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PUBLISH'D AFRIKA

LITERARY MAGAZINE

I FORGOT TO BE BLACK

An Exploration
of Identity, Dignity
& Inherited Narratives

KWAKHANYA

Finding Light
in the Stillness

READ ORWELL'S
ANIMAL FARM
IN SEPEDI

OPPORTUNITIES FOR AFRICAN WRITERS

JUDGE STONE

A James Patterson
& Viola Davis Collabo

FOURTH INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

Preparing For Jobs
That Don't Exist Yet

KNOWLEDGE:

THE PROFITABLE GAINS AUTHORS DON'T SEE

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PUBLISH'D AFRIKA
LITERARY MAGAZINE
Redefining Africa's Narrative

Knowledge: The Missing Capital



Exploring Opportunities Authors Don't See

South African self-published authors are positioned to win—but don't.

In this article, Kelebogile Raphiri, CEO of Phaseup Connect and Chairperson of Township Economic Drive, explores the opportunities these authors don't see.

The Quiet Paradox

In South Africa's creative economy, a quiet paradox continues to play out: self-published authors often earn

less than independent musicians—despite having access to more structured and financially advantageous opportunities.

At first glance, this seems unfair, but a closer look reveals a different truth: The gap is not caused by a lack of opportunity. It is caused by a lack of understanding.

The Opportunity Authors Don't See

Libraries are one of the most misunderstood financial assets in the self-publishing ecosystem.

Many authors see libraries as exposure platforms—places where books are read, not bought.

That perception is costly.

Libraries are institutional buyers. Across South Africa, they purchase books in bulk through structured acquisition systems. When a book meets the required standards, it is not bought once—it is bought multiple times across provinces and municipalities.

This is where most authors miss it. They focus on selling one copy at a time and chasing individual, while **ignoring a system designed**

to buy in volume, pay upfront and scaling distribution instantly.

The Hidden Advantage: Upfront Capital

Timing changes everything.

Library acquisitions can happen immediately after launch, meaning authors can generate revenue early—sometimes before reaching the broader consumer market. This is not just income. It is operational capital. And this is where authors quietly outperform musicians.

Musicians earn after: Streams accumulate, audiences grow, and performances are booked. Until then, they face capital constraints and often sign to labels for funding, seek co-signs for visibility, and trade ownership for growth.

Authors? They have a pathway to earn before scaling—if they know how to access it.

Turning Capital into Market Penetration

Upfront capital is not the win. What you do with it is. When used strategically, it becomes fuel for rapid expansion.

Instead of waiting for organic growth, authors can run targeted digital marketing campaigns, produce consistent, high-quality content, and build authority through storytelling and education.

Even more powerful:

Institutional validation = credibility.

A book already placed in libraries builds trust faster, converts readers easier, and positions the author as established.

The formula is simple:

Credibility + Capital + Visibility = Demand

Expanding Formats, Expanding Reach

Most self-published authors make one critical mistake: they stop at one format. A book should never exist in just one form. With capital, authors can expand into:

- Ebooks → instant, global distribution
- Audiobooks → reach non-readers and mobile audiences

This removes friction and increases accessibility.

More importantly, it unlocks scale. Once created, distribution costs drop to near zero, and revenue grows without added production cost.

Same content. Multiple channels. Scaled income.

The Music Industry Contrast

Independent musicians operate in a different system. Without upfront capital, growth is slower, risk is higher, and dependence increases. To accelerate, they often rely on record labels (**funding + control**), and established artists (**exposure – ownership**). In many cases, they trade independence for opportunity.

Authors don't have to. They can retain ownership, access capital, and scale

independently. But only if they understand the system.

The Real Problem: Lack of Knowledge

The issue is not access. It is awareness. Self-published authors underestimate **the purchasing power of libraries, the importance of institutional standards, and the strategy behind bulk sales.**

So they stay stuck in small-scale thinking, one-book-at-a-time sales, and slow growth cycles while scalable opportunities sit unused.

Conclusion: Positioned to Win, But Not Playing the Game

The reality is simple—and uncomfortable: self-published authors in South Africa are structurally positioned to win.

They have institutional buyers, access to upfront capital, multi-format scalability, and full ownership of their work.

Meanwhile, musicians must build from zero, fight for capital, and navigate restrictive systems.

Authors are already at the door. But opportunity without understanding is wasted.

Until more authors learn to use libraries as capital engines, reinvest into market penetration, and scale through digital formats, the gap between potential and results will remain.

In this game, the biggest disadvantage is not lack of access—it is lack of knowledge.

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I Forgot To Be Black:

An Exploration of Identity, Dignity & Inherited Narratives



What if the identity you were taught to carry was never truly yours? Who are we before the world tells us who to be? Is there such a thing as a psychological weight of our individual racial identity or inherited narratives that shape this very identity?

In *I Forgot to Be Black*, Mzwakhe Mahlangu invites readers on a deeply personal and spiritual journey through memory, history, faith, and self-discovery. Growing up in South Africa's shifting social landscape, he confronts the invisible scripts that shape identity—race,

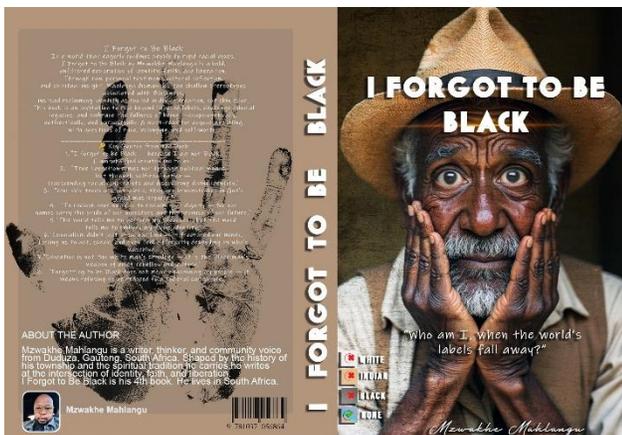
expectation, and inherited narratives.

Blending memoir, philosophy, and spiritual reflection, this book explores the psychological weight of racial identity, the search for dignity beyond social labels, faith as a path toward inner liberation, and reclaiming humanity in a divided world.

Rather than rejecting history, Mahlangu moves through it—uncovering a deeper identity rooted not in race, but in divine belonging and shared humanity.

Mzwakhe was born and raised in Duduza, a township in Gauteng, South Africa, whose history of resistance runs deeper than most textbooks acknowledge. Growing up in the shadow of apartheid's aftermath—surrounded by both the wounds and the brilliance of his community—he developed a fierce curiosity about identity: who names us, who defines us, and who we become when we step outside those definitions?

A writer and independent thinker, Mzwakhe draws from a wide range of intellectual traditions: Black Consciousness, African theology, the writings of Frantz Fanon, Steve Biko, and James Baldwin, and the lived wisdom of the residents of Duduza who shaped him. He is equally shaped by his Christian faith, which anchors his conviction that, at its deepest, identity is a divine gift rather than a social construct.



I Forgot to Be Black is his fourth book—a work ten years in the making, born from personal experience and the belief that liberation begins not in legislation, but in the mind and spirit of the individual.

“*I Forgot to Be Black* explores identity, history, faith, and freedom,” he says. “It traces a personal and intellectual journey that expands into broader questions about how individuals understand themselves within systems shaped by history, race, and culture. The inspiration for the book stemmed from a growing realisation that many assumptions about identity are inherited rather than examined. Writing the book became a way to explore this tension: how we inherit narratives about who

we are and how we might reclaim the freedom to understand ourselves more fully.”

For readers of spiritual nonfiction, cultural reflection, and transformative memoir, *I Forgot to Be Black* offers a courageous invitation: to remember who you were before fear, history, and expectation defined you. This is not a book about forgetting the past. It is a book about discovering freedom within it.

“The title *I Forgot to Be Black* is intentionally provocative, meant to evoke a moment of awakening,” says Mzwakhe. “It reflects the experience of realising that many expectations attached to identity are shaped by external definitions. The title suggests that identity can be lived authentically rather than performed according to imposed standards, inviting readers to question the assumptions that shape their self-perception.”

The book is for anyone who has ever questioned the stories they inherited about who they are and where they belong. While it speaks directly from a Black South African experience, the themes of identity, dignity, faith, and freedom are universal.

“I hope the book resonates particularly with readers navigating questions of belonging, purpose, and intellectual independence,” he says. “Ultimately, it is a book for readers willing to think deeply about themselves and the world they inhabit.”

“I hope readers leave the book with a renewed sense of intellectual and spiritual freedom, having moved from personal experience to

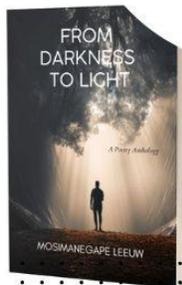
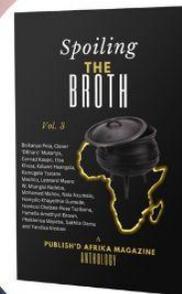
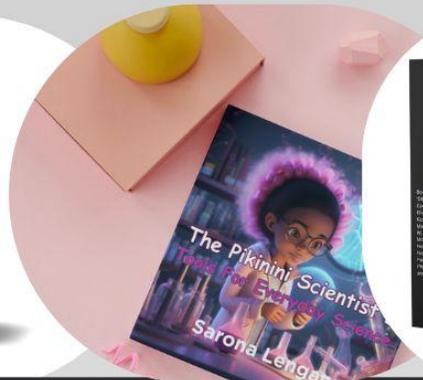
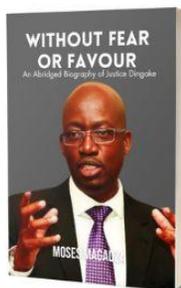
psychological awareness, systemic and theological reflection, and, finally, toward liberation. The ultimate takeaway is a deeper

awareness that identity can be reclaimed, reimagined, and lived with dignity.”

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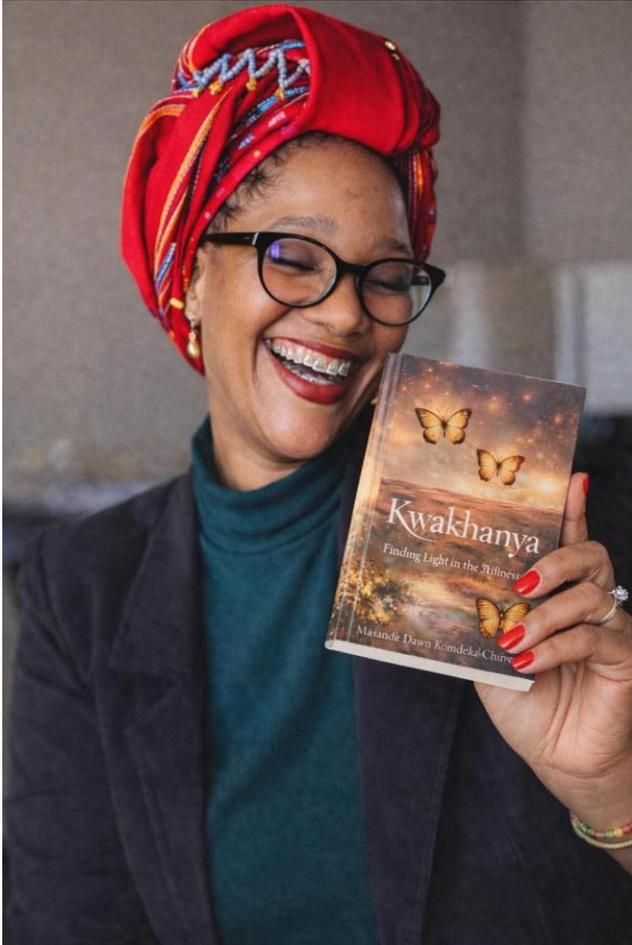
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Kwakhanya: Finding Light in the Stillness



How do you go about rediscovering the light within yourself, even amidst life's most challenging moments?

Kwakhanya: Finding Light in the Stillness is a reflective and deeply personal book by Masande Dawn Komdleka-Chirwa. It is an exploration of healing, stillness, and balance amid the noise of modern life. It tells the story of navigating the many roles we carry as professionals, parents, partners, and individuals seeking deeper meaning.

