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MAKWENA MANAMELA: CHILDREN KEY TO SILENCING THE GUNS IN AFRICA



The immigration issues within Africa not only divide adults, but also have a negative effect on innocent children.

Makwena Manamela feels strongly that this is an issue that needs to be addressed, hence she has written and published a book titled *Tiseke*. The book is available in English, Sepedi, Tshivenda and Braille. The book addresses themes of identity, Afro-phobia, and xenophobia.

"I love it more than any other continent in the world," said Makwena. "Just thinking about Africa's potential fuels me to keep going no matter what challenges I may come across in life. Tiseke had to be written to add this type of content that helps to conscientise children cognitively and logically, in order to move Africa forward, past hate and discrimination. It is the kind of book that builds confidence in children, but also sparks conversations of various subjects concerning African identity, to open dialogue between children, children and their parents, teachers and Africans from all walks of life in any type of relationship."

The book was inspired by human rights researcher, activist and Tiseke Kasambala, who inspired Makwena through her advocacy work since she was a young journalist. She believes translating the book into African languages will help children to see similarities between Africans and their language, learn to embrace others who speak differently, embrace our differences in the society and understand each other's languages.

"The latest languages widen engagement with children in the subject and will reach more readers, but also contribute to access to content that should be available for visually impaired readers," she said. "It's an inclusive book that could be accessed by children from all walks of life, especially in rural under-privileged schools, as they have limited access to similar material."

Tiseke is exactly what is needed to tackle Early Childhood Development issues

that we are faced with in the country at the moment. Children who can access reading material like Tiseke, which is beautifully packaged with colourful, high resolution illustrations bv Sharon Sibanyoni, will likely improve their literacy skills, grammar and vocabulary. Above all other objectives such as fighting various forms of discrimination, afro-phobia, bullying and xenophobia, Tiseke offering visually impaired readers access to content in three languages are impactful and part of addressing social ills in our country.

This body of work is a high-quality book project that will teach vernacular and literacy to young children and teenagers. The translated version preserves indigenous African languages, teaches children to read and write in their languages. Hopefully, teachers will motivate for it to be included in the curricular or non-curriculum literature learning material.

Makwena believes that if we intentionally create positive content that is pro-Africa and ensure every child has access to at least a few books in their early days, surely Africa can become a better place and xenophobia-free to encourage a safe environment for more developments and healthy trade. The power in some literature could destroy stereotypes and eventually silence the guns, especially children's illustrated books that communicate beyond words, but also cater for differently able people and relate to children from all walks of life.

"Animation has also been a very shaping instrumental medium in

children's thinking capacity and view of life, and I believe more animated content should be created from existing literature Intellectual Property, such as Tiseke and others," she said. "Our problems with one another as African parents, should not affect our children and continue the curse of divisions within the continent."

About The Author



Makwena Manamela is a South Africancivi1 rights born activist. artist, filmmaker, journalist and socia1

entrepreneur. An all-rounder, having worked in the Southern African media landscape since 2008, mostly as a and multimedia broadcast producer/reporter. She has covered a variety of beats. Her multimedia skills are vast, from video production to writing.

Her career started in 2008 with the Northern Media Group in Polokwane, Limpopo as a print media intern journalist and the same year she became a producer and reporter for eNews Channel and later for Africa's first 24hour news channel, eNews Africa, until 2011.

In 2016, she founded Deft Multimedia Heads to offer upcoming artists and startup companies affordable public relations services. Currently, she is consulting for art organisations in the Creative and Cultural Industries, working on films and writing new literature.

Celebrating PUBLISH'D AFRIKA Magazine - Four Years of Championing Literacy Excellence.

Tshidi Monkoe, author of the bestselling *Prison Love* memoir, was the cover girl of the very first edition in June 2021.

"I feel honoured and humbled to be part of this huge milestone. I even forgot that I was the first author on the cover of the PUBLISH'D AFRIKA Magazine. That was a big deal for me. Tshidi Monkoe was on the front cover of a magazine. That was a massive accomplishment. I posted the cover on my WhatsApp status every week – for a year! I even remember the colour of the dress I was wearing. This was long before the orange uniform. Indeed, we've come a long way."

AWARDS GALORE AT PUBLISH'D AFRIKA



PUBLISH'D AFRIKA and its subsidiaries – PUBLISH'D AFRIKA Online Literary Magazine, Adopt-An-Author Program and the Short Story Competition's Spoiling The Broth – jointly scooped two awards in the month of May, 2025.

PUBLISH'D AFRIKA as a company was shortlisted for the Mpumalanga Hollywood Foundation's Bambelela Business Awards, along with 136 companies plying their trade in the province. After a grueling three days that started off with a business seminar on Monday, 26 May, the pitching and exhibition for funding on Tuesday 27 May, and ultimately the awards on Wednesday night, 28 May, PUBLISH'D AFRIKA emerged as one of the 17 top

businesses in Mpumalanga. We walked away with a R40 000 prize money to be invested towards the equipment the business needs.



This was fresh on the heels of having been awarded the South Africa-Zimbabwe Excellence Award in the Creative Arts. at the Sandton Hotel in Johannesburg on Saturday, 24 May. PUBLISH'D AFRIKA's Sukoluhle Nontokozo Mdlongwa accepted the award on behalf of company.

Although we have assisted over 150 authors to publish their books since 2021, it was PUBLISH'D AFRIKA's Adopt-An-Author Program, the online literary magazine, and the Spoiling The Broth Short Story Competition that resonated the most with the Bambelela Business Awards judges. PUBLISH'D AFRIKA continues to invest over R25 000 annually into the three initiatives in a bid to unearth and nurture writing talent across the continent.

"Although we didn't clinch the top prize of R130 000, I believe being selected as one of 17 top businesses in the province we operate in is enough recognition for the work we do," said Thokozani Magagula, co-founder of PUBLISH'D AFRIKA. "The judges were also impressed by the fact that we are a team of two - my wife Sukoluhle and I - and that in a space of only four years, we have managed to put the company where it is

today."

In 2022, PUBLISH'D AFRIKA Online Magazine was received a R200 000 funding from the National Arts Council, Department of Sport, Arts and Culture Presidential Employment Stimulus 3. In 2024, the Spoiling The Broth and Adopt-An-Author Program received a R80 000 funding from the National Arts Council, Department of Sport, Arts and Culture and the Presidential Employment Stimulus 5.

We also achieved an even bigger feat when the Department of Education in Gauteng recommended 12 of the books we had published, even though they later procured only six. Three of the titles we have published have also been procured by the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture in both Gauteng and North-West, with another order having been placed for another title this week.

So far, PUBLISH'D AFRIKA's Adopt-An-Author Program and the Spoiling The Broth have managed to unearth a total of 35 writing talents since the initiatives were launched in 2011. A total of 12 budding writers have already been discovered since the Spoiling The Broth initiative re-started this year.



WE ARE FOUR YEARS AND 53 EDITIONS OLD!



The 5th of June 2025 marks four years since PUBLISH'D AFRIKA Online Literary Magazine hit the digital streets.

That's a total of 53 editions published, with two editions a month in the first year of our launch, and one edition a month thereafter – consistently. And we couldn't be prouder!

Conceived by PUBLISH'D AFRIKA cofounder Sukoluhle Nontokozo Mdlongwa, the magazine has cemented its place in the continent's literary landscape and gained recognition with the National Arts Council, Department of Sport, Arts and Culture, UK-South Africa-Zimbabwe Business Expo, and the Hollywood Foundation's Bambelela Business Awards.

