



THE SOUTH AFRICAN CENTRE OF PEN INTERNATIONAL

A World Association of Writers

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To: PEN SA Members

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André Brink – Public Memorial – **2nd March 2015, Cape Town**, hosted by the University of Cape Town

Date: Monday, 2nd March 2015

Time: 18:30 for 19:00 p.m.

Venue: Wilfred and Jules Kramer Law Building, Lecture Theatre 1, UCT Middle Campus

RSVP: lisl.george@uct.ac.za. NB: seating is limited.

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Invitation to attend the film premier of *To Light A Candle* in Johannesburg, 27th February 2015. RSVP by 25th February.

**EDUCATION
IS NOT A CRIME**

NATIONAL FILM PREMIER "TO LIGHT A CANDLE"

27 FEBRUARY 2015 • 18.30 FOR 19.00 • SENATE ROOM, 2ND FLOOR, SENATE HOUSE, WITS UNIVERSITY.

• ANSWER TRUE OR FALSE TO THE FOLLOWING •

Q: Everyone in the world has the right to education. A:

Q: No government has the right to deny sections of the population access to education based on classifications of religion, race, gender, class... or for any reason at all. A:

Q: There is a direct link between educational opportunities and the ability to provide a decent livelihood for one's self. A:

If you answered true to all 3 statements, then you are kindly invited to the screening of the film, *TO LIGHT A CANDLE*.

THE TRAILER CAN BE SEEN ON LINK: <http://vimeo.com/92144770>


ALSO VISIT: <http://www.educationisnotacrime.me/>





PLEASE RSVP BY 25 FEBRUARY 2015 TO BOPAevents@bahainst.org.za

"Our bitter experience of apartheid demonstrates that discrimination of all types - hurts us all. Iran's government is denying its own people the services of thousands of Baha'i engineers, doctors, and artists, who could help Iran, Iranians and the world." ARCHBISHOP DESMOND TUTU.

"TO LIGHT A CANDLE" chronicles the lives of Iran's Baha'is who have triumphed against unbelievable hardship. As the only means to access higher education, the underground Baha'i Institute for Higher Education (BIHE) uses the power of learning and teaching to strengthen the community to combat systemic and systematic persecution, aimed at blocking their development.

The filmmaker, Maziar Bahari, is an Iranian-Canadian journalist of Muslim background. He is best known from the film, "Rosewater" (directed by Dolly Shew's Jon Stewart) which tells his own true story of 110 days in Evin Prison after Iran's 2009 election crisis.



This film will also be premiered in Cape Town, 27th February 2015, 18.30 for 19.00 p.m., Erin Hall, 8 Erin Road, Rondebosch. RSVP to BOPAevents@bahainst.org.za

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Etisalat Prize for Literature for debut fiction

A correction to the last newsletter – the announcement of the winner of the Etisalat Prize for Literature for debut fiction will be announced on Sunday, 15th March 2015. In the running are PEN SA member Nadia Davids (*An Imperfect Blessing*), Songeziwe Mahlangu (*Penumbra*), and Chinelo Okparanta (*Happiness Like Water*). Good luck Nadia!

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SA media – comment by Anton Harber

Go to <http://www.theharbinger.co.za/wordpress/2015/02/16/new-anc-approach-to-media-is-crafty-smart-and-more-effective/> to read Antony Harber's comment on SA media.

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The SA Writers' College 2015 Annual Short Story Award for emerging writers. **Closing date = 31st March 2015**

This competition acknowledges excellence in creative writing in the Short Story genre and is open to any emerging writer residing in South Africa who has had fewer than four stories/articles published in any format (print or digital). Prizes of R10 000, R5 000 and R2 000 will be awarded. Please contact Nichola Meyer at Nichola@sawriterscollege.co.za for detailed competition information.

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Mondays at Six p.m. at St. Clements – 2nd March 2015, 191 Musgrave Road, Durban. Join Jan Hurst-Nicholson for a talk on self publishing.