Masande Dawn Komdleka-Chirwa is a South African author, Human Capital Manager, and Wellness Practitioner (Herbalist of African botanicals) whose work explores the power of stillness, healing, and balance in modern life. A daughter, sister, mother, and wife, she is also a proud member of the South African Board for

People Practices (SABPP), reflecting her belief that structure, integrity, and intention should guide both our professional and personal journeys.

Though she grew up in King William's Town in the Eastern Cape and matriculated at Victoria Girls High School, Masande now lives in Gauteng. She holds a BCom Honours in Human Resources Management and a Postgraduate Diploma in Labour Dispute Resolution Practice.

Her debut book, *Kwakhanya: Finding Light in the Stillness*, is an invitation for readers to pause, reflect, and rediscover the light within themselves, even in life's most challenging moments.

“My writing is shaped by lived experience including periods of hospitalisation, recovery,

and profound reflection that reshaped my understanding of health, spirituality, and resilience,” she says. “These moments led me to explore African botanical practices, stillness rituals, and the quiet wisdom passed down through family and heritage.”

The book began with her elder sister, Indira (whom they call Siesie). She noticed the notes and posts Masande been writing about her experiences and gently suggested, “You should write a book.” But the real inspiration came from life itself, particularly those moments when life forced her to slow down.

“There were seasons when my health required hospitalisation and recovery, and in those quiet spaces, I began to reflect deeply on purpose, healing, and what truly matters,” she says. “My story is not a sermon from a mountain top. It is a whispered testimony from the cubicle next to yours. The book is meant to feel like a conversation with someone who understands the tension between ambition, responsibility, and the deeper need for inner peace.”

The word “Kwakhanya” speaks to light, specifically, the light that grows. It is the quiet illumination that appears even in our most difficult or reflective moments. For Masande, the title represents the idea that clarity and

healing often emerge when we pause long enough to truly listen to ourselves. The subtitle, “Finding Light in the Stillness”, captures the heart of the book’s message: stillness is not emptiness or inactivity, but a space where understanding and renewal can take root.

“In the book, I explain it simply: *stillness is not passive. It is practice.* The title reflects the central belief that moments of pause whether in our professional or personal lives can illuminate the path forward.”

The book is written for people who are balancing many roles and responsibilities. As a mother, wife, sister, and corporate professional, Masande knows how easily we can become consumed by expectations while quietly carrying our own internal struggles often without missing a beat.

This book speaks especially to professionals who may appear strong on the outside but are searching for moments of reflection and healing within. As the dedication in the book says: “*For every professional who has ever sat at their desk and quietly asked, ‘Is this all there is?’*” It is for readers navigating life’s demands while still longing for a deeper connection with themselves.

“My hope is that readers walk away with a renewed understanding that stillness is not

weakness; it is a powerful practice of self-awareness and renewal,” says Masande. “This book is not a preach. It is a tool, something to help you reflect. We live in a world that celebrates constant productivity, yet so many of us quietly feel exhausted or disconnected. If readers finish this book feeling encouraged to pause, breathe, and reflect without guilt, then it has served its purpose.”

One of the ideas Msande shares is: *“For the high achiever, stillness is not the opposite of productivity, it is its source.”* If the book helps someone rediscover their own inner light, even in a small way, then it has done what it was meant to do.

Masande says one of the greatest challenges she encountered while writing the book was simply creating the space to write while balancing the demands of everyday life. As a mother, she needed to be present for her daughter. As a wife, she needed to show up for her husband who was a constant pillar of support throughout this journey. And as a

professional, she needed to be reliable and meet the expectations of her role.

“Fitting all of this, including the author, into a 24-hour day required structure, discipline, and grace,” she says. “Writing a reflective book also meant creating emotional and mental space to be honest about experiences that aren’t always easy to share: seasons of illness, hospitalisation and recovery. Yet those became powerful moments of reflection. As I describe in the book: *True strength is forged in the grace of surrender and receiving, not in relentless pushing.* Throughout the journey, my family played an essential role. My parents, though passed, have been my greatest teachers and guides.”

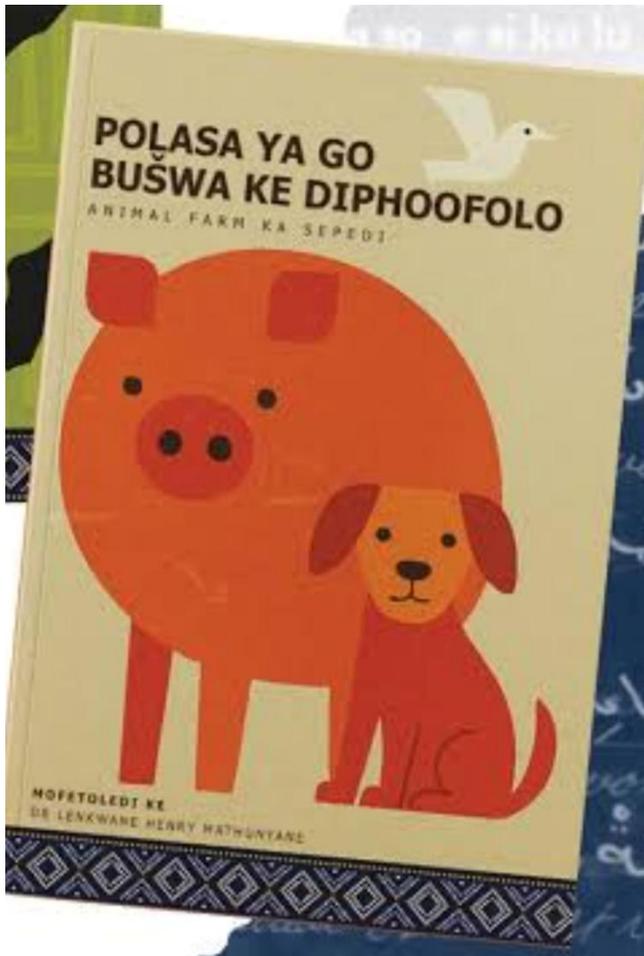
“My husband, Musawenkosi, has been a pillar of strength. And my twin uncle Deon and sister Siesie Indira were constant sources of encouragement. Their presence reminded me that even in life’s most difficult moments, we rarely walk the journey alone.”

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Read Orwell's *Animal Farm* In Sepedi



Would you like to read George Orwell's political allegory, *Animal Farm*, in Sepedi? It is now possible, thanks to a newly translated edition by veteran educationist, Dr Lenkwane Henry Mathunyane.

The book was officially launched at the Nelson Mandela University's Multilingualism Indaba in Gqeberha, Eastern Cape, on 26 March. Aimed at breaking barriers in SA's classrooms, the translation also aspires to enhance political discourse and critical thinking and classroom debate among South African learners, especially amongst learners who study languages other than English. The book also aims to promote equal access to education.

Animal Farm tells the story of farm animals who overthrow their human owner to create a self-sufficient society, only to have it degenerate into a totalitarian regime led by pigs. The original idea of freedom vanishes, replaced by a dictatorship where the pigs become similar to previous human oppressors.

Executive Dean of the Faculty of Humanities, Professor Pamela Maseko, said Nelson Mandela University is committed to advancing multilingualism as a cornerstone of inclusive and equitable education.

"The translation of *Animal Farm* into Sepedi affirms the importance of making classical texts accessible in African languages, where they are equally relevant and resonant within our own cultural, social and political contexts," she said.

The translation by Dr Mathunyane not only enriches literary resources but also strengthens the role of African languages in shaping informed, critical and engaged citizens. He believes that translating the text into Sepedi helps place learners on a more equal footing.

"Some topics, especially in politics and governance, are only available to learners studying English literature," he said. "The contents of this novel will be of great interest

to learners when they can discuss them in their mother tongue.”

For the longest time, subject advisers have raised concern that language can become a barrier to communication and understanding between learners from various language groups. When learners struggle with the language of instruction, their chances of meaningful participation are reduced. It was for this reason that Dr Mathunyane felt language diversity had to be actively supported through access to literature in multiple languages.

“What is happening in this novel is exactly what South Africans experience daily,” Dr Mathunyane says. “When you look at characters like Napoleon and Squealer, you may recognise some of our leaders in them.”

It took Dr Mathunyane over a decade to complete the work, with careful attention paid to the nuances of satire and political symbolism in the original text. But with the help of Sepedi educators and subject advisers, the work was accomplished. The book has been published by the Nelson Mandela University Press.



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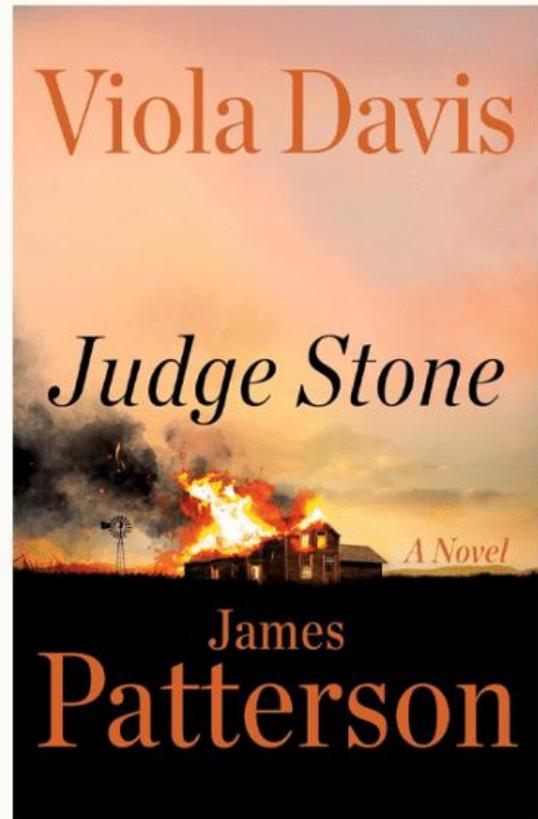
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It is said that too many cooks spoil the broth. This broth, comprising of 15 writers unearthed through PUBLISH'D AFRIKA Online Literary Magazine's Short Story Competition, seeks to shatter this myth. Spoiling The Broth Vol. 4 is a multi-themed collection of new short stories by authors from across the African continent. They were all monthly winners in tightly contested short story writing competitions that were held from January to October 2025.



Judge Stone Courtroom Drama:

A James Patterson & Viola Davis Collabo



James Patterson's books have sold in excess of 375 million copies worldwide.

Viola David has starred in the biggest Hollywood blockbusters, has won an Oscar, Emmy and Tony awards.

Now, the pair have teamed up to pen *Judge Stone*, an explosive legal thriller that will keep you turning the pages until the stunning conclusion.

The story is set in the small Alabama town of Union Springs. The hero, a circuit court judge called Mary Stone, is called on to preside over the case of a female doctor accused of performing an abortion on a 13-year-old Black girl, Nova Jones. The teenager says she was sexually assaulted at a party, but in Alabama, abortion is prohibited even in cases of rape or incest. As well as pitching “pro-choice” and “pro-life” advocates into open conflict, the

prospect of a Black female judge presiding over the incendiary trial unleashes dark currents of racism and misogyny.

James Patterson needs no introduction. He is one of the biggest-selling writers of all time. Among his creations are some of the world's most popular series including *Alex Cross*, *the Women's Murder Club*, *Michael Bennett* and the *Private* novels. He has written many other number one bestsellers including collaborations with President Bill Clinton and Dolly Parton, stand-alone thrillers and non-fiction.

He has also donated millions in grants to independent bookshops and has been the most borrowed adult author in UK libraries for the past fourteen years in a row. He also writes a range of books for young readers, including the *Middle School*, *I Funny*, *Treasure Hunters*, *House of Robots*, *Confessions*, and *Maximum Ride* series.

Viola Davis' standout performances include the intimidating lawyer, Annalise Keating, in TV's *How to Get Away with Murder* and the long-suffering wife of a wayward husband (played by Denzel Washington) in 2016's *Fences*. The latter won her the Oscar for best supporting actor. Davis added a Grammy to her trophy case for the audio book of her 2022 memoir, *Finding Me*. She also starred as the warrior

Naniska in *The Woman King*, alongside South Africa-born actress, Thuso Mbedu.

