artists from across the country for the excellence of their work at the inaugural Cape Flats Awards Ceremony.

Along with three other poets, she recently established a collective called Poets Vannie

Kaap, which meets once a month to share work with a view to performance and/or

publication. The collective has already published four anthologies, called Lekka Poets Volumes 1 to 4.

Haroldene shares some of the insights she gained by co-founding this project, while promoting her own work and running a business. Here are the insights she shared.

My advice to aspiring poets is simple: use what you have and start a group or join an already existing group. Libraries are reliable sources of information about how to start poetry groups or book clubs, but in our case, things happened spontaneously.

About two years ago, a few poets approached me to share their work, asking where they could perform or recite it. So, an idea was born, and I shared it with four poet friends of mine. I added them to a WhatsApp group, and we discussed the idea of starting an open mic. We had our first session at someone's house, and 25 poets came. By now, there are 40 of us. Soon the ability to share and enjoy each other's work became a necessity. We decided on our name during our open mic sessions, and Poets Vannie Kaap was born. Our sessions happen every last Saturday of the month.

Don't be afraid to collaborate. I could never have started Poets Vannie Kaap by myself. My fellow poets and authors, we did it together. We are a family now. We support one another. We had nothing when we started, just enthusiastic poets and some

poems. Some of us had already been published and some not. All that mattered was that, as a publisher, I saw that the poems had potential.

Another way to become more visible as a poet is to make short recordings or TikToks of your work. You never know how much you can grow your audience with social media. But most of all, I believe in the power of collaboration. Seek out other artists and create with them. You can achieve more when you are with a few like-minded people.

Think beyond your own voice and words. There are so many amazing storytellers and authors that will never be recognised as they deserve. I feel it is my responsibility, as a midwife of books, to create platforms where we can meet, celebrate and acknowledge each other's work. There's enough space for all of us.

In the next few days, see if you can create a poem by collaborating with another artist. It doesn't have to be another poet, as long as you can produce a poem in the process.

The 2025 AVBOB Poetry Competition opens its doors on 1 August 2024. Start preparing now by visiting www.avbobpoetry.co.za and familiarising yourself with the theme and competition rules.

The Village Must Come Back



For thousands of years, poets and artists have laboured to identify what was worthy of praise and celebration.

As we celebrated Africa Day on 25 May, the AVBOB Poetry Project asked Maletšema Ruth Emsley, poet, teacher and academic, to share what celebrating this day means to her. Emsley's debut poetry collection, *My Silver Stripes and Other Poems*, was published by Staging Post, a division of Jacana Media (www.jacana.co.za/shop/),

in 2023.

"Celebrating Africa Day shouldn't be only about the traditional attire and eulogies to show respect for African culture and history. It is vital to consider that an African is a member of a community. That African philosophy is based on principles of communalism and, most importantly, Ubuntu. I celebrate the value of collaboration, caring and sharing amid all challenges that are hostile to the communal solidarity. Now, more than ever, Africans should harness their cultural heritage to demonstrate empathy and

humanity and to establish and maintain Ubuntu."

My Silver Stripes and Other Poems is a generous, wide-ranging anthology, as finely balanced as one of the black pots Emsley describes in one of these poems, carried on the "trained, independent necks" of rural women. It is a record of personal struggle and progress in the face of racial and gender inequality, culminating in the writing of this book as part of creative output writing for the Department of Higher Education and Training at the University of Limpopo. At the same time,

many of the poems celebrate compassionate, communal values and lament their neglect in the contemporary world. In the anthology, this lament is perhaps expressed most beautifully at the end of the poem 'A Lost Boy in the Roving World':

"Our boys are slipping away,
like calves from amniotic sacs,
ejected onto a dry world that does not
receive them.

The village must come back
to raise the child."

Emsley remembers how poetry came into her life when she was young and spoke to her. "Poetry first entered my life through recitations during my primary school education. I am still able to say and sense the rhymes and metres of those verses we were memorising!"

She wrote her first poem to enter a poetry magazine competition, little imagining that it would lead to an anthology of her own one day.

