

PEN South Africa newsletter / Issue 10 2016

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Azerbaijani investigative journalist Khadija Ismayilova Released from Prison

Azerbaijani investigative journalist Khadija Ismayilova was released last week on probation, days before her 40th birthday. Ismayilova had been sentenced to seven and a half years in prison on trumped-up financial charges in September 2015, having been detained since December 2014. The remainder of her sentence has been commuted to a three-year conditional sentence. She will be subject to a travel ban and other restrictions. PEN will continue to campaign for all restrictions against her to be lifted...[read more](#)

Ismayilova's case was one of the **cases that we highlighted** last year during the **Day of**

the **Imprisoned Writer** event we held in Cape Town.

“I wasn’t convinced that the government was prepared to show goodwill toward political prisoners and prisoners of conscience,” Ismayilova said after her release.

“But evidently, the pressure put on the authorities to release me was very effective, and the government realised in the end that holding me in prison was more costly than letting me go, and therefore they simply released me.”

This highlights the importance of the ongoing work that PEN has been doing to secure her release.

“My birthday wish is: keep doing whatever you can to get someone out of prison, because it is important,” she said. “It worked with me. It can work with others.”...**read more**

Coverage of Last Month's Literary Events

There were several literary festivals held last month and we've rounded up some of the coverage on these, including pieces reflecting on Eugene de Kock's attendance of the Sunday Times Literary Awards and presence at the Franschhoek Literary Festival:

Franschhoek Literary Festival:

- “Eugene de Kock at the Franschhoek Literary Festival: Of screwed courage and a screwed country” by Palesa Morudu, Daily Maverick
- “Not welcome: Thabiso Mahlape and Lauren Beukes on Eugene de Kock’s presence at the Sunday Times Literary Awards shortlist event” by Jennifer Malec, Books LIVE
- “Unexpected guest at Franschhoek Literary Festival” by Karin Schimke, Financial Mail

- **"Adré Marshall Reflects on the 2016 Franschhoek Literary Festival"** by Adré Marshall, PEN SA
- **"How to survive a literary festival"** by PEN SA member Darrel Bristow-Bovey, Rand Daily Mail
- **"The 2016 Franschhoek Literary Festival is underway!"** by Jennifer Malec, Books LIVE
- **"Three PEN SA Members Shortlisted for the 2016 Sunday Times Literary Awards"** by PEN SA

Spier Poetry Festival:

- **"Spier Poetry Festival 2016: dancing in other words with photos and videos"** by Naomi Bruwer, Litnet
- **"Spier Poetry Festival 2016: Poets' Welcome Dinner"** by Naomi Bruwer, Litnet
- **"Spier Poetry Festival: Quick Q&A with Hans C ten Berge"** by Naomi Bruwer, Litnet

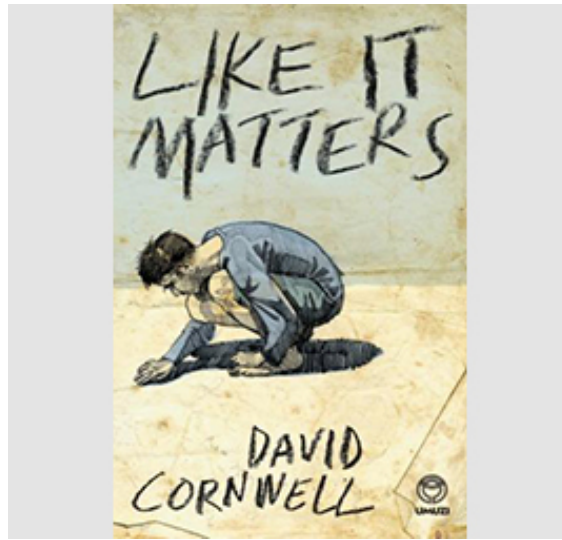
Jewish Literary Festival

- **"Of romance, rugby and refugees: intertwined at the inaugural Jewish Literary Festival in Cape Town"** by PEN SA member Karina Magdalena Szczurek, Litnet

Kingsmead Book Fair

- **"State Capture, Protests Among Hot Topics at Kingsmead Book Fair"** by Vumani Mkhize, EWN

NEW MEMBERS' TITLES



Recent titles from PEN SA members include [Like It Matters](#) by David Cornwell, [Dr Philip's Empire](#) by Tim Keegan and [Safe House](#), a new anthology edited by Ellah Wakatama Allfrey, which Simone Haysom and Mark Gevisser contributed to. A re-edition of the award-winning [Happiness is a Four-Letter Word](#) by Cynthia Jele has been published to coincide with the movie's release. Fiona Khan's 2009 novel [Reeds of Wrath](#) is now on Amazon...[read more](#)

CONGRATULATIONS!

Finuala Dowling has been shortlisted for the Herman Charles Bosman Prize for



Books LIVE's Crowdsourced List of the Best African Books

In celebration of Africa Day Books LIVE have been crowdsourcing suggestions for a list of the best African books. The list is a work in progress, so get in touch with them if there's a title you think should be added...[read more](#)

PEN SA member Niq Mhlongo has also recently shared his favourite 15 books from the Heinemann African Writers Series...[read more](#)

(Image courtesy of [Books LIVE](#))

English Fiction at the 2016 Media24
Books Literary Awards...[read more](#)

WELCOME!

Welcome to new Professional members
Cynthia Jele, Elaine Proctor and David
Cornwell.

AGM REMINDER

The electronic AGM was sent out on
Tuesday 31 May. Please take the time to
look through the documents and
respond. If you didn't receive the email
let us know at
communications@pensouthafrica.co.za.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Take a look at what's on this
month...[read more](#)

CALLS FOR SUBMISSIONS

2016 Short Story Day Africa Prize...[read
more](#)

Moth Short Story Prize 2016...[read
more](#)

Imbewu Trust's 2016 SCRIBE
Scriptwriting Competition...[read more](#)

Seán Ó Faoláin Short Story
Competition...[read more](#)

REST IN PEACE

We have been informed that longtime
PEN SA member John Runnalls passed
away last year. Our sincere
condolences to his friends and family.

Send us your news

Had a book published recently? Attended or participated in a festival? Won an award? Achieved a personal milestone of note? We welcome any news of your activities for future issues of the PEN SA newsletter.

Please email your contributions
to communications@pensouthafrica.co.za



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