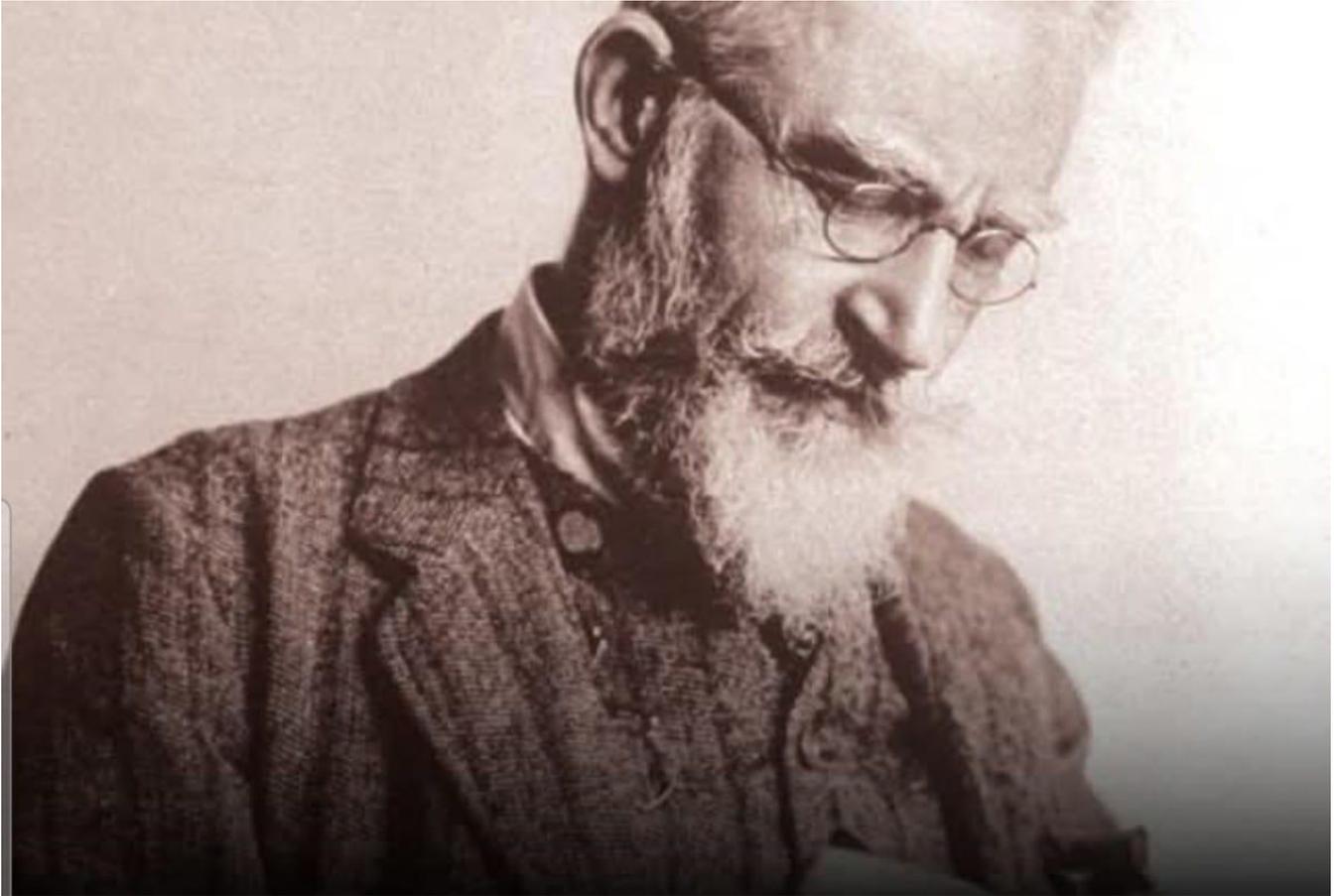
It is not the first time Patterson has co-authored a book with well-known faces. Patterson is known to work with a team of co-authors who are given a detailed outline, describing every plot twist and character arc. His stable of writers create a draft which Patterson hammers into his trademark style. In the book world, where an author's singular vision is an article of faith, this assembly-line approach has ruffled a few feathers.

Patterson reportedly said it was the book, *Finding Me*, a harrowing, soul-bearing book recalling Davis' childhood in rat-infested public housing in Rhode Island, that convinced him to write with her.

"Of course, I'd seen her in a lot of films and TV, but reading *Finding Me* made me realise she was a really good storyteller, a very honest storyteller," he was reported to have stated. "That was really attractive to me, particularly with this [Judge Stone] project."

Davis said she was astonished when Patterson got in touch through her agent, asking if she would like to co-author a book. The premise of the book, however, convinced her to take the project on.

He Won A Nobel And An Oscar – And Rejected Both



At 69, George Bernard Shaw won the Nobel Prize in Literature, which came with a prize money of 120,000 Swedish kronor.

At 83, he won as Oscar.

He was the only person in history to win both, and the only person to reject them both. After all, Shaw had spent decades criticising literary prizes.

“They corrupt art,” he had said. “They turn creativity into competition. They reduce genuine work to a contest, as if passion could be scored like athletics.”

But Shaw faced a dilemma. He didn't want to insult Sweden or dishonour Alfred Nobel's legacy. But he absolutely refused to compromise his principles. His solution? He

accepted the honour, but refused to accept the money.

It was in November 1925 when the Swedish Academy announced that he had won the Noble Prize for Literature. By then, he was already the most famous, highly celebrated and wealthy playwright, his works watched in theatres across two continents. He no longer had interest in validation from “committees”. He called the prize "a lifeboat thrown to a swimmer who has already reached the shore in safety.”

Fourteen years later, at 83, the 11th Academy Awards announced the renowned playwright as the winner of the Oscar for Best Adapted Screenplay for the film version of his play, *Pygmalion*.

He was quoted as having said, “Why give 120,000 Swedish kronor to someone who doesn't need it? Why not support struggling artists instead?”

Although Shaw had refused to accept the prize money, he however used it to create the Anglo-Swedish Literary Foundation—dedicated solely to translating Swedish literature into English. For decades, that money funds translations introducing English readers to Scandinavian authors they would never have

discovered otherwise. He had literally transformed personal glory into cultural bridge-building. He didn't want recognition for himself, but for Swedish voices to reach new audiences.

Shaw genuinely believes that art serves humanity, not artists. That creativity is responsibility, not a path to glory. That recognition becomes a prison—trapping creators into repeating safe formulas instead of challenging audiences with uncomfortable truths.

He advocates for socialism, women's suffrage, vegetarianism (over 60 years without meat), spelling reform, and countless progressive causes that make powerful people squirm. His plays aren't escapism—they are confrontations with Victorian morality, class inequality, religious hypocrisy.

When asked why he writes such controversial work, Shaw says: "My way of joking is to tell the truth. It's the funniest joke in the world."

He left behind a legacy no committee could ever measure—because he understood that the only recognition worth keeping is the courage to speak truth, even when that truth makes the powerful uncomfortable.

Picture: National Portrait Gallery, London

An Ode To The Multifaceted Sol Plaatjie



It has been 150 years since Solomon Tshekisho Plaatjie was born, and 106 years since his novel, *Mhudi*, was written.

The multifaceted Solomon Tshekisho Plaatjie, a pioneering figure in South African literature, is often credited as the first South African to write an English book, his notable works including his seminal text on land dispossession.

But few South Africans know that before making a name for himself, Plaatjie held a host of unremarkable jobs, amongst them a postman, an interpreter and clerk. He would soon become an author, translator, and politician who played a crucial role in shaping South

African literature. His book, *Native Life In South Africa* (1916), is considered a landmark text highlighting the struggles of indigenous people during the colonial era.

Plaatjie's literary contributions extend beyond this notable account. He wrote *Diary of the Siege of Mafeking* during the Anglo Boer War and translated Shakespeare's works into Setswana, showcasing his linguistic skills. As a first secretary general of the South African Native National Congress, later known as ANC, his writings played a significant role in documenting South Africa's complex history.

Plaatjie was born on 9 October 1876 in the Boshof district of the Orange Free State, Christians parents who belonged to the Barolong tribe. Shortly after he was born, his parents moved to the Pniel mission station of the Lutheran Berlin Mission Society, near Barkly West, and it was there that Plaatjie received his only formal education. He remained at Pniel for several years as an

assistant teacher, studying further with the aid of the missionaries.

In 1894 he went to Kimberley, where he found work as a postman, continued his private studies, and eventually distinguished himself on the civil service examinations. On the eve of the Boer War, he was sent to Mafeking as an interpreter, and during the siege of Mafeking (1899 to 1900), he acted as both court interpreter and clerk to the Mafeking administrator of Native affairs. He was proficient in at least eight languages, including German and Dutch, as well as English and all the major African vernaculars.

At the end of the war, Plaatje turned to journalism. He established the first Setswana-English weekly rag, *Koranta ea Becoana*, with financial backing from Silas Molema, chief of the Barolong, in 1901. Seven years later, he moved from Mafeking to Kimberley where he established another newspaper, *Tsala ea Becoana*, later renamed *Tsala ea Batho* (The Friend of the People).

While producing these papers, Plaatje also contributed many articles to other papers, particularly to the Kimberley Diamond Fields Advertiser. When the South African Native National Congress (later called the African National Congress) was formed in 1912, Plaatje was chosen its first secretary-general. An articulate opponent of tribalism, he exemplified the new spirit of national unity among African intellectuals.

The first major campaign of the SANNK was against the Land Act of 1913, a measure that drastically curtailed the right of Africans to own or occupy land throughout the Union. In

1914, Plaatje went to Britain as a member of the deputation charged with appealing to the British government against the Act. The mission proved futile, but Plaatje decided to stay behind after the departure of the rest of the deputation, and he remained in Britain until February 1917, when he returned to South Africa. During this time, he lectured, worked as a language assistant at London University, and produced three books, including a detailed and moving appeal against the Land Act, *Native Life in South Africa, Before and Since the European War and the Boer Rebellion* (1916). The other two works, *Sechuana-Proverbs, With Literal Translations and Their English Equivalents* and *A Sechuana Reader*, written with Daniel Jones of London University, also appeared in 1916.

Late in 1919 he took part in a meeting with British Prime Minister Lloyd George. In December 1920 he went to Canada and the United States, where he travelled widely. Meeting with leaders of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, he arranged for an American edition of his book. *Native Life*, to appear.

At the end of 1923 he returned to South Africa. He continued to write, and when Parliament was in session he travelled to Cape Town to cover the sessions and to lobby for African interests as a representative of the ANC. Influenced by his experiences in the United States, he became involved in the Joint Council movement. He also joined the African People's Organisation of Abdul Abdurahman. He made a trip to the Congo to observe conditions there and was active in civic affairs in Kimberley. Although his relations with the

ANC were sometimes uneasy, in December 1930 he accompanied an ANC deputation to the Native affairs department to register African complaints against the pass laws. He died of pneumonia while on a trip to Johannesburg on 19 June 1932.

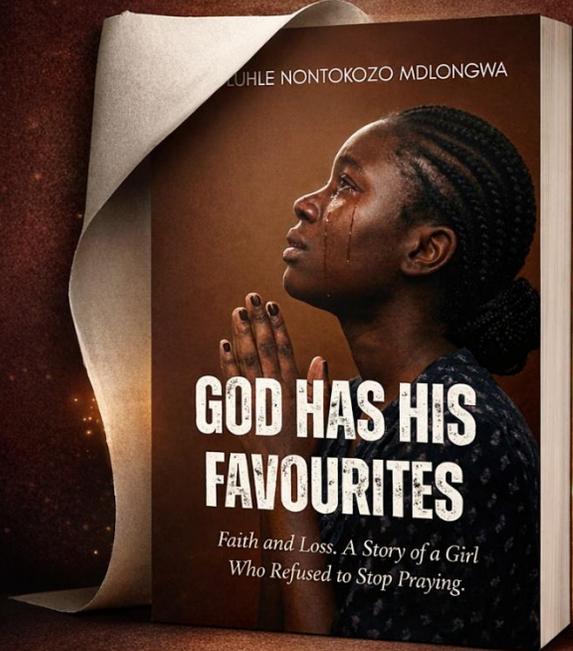
In addition to the works already mentioned, his writings include a novel, *Mhudi, An Epic of South African Native Life a Hundred Years Ago*

(1930), *The Mote and the Beam: An Epic on Sex-Relationship 'Twixt White and Black in British South Africa* (1921), and translations of four Shakespeare plays into Setswana.