Now that traditionally published authors are getting reversal of copyright for their books and self-publishing them as e-books, the stigma of what was once known as 'vanity' publishing is diminishing. Indie authors now account for approximately 30% of daily sales of e-books on Amazon. So how do you go about uploading your book and getting a cover made? How do you compete with the three million e-books that are now for sale? How do you get paid, fill in the IRS forms, handle poor reviews? How much does it cost to have print copies made? But most importantly, can you make any money from self-publishing?

Jan Hurst-Nicholson will be answering these questions and giving a brief overview of her experiences as an Indie publisher.

You can see her books on her website www.just4kix.jimdo.com or her Amazon author page <http://www.amazon.com/Jan-Hurst-Nicholson/e/B002LNM4ZI>

RSVP to (031) 202-2511 or contact Pieter Scholtz at kwasuka1@mweb.co.za.

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PEN SA on Facebook

Have you ever visited PEN SA's Facebook page at www.facebook.com/southafricanpen? PEN SA is sometimes advised of events, competitions, etc., at the last minute and it is not possible to then publicise them via our newsletters. These events are, however, publicised on our Facebook page. We'd thus encourage members to visit the Facebook site. And don't forget to LIKE the site!

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A Statement from the Nordic PEN Centres regarding the Attacks in Copenhagen, 15th February 2015

The attack on the Saturday meeting in Copenhagen, where people came together to discuss freedom of expression in the face of blasphemy, and the subsequent shooting at the city's synagogue, is a chilling reminder that the open societies of the North European countries are also faced with threats against their core values: Free exchange of ideas in a secular society. These cruel attempts at suppression and the loss of life they brought with them can only be lamented and condemned in the strongest terms.

That the events take place on the 25th anniversary of Iran's fatwa against the British-Indian author Salman Rushdie underscores that freedom of expression is universal and cross-cultural. Today censorship and violence threatens authors, visual artists and cartoonists, in far, far, to many societies. The Nordic PEN Centres will continue to fight for their rights to express themselves without persecution, both at home and abroad.

The Nordic countries have a long history of respecting freedom of expression and encouraging sharp social criticism in all media. Recently an international survey listed Denmark as one of the most free countries in the world. We will not allow the forces of intolerance to destroy that with their crude tactics.

Signed:

Dansk PEN - The Danish PEN Centre
Norsk P.E.N. - The Norwegian PEN Centre
PEN á Íslandi - The Icelandic PEN Centre
Suomen PEN - The Finnish PEN Centre
Svenska P.E.N. - The Swedish PEN Centre

The above statement was kindly sent to PEN SA by Jarkko Tontti, Poet, novelist, essayist, lawyer, Executive Board member and International Treasurer of PEN International. PEN SA President, Margie Orford, replied: Be assured - for what it is worth - that we stand with you in solidarity and deepest sympathy with those murdered in Denmark today.

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Wordsworth Books Summer Sale – starts 27th February 2015, Cape Town

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PEN SA celebrates International Mother Language Day, 21st February 2015

The right to speak, teach and learn in one's own mother tongue is a fundamental human right. Language is key to knowing and expressing both one's culture and one's self. To deny that right is to erase part of the diversity of human experience and the uniqueness of individuals and communities. PEN South Africa both celebrates and works to protect linguistic diversity in South Africa stands together with PEN International to condemn the treatment of Ilham Tohti. **Margie Orford – President, PEN SA**

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On International Mother Language Day PEN Calls on China to Free Ilham Tohti

On 21 February 2015, International Mother Language Day, PEN calls for the immediate and unconditional release of academic and Uyghur PEN Ilham Tohti.

Ilham Tohti is a writer and academic from China's Uyghur minority. He was arrested in January 2014, charged with 'splitism'.

Tohti is a public intellectual from China's Uyghur minority and one the world's foremost scholars on Uyghur issues. Arrested in January 2014, charged with 'splitism' in July 2014, and convicted following an unfair trial on 23 September 2014, he was sentenced to life imprisonment and confiscation of all his property. Tohti's appeal against his conviction and sentence was rejected in November 2014.

Tohti has never promoted violence or separatism. In 2006, he co-founded the website Uyghur Online, aimed at promoting understanding between Uyghurs and Han Chinese. However, his criticism of the Chinese authorities for their heavy-handed treatment of the Uyghur minority made him the target of frequent harassment. Following his initial arrest, the Bureau of Public Security for Urumqi alleged that Tohti had been using the website as a platform to recruit followers.

