

To: SA PEN Members
E-Newsletter No. 5/2014 – 13/04/2014



THE SOUTH AFRICAN CENTRE OF
PEN INTERNATIONAL
A World Association of Writers

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Publications received

SA PEN has received the following publications. Should you wish to read any of them please contact Deborah on rudebs@icon.co.za

- *Carapace* 99, February 2014
- *North Korean Writers in Exile PEN Literature*, 2014, 1 Feb

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SA PEN Event

The Book Lounge, Cape Town, Tuesday, 15th April, 5.30 for 6.00 p.m.
Sexuality and the Law: A Debate on Cultural Politics in Africa
with South African PEN

South African PEN, Open Book and the Book Lounge have a long history together and are delighted to be extending their collaborative events outside of the five day Open Book Festival and into the rest of the year.

The first of these events, *Sexuality and the Law: A Debate on Cultural Politics in Africa*, will be taking place at the Book Lounge on the 15th April.

Over the last year and specifically the last few months, several states in Africa have passed new laws harshly penalising sexual minorities. Uganda's criminalisation of homosexuality has earned worldwide attention, as has Nigeria's recent legislation against LGBTI persons. The scope of these laws is extensive, reaching into the living rooms and bedrooms of individuals, prohibiting association and sex acts. More recently, officials in the Congo are considering similar legislation, and a member of parliament in Kenya declared homosexuality as dangerous as terrorism. Closer to home, LGBTI people in South Africa continue to face violence of all kinds, even though the country has legal protections built into the Constitution, marking its importance as a nation on the continent and in the world.

In light of this new wave of legislation and persecution, **South African PEN** will hold a conversation between **Professor Pierre de Vos**, the Claude Leon Foundation Chair in Constitutional Governance at the University of Cape Town and a well-known writer for the '*Daily Maverick*', and **Professor Desiree Lewis**, the Head of Department of Women and Gender Studies at University of Western Cape and feminist activist. **Dr. Derrick Higginbotham** (UCT, English Department), who teaches queer theory and LGBTI literature, will chair this discussion that will explore sexuality minorities, human rights, religion, and the law in Africa.

RSVP to booklounge@gmail.com or tel: (021) 462-2425.

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Book Launch - *Thoughts in a Makeshift Mortuary* by Jenny Hobbs, Wednesday, 16th April, 6.00 for 6.30 p.m. at The Book Lounge, Cape Town

Thoughts in a Makeshift Mortuary, Jenny Hobbs's rich, powerful first novel, now happily back in print, is a story about ordinary living in extraordinary times and a moving tribute to those who worked to raise a South Africa driven to its knees. Jenny will be in conversation with Cape Talk's John Maytham.

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Walking the Tight Rope: An African LGBTI Anthology. Call for submissions

Writers who identify as gay, lesbian, queer, bisexual, or transgender, living in Africa and first or second generation Africans living in the Diaspora (i.e. if you are African or one of your parents is African) are encouraged to submit their prose work of no more than 600 words for consideration.

For more information, please visit <http://lgbtafricapoetryanthology.wordpress.com/>, or email Abayomi Animashaun at abayo.animashaun@gmail.com. **The deadline for submissions is 15th April 2014.**

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Imagining Equality, Your Voices on Women’s Human Rights, An Online Media Project

What are women’s human rights? Are all women given the same rights? Are men and women equal yet? What are your hopes for the world’s women and girls in the decade ahead?

Imagining Equality will showcase the diverse experiences and creative ideas of women from around the world. Submitting your work provides the opportunity to share your creativity with our global audience of over 50 000 monthly visitors. Submitted work will be reviewed by our curatorial team, and selected submissions will be curated for inclusion in the online exhibition launching in June 2014. We invite you to share your stories and creativity!

Go to <http://imaginingequality.imow.org> for further information or email team@imow.org. Submit your short stories, poetry, creative essays, original articles, essays or non-fiction writing of 300 to 1 500 words before the **30th April 2014**.