In 1972, his Mafeking diary, discovered in 1969 and edited by John L. Comaroff, was published under the title *The Boer War Diary of Sol T. Platje: An African at Mafeking*.

✦ **COVER REVEAL** ✦

I'm proud to reveal the official cover of my upcoming book...



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Igniting The Altar

Exploring The Power Of A Praying Woman



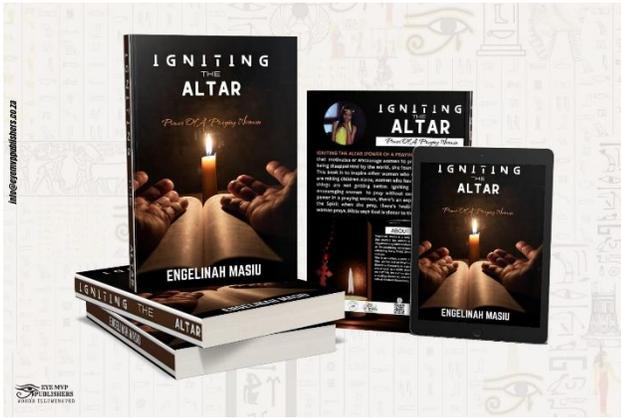
“As women, we're often our own worst critics. We beat ourselves up over perceived failures, and we let our struggles define us. But our struggles are not our identity. Our identity is in God, and in His love and acceptance, we find the strength to rise above our challenges.”

So says Angelinah Masiu, author of the newly released book, *Igniting the Altar*. The book is a self-help guide that chronicles her journey of healing and growth, and explores the power of a praying woman.

A talented author, poet, writer and actress, Angelinah says she wrote the book to empower women to tap in the transformative power of prayer, helping them to overcome life's challenges and unlock their full potential. With a voice that resonate across the pages, Angelinah inspires others to embrace their own creative truth and lead lives defined by passion and purpose.

“Igniting The Altar is more than just a book – it is a testament to the strength and resilience of women who have faced pain and depression, and a call to ignite the flame of consistent prayer in their lives,” she says. “For me, writing the book was a journey of healing and growth. It was a process of confronting the pain and depression that had held me captive for far too long. But it

was also a journey of discovery – discovery of the power of prayer, of the importance of community, and of the resilience of the human spirit.”



Engelinah says the book was inspired by her own journey of faith self-reflection and the people she has met, who have shown her the power of resilience and prayer. The book is for every woman who has ever felt broken, lost or ready to reignite their spark.

“Prayer played a crucial role in my journey,” she says. “It was my lifeline, my comfort, and my source of strength. As I poured out my heart to God, I began to realise that I wasn't alone in my struggles. I was part of a larger community of women who have faced similar challenges and had come out stronger on the other side.”

“That is what *Igniting The Altar* is all about – empowering women to tap into that strength, to find solace in prayer, and to ignite the flame of hope in their own lives. It is a call to consistency, to perseverance, and to trust in the power of God to transform our lives.”

Engelinah says writing the book was therapeutic though challenging. Self-doubt set in as well as the stress that comes from putting together the money to fund the publishing process.

After reading the book, Engelinah hopes readers will find a sense of empowerment and a reminder that they are not alone in their struggles.

“One lesson I have learned is that you have the power to reignite your own altar. Let's allow the fire of God's presence to transform our lives. Let's show the world what it means to live a life of faith, hope and resilience.”

You can purchase *Igniting the altar* on Amazon, Takealot, Draft2Digital, or you can pre-order from Engelinah on Facebook, or contact her at 0634925078.



AFDA Cape Town Explores Exile in Bold New Theatre Production



In a bold and deeply reflective new production, AFDA Cape Town continues to affirm its position as a leading creative institution in South Africa, bringing together staff, students and alumni in a professionally staged theatre work that interrogates one of the country's most complex and resonant themes: exile.

Titled *Ballingskap | Elubhacweni*, the production is an embodied and textual exploration of exile in its many forms, from displacement from one's birthplace to the more intimate and often invisible exile from oneself, one's identity, or even one's language.

Exile, in its simplest form, speaks to removal and departure from what is known, familiar and native. In South Africa, however, the term carries profound political weight, shaped by histories of forced removals, resistance, and the complex duality between voluntary and involuntary exile. This production unpacks that tension, weaving together narratives that reflect both the past and the ongoing realities of displacement in today's society.

The conceptual vision for this production originated with AFDA Cape Town Dean,

Leopold Senekal. His vision was clear: to create a space where students could step beyond the safety of the classroom and into the demands and rewards of the professional stage.

To bring this vision to life, two theatre-makers and lecturers from AFDA's Live Performance School, Khanya Ngcuka and Kayla van der Merwe were entrusted with devising the production alongside the student cast. Drawing from their respective backgrounds in writing and physical theatre, the duo found a

shared curiosity in the layered concept of exile, exploring both its historical roots and its continued presence in contemporary life.

Ballingskap | Elubhacweni is an immersive, sensory experience. The production is structured around the four elements – earth, air, fire and water – each representing different dimensions of exile and human experience. Through movement, text and visual imagery, the elements serve as both metaphor and method, guiding audiences through a fragmented yet deeply connected landscape of stories.

For Ngcuka, a theatre-maker and academic, the work aligns with her ongoing interest in translating the lived experiences of marginalised communities into theatrical form. Her work has been recognised with multiple Standard Bank Ovation Awards at the National Arts Festival, reflecting both critical acclaim and artistic impact.

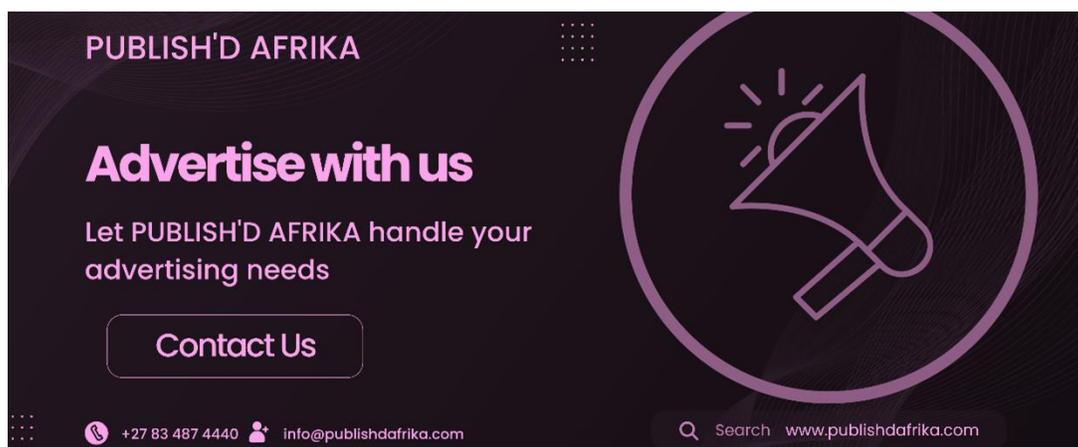
Van der Merwe, a physical theatre specialist and AFDA lecturer in screen acting and voice, brings a movement-driven approach that foregrounds the body as a site of storytelling.

Her previous work, including the acclaimed remnant, demonstrates a commitment to creating emotionally resonant performances that explore complex human experiences through physical expression.

The cast, featuring AFDA students Naesha Samuels, Asakhe Zibi, Megan Smith, Tumelo Gwanzura-Durand, Sibahle Mhlongo, Tameryn van Wyk, Funeka Zondi, Ngcali Jafta, Thalia Mason, Amahle Mazibuko, Zoë Jeniker and Lea van der Merwe, represents a diverse range of voices and experiences. Each performer contributes to a collective narrative that reflects the multiplicity of exile in contemporary South Africa.

In bringing this work to the stage, AFDA demonstrates that powerful storytelling is not confined to the screen. It lives in the body, in language, and in the shared act of performance, reminding us that even in exile, there is connection, reflection and the possibility of home.

The production runs from 30 April to 2 May 2026 at Theatre Arts in Observatory, Cape Town.



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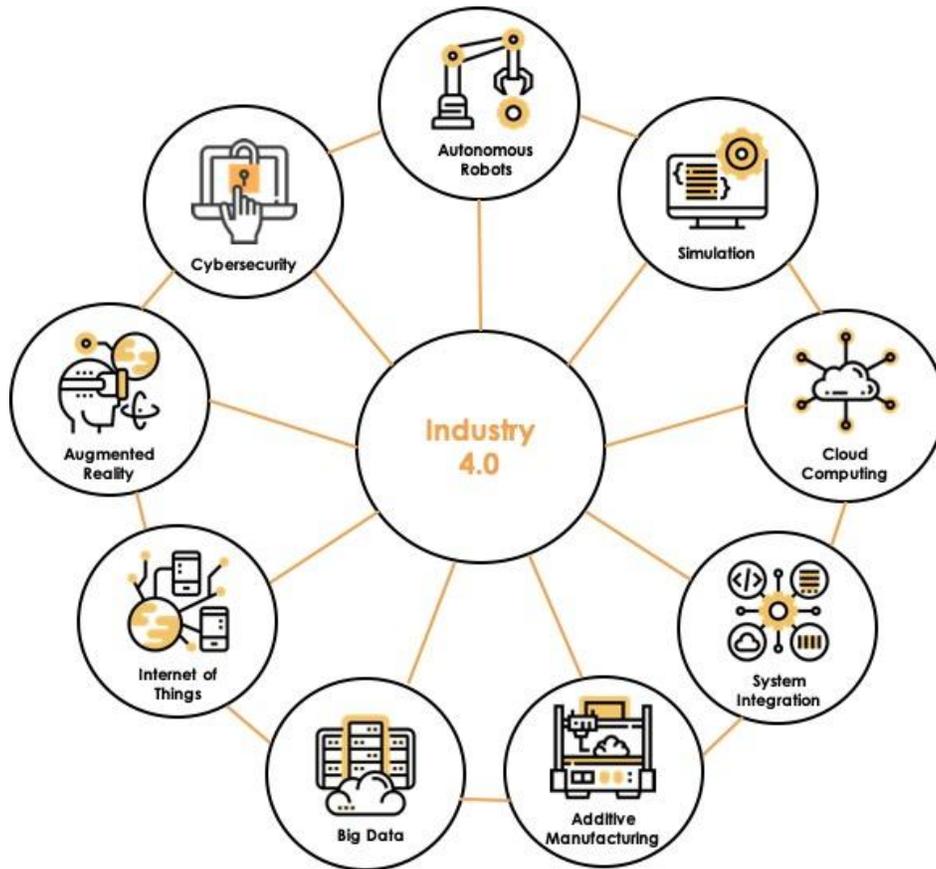
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Fourth Industrial Revolution:

Preparing For Jobs That Don't Exist Yet



Technology is moving faster than ever. AI, VR, AR, Robotics – they are not "future tech" anymore. They are NOW.

What is the Fourth Industrial Revolution?

The Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) refers to the current technological transformation that is fundamentally changing the way we live, work, and interact with each other. It is characterised by the fusion of technologies like artificial intelligence (AI), the Internet of Things (IoT), robotics, biotechnology, and nanotechnology, which are

blurring the lines between the physical, digital, and biological worlds.

This revolution is marked by the widespread adoption of technologies such as:

1. Artificial intelligence and machine learning
2. Automation and robotics
3. Internet of Things (IoT) and connected devices
4. Blockchain and distributed ledger technology
5. Augmented and virtual reality

The 4IR is transforming industries and economies, creating new opportunities and

challenges. It is impacting various sectors, including healthcare, finance, education, and

manufacturing, and is expected to lead to significant changes in the job market and the way we work.

The Fourth Industrial Revolution is distinct from previous industrial revolutions in its scope, scale, and speed of change, and its impact is being felt globally.