Since its launch, the publication has lived up to its slogan of "redefining Africa's narrative", by giving birth to two integral spin-offs. These are the **Adopt-An-Author Program** that has already unearthed 11 new African literary voices, and the **Spoiling The Broth Anthology** initiative, which has discovered and brought to the fore a total of 41 new writers from across the continent. The 41 writers were discovered through our

monthly short story competition, with their works later compiled in three short story collection volumes that were published in 2022, 2024 and 2025.

Of the baby she had conceived, Sukoluhle Nontokozo Mdlongwa had this to say: "I honestly didn't think much of the idea when I proposed it to my husband; only that I knew we could make it work. After all, he is from a journalism background, having worked for 16 years as a journalist and 10 years as an editor. When we started the magazine, we already had a publishing imprint that had its own teething problems, and the workload just about tripled. But the reception the magazine received from the very first edition emboldened us to soldier on. I'm happy we had the courage to get started, and the tenacity to not only make it work, but make a success of it."

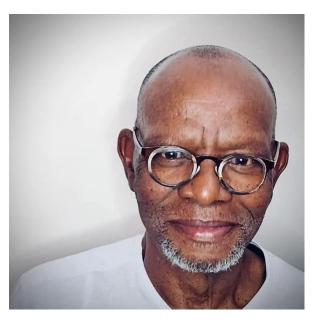
Creatives who have graced our pages include, amongst others, Kwela Books' Stevlyn Vermeulen, American author Eve Fairbanks, Nhlanhla Ngema of Sarafina and Broadway's The Lion King fame and founder of Keeloz Global Entertainment, and Kirsten Miller who won the prestigious international writing competition, the Niso Wilbur Smith Adventure Writing Prize for 2016. She is also the author of six books.

We have also had the courageous Tshidi Monkoe, author of Prison Love, gracing our pages, best-selling authors Takalani M, Sue Nyathi and Busisekile Khumalo, poetry connoisseur Frank Meintjies, and Botswana filmmaker Donald Molosi.

Celebrating PUBLISH'D AFRIKA Magazine - Four Years of Championing Literacy Excellence.

Tshidi Monkoe, author of the bestselling Prison Love memoir: "You believed in me when I was still an underdog. You gave a new author a chance by allowing yourselves to be used by God to launch me. I was not only on the cover of your magazine, but you did so many things for me probono, including proofreading, publishing the ebook for *Prison Love* and assistance with my mentorship program for authors. I will be eternally grateful for how you have shown up in my career and business as an author."

AN ODE TO MORABO MOROJELE AND NGUGI WA THIONG'O



"I came to writing almost by accident... I've always enjoyed writing (but) I never grew up thinking I was going to be a writer." – Morabo Morejele

Two giants of African literature - Morabo Morejele and Ngugi wa Thiong'o - passed on in the month of May.

Lesotho's Morabo whom Morejele, PUBLISH'D AFRIKA Magazine proudly featured as a lead story after winning the University of Johannesburg Prize for

writing in English, died on 20 May, aged 64.

Morejele's novel, Three Egg Dilemma, won him the R75 000 main prize and was praised for its witty, thought-provoking exploration of modern life, identity, and tradition, and its blend of humour and social critique.

Morejele not only worked across multiple fields, but achieved impressively in all. Born 16 September in Maseru, Lesotho and schooled at the Waterford Kamhlaba United World College in Swaziland, he went on to be accepted to study at the London School of Economics. It was in London in the early 80's where he

converted his jazz drumming hobby into a professional side hustle.

At the time of his death, he was working on his third fiction outing, a collection of short stories.

Nic Mhlongo, at hearing of Ntate Morejele's passing: "Today, around 3pm, a van delivers a box of Three Egg Dilemma to my house in Soweto, and I personally signed for it. Thirty minutes later, I hear that Ntate Morabo Morojele has passed away A very beautiful soul. May his soul rest in peace."

Venessa Perumal: "I bought my copy of Morabo Morojele when it came out and in honour of your life, I went to my book case to touch the copy. So sad to come onto Facebook and read of your passing. Condolences to all family and friends. A learned African knowledge sharer moves on to his next journey. #RIPMorabo x."

Melinda Ferguson: "I am so devastated. I spent the evening with him at a fireplace in Clarens two or three weeks ago. We spoke for a long, long time about writing and AI and lots of things. He was ill but so courageous... I wish I had hugged him a little harder when I said goodbye. What a genius and darling human being. I am very sad."

Masitise Seleso wrote: "Today we gather in solemn reflection to honour the life and legacy of our dear brother, mentor, and friend-Morabo Morojele. A jazz drummer, novelist, scholar, and public intellectual of rare distinction, Morabo was a man whose presence across disciplines resonated communities with a quiet power and a profound generosity of spirit.

In him resided a remarkable harmony of expression and intellect: The cadence of the drum, which he played not merely as a musician, but as a storyteller—his rhythms deeply rooted in African traditions and the language of liberation. The eloquence of the written word, most notably in his acclaimed novel How We Buried Puso, a searing exploration of postapartheid identity and memory that earned critical praise and resonated with readers across the continent and beyond.

The rigour of scholarship, expressed in his work as a researcher, teacher, and thought leader—particularly in his contributions to post-colonial theory, African literature, and cultural studies.

And the clarity of thought, which he brought to every conversation, lecture, and collaboration, inspiring all who encountered his work.

Morabo's life was animated by a deep commitment to justice, human dignity, and intellectual freedom. He saw the arts not as a luxury but as a necessity—for healing, for imagining better futures, for telling the truths others preferred to forget.

As a drummer, he performed on stages across the globe, yet always returned to the roots of his sound: the rhythms of Johannesburg, the improvisations of lived experience.

As a writer, he challenged us—gently but unflinchingly—to confront the legacies of our histories. As a scholar, he asked difficult questions and pursued them with integrity, encouraging his students and peers to do the same.

Many who knew him speak of his humility, his curiosity, and his generosity of mentorship. A former colleague recently wrote: "Morabo had the rare ability to make everyone in the room feel both heard and challenged. He didn't just teach—he expanded the way we understood the world."

His passing is a profound loss to the artistic and academic communities of Lesotho, South Africa and the world. Yet amid our sorrow, we also speak with gratitude:

For the gift of his presence among us,

For the legacy of thought, sound, and story he leaves behind,

And for the enduring example of a life lived with depth, conviction, and unshakeable creativity.

May we honour his memory by continuing the work he believed inwork rooted in courage, imagination, and care.

May his voice echo in our thoughts.

May his rhythms guide our steps.

And his spirit—undaunted, may inquisitive, and deeply humane—live on in the work we carry forward.

Rest in eternal peace, Morabo Morojele. You remain deeply missed, and forever remembered."

Ngugi wa Thiong'o



Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, a renowned Kenyan writer, academic, and advocate for African languages and decolonization, passed away on the morning of May 28, 2025. He was 87 years old.

His daughter, Wanjiku wa Ngugi, shared the news on Facebook, calling on his community to honour his life with joy rather than grief.

Born in 1938, Ngũgĩ began his literary career writing in English but in 1970 committed himself to writing in his native Gikuyu as a political and cultural stance against colonialism and linguistic imperialism. His early works like *Weep Not, Child* and *The River Between,* explore the impact of colonialism on Kenyan society, while later works such as *Devil on the Cross* and *Matigari* delve into post-colonial critique and resistance.

Ngũgĩ's decision to abandon English in favour of African languages made him a leading voice in the movement to restore African cultural identity through literature. His memoirs and essays, including *Decolonising the Mind*, remain seminal texts in postcolonial thought and African studies.

Ngũgĩ's writing career spanned more than 60 years and over 30 books. From early novels like Weep Not, Child and The River Between to later works like Wizard Of A Crow and The Perfect Nine, he never stopped pushing the boundaries of language and politics.

He was also a lifelong activist. In the 1980s, his grassroots theater work in Kenya led to his arrest and exile. He believed in the power of ordinary people telling their own stories and spent a lifetime making that possible.