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Congratulations to Tan Twan Eng on his novel, *The Garden of Evening Mists* being shortlisted for the **2014 International IMPAC DUBLIN Literary Award**, managed by Dublin City Libraries. Ten novels have been shortlisted for the €100 000 prize. 110 library systems in 39 countries worldwide participated in nominating books for the 2014 award with the shortlisted novels being nominated by public libraries in Australia, Croatia, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Mexico, Norway, South Africa and The Netherlands. The winner will be announced on the 12th June.



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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 SA PEN e-newsletter. Please e-mail your contributions to rudebs@icon.co.za.

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Chipping Campden Literature Festival, England, 6th to 11th May 2014

SA PEN members Tim Butcher and A.E. Ballakisten will be participating in this festival on the 8th May 2014. Peter Hain will be reading poetry by member Patricia Schonstein.

Chipping Campden Literature Festival

South African Pen
War & Civil Conflict in Africa

explored through poetry and prose



Ad & Wal
Patricia Schonstein

Peter Hain MP
presents Patricia Schonstein's latest anthology of poems, and discusses Ad & Wal, his book about his white South African parents, jailed for trying to protect anti-apartheid activists

Tim Butcher
relates his overland journeys through the heart of Africa, one following Graham Greene's trail recounted in *Journey without Maps* (1936)



TALKING TO A TREE
AE Ballakisten

AE Ballakisten
reads from his latest poetry collection



Blood River
A Journey to Africa's Broken Heart

Chasing the Devil
On Foot through Africa's Killing Fields

Box Office
Tickets available from the Box Office, 2nd Floor, Old Police Station, Chipping Campden, GL55 6HB, when the A Board displays OPEN

By Post
Fill in the form at the back of the programme, or download one from the website below, and post it with cheque and SAE to Vicky Bennett at the above address

www.campdenlitfest.co.uk



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Charles Martin Hallé

It is with sadness that SA PEN heard of the recent passing of member Charles Martin Hallé, author of *The Whore of Babylon* and *Charles Hallé: The musical and social life of a Victorian superstar*, written about his great grandfather, founder of the Hallé Orchestra.

Our condolences to his wife, Ann, and to his children.

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Mondays at St. Clements - Short Story Competition 2014

In celebration of the shortest day of the year which falls on 21st June in 2014, Mondays at St. Clements is celebrating National Short Story Day an initiative aimed at promoting fiction in its succinct form, focusing on South African writing that lends itself to this tradition. Our past short-story competitions attracted over 100 submissions each year. This year's competition guidelines are:

- length: 100 words (excluding title). Stories of more or less than 100 words will be disqualified
- entries by email to kwasukal@mweb.co.za
- state author's name and wordcount
- use large font: e.g. Times New Roman, 14 pt.
- author of winning story will receive a presentation box of wine or electric coffee percolator.
- author's names will be deleted for adjudication
- no more than 7 submissions per person will be considered
- stories submitted for previous competitions will not be considered
- **closing date: Monday, 2nd June 2014**
- the top ten stories will be published in *le petit déjeuner 4*, comprising a selection of 50 short stories
- all stories will be read at St. Clements on the two Mondays following the presentation.

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India by Karen Jennings

In 2012 I was informed that I had been awarded a three-month writer's residency at Sangam House, near Bangalore, India. I had been awarded the residency by the M Restaurant Group who sponsor two writing residencies a year – one in India and one in China. All expenses were paid and, therefore, as a young and impoverished writer, I was given the opportunity to write for three solid months in the beautiful rural setting of southern India without anything to worry me. We ate delicious food that was prepared for us by local chefs using vegetables grown on the grounds of Nrityagram – a dance village that hosts Sangam House writers each year for several months. I spent November and December of 2012, as well as January of 2013 there meeting various

writers and members of the Indian writing and publishing communities. During my three months I was able to write a rough draft of a book.

Some months after my return to South Africa, I was offered the opportunity as a Sangam House alumnus to apply for a month long residency at the Chennai Mathematical Institute – this residency I was lucky enough to be awarded. The Institute is hoping to expand and add a Humanities section in the next few years. Currently they have one creative writing class – an elective comprised of three young students. I worked with these three students on some writing exercises and was also given the opportunity to give several talks to the faculty and students. Chennai, a crowded and busy city was

very different to the quiet countryside around Nriyagaram, but it presented me with new experiences and ideas. I came away from India with a manuscript very nearly completed. I hope to see the manuscript published next year.