What are the key technologies of the 4IR?

The Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) is characterised by several key technologies that are transforming industries and revolutionising the way we live and work. Some of the most significant ones include:

1. Artificial Intelligence (AI) - enabling machines to think, learn, and act like humans.
2. Internet of Things (IoT) - connecting devices, vehicles, and home appliances to the internet, allowing for data collection and exchange.
3. Robotics - using robots to automate tasks, enhance productivity, and improve precision.
4. Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR) - creating immersive experiences that blur the lines between physical and digital worlds.
5. Blockchain - a decentralised, secure way to record transactions and manage data.
6. 5G Networks - providing faster, more reliable connectivity and enabling widespread adoption of IoT and other technologies.

7. Biotechnology - leveraging biology and genetic engineering to develop new products, treatments, and solutions.

8. Quantum Computing - using the principles of quantum mechanics to solve complex problems that are currently unsolvable with traditional computers.

These technologies are converging and interacting with each other in complex ways, creating new opportunities and challenges for industries, governments, and individuals.

What are the job opportunities in the 5IR?

The Fifth Industrial Revolution (5IR) is all about harnessing technology to drive human-centered innovation. It is not just about efficiency, but about creating a better world through empathy, ethics and sustainability. Here are some potential job opportunities emerging in the 5IR era:

- Manufacturing and Production
 - Robotics Engineers: Designing and developing robots that work alongside humans in industries like manufacturing, healthcare and logistics.
 - Automation Specialists: Implementing and maintaining AI-powered systems to enhance productivity and efficiency.
- Healthcare and Medicine
 - AI-Assisted Healthcare Professionals: Working alongside AI systems to analyze medical data, diagnose patients and develop personalised treatment plans.

- Biotechnology Researchers: Developing new therapies and treatments using biotechnology and genetic engineering.

- Technology and Data

- AI and Machine Learning Experts: Designing and developing AI-powered systems that can learn, reason and interact with humans.

- Data Scientists: Analyzing complex data sets to identify patterns, predict trends and inform business decisions.

- Sustainability and Energy

- Sustainability Specialists: Developing and implementing sustainable practices and solutions to reduce environmental impact.

- Renewable Energy Technicians: Installing and maintaining systems that generate energy from sources like solar and wind power.

- Education and Leadership

- Lifelong Learning Specialists: Helping individuals develop the skills they need to adapt to changing technologies and work environments.

- Leaders with Emotional Intelligence: Guiding organisations and teams to prioritise human values, empathy and sustainability.

In the 5IR world, human skills like empathy, creativity and adaptability will become increasingly valuable. As technology continues to evolve, it is essential to focus on developing skills that complement AI and machines, rather than competing with them. Some key skills for success in the 5IR era include:

- Empathy and Emotional Intelligence

- Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving

- Creativity and Innovation

- Collaboration and Teamwork

- Lifelong Learning and Adaptability

But here is the problem: Most educators weren't trained to teach this. There is however a lifeline for anyone intending to prepare for the jobs that aren't there yet. Follow the link below for details and to register.

<https://vadea.viaafrika.com/product-category/teaching-for-the-fourth-industrial-revolution/>



Iimfundiso Ngobomi – Amabalana Amafutshane Nezincoko



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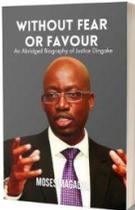
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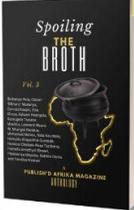
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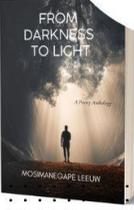
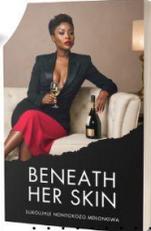
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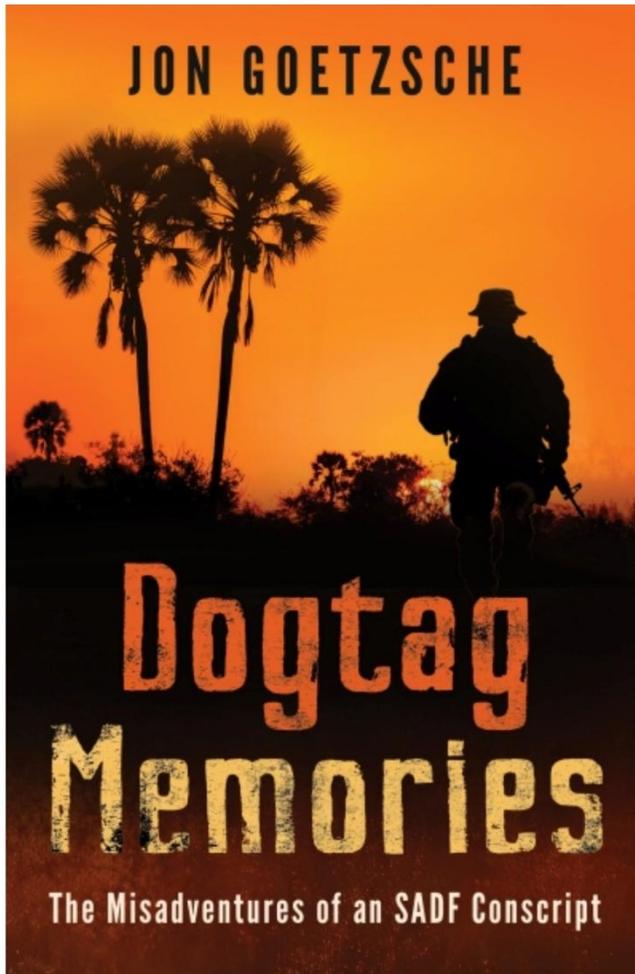
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Dogtag Memories:

A Look Into SADF's Military Machine



In 1977, at seventeen years of age, Jon Goetzsche is drafted into the South African Defence Force. This marks the beginning of his chaotic journey through South Africa's military machine, where his tranquil schooldays are abruptly interrupted and replaced by the brutal regimentation of army life.

His book, *Dogtag Memories*, is a raw, darkly humorous memoir that follows this journey. What begins as naive indifference soon spirals into a struggle against authority, misfortune and the absurdities of war.

After surviving the gruelling training to become a Parabat, Jon is court-martialled for assaulting a fellow soldier and sent to Detention Barracks. Reassigned to an ordinary infantry battalion, he completes five months of training and is sent to the border for the rest of his two years' national service, followed by several camps. Through the laughable rules, harsh punishment, grinding boredom, fatal mishaps and clashes with guerrillas, he endures with wit, irony and a

stubborn refusal to surrender his humanity.

Told with unflinching honesty and biting humour, *Dogtag Memories* transcends the typical border war narrative. Decades later, Jon reflects on how those formative years shaped him, offering a poignant, irreverent and deeply human account of camaraderie, hardship and resilience.

Dogtag Memories is not a polished war memoir. It is sharp, irreverent, and painfully honest. A

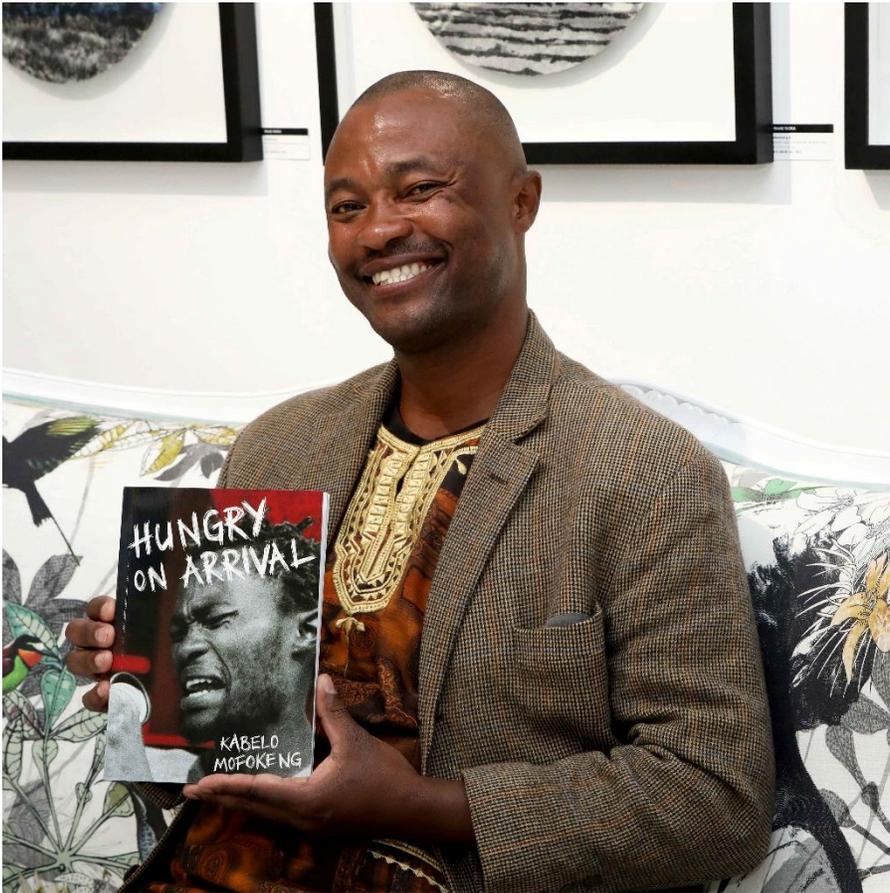
story of grinding boredom, absurd rules, misfortune, and the stubborn refusal to surrender one's humanity.

A raw, darkly humorous account of youth inside a military machine:

<https://loom.ly/FBqjJto>

AVBOB Poetry Corner

A Poet's Hunger: Kabelo Mofokeng



We often pay tribute to the protest poets of the apartheid era, who reported on the injustices and inequality they witnessed. But what role can poets play in our society today, 30 years into democracy?

As South Africans celebrated Human Rights Day on 21 March, The AVBOB Poetry Project interviewed Kabelo Mofokeng, poet, activist and jazz aficionado, to explore this question. His debut collection, *Hungry on Arrival* (Botsotso, 2024) celebrates the

multilingual speech rhythms of the streets of Johannesburg. The reader constantly has to shift between registers and adapt to changing contexts.

While some poems are written entirely in English, others include phrases in Sesotho and Scamtho, a creole language born out of the mixing of cultures in the melting-pot of the city. They reflect urgent contemporary realities but also look back in reverence towards Sesotho culture and traditions that still run strongly in his family.

Mofokeng explains: “The oral poetic tradition has always had a profound influence on me. If I address an audience living in a township, using words in Sesotho and Scamtho as well as in English evokes very particular emotions. Some people may not understand everything, but they can follow the rhythms of the speech.

And, of course, there are footnotes to explain unfamiliar words.”

About the title of his anthology, he says, “*Hungry on Arrival* is the name of a composition by the great pianist, Moses Molelekwa. But on another level, I have always been writing about hunger. In my work, hunger does not only refer to the scarcity of food. I am as interested in the hunger of the mind: the hunger to know more, to transform a given situation. As a poet, I believe it is not enough to elevate myself. It is important to stand for something, to become involved in one’s community.”

This commitment to stay hungry while feeding others is beautifully expressed in a poem towards the end of the collection, called ‘A Poet’s Love’, which begins:

It is true

a poet’s love

does not belong

only to himself.

When a poet loves

he reaches further

the entire clan gathers

to welcome this offering of the gods

where his name shall remain

inside their hut.

When a poet loves

inside a House of Hunger

every word is broken politely

to feed the heart of every belly

for when hunger cripples the land

it hurts every child

that is why a poet cannot belong to any politician.

Mofokeng says, “This poem wants the reader to ask: if I am well-off but my neighbour is starving, how liberated am I really? I wanted to demystify the romantic version of love that is sold to us. Instead, I believe that our love is an extension of the way we live.”