He most recently served as Distinguished Professor of English and Comparative Literature at the University of California, Irvine.



Nomawele Njongo, Founder and Executive Director of KwaziThina Publishers: "As a Pan-African publishing house committed to preserving our cultural heritage, we recognise the transformative power of platforms that refuse to let African narratives be confined to the margins. PUBLISH'D AFRIKA Magazine has been more than a publication – it has been a movement, a sanctuary, and a megaphone for our collective voices. You don't merely document; you curate legacies, amplify whispers into roars, and ignite revolutions through ink and intention."

POTGIETER, WAMARA WIN ISLAND PRIZE



South African author, Dr Kristien Potgieter, alongside Ugandan scribe Zabu Wamara, have been announced as the joint winners of the Island Prize for African Fiction.

The prize, in its fourth year and administered by Holland House Books, awarded Dr Potgieter for her debut novel, In the Valley of Bones, and Wamara for her masterpiece, Night Dancer. The competition had attracted nearly 200 entries from across the continent, covering a wide range of themes, genres and styles.

Dr Potgieter, an author and editor from Johannesburg, South Africa, has a PhD in Creative Writing from Bath Spa University and an MA in Creative Writing from the University of East Anglia, where she was the 2015-2016 Booker Scholar. Her children's books, Bongi Ballerina (2023), and Bongi Ballerina Takes a Bow (2025), are published in South Africa by LAPA Publishers, with a third children's book forthcoming in 2026. Her short fiction and academic writing have been published online and in print in various places. She has more than a decade of experience as a professional editor for publishing companies and academic institutions.

She told PUBLISH'D AFRIKA: "The validation of winning this award – with my wonderful co-winner Zabu Wamara from Uganda, I must add, whose book I'm really looking forward to reading -

has been wonderful and so encouraging. While I would keep writing without the external validation of awards (and have done so for many years), it is so encouraging to receive recognition from time to time. It definitely bolsters my resolve to keep writing."

Dr Potgieter said she does not, as a rule, enter a lot of writing contests, unless she happens to come across a competition for which she already has a piece of writing that would be suitable to enter. From time to time, she would write a short story in order to enter it into a specific short story competition (competition deadlines can be great motivators), but this does not happen often for her.

"The Island Prize is certainly the first accolade I have received for a novel, so that feels really wonderful," she said. "My book, In the Valley of Bones, is a gothic queer love story set in a small town in South Africa in the 1940s. I've been working on it since 2022 and, because it's set in the past, it required extensive research on a variety of topics. By the time I entered the Island Prize, the novel had already gone through several drafts over the last three years."

Dr Potgieter's advice to budding authors is that they should read lots and read widely, and do not be afraid to receive feedback on your work (provided it's from someone whose opinion you trust, of course, and who is knowledgeable about the form or genre you are writing in). A trusted reader's feedback on your work can be extremely valuable.

Wamara is a therapist and author based in Kampala, and her writing draws on her professional experiences in the line of duty. Her novel is set in contemporary Kampala and follows Amani, a trainee therapist recovering from the trauma of her best friend's death. Her return to work brings her into contact with Kay, a

mysterious patient whose pain mirrors her own.

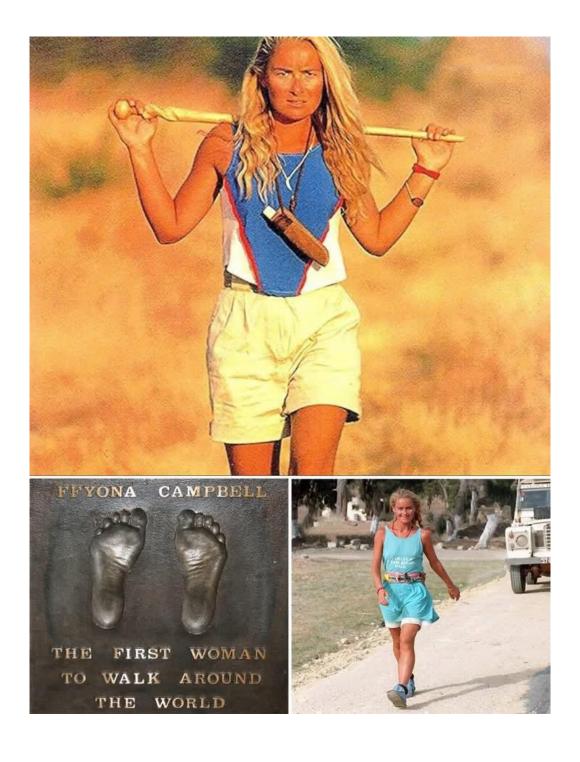
The Island Prize, which was founded in 2022, recognises new literary talents from Africa. It was set up in the spirit of honouring the trailblazing Booker-Longlisted novel, *An Island*, by the South African author Karen Jennings, herself a proof of the importance of literary honours in providing visibility for underrepresented writers.

The prize is co-administered by Jennings and her publishers, Holland House Books (UK), and Karavan Press (South Africa). It awards a total of £1,000 split among a winner and two runner ups. The winning manuscripts will be considered for publication, and the authors will be introduced to an agent.



Nomawele Njongo, Founder and Executive Director of KwaziThina Publishers: "When you featured our work, shared our creative odysseys, and spotlighted initiatives like the Funda Mpondo Literary Festival, you did something radical: you declared, unambiguously, that our stories are not just heard — they are essential. In a global literary landscape that still too often sidelines African voices, your magazine has been a steadfast warrior, ensuring that the richness of Mpondoland's valleys, the rhythm of Jozi's streets, and the brilliance of creatives across the continent claim their rightful space on the world stage."

THE WOMAN WHO WALKED ACROSS AFRICA



In 1991, at just 24 years old, Ffyona Campbell set out on a journey that defied reason and redefined limits. Her mission? To walk the length of Africa — 16,000 kilometers — from Cape Town to Tangiers.

The walk was part of something even bigger: to become the first woman to walk around the world. So for over two years, crossed deserts, jungles, savannahs, walking 40,2km a carrying her gear, battling blisters, heatstroke, and near-constant dehydration.

Wild animals weren't the only danger she also faced isolation, cultural barriers, and skepticism at nearly every turn. Every step was a test — not just of strength, but of resilience, diplomacy, and unshakable will.

In 1993, after walking for two relentless years, she reached Tangiers, Morocco becoming the first woman to walk solo across the African continent.

Ffyona Campbell was born in 1967 in Totnes, Devon, into a family with a long Royal Naval tradition. Her walk around Africa wasn't her first grueling feat and test of resilience. When she was 16, she covered 32,000 kilometres (20,000 mi) over 11 years and raised £180,000 for charity. She was the youngest person to walk the length of Britain and the first person to walk the full length of Africa. She wrote about her experience in a series of three books, amongst them On Foot Through Africa.

During her childhood and early teens, the Campbells moved home 24 times, which

resulted in her attending 15 schools. After leaving home and school at 16, she raised the necessary sponsorship to enable her to walk from John o' Groats to Lands End. Walking 30 to 40km a day, six days a week, she completed the journey in 49 days and was the youngest person at that time to have done it.

At 18, she set off from New York City crossing the United States towards Los Angeles. At 21, she walked across Australia, 50 miles a day for 3,200 miles from Sydney to Perth in 95 days, beating the men's record for this journey.

She suffered severe sunburn, dehydration as well as intense blistering of the feet but was determined not to miss out any miles. She wrote about this journey in her book, Feet of Clay.

On 2 April 1991, she left Cape Town, South Africa and walked the length of Africa covering over 16,000km before arriving in Tangiers, Morocco two years later on 1 September 1993. She had been joined by her former boyfriend, British survival expert, Ray Mears, for five months during the journey through Zaire after an uprising had forced her and her team to abandon the support vehicle and be evacuated by the French Foreign Legion along with all the other expats. She was able to return to central Africa within weeks of the evacuation and continued walking from the place she had left.