Although the collection was started years back, she put it together during the COVID-19 lockdowns. Emsley, who lost her husband to the pandemic, notes, "I felt I

had so many words inside of me. I felt they would help me share the many emotions I felt: the memories, fear, isolation."

About the anthology, she is grateful that academic departments are beginning to recognise creative writing as a form of scholarly research. She adds, "The viewpoints of all academics, including the black women academics who have been socially, culturally and educationally excluded, can now contribute as we write and share."

Her most memorable evocation of such shared work is probably from 'We Waited for No Aid', a poem that celebrates the resilience and independence of the rural women of her childhood. It ends:

"In a line, on a faithful path
that greets us at dawn
and bids us farewell at dusk, we traipsed,
humming in harmony,
quieting the dawn roads with our bare
feet."

In the next few days, write a poem about the courage and resilience of the African dream for someone you do not know.

Writing Blunders And How To Avoid Them

Arc, Trajectory And Plausibility Issues:

Writers often miss three elements of storytelling that drive any story. Today, we will talk about Arc, Trajectory and Plausibility Issues.

ARC – The difference between where the character started off and where they are going, and how their personality changes through the story over time. It is about how a character ticks the boxes as they travel through the story.

Some characters, unfortunately, are mere names on the page, mere spectators who seem to be standing on the side-lines while less important characters drive the story. Yet the writer took the time to describe these characters in such detail, the reader automatically expects that they are important to the story.

Give your characters motivation, goals and ambitions. This is where they are starting off – their struggles. Your character could be a loner who has been pushed into a situation where he has to be a team player, and as a result begins to dismantle his armour and comes out of his shell, and as such unravels the reasons why he found himself unable to trust anyone. He could be a newly enlisted secret agent who is afraid of heights, and for him to qualify for the gruelling training, he has to pass a paratrooper test.

TRAJECTORY – The character's journey through the story, ending either in a better or worse place than when they started, how their position shifts in the world around them. The character, especially the main one, should not be the same person at the end of your story. He should either be a better person, or worse than when he started off, and at the same time make him relatable. If the reader cannot relate to the character's struggles, they will stop reading.

PLAUSIBILITY ISSUES: Is it believable? Can this really happen in real-life?

In movies, the main character can crash his car at 200km/h, roll it multiple times and still come out guns blazing, ready to face off against his enemies. The main character can be bludgeoned on the head with a hammer so many times, blood gushing everywhere, survive it and go on to win the Comrades Marathon.

Don't even try to put such a scene in your manuscript. No one can survive multiple blows to the head, or roll in a car ten times, and come out of the mangled wreckage to fight another

Writing 101 With Oscar Mwafuluka Mubila

CHARACTERISATION

NOTE: There are more things you can do than what I am sharing here. The key is to observe the characters of your favourite books or stories. You just might learn something. To be a great writer, you must first be a great reader. I am no expert, but I use my experience of having taught English for the past 20 years to inform my tips. These tips are what I give my students to help them prepare for their Composition.

THINK CAREFULLY ABOUT THE NAME YOU GIVE YOUR CHARACTER: It seems like it is an obvious and simple thing, but the name of your character can convey a lot and help move the story along. JK Rowling is clever at this.

Consider Dumbledore and how he is described. His first name is Albus (White in Latin) hinting that he is the great WHITE wizard. See the significance? Consider the role of Gandalf when he evolves from a Grey Wizard into a White Wizard in *Lord of The Rings*.

In the *Prisoner of Azkaban*, Professor Lupin is the teacher of defence against the dark arts. It turns out he is a werewolf. Lupin is wolf in Latin. See the pattern?

2 ACTION AND WORDS: Reveal your characters through what they do and say. This includes what others do and say about them. Make your protagonists well-rounded, going through the same ups and downs that readers can relate to. Your characters must evolve with the story. In other words, the characters we meet at the beginning must not be the same we meet at the end. Think about your own journey through life. You must have had at least one life changing moment, right? Where you the same after that? The Harry Potter we meet at the beginning is not the Harry Potter we meet at the end.