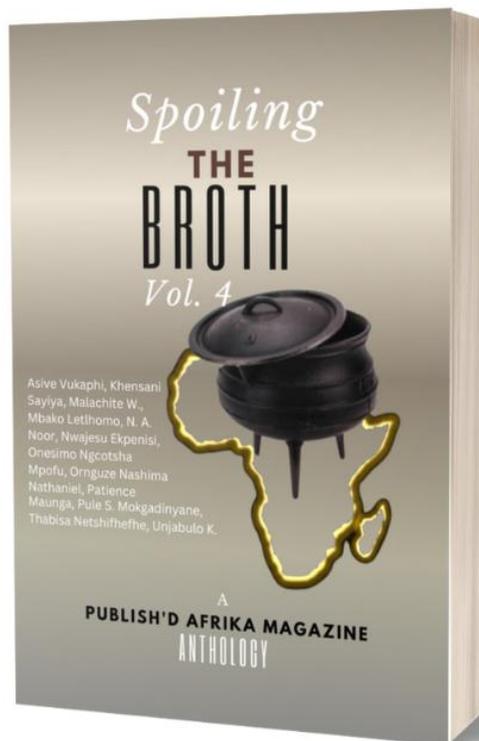
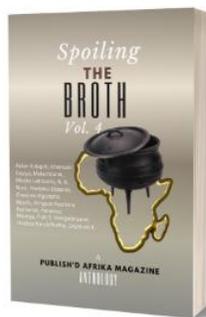
What would it mean to put such a vision into practice, especially in the context of Human Rights Day?

“Hunger hurts everyone. And so, it is our responsibility to feed people. Sometimes the work is physical: turning dump sites into spots of greenery. And sometimes we have to feed people by doing the work of healing and remembering. For me, the 21st of March is about remembering and coming to terms with

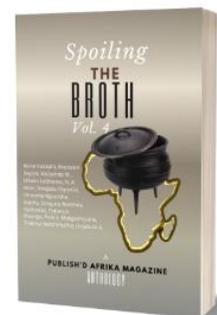
the past. Many of the conditions that caused workers to protest at Sharpeville have not really changed, and this is symptomatic of a society that needs deep healing. We still need protest poetry, no matter what race or culture

we are born into. The work of transformation remains unfinished.”

In the next few days, write a poem about the different kinds of hunger you have experienced.



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It is said that too many cooks spoil the broth. This broth, comprising of 15 writers unearthed through PUBLISH'D AFRIKA Online Literary Magazine's Short Story Competition, seeks to shatter this myth. Spoiling The Broth Vol. 4 is a multi-themed collection of new short stories by authors from across the African continent. They were all monthly winners in tightly contested short story writing competitions that were held from January to October 2025.



Common Ground



Do you think your poems belong to a separate, inner world, removed from your working life?

Shari Daya is a Cape Town-based poet and geographer who uses her academic research and expertise as raw material for her deeply engaging poems. Her debut collection, *Land / Lines*, was published by Karavan Press in 2024. In it, she seamlessly moves between the aerial, bird's eye view of a researcher and deep amazement in the face of the “thrill of hot, soft, quiet

lives.”

This month she shared two beautiful fragments from ‘Common Ground’, one of the most arresting poems from this collection, with The AVBOB Poetry Project. The poem describes a morning trip to see mushrooms and frogs in a common area not far from her home.

Read the fragments she shared and discover how exciting it can be when one's areas of expertise find their way into the poems one is writing. The first fragment reads:

... The little lids, lifted to reveal something of the magic of the forest's

understory, should have a name, too. You could Google it. You could type,

“the bit of earth that remains on top of a mushroom post-puhpowee”. The

engine will respond, “your search did not match any documents.”

Notice that Daya writes in the third person here, as if looking at herself from a slight distance. She would like to look up the name for the lid of a mushroom, as any curious researcher would. She has already told us that “puhpowee” is a Native American word referring to “the force that / causes mushrooms to push up from the earth overnight.” In other words, this is a foreign word she has learned from another writer and researcher. She knows, however, that Google will not have answers to such a question. She

is in the presence of something she cannot study, but only experience.

The second fragment, starting only a few lines later, reads:

In the pine-scented gloom, the mushrooms watch with equanimity

from under their hats, and today, you watch the mushrooms watching the

mammals. Your walk is much slower than planned, because you keep

stopping to greet more of these silent, wild creatures. If you watched long

enough, you would see, or hear, the growth. You would feel the vibrations as

these organisms break the skin of the earth. Repeatedly, as you crouch for a

better view, you are less alone in the scrap of forest than you imagined.

By the time the reader reaches this second fragment, Daya has become almost entirely immersed in the landscape through which she

is travelling. She feels the mushrooms returning her gaze, watching her. Far from being passive objects of her study, they have become “silent, wild creatures” that have to be greeted and acknowledged.

However, notice that she does not collapse the boundary between herself and the mushrooms completely. They are still “organisms” that can “break the skin of the earth” in a way that is impossible for human beings. But her experience of them is changing her, forcing her to slow down and realise that she is less alone than she imagined. She is not looking at them in the spirit of a neutral observer sharing knowledge but as a human being who is open to new, potentially transformative experiences. As a result, the attentive reader is drawn into the adventure, eager to learn and experience with her.

In the next few days, write a poem exploring something about which you care and know more than most people. See if you can turn your enthusiasm into something exciting and accessible.

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CALLS FOR SUBMISSIONS

Opportunities For African Writers

The calls for submissions below are strictly for African writers. An African writer is taken to mean someone who was born in Africa, who is a national or resident of an African country, or whose parents are African.

These calls for submissions aimed at promoting and advancing the development and publication of the poetic arts. Some are with collaborations with publishers, festivals, booking agents, colleges, universities, conferences and all other entities that share an interest in the poetic arts of Africa.

The CantoMundo Chapbook Prize 2026: (Prize: \$1,000 + Publication)

Are you a poet with a powerful manuscript waiting to be shared with the world? The Bilingual Press | Editorial Bilingüe, in collaboration with CantoMundo, has announced the inaugural CantoMundo Chapbook Prize 2026.

This exciting new literary prize seeks to elevate poetic voices by offering a unique platform for bilingual publication. If you are looking for writing contests that celebrate linguistic diversity and artistic excellence, this is an opportunity you won't want to miss.

Winning a chapbook prize is a significant milestone. Not only does it provide a financial boost, but the translation aspect offers a rare chance to reach an international, Spanish-speaking audience. Whether you are an emerging writer or have several short stories and poems published, this prize is a prestigious addition to any literary CV.

Eligibility and Submission Guidelines

Before you submit your work, ensure your manuscript aligns with the Eligibility and Submission Guidelines:

Submissions must be between 15–25 pages of poetry.

The original submission must be in English.

While specific portal details apply, it is standard practice to use a professional font (e.g., Times New Roman, 12pt) and to start each new poem on a separate page.

Step-by-Step: How to Apply for the CantoMundo Chapbook Prize

The submission window opens on April 1, 2026, and closes on May 30, 2026. If you are wondering how to apply, follow these steps:

Ensure your 15–25 pages represent your strongest work. Check out our tips on editing your poetry before you hit send.

Interested poets should visit the official CantoMundo website or scan the QR code in the announcement graphic to access the application portal.

If you have specific questions regarding the how-to apply process or technical issues, reach out to the organizers at CantoMundo@asu.edu.

Deadline: May 30, 2026.

What Prizes Will the Winners Win?

The winner of the CantoMundo Chapbook Prize will receive a comprehensive prize package designed to launch their work into new markets. What prizes will the winners win exactly?

\$1,000 cash prize.

A bilingual publication: The selected manuscript will be translated into Spanish and published in a beautiful bilingual edition by the Bilingual Press.

10 contributor copies of the published chapbook to share with peers and reviewers.

Glenna Luschei Prize for African Poetry

The Glenna Luschei Prize for African Poetry is a post-publication award of US \$1,000 to a book of poetry published by an African author.

An African writer is someone who was born in Africa, who is a national or resident of an African country, or whose parents are African.

They do not accept submissions electronically. Please visit their website for more information on how to submit.

Sillerman First Book Prize

The Sillerman First Book Prize for African Poets awards USD \$1,000 and publication by the University of Nebraska Press.

They accept electronic submissions of full-length manuscripts of poetry to the Sillerman First Book Prize for African Poets annually between September 15 and December 1. The Sillerman First Book Prize for African Poets accepts electronic submissions ONLY. Click here: <https://africanpoetrybookfund.submittable.com/submit> to submit via Submittable.

To ensure confidentiality and fairness, all submissions to the Sillerman Prize are handled by APBF Coordinator, Kerri Malone. Please direct questions regarding submissions to apbf@brown.edu.

An African writer is taken to mean someone who was born in Africa, who is a national or resident of an African country, or whose parents are African.

No past or present paid employees of the University of Nebraska Press or Amalion Press, or current faculty, students, or employees at the University of Nebraska or Brown University, are eligible for the prizes.

The Evaristo African Poetry Prize awards USD \$1,500 to 10 poems

They accept electronic submissions to the Evaristo African Poetry Prize annually between October 1 and November 1.

An African writer is taken to mean someone who was born in Africa, who is a national or resident of an African country, or whose parents are African.

No past or present paid employees of the University of Nebraska Press or Amalion Press, or current faculty, students, or employees at the University of Nebraska or Brown University, are eligible for the prizes.

They accept electronic unsolicited full-length poetry manuscript submissions from published and unpublished African poets during our open submissions periods. For submission guidelines, please visit: <https://africanpoetrybf.brown.edu/publish-with-apbf/>

2026 Cave Canem Prize

Cave Canem invites Black poets to submit their debut full-length poetry manuscripts for the 2026 Cave Canem Prize, an annual award dedicated to supporting the careers of emerging Black voices in poetry. This prestigious prize offers not only a \$10,000 cash award, but also publication by the University of Georgia Press, 15 author copies, and a feature reading.

About the Cave Canem Prize

Since its inception, the Cave Canem Prize has launched the careers of some of the most compelling Black poets writing today. It exists to offer a direct publishing route to leading literary publishers—Graywolf Press, University of Pittsburgh Press, and University of Georgia Press—and help poets share their voices with a broader audience.

The 2026 winning manuscript will be published by University of Georgia Press in Fall 2026.

Eligibility Requirements for the Cave Canem Prize

Open to Black poets who identify as members of the African Diaspora

Manuscripts must be original, unpublished, and written in English

Applicants must not have previously published a full-length poetry book through a professional press

Chapbooks and self-published works (print-run of 500 or fewer) are allowed

Poets may submit simultaneously to other contests but must notify Cave Canem if their manuscript is accepted elsewhere

Note: Current/former students, colleagues, family, and close friends of the judge are ineligible, as are those affiliated with Cave Canem Foundation or University of Georgia Press.

Submission Guidelines

Submit one manuscript only via Submittable at <https://cavecanem.submittable.com/submit>

Accepted file formats: .docx or .pdf

Manuscript should include:

Title page (title only)

Table of contents

60–75 pages, paginated

No more than one poem per page

No author name should appear in the document

Include a cover letter in Submittable's text box, not in the manuscript file

Cover letter should include a 200-word bio and acknowledgments of previously published poems

No revisions allowed after submission

Adhere strictly to the guidelines to avoid disqualification.

Deadline: May 30, 2026

Submit by 11:59 PM ET

Entry is free

Questions? Contact: programs@ccpoets.org

Evaristo Prize for African Poetry

The Evaristo Prize for African Poetry is an annual prize of USD \$1,500 awarded to ten poems written by an African poet.

Established first as the Brunel International African Poetry Prize (BIAPP) in 2012 by British writer Bernardine Evaristo, who founded and managed the prize for ten years, the Evaristo Prize was renamed and passed on to be managed by the African Poetry Book Fund in 2022. A close partner of APBF, the BIAPP sought to “encourage a new generation of poets who might one day become an international presence.” Indeed, the excellence of BIAPP winners continues to be celebrated globally as many of the poets have gone to publish chapbooks, full-length poetry collections, and win more prizes.

President of the UK's Royal Society of Literature and a celebrated writer, Bernardine Evaristo is an APBF Editorial Board Member; Professor of Creative Writing at Brunel University London; and the author of ten books of fiction, poetry, essays, drama, criticism, and journalism.

Eligibility

The Prize is open to African writers. An “African writer” is taken to mean someone who was born in Africa, who is a national or resident of an African country, or whose parents are African.

The prize is open to African poets who have not yet had a full-length poetry book published at the time of submission. Self-published poetry books, chapbooks, and pamphlets are exempt from this stipulation.