During the stretch across the Sahara, she walked an extra 4,000 km around a war zone to avoid missing out any steps. She reached Tangiers and was greeted by the international media. The walk raised awareness of Survival International, an organisation which helps protect the lives of threatened tribal people. She wrote about this journey in her book On Foot through Africa.

In April 1994, she left Algeciras, Spain and walked through Europe on the Via de la Plata through Spain, through France, crossing to Britain at Dover. She then completed the last 1,300 km walking from Dover back to John o' Groats accompanied by young people from Raleigh International who came to find out just how far they could walk if they really put their minds to it. She arrived at John O'Groat's, the world's end, on 14 October 1994. She was shadowed by a BBC film crew and presenter Janet Street-Porter. At the time, Campbell was hailed as the first woman to walk around the world.

Campbell raised half the amount for charity in one go when one of the organisers at Raleigh International sold the advertising space on her forehead during her well-publicised return. After a period in hospital for a back operation, she walked across America again for her own personal satisfaction as she had had to miss out a section in the middle due to illness. She wrote about that journey in her final book, The Whole Story.

Inspired by the hunter-gatherers she met on her journey - Aborigines, Bushmen, Pygmies and Native Americans Campbell returned to Australia after the end of the world walk to live with the Aborigines. After three months she returned to Britain to learn how to be a hunter-gatherer in her own country and to work out what had separated us from the life we must have loved so much. She wrote about her adventures in her fourth book, The Hunter-Gatherer Way.

Celebrating PUBLISH'D AFRIKA Magazine - Four Years of Championing Literacy Excellence.

Kirsten Miller, winner of the Niso Wilbur Smith Adventure Writing Prize for 2016 "Writing is a way in which we can offer ourselves to the other. I have watched PUBLISH'D AFRIKA Magazine grow from its inception, and as a contributor to one of the earliest editions, I am incredibly proud of the publication it has become. Accessible to all, it is a contribution to writing and South African culture that should be supported and nurtured by all stakeholders - writers, funders and supporters of the written word - for its participation in the world of ideas and the writing journey."

UQAMATA: REINTRODUCING CULTURAL PRACTICES TO CHILDREN



Realising that there was a glaring lack of indigenous representation on bookshelves, especially books written in isiZulu, a fire was lit in author Nompumelelo Ngcobo to write our stories in our indigenous languages.

The result was the *uQamata Cultural Series*, a four-part illustrated children's book series written in isiZulu. It follows a spirited six-year-old girl named uQamata as she explores traditional rites of passage such as umemulo, amalobolo, umhlonyane, and utsiki. The stories aim to reintroduce cultural practices to children in a joyful and affirming way.

Nompumelelo, a researcher, cultural storyteller, and mother based Johannesburg, boosts of a background in public policy and African spirituality. She has worked across academia and the legislature, always committed indigenous amplifying knowledge systems. She is currently pursuing a PhD in the School of Religion and Classics, where her focus is on consciousness and agency in African spirituality.

She told **PUBLISH'D AFRIKA:** "My daughter, Qamata, inspired this series. I wanted her to see herself in the books she reads—not just visually, but spiritually and culturally. Seeing the lack of

indigenous representation bookshelves, especially books written in isiZulu. lit a fire in me to write our stories in our language."



This series is for early phase learners, families raising children in African households, educators, and cultural organisations committed to decolonising literature and curriculum. It's also for anyone looking to reconnect with or introduce young ones to traditional African values and rites.

"I hope to preserve and pass on our indigenous knowledge systems in a way that feels natural and exciting to children," said Nompumelelo. "I want the series to be used in schools, libraries, and homes across South Africa-and eventually across the continent—as a tool for cultural education."

"I want readers to walk away with a deepened sense of pride in who they are, where they come from, and the richness of African traditions. I want young readers to see that their stories, language, and spiritual heritage are beautiful, powerful, and worthy of celebration."

Follow the journey: @ugamataculturalseries on instagram

Celebrating PUBLISH'D AFRIKA Magazine - Four Years of Championing Literacy Excellence.

Nomawele Njongo, Founder and Executive Director of KwaziThina Publishers: "Publications like PUBLISH'D AFRIKA are indispensable for creatives in that they dissolve the loneliness of creation. Before your platform, many of us crafted stories in solitude, wondering if anyone would ever listen. Then you arrived, proclaiming: 'We see you. Speak boldly – we'll carry your words further.' Your features are not just exposure; they are validation, turning solitary art into communal power and opening doors to collaborations, audiences, and opportunities that sustain our craft."

WORDS AND WOMBS: WRITING AS A FEMININE ACT OF CREATION

By Faith Chabalala – Writer, Copywriter, Copy Editor, Publisher, Publicist



I have grown to believe that every woman holds a book in her womb. Stories told and stories untold.

The womb grows slowly and sometime painfully, it kicks in the early hours of the morning when the world is quiet. Quiet enough to hear the whispers of the ancestors. Some stories come with blood, others with a cry, a cry of joy perhaps. But they all come from a sacred place – the womb. Home of all the all the memories. It is the seat of creation. A place where life begins and sometimes ends.

In many parts of the world, the womb is not just a bodily organ. It is spiritual. It holds history. It listens. It dreams. It bleeds the seasons of a woman's coming. And so, when African women write, they do not only write on paper, but they midwife words. Her womb poetry and her mouth a library.

My grandmother understood many languages, although she never learned how to write her name. Her stories knitted into every meal she made, every song she sung. She was steadfast, buried children and still rose to plant again and again. African women now continue that legacy through pen and paper, through keyboards with voices raised in rooms that they were once told to clean.

African women like Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, Tsitsi Angarembga, Mariama Ba, Yvonne Vera and Lebogang Mashile have turned personal into political and

intimate into eternal. They write for peace, love, identity, equality, liberation their stories come from the womb, their stories come from home. They write from a place of their ancestors, they carry the rhythm and the beat, their wood smell of African soil, smoke, even the rain.

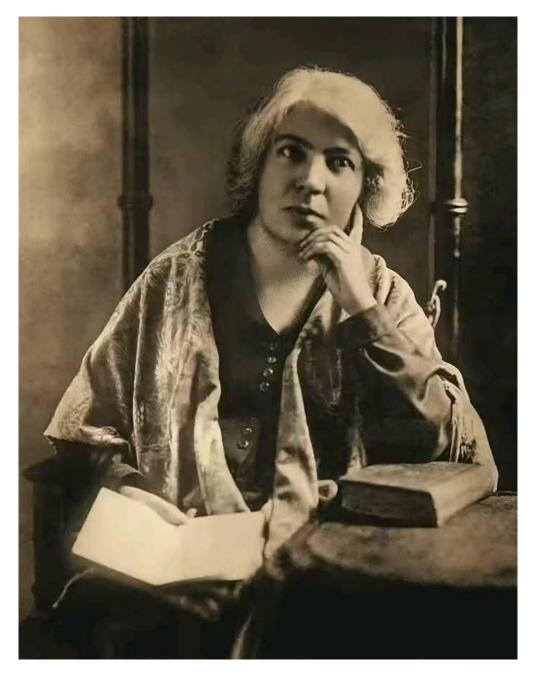
Women who write do not seek permission; they remember, they create the memory and hold the space for others to do so. So write, woman. Write like your story matters, because it does, write like your womb is listening because it is.

A woman's story is never just her own, but it is her mother's, and her mother's mother. It is the story of a nation, carved into a diary, it is the story of a continent that has bled but yet continues to blossom.

Celebrating PUBLISH'D AFRIKA Magazine - Four Years of Championing Literacy Excellence.