I am still in awe of Nyambe Wina's book, *The Accusing Finger*. I read it decades ago, but the profound journey of the protagonist has stuck with me. In fact, when I look back, one of my current projects drew inspiration from that. Would love to get my hands on that book again.

3: CONTRAST: Your character will be more powerful if you include other characters whose personality is in contrast to your character. We human beings naturally like to compare. Why not use this technique in writing. Once you have made your protagonist a loveable character,

create another character that people will love to hate. Your readers will want your protagonist to teach them a lesson.

Other characters should be designed to complement your main character. Consider how Ron and Hermione complement Harry.

POINTS OF VIEW

By Oscar Mwauluka Mubila

1. 1st Person Narrative: I/We. In this type of narrative, the protagonist (main character) is also the narrator. This approach or style is great because we get to really know the character because we see the world through their eyes. They can comment on what's going on from their perspective.

However, most times, the descriptions are limited because realistically, as people we don't notice everything. Also, how can we trust the character's perspective or comments?

To make descriptions work, as well as perspectives work, writers will make their characters super intelligent, even when they are young. A perfect example is how Harper Lee in the novel *To Kill a Mockingbird* makes Scout, the narrator, super intelligent that she is able to read at the age of three. She is super observant and naturally curious. These traits help her as both a character and a narrator, moving the story along.

Conan Doyle, the creator of Sherlock Holmes, takes a different approach. Dr Watson is the narrator, but Holmes is the protagonist. Doyle allows the narrator to be the observer, and being a doctor gives his observations more credibility, especially for the Victorian times where doctors were massively respected men of science. Watson remains in the background while Holmes does his magic. Only in the *Hound of the Baskerville's* is the focus more on Watson as for more than half the novel is about Watson.

If you go for this style, think carefully about the character and what sort of relationship you want the readers to have with that character. Many well-known and best-selling books have this approach.

2: 2nd Person: You. This is the least popular. It makes the reader the protagonist by making the story a kind of set of instructions you as the reader follow. This point of view is what you get in instruction manuals. Imagine trying to tell a story like that? I am yet to read a book with this approach, but one well known one is called *Bright Lights, Big City* by Jay McInerney.

3. 3rd Person, Omniscient: He/She/They/It. This is by far the most common approach. This is where the narrator is an all-powerful, all-seeing being that can go anywhere, see anything, enter the minds of any character, comment on any situation etc.

As you can imagine, this works with stories that have multiple characters with multiple scenes. Skillful narrators can weave these stories very well. The approach works very well where setting and plot are more important and multiple characters are on several journeys that lead to one final destination of reckoning. A perfect example would be *The Lord of the Rings*. J.R. Tolkien is a master of this.

However, some readers may find the idea of creating multiple relationships in one story quite tedious. To avoid this, as a writer, you have to create very powerful characters that will engage your readers from the word go. You will have to somewhat introduce them at roughly the same time, using dialogue and actions to present them. Once the characters have been established well, it may be easier to jump from one character to the other without losing your audience. I remember being unhappy at having to leave a character I have gotten to know very well, to start trying to get to know another character in the same book.

4. 3rd Person, Limited: He/She/It/ They. This is my favourite approach. The narrator is not part of the action, but picks a character and follows the character like a camera. The narrator can get into the mind of the character, and comment. The narrator can make observations, but they are limited to those of the main character. It is very much like 1st person, but the advantage is that the main character doesn't have to have super intelligence to make the story work. The narrator never leaves the character to check on other events or characters. The reader establishes only one relationship and stays with it to the end. All other relationships are experienced through the main character.

Whichever style you go for, the key is to create powerful characters your readers can connect with and take them on a journey they can equally connect or relate with. Hence the importance of having universal themes such as the traditional struggle between good and evil, coming of age, dealing with acceptance or loss, struggling with personal demons etc.

Oscar Mwauluka Mubila is a teacher of English based in Zambia. He has garnered experience teaching both the English language and Literature up to A Level. His current literary project is on wattpad under the handle Ossymwauluka. He also has a Facebook page called English 101 with Oscar.