Only poems written in English can be considered, but we welcome poems in translation for consideration too. In the case that the winning work is translated, a percentage of the prize money would be awarded to the translator.

No past or present paid employees of the University of Nebraska Press, Akashic Books, or Amalion Press, or current faculty, students, or employees at the University of Nebraska are eligible for the prizes.

African poets who have published a chapbook in a New-Generation African Poets Chapbooks Box Set series remain eligible for the Evaristo African Poetry Prize if they have not published a full-length book of poems.

When To Send

Manuscripts of 10 poems, no more and no less, will be accepted annually between October 1st and November 1st via Submittable. Please do not send any submissions via email. We do not have the capacity to track submissions by email and any manuscripts received as such will not be considered. Submit by clicking here: <https://africanpoetrybookfund.submittable.com/submit>

Manuscript

Poems must be the original work of the entrant and be no longer than 40 lines each.

Poems may have been previously published or won previous awards.

People who have entered previously for the prize can re-submit but are advised to share new poems.

While we have no specific formatting rules, we suggest sending your manuscript in Times New Roman or Arial, 12-point font, single-spaced. We also prefer one poem per page, meaning a new poem does not begin on the same page on which another ends. The entire submission must be in black ink, no colors.

All entries must be submitted via Submittable. Poems must be submitted in a single document without any identifying information included. The document should be named after the title of the first poem in the packet. Alterations cannot be made to poems once entered. The Submittable cover letter, which will be concealed to screeners and judges, should include the entrants' name, nationality, country of birth, full address including country of permanent residence, personal email address and telephone number.

The APBF reserves the right to not award the Prize if, in the judges' opinion, such an action is justified. APBF also reserves the right to split the Prize if they decide that more than one poet is worthy of winning it.

Ann Petry Award

Founded in 2020 in partnership with Red Hen Press and the Peauxdunque Writers Alliance, the Ann Petry Award seeks to publish prose literature by Black authors. The Ann Petry Award is for a work of previously unpublished prose, either a novel or a collection of short stories or novellas, with a minimum of 150 pages, by a Black writer. The awarded manuscript is selected through an annual submission process, with primary review by the Peauxdunque Writers Alliance, who will win now the submissions to a list of finalists for the final judge.

Award Details

\$3000

Book publication by Red Hen Press

The opening chapter or story of the awarded manuscript will be published in the Peauxdunque Review

Four-week residency at The Community Library's Ernest and Mary Hemingway House in Ketchum, Idaho

Deadline: July 31, 2026

Note: The Ann Petry Award is for a work of previously unpublished prose, either a novel or a collection of short stories or novellas, with a 25,000-word minimum (approximately 150 pages, double-spaced, Times New Roman 12pt font) by a Black writer. Entries will be accepted via Submittable only.

Submissions are currently open for this award.

Guidelines

The award is open to all Black writers, with the following exceptions:

Authors who have had a full-length work published by Red Hen Press, or a full-length work currently under consideration by Red Hen Press

Employees, interns, or contractors of Red Hen Press

Relatives of employees or members of the executive board of directors

Relatives or individuals having a personal or professional relationship with any of the final judges where they have taken any part whatsoever in shaping the manuscript, or where, for whatever reason, selecting a particular manuscript might have the appearance of impropriety

Procedures and Ethical Considerations

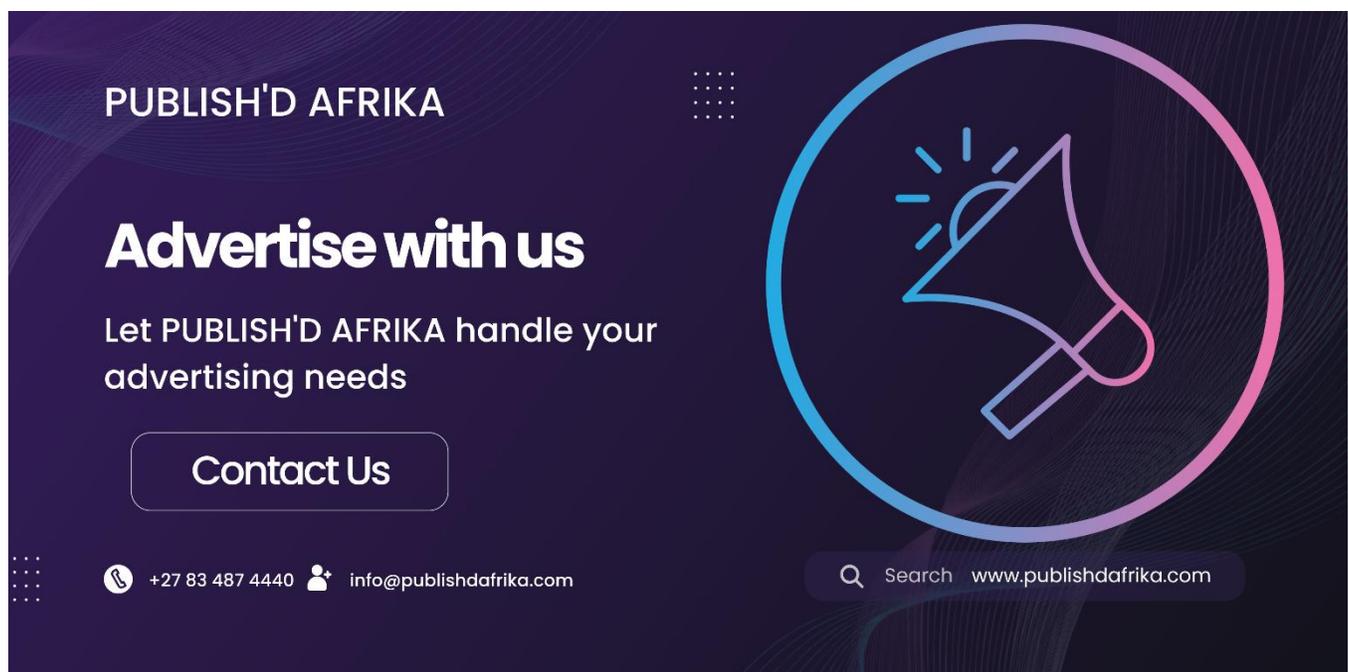
To be certain that every manuscript finalist receives the fairest evaluation, all manuscripts shall be submitted to the judges without any identifying material. Bios, acknowledgments, and other identifying material shall be removed from judged manuscripts until the conclusion of the competition.

Please remove all names, bios, acknowledgments, and other identifying material from the submitted manuscript, and include only your name, contact information, and a short biographical statement in the cover letter field of Submittable.

The Ann Petry Award of Red Hen Press and Peauxdunque Writers Alliance is committed to maintaining the utmost integrity of our awards. Judges shall recuse themselves from considering any manuscript where they recognize the work. In the event of refusal, a manuscript score previously assigned by the managing editor of the press will be substituted.

Want to submit? Click on the link below for the submissible:

<https://redhen.org/ann-petry-award/>



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More Calls For Submissions

Opportunities For Emerging African Writers

The Annual Bridgette James Poetry Competition 2026

We are pleased to announce that The Annual Bridgette James Poetry Competition returns on Wednesday, 1 April 2026. Submissions will remain open until midnight (BST) on Thursday, 30 April 2026.

Entry is FREE.

Theme: Outsider

Prizes: (Paid via money transfer services such as Remitly or Western Union into the winner's bank account.)

First Place: \$100 USD + Publication in the anthology (Winner featured on the book blurb)

Second Place: \$20 USD + Publication of two (2) poems in the anthology

Third Place: \$10 USD + Publication of one poem in the anthology

Commended Poem: \$10 USD

Ella's Poems Project – Charitable Awards

- Youngest Submitter – \$10 USD
- Best Regional Submitter – \$10 USD
- Best Performing Female – \$10 USD
- Bridgette James's Favourite – \$10 USD
- Judge's Favourite – \$10 USD

All shortlisted entries will be offered a contract and included in a winners' anthology to be published on Amazon KDP.

www.ellaspoeems.com

Writers Space Africa Awards

The calls below are strictly about Writers Space Africa. They include the African Teen Writers Awards, The Wakini Kuria Prize for Children's Literature, and the 9th Edition of the African Writers Awards.

Teen Writers Awards

Organised by Writers Space Africa (WSA), the 5th edition of the African Teen Writers Awards is officially open.

This award aims to inspire and empower young African writers by encouraging them to share their stories and challenge negative stereotypes about the continent through creative expression. The award is open to teens aged 13 to 16 years, and submissions are accepted in two categories: Poetry and Prose. Each participant may submit one entry per category.

Submission period: March 15 – July 1, 2026

Theme: The Teen Behind Social Media

The winner in each category will receive:

A certificate of achievement

A cash prize of \$100, sponsored by Nahida Esmail.

Shortlisted participants will be required to provide proof of age and identification when contacted.

Please note that AI-generated submissions are not accepted.

Wakini Kuria Prize For Children's Literature

The Wakini Kuria Prize for Children's Literature, established in 2019, honours the memory and legacy of Wakini Kuria, who served on the Advisory Board of the African Writers Development Trust and was the Chief Editor of Writers Space Africa (WSA) Magazine from 2017 until her passing

in 2019. She also coordinated the Writers Space Africa – Kenya Chapter and played a key role in developing platforms for emerging African writers.

Since its inception, the prize has recognised outstanding writers from across Africa, including winners from Uganda, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Tanzania, Nigeria, Lesotho, Ghana, Malawi, Kenya, Cameroon, and other countries.

For the 8th edition of the prize, submissions are invited in the children's literature genre for readers aged 6 to 12 years.

Genre: Children's fiction

Theme: Digital World

Word limit: Maximum 1,200 words

Entry fee: None

Eligibility: Writers of African descent only

Submission period: March 15 – July 1, 2026

The winners will receive:

First Prize: Certificate and \$200

Second Prize: Certificate and \$150

Third Prize: Certificate and \$100

This prize is sponsored by Nahida Esmail.

Please note:

Poetry is not accepted for this edition

Entries must be original and unpublished, including on personal blogs

AI-generated submissions are not accepted

Previous winners of the prize are not eligible to enter

9th Edition of the African Writers Awards

AWA
2026
AFRICAN WRITERS AWARDS

9TH EDITION

Theme
BELONGING

We are pleased to announce the 9th edition of the African Writers Awards. Submissions are now open for poetry (minimum of 14 lines) and short stories (between 3,000 and 5,000 words).

PRIZES

- Best Poetry — \$100
- Best Short Story — \$100

Submission Period: March 15 – July 1, 2026

Winners will be announced at the **2026 African Writers Conference** in Kampala, Uganda.

Please visit www.africanwritersawards.com to read the guidelines and to submit your entry.

Please note that submissions generated by AI will not be accepted.

This prize is proudly sponsored by **Anthony 'Penboss' Onugba.**

Powered By: WSA WSA-US African Writers Awards

We are pleased to announce the 9th edition of the African Writers Awards, organised by Writers Space Africa (WSA). This award recognises outstanding creative writing by African writers and aims to promote original voices across the continent and the diaspora.

For the 2026 edition, submissions are invited in two genres: Poetry and Short Story. Participants must choose one genre only. Entries submitted in more than one genre will be disqualified.

Genres: Poetry or Short Story

Theme: Belonging

Entry fee: None

Submission period: March 15 – July 1, 2026

Length requirements:

Poetry: Minimum of 14 lines

Short Story: 3,000 – 5,000 words

The winner in each genre will receive:

A cash prize of \$100

A certificate of achievement

This award is sponsored by Anthony “Penboss” Onugba.

Please note:

Entries must be original and unpublished, including on personal blogs

AI-generated submissions are not accepted

Previous winners in any category of the African Writers Awards are not eligible to enter

To enter any of the Writers Space Africa calls, visit:

www.africanwritersawards.com

French Institute's Call To Performing Artists

The French Institute of South Africa (IFAS) announces the opening of the call for performing artists for the 2026 edition of Fête de la Musique, which marks the festival's 15th edition in South Africa. Applications are invited from musicians, bands, DJs and poets wishing to perform at the Pretoria and Johannesburg events.