Nomawele Njongo, Founder and Executive Director of KwaziThina Publishers: "You don't passively report; you actively participate in shaping Africa's literary future. By covering festivals, publishers, and grassroots initiatives, you provide the visibility that fuels growth, ensuring these vital spaces thrive and expand. Every story you publish is a torch passed forward. When a young writer in the Eastern Cape sees their language honoured, their landscapes celebrated, and their truths centred in your pages, they don't just aspire - they believe. You are sowing seeds for a bolder, more inclusive literary renaissance, one where no one must shrink to fit someone else's narrative."

THE INSPIRING STORY OF GRAZIA DELEDDA



Do you see this woman?

She was mocked, dismissed, humiliated, and cast aside... simply because she was born a woman. Her name was Grazia Deledda.

Born in the rugged hills of Nuoro, Sardinia — a land where girls were taught

to sew, not to dream. At just nine years old, she was pulled out of school. Education, they said, was unnecessary for a girl.

But Grazia didn't agree. She studied in secret — feeding her mind with borrowed books and filling her soul with unwritten

stories. As a teenager, she published her first tale in a magazine.

For her, it was joy. For the village, it was scandal. "A woman? Writing? How shameful," the neighbors whispered.

The priest disapproved. Even her own family turned cold. A woman's place, they said, was in the kitchen, not on the page.

But Grazia was made of something different: perseverance. She wrote at night, when the world slept. In silence, she built a voice. Years later, she moved to Rome, with a man who believed in her more than anyone else: Palmiro Madesani.

Palmiro was not just a husband. He was her shield, her anchor, her fuel. When the world mocked the two of them—a woman writer and a man proud to stand

behind her—they answered with quiet defiance. Grazia wrote of fierce women, broken men, and wild landscapes that mirrored her own unbreakable heart. And one day, the world finally listened.

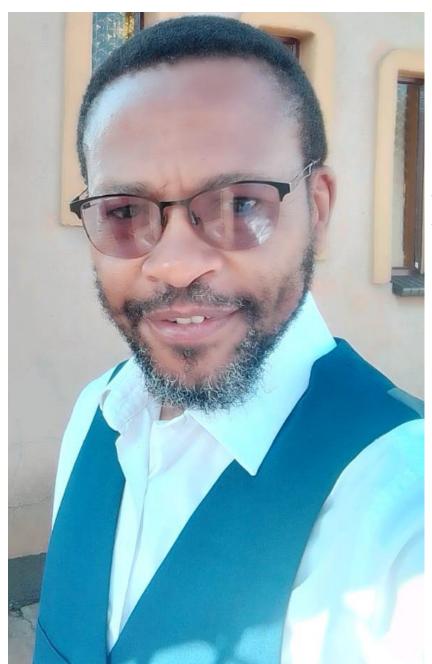
In 1926, Grazia Deledda—the little girl from Sardinia with only a basic education—became the first Italian woman to win the Nobel Prize for Literature. When she stepped onto that stage, she did not walk alone. At her side, hand in hand, stood Palmiro—the man who knew how to love without fear. Because real love doesn't ask you to shrink. It holds you higher when the world tries to pull you down.

And you, Grazia—thank you. For teaching us that being a woman is not a weakness. It is a light that writes itself into history.



Nomawele Njongo, Founder and Executive Director of KwaziThina Publishers: "To the PUBLISH'D AFRIKA Team: Enkosi kakhulu. Your work is a testament to what happens when passion meets purpose. You are not just a magazine – you are a lighthouse for African creativity, a bridge between artists and the world, and a home for stories that might otherwise go untold. As you mark four years of profound impact, we celebrate you and recommit to walking this path together."

THOSE SEVEN WORDS



The ability to read and write shapes the essence of human expression. But what happens when shame, circumstance, or lack of access prevents one from acquiring these fundamental skills? Pule S Mokgadinyane looks at how the arts become a gateway to knowledge itself.

The story of Hanna Schmitz, a fictional character in *The Reader,* is a sobering reflection of reality. Her illiteracy not only dictated the trajectory of her life but also highlighted a deeply personal struggle – one

that many incarcerated individuals share.

Be that as it may, within the confines of prison walls, many find a path to literacy through unexpected means: the arts. poetry, music, storytelling – these creative outlets provide a gateway to learning, transforming lives in ways traditional education often cannot.

The case of Hanna Schmitz and The Reader

Hanna's story, brought to life in Bernhard Schlink's novel *Der Vorleser* (translated as The Reader), speaks to the shame of illiteracy. When standing trial for the war crimes, she is asked by the presiding judge to provide a handwriting sample on a piece of paper – an attempt to confirm whether she had authored a report detailing the events at the concentration camp where she had worked. A pad and a pen are given to her. Flabbergasted and overwhelmed, she responds: "There's no need. I wrote the report."

At first glance, her response seemed like an admission of guilt, but in reality, it was driven by shame. Hanna was illiterate unable to read and write. But the humiliation of exposing this in front of the court, her colleagues, and the world at large was unbearable. Her refusal to provide a sample was interpreted as an admission of guilt, sealing her fate. Those seven words sent her to prison for life.

Ironically, it was in prison that she finally gained literacy. Through audiobooks and written text, Hanna taught herself to read. This method, listening to words while following along in a book, is a

technique used in literacy programmes the world over. Her journey, although fictionalised, parallels the experiences of many inmates who enter prison without basic education but emerge with newfound intellectual abilities.

The Reality of Prison Literacy

In South Africa, as in many parts of the world, the prison system houses many inmates who arrive not being able to write their names or spell simple words. Some have never held a book, let alone read one. Yet, statistics show educational programmes in correctional centres significantly increases literacy rates among inmates.

What I went through as a pre-AET facilitator in prison opened my eyes to this. There's a high illiteracy rate. One learner came to my class. His goal: to learn how to sign his name. He was not interested in any other lessons but English literacy. The most interesting and somewhat amusing thing about him was his singular focus—he only wanted to learn how to sign his name, nothing more. "Ngifuna ukwazi ukuhlikihla nje," he emphasised. He only wanted to know how to sign. Teaching him to write properly was of no interest to him.

There are many literacy programmes provided. One such program is the Prison SMART initiative, which has been operating in South African prisons since 2002. Over 8, 881 prisoners have benefited from the program, which focuses on stress management and rehabilitation while incorporating training. Additionally, literacy Durban University of Technology (DUT) has launched digital literacy programs at correctional facilities, equipping inmates with essential skills for reintegration into society.

The Power of the Arts in Education

Why does art succeed where traditional education struggles? The answer lies in engagement. expression Creative removes the fear associated with formal schooling. Allowing individuals to learn organically. Writing song lyrics requires spelling, reading poetry demands comprehension, and acting in a play studying a script. requires seemingly recreational activities cultivate essential literacy skills.

Research supports this connection. The Arts Education Partnership highlights how arts -based learning fosters multiple literacies, including media, movement, and sound, expanding traditional definitions of literacy. Similarly, studies from the Republic of South Africa indicate that arts-based education enhances social skills, self-efficacy, and ideation—critical components of literacy development.

What The Arts Do

Although this is a fictionalised narration. The arts have a capability to make believe. They simply shout, 'if reality was like this.' Hence this movie motivated me to write this article. It took me back to what I went through as a pre-AET facilitator in prison.

The book and consequently, screenplay, and the Oscar winning performance of Kate Winslet got tongues wagging. Most said the movie downplays the Nazi atrocities. But that's what art should do: get people talking. That's what writers should do: portray the nuances of life in non-fictional and/or fictionalised characters.