Conning The King Cons

How To Spot Scammers Before They Scam You

For those who come across posts promising free internet data, free this and free that, lend me your ears. Below are some basic ICT that will help you navigate the World Wide Web with ease, and help you spot those determined to rid you of your hard-earned cash.

The first one: Any link that starts with "http " is most likely a phishing link. Phishing is usually intended to obtain your personal details including your date of birth, bank account number, PIN, log-in details etc. For the purposes of a SCAM.

This is how scammers and hackers steal your identity and use them to scam you or your contacts.

- 👉 Avoid random links.
- 👉 Avoid all these null data links,
- 👉 MTN, Airtel, Nestlé etc are not sharing data or awards via WhatsApp.
- 👉 The government is not sharing money via WhatsApp.
- 👉 Your bank is not sharing money via WhatsApp or any social media network.

ACTION

Be smart and ignore those links for your own good.

Stop forwarding as received without proper verification because you might put someone's life in danger.

There is no free money or lunch. Ask yourself: What would these faceless people get in return for what they want me to do?

There is no free credit.

There is no free data anywhere in Africa via links.

Do you know the difference between "http" and "https"? Some of you may be aware of this difference, but it is worth sharing for many that are not familiar with it.

The main difference between "http://" and "[https://](#)" is all about **SECURITY**.

HTTP stands for Hyper Text Transfer Protocol.

The "S" stands for "Secure".

If you visit a Website or web page, and look at the address in the web browser and it begins with the following: <http://>, this means that the website is talking to your browser using the regular unsecured language. In other words, it is possible for someone to "eavesdrop" on your computer or smart phone's conversation with the Website.

If you fill out any form on the website, someone might see the information you send to that site. This is why you should **NEVER** enter your credit card number or any other personal/business information in an

Http website!

But if the web address begins with <https://>, that means your computer is talking to the website in a Secure code that no one can eavesdrop on.

Now, you understand why this is so important.

If a website ever asks you to enter your Credit/Debit card or any other Information, or promises a 'Free Gift', you should first check to see if the web address begins with <https://>. If it doesn't, you should **NEVER** enter sensitive Information such as a credit/debit card number, location, date of birth, addresses etc.

While checking the name of any website, first look for the domain extension (.com or .org, .co, .in, .net etc). The name just before the .com, .org etc is the domain name of the website.

Example, <http://amazon.diwali-festivals.com>, the word before .com is "diwali-festivals" (and NOT "amazon").

So, this webpage does not belong to amazon.com but rather belongs to "diwali-festivals.com", which we all haven't heard of before.

You can similarly check for bank frauds.

Before your e-banking logins, make sure that the name just before ".com" is the name of your bank. Example: "Something.standardbank.co.za" belongs to standardbank ; but, standardbak.something.com belongs to "something" else.

You've hopefully learned something new, now please educate others. Stay safe as more scammers and cyber criminals are on the loose on these cyber streets.

CALLS FOR SUBMISSIONS CORNER

Poems For Wole Soyinka: Call For Submissions



To Mark The 90th Birthday Anniversary Of Africa's First Nobel Laureate In Literature, Professor Wole Soyinka, The Pan African Writers Association (PAWA) Hereby Calls For Poetry Submissions From African Writers At Home And In The Diaspora.

Poetry Submission; Free Verse or in Stanza of 20 Lines Maximum

Submission should be in word document, Times New Roman, font size 12, with name of the poet, phone/ WhatsApp number and email address.

Submissions which can be in Arabic, English or French should be in Microsoft Word, typed in Times New Roman, 12 font size and double-line spacing with Subject line WS@90 should be sent to;

The Editor, Professor William Ndi, via email address; wndi@tuskegee.edu with a copy to pawahouse@gmail.com

Deadline for submission is 15th June 2024

Published poets will be entitled to one copy of the anthology each.

Dr Wale Okediran

PAWA Secretary General

pawahouse@gmail.com

New Contrast Issue 206: Submissions Are Now Open

Submit poetry, fiction, flash fiction, creative non-fiction, cover art, reviews and criticism at the link below.