In 2026, Fête de la Musique will take place across three cities. The programme begins in Cape Town on Sunday 29 March as part of Bree Street Sundays. The festival will then continue in Pretoria on Saturday 13 June, followed by Johannesburg on Saturday 20 June at Victoria Yards.

“The 15th edition of Fête de la Musique reflects the continued commitment of IFAS to support emerging artists and encourage cultural exchange through accessible public events,” said Dorine Lebreton, Cultural Attaché and Deputy Director of the French Institute of South Africa. “This call for artists offers musicians and performers an opportunity to share their work with new audiences and to take part in a programme that brings together artists from across the country.”

Brad Holmes, Managing Director of Bassline, added: “Fête de la Musique has become an important platform for emerging talent in South Africa. Each year the festival creates opportunities for artists

to perform in front of new audiences while also connecting with other musicians and industry professionals.”

The present call for artists applies to the Pretoria and Johannesburg events. Two artists or bands will be selected to perform in Pretoria, and all other selected applicants will take part in the Johannesburg programme.

Applications will be accepted under the following conditions:

Applications open on 12 March 2026 and close on 14 April 2026, or earlier if 300 applications are received.

To apply, artists must complete the application form and send a WeTransfer file with the required materials to fetedelamusiquejoburg@gmail.com.

Applicants must:

Be available to perform live in Pretoria on 13 June and in Johannesburg on 20 June 2026.

Present a 45-minute live set and demonstrate the ability to engage a public audience.

Attend compulsory professional workshops in Johannesburg on 18 and 19 June 2026.

Incomplete applications will not be considered. Only selected applicants will be contacted.

About Fête de la Musique

Created in France in 1982, Fête de la Musique is now celebrated in more than 100 countries. The festival encourages musicians of all levels to perform in public spaces and offers free concerts to the public.

Introduced in Johannesburg 15 years ago, the event provides a platform for emerging artists while presenting established performers across a range of musical styles. Previous editions have featured Msaki, BCUC, Samthing Soweto, Vaudou Game, Nakhane, SunEl Musician and Bongeziwe Mabandla, among others.

The 2026 edition is organised by the French Institute of South Africa and co-produced by Bassline, with the support of TotalEnergies Marketing South Africa.

Arts Opportunities: Open Call

Apply now for the International Coproduction Fund (IKF)



The IKF supports coproductions worldwide that grow out of collaborative and dialogue-based working processes in the fields of music, dance, theatre and performance art. The fund is used to promote innovative productions and international cultural exchange, as well as new approaches to intercultural collaboration and networking.

Professional artists, ensembles and initiatives from outside Germany, who plan their projects in dialogue-oriented collaboration with artists, ensembles or initiatives in Germany, can apply.

Applicants can be either natural persons (in other words, individual artists) or legal entities (institutions, associations, organised

groups, etc.) from outside Germany, who plan their projects in dialogue-oriented collaboration with artists, ensembles or initiatives in Germany. What matters is the applicant's primary place of residence and work, not their nationality.

Through the IKF, we support the creation of new productions and the development of existing productions in music, theatre, dance and performance that are of a high artistic standard and have public impact. Collaborative artistic development of the project is a prerequisite. The application must clearly demonstrate a genuine mutual interest in a collaborative dialogue-oriented production. The work should be presented abroad in a professional setting, and if possible, also in Germany. In addition to pure music, dance or theatre productions, interdisciplinary, hybrid projects or projects involving the appropriate use of digital media are also eligible.

Conditions of Funding

From 2026, there are two confirmed application periods:

For the first round, applications are accepted from mid-January until 1 April 2026. This round is for projects scheduled to start in July 2026 and end on 1 October 2027.

In the second round, applications will be accepted from mid-July until 1 October 2026. This round is for projects starting in 2027 and ending on 1 April 2028.

All project costs, including artist fees, travel costs and production expenses, can be included in the funding application. The requested funding amount should be no more than €30,000 and no less than €15,000.

Projects that are not eligible for funding are purely commercial projects, commissioned works, guest performances or tours, projects with a residency-based character, music recordings, film or exhibition projects without a performative element as well as ongoing operational costs.

They recommend checking their website regularly for the latest updates on the application process.

For more details and to apply, go here: <https://www.goethe.de/en/kul/foe/int.html>

Contact koproduktionsfonds@goethe.de

Opportunities for Historically Underrepresented Writers

The calls for submissions below are open to historically underrepresented writers or focus on publishing content produced by historically underrepresented writers. Some of these publications are open to a wide range of writers including writers of colour, gender non-conforming and LGBTQ+ writers, and those living with disabilities. Some have limited definitions and are only interested in work by Black authors. Some are open to submissions from all authors.

The Brownstone Magazine

This is a digital publication “created by Black women, for Black women. We publish work that explores culture, identity, creativity, and lived experience with care and intention.” They are currently accepting long-form pieces exploring culture, identity, and personal perspective, as well as commentary, cultural analysis, reviews, and profiles and interviews. Please only submit to them if you are Black.

The Other Side of Hope: Journeys in Refugee and Immigrant Literature

“We invite refugee, asylum seeker, and immigrant poets from around the world to submit their poetry for our other tongue, mother tongue issue. This edition celebrates linguistic diversity by featuring poetry written in any language, presented along English translations.” Submit up to 2 poems in any language except English. Please state in English the language your poems are written in. “If your poem is selected for publication, you can self-translate it or a member of our Translations Advisory Group will translate it into English (see guidelines for the languages covered by this group). Members of the editorial team will work with you to polish and finalize the translation.” They pay £50 per published poet, and £25 for the English translation. The deadline is 30 April 2026.

The B’K Magazine

This art and literature magazine prioritises and pays traditionally marginalised creators, but they are open to submissions from all. They have very in-depth and detailed submission guidelines that everyone should read carefully before submitting.

The Saartjie Journal

This new journal is only open to writing and visual art by Black women artists and writers. They accept submissions of previously unpublished original poems, short stories, and visual art.

Decolonial Passage

According to their website they “publish writing from writers of all backgrounds regardless of race, origin, or gender while simultaneously centering African, African American, and Black Diaspora writing.” Their mission statement goes into more details about this. They are open on a rolling basis to essays, creative nonfiction, short stories, and flash fiction. They are open to poetry only during the months of February, June, and October; and for prose, only during April, May, August, and December.

Magnets and Ladders

They publish the work of disabled writers in two issues a year.

DisLit Youth Magazine

They only publish work by writers 14-22, and they primarily publish disabled writers.

Heaven Magazine

They are interested in publishing fiction, creative non-fiction, flash, and poetry by all underrepresented creators.

The Kalahari Review

A weekly African literary magazine interested in material exploring modern Africa and Africans in unique and avant-garde ways. They publish their work on Medium.

Transition

Born in Africa and bred in the diaspora, Transition is a publication of the Hutchins Center at Harvard University, published three times annually. Transition publishes writing by and about Africa and the African diaspora, with an eye towards a global perspective. They accept submissions year-round on a rolling basis, and generally respond to submissions within four months.

African Writer

They are open to all genres of literature from Africa and the African Diaspora. They do not allow simultaneous submissions.

Afritondo

According to their website, “Afritondo is a media and publishing platform that aims to connect with and tell the stories of Africans and Black minority populations across the globe.” They accept a wide range of work, including manuscript-length work.

Brittle Paper

Brittle Paper is an online literary magazine for readers of African Literature. They accept the following: “fiction, poetry, creative non-fiction, book reviews, essays, literary commentaries, fun listicles, and any writing with a literary bent”.

Torch Literary Arts

Torch Literary Arts is a nonprofit organisation. They publish and promote creative writing by Black women only. They publish contemporary writing by experienced and emerging writers. “We are interested in work that challenges and disrupts pre-conceived notions of what Black women’s contemporary writing should be.” General submissions are accepted for Friday Features only, in

which they publish fiction, creative nonfiction, poetry, and drama (including that accompanied by video or dramatic audio). Send up to 3,500 for prose works, up to 10 pages for drama, or up to 5 poems. Pay is \$150. Submissions are accepted on an ongoing basis.

Craft

This respected literary journal is open to creative work from authors of all backgrounds, but they offer free submissions + fast response times to BIPOC and other mis- and underrepresented writers. Craft pays \$100 for flash and \$200 for short fiction and creative nonfiction.

Aloka

They want work by non-native English speakers only – poetry, translations, fiction, and hybrid work. Send up to 5 poems, or up to 2 prose pieces, up to 2,500 words each.

Emergent Literary

An exciting new literary journal that accepts a wide range of submissions from Black and Brown authors.

Lantana

They are an award-winning children's book publisher based in England, United Kingdom. They are looking for manuscripts and book dummies by authors and illustrators from under-represented groups. They almost exclusively publish stories with child protagonists (including poetry, graphic novels and non-fiction) and are not looking for stories only featuring animal characters.

Phoenix

Phoenix is a new speculative imprint launched by Nigerian publisher Ouida Books in collaboration with Nnedi Okorafor and Lọlá Shónéyìn. Phoenix is dedicated to publishing African speculative fiction and fantasy (Africanfuturism and Africanjujuism).

The Black Lawrence Immigrant Writing Series

This opportunity, from Black Lawrence Press, is for immigrants living in the US – for manuscripts of fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and hybrid writing. “Poets and authors, at any stage of their careers, who identify as immigrants are welcome to submit a book manuscript of poetry or prose or a hybrid text for consideration. Submissions are accepted year-round. However, selections are made in June and November for a total of two books per year. In addition to publication, marketing, and a standard royalties contract from Black Lawrence Press, authors chosen for the Black Lawrence Immigrant Writing Series will receive a travel stipend of \$500, which can be used for book tours or in any manner chosen by the authors.”

North Dakota State University Press: Contemporary Voices of Indigenous Peoples Series

The goal of this series to feature the authentic stories, poetry, and scholarly works of Native Americans, First Nations, Maori, Aborigines, Indians, and more to give voice to contemporary Indigenous peoples. NDSU Press considers book-length manuscripts of fiction, nonfiction, and poetry for publication in this series.

Tundra Books, Puffin Canada, Penguin Teen Canada

These children and teen focused Canadian imprints are open to direct submissions by underrepresented authors and illustrators only. Authors need not be Canadian.

Angry Robot

A great science fiction publisher that only accepts direct submissions from Black authors.

The Cave Canem Prize

This is a prize for Black poets. “The Cave Canem Prize supports the work of Black poets to overcome the obstacle of publishing their first book of poems. Awarded to one poet annually, the Prize recipient receives a monetary award, as well as having their manuscript published by one of our partner publishers, Graywolf Press; University of Pittsburgh Press; or University of Georgia Press.” About eligibility, “All unpublished, original collections of poems written in English by Black poets who have not had a full-length book of poetry published by a professional press.” Also, “Cave Canem defines Black poets as any poet who identifies as a member of the African Diaspora. Submissions must be paginated with a font size of 11 or 12, and 60 – 75 pages in length, inclusive of title page and table of contents.” The winning manuscript will be published by Graywolf Press. The prize/submission portal will open for submissions on 1st April 2026, and close on 30th April 2026.

Screen Door Press

This is an opportunity to be published by an imprint of University of Kentucky Press, but the authors are awarded \$5,000 as a prize as well as a publishing contract. Screen Door Press is dedicated to “discovering unique, exceptional, and varied voices representing Black literary traditions.” Their goal “is to publish thought-provoking books that use relatable characters, strong narratives, and beautiful language to champion diverse views from throughout the Black diaspora.” They are open to submissions of Novel/novellas, Short Story Collections, poetry, and “other”. The editor is Crystal Wilkinson. They close to submissions April 20th.

Princeton University Press: Global Equity Grants

These grants are for authors of underrepresented groups to support the preparation of works that is already under contract, in production, or published within the last 12 months. Grants range from \$500 to \$1,000. The grants can be used to cover a wide range of supports including parental/family care, and translation. More details at the source. Applications are considered on a rolling basis.

For a full list where you might find a call that works for you, go to:

<https://authorspublish.com/opportunities-for-historically-underrepresented-writers-march-2026/>



PUBLISH'D AFRIKA
LITERARY MAGAZINE
Redefining Africa's Narrative