Bridging The Gab

Literacy gained through artistic expression is not just an intellectual victory – it's a societal one. When inmates gain reading and writing skills, they carry with them the tools to secure employment, communicate effectively, and engage with the world in meaningful ways. Many former inmates go on to pursue further education, leveraging the skills they honed through poetry or music. For them, literacy is more than functional, it's transformational. It enables them to share their stories, advocate for themselves, and build futures that may have once seemed impossible.

Take me for instance, and many others like me, I started writing my first manuscript inside. Took a magazine article writing course to hone my writing skills and better understand what it takes to write for a magazine. Had two of my online articles published. All while I was

inside. Now, I'm about to be a published author. Having two complete manuscripts and three more in the making.

Conclusion

The arts have an undeniable role in education. They foster curiosity, eliminate the fear of learning, and serve as a gateway to learning for those who might otherwise remain in the shadows of Prisons, schools, illiteracy. and communities at large must recognise and support the arts as viable educational tools. By embracing creativity as a path to literacy, we don't just teach people to read – we empower them to rewrite their own stories.

Celebrating PUBLISH'D AFRIKA Magazine - Four Years of Championing Literary Excellence

Kenyan author, Alexander Nderitu, Editor-in-Chief of The African Griot Review: "Congratulations, PUBLISH'D AFRIKA, on your fourth anniversary! Lit mags are something of a novelty in the African literary scene and yet they play an important role: bridging the gap between literature and entertainment and keeping litterateurs updated on what's going on in the world of arts and letters. Thank you for shining the spotlight on so many authors across the continent and may you continue to do so for many years to come."

AFRICAN LANGUAGE SFRIFS ONLITERATURES IN TRANSLATION LAUNCHED

As the African Language Literatures in Translation series takes shape, the University of Georgia Press invites scholars, translators, and authors to contribute to this groundbreaking series.

This follows the University of Georgia having announced African Language Literatures in Translation (ALLT), a series dedicated to bringing African classic literary works-both contemporary-written in indigenous languages to English-speaking audiences.

The majority of works selected for the series are already in circulation in their original languages but have yet to be made available in English. To that end, UGA Press is working closely with Africa-based publishers and literary organisations to ensure that translated editions are accessible and affordably priced across the continent. The series aims to overcome the challenges of accessing African literature, particularly works originally written in indigenous and underrepresented languages.

Christopher Ernest Ouma, an associate professor of English at Duke University, and Alexander Fyfe, assistant professor of comparative literature and African studies at the University of Georgia will serve as the series editors.

The goal is not only to make African literature more accessible, but to also encourage the teaching of African English-speaking literature in classrooms. The series will also provide resources for instructors that will allow them to contextualise these works for their students.

"As a teacher of modern African literatures, I've often felt frustration that so few works of African-language writing are readily available in translation for use in the classroom," said Fyfe. "With this series, we want to create a sustainable venue for translations of Africanlanguage writing that makes texts available to Anglophone readerships, while contributing positively and responsibly to the publishing and ecosystems translation that already support African writing."

UGA Press Editor-in-Chief Nathaniel Holly expressed both pride and a sense of duty in launching the series.

"African Language Literatures Translation is a tremendous opportunity and responsibility for the University of Georgia Press," Holly said. "With Alex Fyfe and Chris Ouma at the editorial helm, ALLT will publish writers based both on the African continent and in its diasporas to help create translational connections between writers and readers. While the works published in this series should have been available to Englishreading audiences long ago, we are honoured to play even a small part in getting this wealth of essential and exciting literature to many new readers around the world."

Stephanie Newell, Chair of the Council on African Studies at Yale University, said the series is both timely and decades overdue, and recognised its potential to transform the field of African literary studies.

Inquiries about publishing can be directed to Nathaniel Holly at nfholly@uga.edu or to the series editors alexander.fyfe@uga.edu and christopher.ouma@duke.edu.



Botswana's Dr. Paula O.M. Otukile, founder of Mulher Forte African literature: "PUBLISH'D AFRIKA is a ray of hope for the upcoming and new African authors and literature promoters and creatives in Africa. As far as 2021, they have been consistently featuring talent without a fee and fairly. Such publications paved the way for many like myself in Botswana and my stable of literature, Mulher Forte African literature, in terms of regional visibility and being featured in a well-written, if not great publication. It opens more doors for us. We encourage the arts and culture sponsors to partner with PUBLISH'D AFRIKA and many others making this beautiful creative industry stronger again. Our word is keep on writing, the sky is the limit."

"MME, NTATE O KAE?" SHINING THE SPOTLIGHT ON **FATHERLESSNESS**



South Africa is notorious for fatherlessness. Many children grow up without their biological fathers for a cocktail of reasons. The root of fatherlessness is death, broken families, having children out of wedlock and extramarital affairs. Parents find themselves with unresolved conflict. Sadly, innocent children are often caught in the crossfire.

This is the premise of a short story anthology written by Tshidi Monkoe, the author of the best-selling memoir, Prison Love.

She told **PUBLISH'D AFRIKA:** "Mme, Ntate O Kae? (Mommy, where is Daddy?) is a compilation of short stories about children who are raised by single mothers, grandparents, stepfathers or a physically present father who is absent emotionally. In some of the stories, the children have grown up and became parents. That is where we see the longterm negative impact of fatherlessness, especially when they become husbands. They find themselves having to give what was not given to them. They parent and love from a very broken place."



Tshidi said as a spouse, when you think you are being abused or ill-treated by

your husband, you are actually dealing with a little boy who never healed - a little boy who is still in pursuit of answers and happiness. A little boy who lacks selflove and self-respect. A little boy who has not sent a search party within himself to look for love, happiness and fulfillment.

"You are dealing with a little boy who misunderstood, feels unheard, inadequate and unappreciated," she said. "While you are retaliating or trying to fix the adult, you are oblivious to the fact that you actually represent people and circumstances that took away the little boy's voice and power. He then fights back because he now has a body and structure that allow him to finally defend himself and express his pain. This becomes a vicious cycle of brokenness and fatherlessness."

Monkoe, who is also an Inspirational Speaker, a certified Relationship and Wellness Coach, NLP Coach and NLP Practitioner, will release the book on the eve of Father's Day.



UZENENYE! UBOMI THE FOOTPRINT 2ND EDITION



A two-time self-published author, Akhiwe A Mankayi. has released a second edition of his book titled *Ubomi Thee Footprint*.

It has been seven years of a roller-coaster journey since the first edition to the finishing of the second edition, but the author says he is glad that journey has come to an end and greatness is yet to come.

He told **PUBLISH'D AFRIKA**: "If only young writers, aspiring writers and authors would be taught the 'do's' and 'don't's' in genres of writing, advanced writing, academic writing, the finishing of books and the business side, which is Authorpreneurship. A lot of authors wouldn't lose money or waste a lot of time reproducing books so as to reach the standards."

Fortunately for Akhiwe, the second edition did not cost a penny but a great deal of time and negotiating back and forth to reach an agreement. For some authors, that's not the case. This also raises the fact that publishing companies should treat every title as gold, no matter how old the author is – their background, experience, influence, social media following and/or how deep their pockets are etc.

"Publishing is the easy part, but marketing and branding a product that is not up to the standard of the industry is intended to be a recipe for disaster," said Akhiwe. "Writing, sub-editing, editing, layout, proofreading, graphics marketing are the most important parts of creating a success out of a book. Gratefully, such things have been upgraded and dealt with in this second edition of Ubomi Thee Footprint."

Ubomi Thee Footprint is an English which explores autobiography complex journey of Akhiwe, grappling with separation, loss, and identity amidst adversity. Haunted by an alcoholic father and a troubled past, he wields his pen to share his resilience. The narrative evokes raw emotions and tender memories, encouraging readers to confront their own shadows and emerge stronger from their struggles.