Please read our guidelines carefully to make sure your submission will be read.

We accept submissions in English, isiXhosa, isiZulu and Afrikaans.

Submissions are open from 15th May till 1st July.

<https://www.newcontrast.net/submissions/>

Mukana Press 2024 Anthology Of African Writing

US-based Afro-centric publisher Mukana Press is currently seeking entries for their next anthology of short stories. Submissions may come from anywhere on the globe, but Mukana Press is particularly keen on authors from traditionally underrepresented backgrounds with a focus on authors from Africa, South America, The Middle East and Asia.

Submissions must be in Ms Word format and range between 1000 and 8000 words. According to their official website:

'For our 2024 Anthology of African stories, we are looking for stories of joy. Africa's stories have long been stories of war, abuse, poverty, death and suffering. We seek stories of friendships, love, strong familial bonds, nostalgic school days, mischief, superstition, spies, whatever allows us to tell an alternative story. We want a collection that will make our readers laugh, smile and giggle or be bewildered by your protagonists. Send us your spooky ghost stories, and your quirky villains. We want a vibrant and lively collection! The subject matter might be heavy, but if your protagonist has a unique voice that can turn a somber subject into thriller, then we want to hear from you!'

Mukana Press publishes full length books (short story collections, memoirs and novels). Their previous publications include *The Newlyweds' Window*, *Send Her Back* and *Other Stories*, *Old Love Skin: Voices From Contemporary Africa* and *Our Daughter, Who Art In America*.

Entries are to be made via Submittable: <https://mukanapress.submittable.com/submit>

The 2024 Doek Literary Festival

Doek, in partnership with Bank Windhoek, is proud to announce the second edition of the Doek Literary Festival which will be hosted at the Goethe-Institut in Windhoek, Namibia from 21-24 August 2024.

The eclectic collection of literary artists—from Namibia, Angola, Ethiopia, Jamaica, Kenya, Nigeria, and Zimbabwe—curated in the line-up will explore the delights, dangers, past dreams, present conditions, and future challenges of storytelling in the country, Africa, and the world with their published works as the backdrops for exciting enquiry.

This year's featured writers, poets, and visual artists are: Charmaine //Gamxamus • Namafu Amutse • Roxane Bayer • Chiké Frankie Edozien • Ndawedwa Denga Hanghuwo • Ishion Hutchinson • Filemon Iiyambo • Veripuami Nandee Kangumine • Femi Kayode • Maaza Mengiste • Nelson Mlambo • Sipiwe Gloria Ndlovu • Troy Onyango • Ondjaki • David Smuts • Jean-Claude Tjitamunisa • Mukoma Wa Ngūgī • and Zukiswa Wanner

Visit the festival's website for more information: <https://festival.doek.africa/>

Opportunity For Young Actors Within BRICS

Young professional actors from BRICS+ countries not older than 28 years old, who wish to improve their professional level and acquire new skills in the profession, as well as young professionals and graduates of theatre schools, film schools and educational institutions in the field of acting. Applicants must submit a CV, photo portfolio, introduction video, and examples of work in theatre or film for consideration.

Application deadline: 14 June 2024.

Dates of the fellowship program: 26 August to 22 September 2024.

Venue: Moscow, Russia.

Working language: Russian, English.

The candidates can apply via the submitting form on the Gorchakov Foundation websites:

https://en.gorchakovfund.ru/portal/news/view/registration_open_for_the_interussia_fellowship_programme_in_theatre_arts_64632

https://interussia.com/theatre_en

WhatsApp: +7 (985) 723 89 84

e-mail: nazarkina@tvbrics.com

Libretto African Anthology Prize 2024 – Second Edition for Children's Literature

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the second edition of the Libretto African Anthology Prize 2024 for Children's Literature, where imagination knows no bounds and storytelling takes flight! As we embark on this literary journey, we invite writers from across the African continent to weave stories that capture the hearts and minds of young readers.