PEN International first began working on Tohti's case in 2009, following his detention for speaking out about ethnic unrest that broke out in Urumqi, capital of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR), on 5 July 2009. Initially placed under house arrest, he was later transferred to an unknown location where he was kept incommunicado before being released six weeks later. Further harassment followed, including periods spent under house arrest.

Tohti is a member of Uyghur PEN and received the PEN/Barbara Goldsmith Freedom to Write Award in 2014. He was an honorary Empty Chair at PEN International's world congress in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, in 2014. Several of his students, arrested at the same time as Tohti, were also convicted of 'splitism' and were handed prison sentences of between three and five years.

To take action go to: <http://www.pen-international.org/newsitems/on-international-mother-language-day-pen-calls-on-china-to-free-ilham-tohti/>

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Nal'ibali highlights the importance of home languages this International Mother Tongue Language Day - 21st February 2015

Nal'ibali, the national reading-for-enjoyment campaign, has collaborated with SA role models and public figures to highlight the importance of mother tongue languages in children's literacy development this International Tongue Language Day, Saturday, 21st February. By asking participants to try and read a children's story – in a language they didn't understand – Nal'ibali has created a poignant Public Service Announcement (PSA) highlighting the challenges faced by many young children as they engage with print and other literacy materials in unfamiliar languages on a daily basis.

“Regular interaction with interesting and challenging books and stories in home languages allows children to build a deep understanding of their mother tongue. This ensures a firm foundation for learning not only an additional language, but for all other school learning too,” explains Carole Bloch, Director of PRAESA (The Project for the Study of Alternative Education in South Africa) which is running the Nal'ibali campaign.

“All children, and not only English speakers, deserve significant exposure to the finest of locally written and international literature in their first languages. Until we achieve this, we continue to disadvantage learning opportunities for the majority of children in South Africa,” Bloch continues.

Showing just how meaningless receiving news and information in a language you don't understand can be, South African public figures including YouTube sensation, Suzelle DIY, actress and Freshlyground lead singer, Zolani Mahola, as well as soccer players Cecil Lolo and Ziyaad Eksteen from Ajax Cape Town Football Club all had a turn to be filmed reading a story in a language they did not know.

“It is of utmost importance to me that my child speaks the language of his mother and the people who came before her. For him to have access to the rich culture I came from would be one of the biggest gifts I could ever pass on to him and reading in his mother tongue would open the windows of that world even further to him,” commented Mahola on the day.

Taking up the challenge, and reading snippets from a story in the 'wrong' language on air, national radio stations RSG, SAfm and Umhlobo Wenene FM, who typically broadcast in Afrikaans, English and isiXhosa respectively, surprised their listeners and helped spread the message even further.

“It takes many years to learn your mother tongue well and reading and talking about books in your home language enriches children’s language enormously. So, to help your children have the very best chance of success at school, the golden rule is to start talking and reading to them in their mother tongue/s when they are babies and keep doing this throughout their lives, even as they learn other languages at school,” concludes Bloch.

And, for those wanting to access children’s stories and other literacy materials in a range of SA languages, they need not look further than the Nal’ibali reading-for-enjoyment supplement. Issued each week during term time, the supplement is the only fully bilingual resource of its kind offering children’s stories, literacy activities as well as reading tips and support in four different language combinations. These resources are also freely available from the Nal’ibali web- and mobisites: www.nalibali.org and www.nalibali.mobi

To watch the special Nal’ibali International Mother Tongue Day PSA, go to: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V-c8gXPZEPk>

The Nal’ibali reading-for-enjoyment supplement is available in the following newspapers:

KwaZulu-Natal: *Sunday World* (English and isiZulu) on Sundays

Gauteng: *Sunday World* (English and isiZulu) on Sundays

Free State: *Sunday World* (English and Sesotho) on Sundays

Western Cape: *Sunday Times Express* (English and isiXhosa) on Sundays

Eastern Cape: *The Daily Dispatch* on Tuesday and *The Herald* on Thursdays (English and isiXhosa)

PEN SA collaborated with Nal’ibali on translation projects in 2013 and 2014 and continues to partner with Nal’ibali.