Akhiwe stated that the book relates to everyone in general, particularly people who endured being raised in broken homes, battled with sexual identity, loss and grief, rape and abuse, family history, and being ignored (seen but not heard).

"This is a story that narrates how giving up is not an option and sticking to a plan of action and following that no matter what storms life can bring," he said. "Poverty in all honesty is the best varsity but one needs to graduate from such a situation because we must succeed."

Akhiwe says all in all, it doesn't end with publishing, but a book has a life beyond that and the 2nd edition of *Ubomi Thee* Footprint is journey about to start that voyage. Akhiwe's resilience shines through in all that he does, from his books, work and life.

Exclusive first copies are available on WhatsApp 078 330 9564, "Books by Akhiwe A Mankayi". You can also reach out to him on his Facebook page, Akhiwe A Mankayi, and on Tiktok.

STARLINK: WHAT IT MEANS TO OPEN OUR AIRSPACE TO MUSK



The United States has 800 military bases worldwide and would love to have one in South Africa. However, because of South Africa's political positioning, this is not viable. This is where Starlink comes in.

Proponents of Elon Musk's satellite internet present it as a solution to rural disconnection, a godsend for farmers, rural clinics and schoolchildren. But Starlink is not just bandwidth in the bundus. It's a Trojan Horse designed for 21st-century American domination.

If and when South Africa opens its airspace, it will find that "securing our borders" is the least of its problems. South Africans will discover that sovereignty leaks not through borders but through satellites.

Starlink pretends to be a neutral service provider. But neutrality is fiction in geopolitics. While its marketing speaks of farmers and learners, Starlink's parent company, SpaceX, is neck-deep in the US military-industrial complex.

SpaceX holds Pentagon contracts for missile tracking and battlefield communication. Its satellites are integrated into NATO-linked defence networks. And under the Starshield programme, it is actively developing military-grade space capabilities.

In Ukraine, we saw the real Starlink: coordinating drone strikes, powering real-time battlefield intelligence, and even at Elon Musk's whim, it dictated the limits of military operations. This isn't telecoms. It's geopolitical domination masquerading as broadband.

Now imagine this network quietly embedding itself across South Africa, not as a traditional foreign base with boots on the ground, but as a network of terminals, antennas, and encrypted channels beyond local control. No soldiers, no flag. Just a silent satellite occupation.

Starlink doesn't need to obey local laws; it bypasses them. Ground stations may be offshore or in neighbouring states. Traffic is routed through US-controlled channels.

When Starlink lands, ICASA will be rendered irrelevant, sidelined by a network that answers not to Pretoria but to Palo Alto and the Pentagon. Forget the BEE requirements. Your honourable members in the Parliamentary committees can discuss them vigorously amongst themselves.

In practice, this means any embassy, NGO or mining company using Starlink would be operating in a digital enclave, communicating independently of the state, shielded from scrutiny, and free from South African jurisdiction. This is the erosion of digital sovereignty, and it's happening under the radar, literally.

Across Africa right now, NGOs operating in conflict zones or resource-rich regions now rely on Starlink. This creates a parallel communications infrastructure: fast, encrypted, and entirely unaccountable to the host state. These terminals can communicate across borders without touching local networks, making them invisible to regulators, security agencies, and even policymakers.

In practice, this means that foreign-funded NGOs, mining firms, and diplomatic missions can operate within South Africa but outside its digital jurisdiction. South Africa will be digitally Balkanised by infrastructure it neither owns nor controls.

Real-time African data on movement, transactions, agriculture, climate, and demographics will be harvested without oversight and used to train AI models, support predictive policing, or guide strategic investments. All of this happens outside African jurisdictions, enriching US intelligence, tech firms, and defence agencies.

Crucially, the data flowing through these Starlink terminals is not neutral. It's routed through US-controlled ground stations, governed by American law, and increasingly fed into AI systems, surveillance platforms, and military simulations.

Now, contrast this with how the United States treats foreign technology. Huawei was banned outright because the US believes it could compromise national security. TikTok has faced legislative bans, sanctions, and forced divestments. The justification is that American sovereignty must be protected from Chinese infrastructure.

But in Africa, US tech is welcomed with no questions asked. Starlink is entering countries like Nigeria, Rwanda, Kenya, and Zambia, often outside normal regulatory processes, with no public debate, and in most cases, in defiance of local telecom and regulatory laws.

Where the US sees data infrastructure as a matter of national defence, African governments too often see it as a development opportunity. But digital dependency is still dependency, and when the infrastructure is foreign-owned, so is the power.

The brilliance of Starlink is that it needs no bases. Its dishes are rural clinics. Its antennas are schools. Its forward-operating stations are NGOs. And its justification is always wrapped in the warm glow of "progress."

But we must learn from history: the railroads of the colonial empires weren't built for the people, they were built to extract. Today's satellites do not just connect, they entrench, create dependencies, determine how data flows, how communications are routed and who holds the keys to the cloud.

Already, Starlink is live across much of Africa. In each case, its arrival is celebrated as "leapfrogging traditional telecoms technology." But Africans should ask themselves what they are leapfrogging into.

South Africa is next in line to be lulled by the illusion of harmless technology, and once this system is embedded, it cannot be dislodged.

The truth is that Starlink is not in it for the money. The commercial model makes no sense in rural South Africa, where the incomes are low and the population is sparse. There's a reason why network coverage is poor in rural areas. There's no money to be made there.

Meanwhile, the people who can afford to pay for Starlink are in urban areas and already have relatively affordable high-speed LTE and fibre. So why the interest?

Because, again, this isn't about profit, it's about presence and judging by how Starlink is brushing aside the country's BEE laws, it will almost certainly pressure regulators for exemptions and use NGO-driven deployments to sidestep procurement laws.

The feel-good narrative of "connecting the unconnected" is not philanthropy, it's a Trojan Horse aimed at the last African state with both the capacity and the inclination to resist American technological dominance.

This isn't about giving villagers 480p YouTube. It's about embedding US communications in a BRICS country, dominating infrastructure for NGOs and military contractors, securing exclusive access to real-time African data for AI and intelligence applications, and weakening South Africa's sovereignty without ever firing a shot.

Starlink is the perfect proxy: a private company doing what governments can't admit to. For South Africa, accepting Starlink means accepting the expropriation of digital control.

History teaches us that the technologies of empire rarely announce themselves with weapons. They come with promises. They come with progress, and they are here."

*Source: Zamani Saule page



WHEN AN AUTHOR KILLS OFF A CHARACTER:

DOYLE FEELS READERS' WRATH



In 1893, Arthur Conan Doyle made a decision he thought would finally give him peace: he killed Sherlock Holmes.

What followed wasn't just grief—it was a full-blown cultural uprising. Readers sent Doyle hate mail. Subscriptions to The Strand Magazine (where Holmes' adventures were serialised) were canceled in droves—over 20,000 of them. Staff at the magazine referred to Holmes' death as "the dreadful event." Some fans even

wore black armbands in mourning, as if a real person had died.

Doyle had grown to resent his own creation. Sherlock Holmes' fame overshadowed everything else he wrote—including the historical novels he considered his true literary legacy. In a letter to his mother, he confessed: "I must save my mind for better things." Her response? "You won't." (She was right).

The Public's Revenge

The backlash was so severe that The Strand Magazine nearly collapsed—Holmes was their biggest draw. Fans protested in the streets, demanding Holmes' return. Doyle's own doctor blamed Holmes' death for Doyle's poor health, telling him: "You're not yourself without him."

After eight long years of pressure (and a very tempting paycheck), Doyle finally caved. In 1901, he brought Holmes back in The Hound of the Baskervilles—though he still pretended Holmes was

dead for a while longer. By 1903, the detective was fully resurrected, much to the world's relief.