In a world where children are constantly bombarded with distractions, the power of storytelling remains unmatched. Through the magic of words, writers have the ability to transport young minds to faraway lands, introduce them to captivating characters, and instill in them the values of empathy, courage, and resilience.

The Libretto African Anthology Prize (LAAP) celebrates the richness of African culture, history, and tradition, offering a platform for diverse voices to be heard. This prize seeks to showcase the beauty of African storytelling in all its forms as Africa's stories are as vast and varied as the continent itself.

This year, we are particularly focused on children's literature, recognizing the importance of nurturing a love for reading from a young age. Whether it's a whimsical write up that sparks the imagination, a thrilling adventure that keeps readers on the edge of their seats, or a heartwarming tale that teaches valuable life lessons, we believe that every story has the power to make a difference in a child's life. Submissions in indigenous African languages are warmly welcomed, with translations provided for the judging panel. This commitment to linguistic diversity reflects our belief in the power of language to shape identity and foster cultural exchange.

SUBMISSIONS GUIDELINES:

Eligibility: The Libretto African Anthology Prize is open to writers who are citizens of African country.

Submission Process: Submissions are to be made at <https://librettong.com/anthology-submissions/>. Upon submission all entrants are expected to purchase the first edition of the anthology uploaded on the submission portal. Read the steps below:

2. STEP TO PURCHASE THE ANTHOLOGY BEFORE YOUR SUBMISSIONS IS MADE AND ACCEPTED

Step 1: Purchase the anthology.

Step 2: After purchasing the anthology, a SUCCESS notification will be displayed which confirms the successful purchase of the book. Click on the link written on the SUCCESS prompt to proceed with your entry submission.

WHAT YOU WILL FIND ON THE SUBMISSIONS LINK

Step 1: EMAIL: Fill your email address on the blank space.

Step 2: STORY TITLE: Fill the title of your submission.

Step 3: COVER LETTER: Write a short synopsis of what your story is about.

Step 4: UPLOAD YOUR SUBMISSION: You are only requested to upload a Microsoft Document. No other format will be accepted expect Word Document.

Step 5: AUTHOR'S BIO: You are to fill out your full biography in the blank space.

Step 6: NATIONALITY: Include your country in the blank space.

Step 7: AUTHOR'S NAME: Fill out your full name in the blank space.

Step 8: AUTHOR'S PICTURE: You are requested to upload a portrait photograph of you in high-resolution. No other image format except JPEG or PNG are allowed.

What that means is that if you have purchased the book you are requested to click Yes and if No, you are expected to purchase before your work will be accepted.

Theme: While there is no specific theme for this edition, we encourage submissions that celebrate African cultures, traditions, folklore, and contemporary life. Stories that promote curiosity, diversity, and empathy are highly encouraged.

Genre: We accept entries for children's short stories in middle-grade story and young adult fiction.

Length: Stories should range from 2000 to 2500 maximum words count.

Formatting: Please use standard manuscript format (Times New Roman, 14-point font, double-spaced).

Judging Criteria: Entries will be judged based on literary merit, originality, creativity, suitability for the target age group, and adherence to submissions guidelines. Our panel of esteemed judges consist of prominent authors, educators, and literary professionals with expertise in Children's literature.

Copyright: Submitting for the anthology gives Us the copyright to make use of entries as deemed fit.

Language: Entries must be written in English. Submissions in indigenous African languages are widely welcomed but with translations provided.

Deadline: The submission deadline is July 31, 2024. Late submissions will not be accepted.

CASH PRIZE:

The winner of the Libretto African Anthology Prize (LAAP) for Children Literature will receive a cash Prize of ₦100,000.

PUBLICATION:

The longlist will be released in August, shortlist in October, and the Winner announced in November. The longlisted, shortlisted, and winning story will be published as part of the Libretto African Anthology for Children's Literature.

MENTORSHIP: The winner will be invited to mentor writers in our next online mentorship program.

ONLINE SUBSCRIPTION:

Entrants should subscribe to: www.librettong.com for regular updates.

For enquiries, contact us: info@librettong.com