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Petition re. Jenny Crwys-Williams’ Book Show



As many of you know, Jenny's Book Show has been reduced to 16-17 minutes on a Wednesday afternoon and 15 minutes on a Saturday morning in between adverts, the news and sport.

Please consider supporting - and signing - this petition to help get Jenny's full Book Show back on air where it belongs!

We would be delighted if you could circulate and/or share the petition on Facebook, Twitter and via Email with all your friends and colleagues so we can gain as many supporters as possible and help change 702's mind about this brilliant show which brings the joy of books, authors and reading to so many people.

Reinstate a 1-2 hour Book Show hosted by Jenny Crwys-Williams
Joanne Macgregor Johannesburg, South Africa

The Radio 702 Book Show, hosted by Jenny Crwys-Williams, has been a firm favourite with those who love books, reading and writing on Radio 702 for years. Jenny brought her passion for books, her knowledge of authors and the literary scene, her personal experience of writing, and her own inimitable style to our favourite hour or two of the week every Wednesday afternoon.

I would like to petition Radio 702 to reinstate the full Book Show, hosted by Jenny Crwys-Williams herself.

To read the full petition and sign it, please [CLICK HERE](#)

Thank you! We'll keep you updated!

IN THE MEDIA

702 TALK RADIO

Jenny Crwys-Williams

Go to <https://www.change.org/p/702-talk-radio-johannesburg-south-africa-reinstate-a-1-2-hour-book-show-hosted-by-jenny-crwys-williams> to sign the petition.

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Celebrate World Read Aloud Day – 4th March 2015



Children at Dalubuhle Primary School in Franschhoek in the Western Cape enjoying a read aloud session with one of the Nal'ibali staff members

(Cape Town, 17th February 2015) Nal'ibali, the national reading-for-enjoyment campaign, is calling on all South Africans to join them in celebrating one of the most important dates in the literacy calendar, World Read Aloud Day, on Wednesday, 4th March. Raising awareness of the importance of reading aloud for children's literacy development, and attempting to break its read-aloud record from 2014, the campaign is asking adults across the country to read aloud the same story on the same day to the children in their lives. Each year, Nal'ibali commissions a new story to share on this day, and makes it available in all 11 official languages. This year's story has been written by one of South Africa's best-loved storytellers, Gcina Mhlophe.

"Last year, through a huge and wonderful collaboration between many partners – librarians, teachers, parents and NGO's, just under 48 000 children were read aloud to. This year we hope to break that record and share another day of reading and story with even more children and adults," comments Carole Bloch, director of PRAESA (The Project for the Study of

Alternative Education in South Africa), which is driving the Nal'ibali campaign together with partners.

"Listening to a well read story, nourishes our minds by stimulating thoughts and ideas, and stimulating language," continues Bloch. "It is also a great motivating force for children to feel the power of story and to want to learn to read," she explains.

"And, it's so important to share stories with children in their home languages because access to mother tongue literacy materials offers children the solid base from which to learn a second language, and other school subjects," adds Smangele Mathebula, Nal'ibali Campaign Driver.

This year's special World Read Aloud Day story, *Sisanda's Gift*, will be issued in all 11 official South African languages and will be freely available for download (as a print or audio story) in any of these languages via the Nal'ibali website, mobisite and Mxit app from the end of February. Those participating will also be able to sign up on these platforms to share how many children they will be reading to.

The story, together with additional information and activities, will also appear in a special edition of the campaign's weekly reading-for-enjoyment supplement. Produced in partnership with *Times Media*, the Nal'ibali supplement is the only bilingual literacy resource of its kind, offering literacy tips, stories and reading activities in English, isiXhosa, isiZulu, Sesotho and Afrikaans. Broadcast partner, SABC Education, will also ensure that the story is read aloud on air in all official languages.