This wasn't just a literary scandal—it was the birth of modern fandom. Before social media, before hashtag campaigns, fans found a way to make their voices heard. And they won.

The Complete Stories of Sherlock Holmes: https://amzn.to/4k2BbAx



CALLS FOR SUBMISSIONS

DSAC/ANFASA PUBLISHING HUB

In July 2023, the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture (DSAC) in partnership with the Academic and Non-Fiction Authors Association of South Africa (ANFASA), launched the DSAC Publishing Hub, an industry stimulus project to support authors and revitalise the publishing industry. Also, to encourage the creation of new literature telling our stories, written by South African authors for edutainment and preservation of our heritage.

An impressive collection of fifty-seven works, comprising of forty-three physical books, eight audiobooks, and six books converted to braille, were produced to date. Notably, four Khoi and San books written in Khwedam, !Xuhnthali, and Nama were published to further emphasising the importance of linguistic and cultural preservation.

In the previous year, South Africa celebrated 30 years of democracy. It is an opportune moment to reflect on our rich history, diverse culture, and the journey towards freedom and equality. Through literature, we can further commemorate this milestone and continue to shape narratives that reflect the spirit of our nation.

If you're interested in participating in the "DSAC Publishing Hub" initiative, either as an author, a publisher or a member of the selection panel, complete an application for consideration.

The Department of Sport, Arts and Culture (DSAC), in collaboration with the Academic and Non-Fiction Authors' Association of South Africa (ANFASA), is thrilled to announce the opening of the DSAC Publishing Hub for 2025/26 call for manuscripts, selection publishers. For information, panel, and more please visit: https://www.anfasa.org.za/dasc-publishing-hub/

GOT SOMETHING TO SAY ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING?

Enter The Ajuda Foundation Creative Writing Competition. You don't need to have written anything before. You just need a voice, and something to say about any aspect of mental health and wellbeing.

Whether it's a short story, a poem, or a short memoir, if it reflects your thoughts or experiences around mental health and wellbeing, it's worth sharing.

Also, creative writing isn't just about your reader. It can be really good for the writer too. There's loads of evidence showing that writing things down can help reduce stress, improve mood, and give you a bit of headspace. It doesn't have to be perfect. It just has to be yours.

Details and how to enter here:

[https://foundationcreativewriting.my.canva.site/](https://foundationcreativewriting.m y.canva.site/), or send an email to foundation@ajuda.org.uk

STANLEY UMEZULIKE PRIZE FOR CRIME THRILLER WRITING



This global competition is proudly organized by Guild of African Thriller Authors (GATA).

We launched this writing competition with one powerful mission: to discover, celebrate, and elevate the next generation of bold, talented, and skillful crime thriller writers from across the world.

As someone who has walked this path and carved out a space in the world of crime thriller writing, I believe it's time to give back; to pass the torch and spotlight emerging voices who have the skill, the guts,

and the storytelling fire.

The winner gets the cash prize of $\aleph 100,000$ or its equivalent in their local currency.

We will announce the winner on 31st July 2025.

The writing instruction is: write a crime thriller story set in the year 2045.

Word count: 3000 to 5000 words. It should not exceed 5000 words.

Below is the criteria for applying, and the submission guidelines.

- 1. Applicant must be 18 and above.
- 2. Writers from any part of the world are free to apply.
- 3. Your document should be in Times New Roman, Font Size 12, Double Line Spacing.

- 4. Only writers who have published at least one short story on any online platform prior to applying for the competition, are eligible to apply. They will attach the link of their published work to their submission.
- 5. All stories should be written in English language.
- 6. Your work must be original. Anyone who writes with AI is automatically disqualified.
- 7. All stories should be submitted to guildofafricanthrillerauthors@gmail.com
- 8. The deadline for the submission is 20th June 2025
- 9. To participate and receive updates about this competition, join GATA Competition WhatsApp Group. Click here to join: https://chat.whatsapp.com/BRQxGoGNeaZJ7ZaeY19WiB

UMUOFIA ARTS AND BOOKS OPEN FOR SUBMISSIONS

The Umuofia Arts and Books Festival is now accepting submissions for its third edition, taking place from July 31 to August 2. This year's festival anthology is themed "Reflections," and writers are invited to submit poetry, fiction, and nonfiction that thoughtfully engage with the theme.

Named after the iconic fictional village in Chinua Achebe's Things Fall Apart, the Umuofia Arts and Books Festival has grown to become the leading literary and arts gathering in Southeastern Nigeria. Contributors whose work is accepted will receive a payment of N25,000 per piece or group of poems.

The deadline for submissions has been extended to June 10. Interested writers are encouraged to submit early.

Submission Guidelines:

Submissions should be typewritten, Times New Roman font, size 12pt Max word count is 4000 for fiction and essays and 2 poems for poetry category. Email subject should contain the title of your submission and genre.

Email submissions to umuofiabookfestival@gmail.com

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2025 4TH WRITE SHORT STORY AWARD



Calling Black, Asian and minority ethnic writers living in the UK or Ireland who are 18 and above!

4th Estate Books are thrilled to launch the 2025 4th Write Short Story Prize, in association with The Guardian.

The winner will receive £1,000, and their story will be published on the Guardian website. The winner will also receive a one day 4th Estate

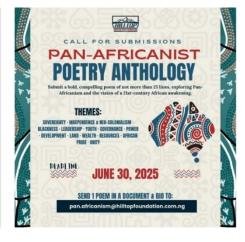
workshop with Editorial, Publicity and Marketing.

Deadline: 8 June

Learn more: 8

https://commonwealthfoundation.com/opportunity/2025-4thwrite-short-story-prize/

HILL-TOP CREATIVE ARTS FOUNDATION CALLS FOR SUBMISSIONS TO PAN-AFRICANIST POETRY ANTHOLOGY



The Hill-Top Creative Arts Foundation (HCAF) invites poets from across Africa and the diaspora to submit entries for its upcoming Pan-Africanist Poetry Anthology.

This project seeks to spotlight powerful poetic voices that interrogate and reimagine Africa's present and future through the lens of Pan-Africanism.

Poems must engage with themes such as sovereignty, blackness, neo-colonialism,

governance, youth, leadership, development, African unity, and other urgent questions shaping the continent in the 21st century. Submissions must not exceed 25 lines.

All poems must be submitted as a document attachment. Entries pasted in the body of the email will not be considered. A short bio and a clear photograph of the writer should accompany each submission.

Deadline: 30th June 2025

Email submissions to: pan.africanism@hilltopfoundation.com.ng

For more information, follow Hill-Top Creative Arts Foundation on social media or visit hilltopfoundation.com.ng.

MUKTAR ALIYU ART RESIDENCY (MAAR) ANNOUNCES THIRD EDITION FELLOWS

Witsprouts, in Strategic Partnership with Hill-Top Creative Arts Foundation, Launches the 2025 Storytelling Prize to Revive Oral Narratives Across Generations

Call for Submissions from the writer and great scholar, Kenyan Scholar and poet, Wanjohi Wa Makokha

Deadline: 10 June 2025

We are excited to announce a New Call for Short Stories for inclusion in a forthcoming Senior Secondary School Anthology aligned with Kenya's Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC).

If you're a storyteller with a passion for shaping young minds aged 16–18, we invite you to submit original, unpublished stories (5,000–7,000 words) reflecting youth realities, growth, and aspirations.

Thirty stories will be selected globally, with strong emphasis on engaging themes, well-developed characters, examinable titles, and values-based narratives. Kindly send your submission in Word format by 10th June 2025 to makokha.justus@ku.ac.ke with the subject: SHORT STORY SUBMISSION – [COUNTRY-AUTHOR NAME-TITLE].

www.ku.ac.ke





SOME OF PUBLISH'D AFRIKA MAGAZINE PREVIOUS EDITIONS