Further assisting the campaign to reach as many children as possible, the following partners have already signed up to help put the story in the hands of even more caregivers:

Corporate partners, South African Airways and Ackermans, will be distributing the story to their staff nationwide, reaching a collective of more than 17 000 staff members. For those who sign up to read the story via the Nal'ibali web- and mobisites, SAA has also donated a prize of two domestic airfare tickets for one lucky winner.

The Free State, Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal arms of the Department of Basic Education will be ensuring the story is read aloud at schools in their respective provinces and access to relevant materials will be made available to all provincial departments.

The Family Literacy Project will be sharing the story with its KwaZulu-Natal based family literacy groups, while The Bookery, University of Cape Town's Schools Improvement Initiative, Rotary District 9350 and False Bay College will be promoting and hosting read aloud sessions in the greater Western Cape. Sikhula

Sonke, a community-based organisation addressing the need for quality early childhood development, and Harare Library, have also pledged to promote the event in Khayelitsha.

Fellow literacy organisation, The Shine Centre, as well the National Professional Teacher's Organisation of South Africa (NAPTOSA) will also be distributing the story via their networks of teachers and volunteers. And, online, LIASA and the SA Booksellers Association will be promoting the day through their digital platforms and, FunDza will be offering the story to users via its mobile Mxit app. Global NGO, WorldReader, has committed to sharing it with its audiences in parts of the world that primarily have access to only low-end phones.

Finally, Nal'ibali Literacy Mentors will be hosting read-aloud sessions with members of the campaign's network of over 300 reading clubs. And, giving her own special reading, Mhlophe will be visiting the Mbuyisa Makhubu Primary School Nal'ibali Reading Club and reading aloud to over 400 children at the school in Orlando West, Soweto.

"For me, the most important thing is for children to feel loved in many different ways and sharing a story with them is a beautiful way of showing that you care. Of course the secret is that reading for pleasure isn't just fun for children, it feels tremendously good for us adults too!" shared Mhlophe.

To sign-up, download, or to print out Nal'ibali's special World Read Aloud Day story for yourself, your school, crèche, staff or others in your area, visit www.nalibali.org, www.nalibali.mobi or email info@nalibali.org.

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Forthcoming events

- ❖ Film Premier – *To Light A Candle* – 27th February 2015. Johannesburg & Cape Town
- ❖ André Brink – Public Memorial – 2nd March 2015, Cape Town,
- ❖ Dubai Festival of Literature – 3rd to 7th March 2015. www.eaifl.com
- ❖ World Read Aloud Day – 4th March 2015
- ❖ Woordfees – 6th to 15th March 2015, Stellenbosch. www.sun.ac.za/afrikaans/woordfees/
- ❖ ACT | UJ Arts & Culture Conference - 8th to 10th March 2015, Johannesburg. www.creativeconference.co.za
- ❖ South African Library Week – 14th to 21st March 2015 – <http://www.liasa.org.za/node/1425>
- ❖ Time of the Writer International Writers Festival – 16th to 21st March 2015, Durban. www.cca.ukzn.ac.za
- ❖ Knysna Literary Festival – 18th to 22nd March 2015. www.knysnaliteraryfestival.co.za
- ❖ Indie Book Fair – 20th & 21st March 2015, Sunnyside Park Hotel, Johannesburg. <http://www.tametimes.co.za/228822/news-details/the-indie-book-fair-comes-to-johannesburg>
- ❖ Paris Book Fair - 20th to 23rd March 2015, Paris, France. <http://www.salondulivrepairs.com/GB.htm>
- ❖ World Poetry Day – 21st March 2015

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Had a book published recently? Attended or participated in a Festival? Won an award? Achieved a personal milestone of note? The compiler would welcome any news of your activities for future issues of the PEN SA e-newsletter. Please e-mail your contributions to rudebs@icon.co.za.

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All information regarding awards/competitions, residencies, festivals, etc., included in this newsletter is passed on to you as a service to PEN SA members. Any questions regarding entry rules, entry processes, festival programmes, etc., should be forwarded direct to the relevant organisers. PEN SA attempts to establish that the information received is genuine before passing this on to our members, but we cannot be held responsible should that not be the case.



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Please note that PEN SA Newsletters are available to members and to the public on the PEN SA website at <http://www.sapen.co.za/newsletter-archive>