Karen at the Sangam House residency at Nriyagram, comforting Guru who had been frightened by Diwali firework celebrations.

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Sign PEN's petition for greater freedom of expression in Turkey

We, the signatories named below, are writers from around the world who love, live and breathe words. We are united in our belief that freedom of expression is a universal and fundamental human right. We hereby express our grave concern with regard to “the freedom of words” in Turkey today.

As human beings we connect both within and across borders through words, written and spoken. A free exchange of ideas is essential for democracy, as well as for creativity, empathy and tolerance. As shown in a recent PEN report on last year’s protests, Turkey has a wide range of free expression issues, from criminal defamation to self-censorship within the mainstream media and from police violence against journalists to a narrowing sphere for freedom of expression on the internet.

Turkey ranks 154th among 180 countries on the World Press Freedom Index. To this day, translators, editors, publishers, poets and writers face criminal proceedings and even imprisonment for legitimate expression under a variety of legislative fetters, such as the country’s draconian Anti-Terror Law, the Law on Meetings and Demonstrations and the Turkish Penal Code’s articles criminalising defamation (Art.125), religious defamation (Art.216), obscenity (Art.226), insulting the Turkish people, state or its organs (Art.301) and promoting conscientious objection to military service (Art.318).

The blanket ban on Twitter and YouTube comes in the aftermath of a regressive new internet law, and is an unacceptable violation of the right to freedom of speech. Turkey should be proud to be home to Europe’s youngest internet audience with over 36 million internet users, placing it among the most globally connected countries in the Muslim world. By connecting people from a range of backgrounds and making it possible for them to express their thoughts, the internet is a valuable network that supports and strengthens democracy.

Twitter and YouTube are vehicles of expression that give a voice to each and every user, regardless of class, religion, ethnicity or political stature. There are more than 12 million Turkey-based Twitter users, which shows the vibrancy of civil society. Turkey is a state party to the European Convention on Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, both of which protect the right to legitimate freedom of expression.

We welcome the administrative court in Ankara's decision to suspend the ban on Twitter ahead of a full judgment and urge the telecommunications authority to restore access immediately.

Among our signatories there are writers from Turkey and across the world. As fellow human beings sharing the same planet, we care about one another's problems and we know that we are all interconnected.

Turkey is a country where Western democratic values, secularism and Islamic culture come together. It is not surrounded by enemies. It is not an isolated or inward-looking country. It is part of an international community. Our plea to Turkey's leaders is not to retreat from democracy and its keystone, freedom of speech; but rather to recognize their obligations under international treaties and to lift the block on Twitter and YouTube with immediate effect. We urge them to remember that this beautiful country will be stronger and happier when, and if, it appreciates pluralism, diversity and the freedom of words.

Héctor Abad Faciolince, Boris Akunin, Svetlana Alexievich, Hanan al-Shaykh, Ahmet Altan, Mehmet Altan, Meltem Arikan, Jirō Asada, Margaret Atwood, Oya Baydar, Marian Botsford Fraser (PEN International's Writers in Prison Committee), Martín Caparrós, Fethiye Çetin, Paulo Coelho, Can Dündar, Kerstin Ekman, Peter Englund (Permanent Secretary of the Swedish Academy), Álvaro Enrigue, Moris Farhi, Maureen Freely (President of English PEN), Maggie Gee, Kaya Genç, Graeme Gibson, Francisco Goldman, Günter Grass (Nobel laureate), Tarık Günersel (President of Turkish PEN), Josef Haslinger (President of German PEN), Eva Hoffman, Elfriede Jelinek (Nobel laureate), AL Kennedy, Abbas Khider, Karl Ove Knausgård, Hari Kunzru, Valeria Luiselli, Alain Mabanckou, Perihan Mağden, Alberto Manguel, Ángeles Mastretta, Bejan Matur, Murat Menteş, Pankaj Mishra, Blake Morrison, Neel Mukherjee, Sofi Oksanen, Michael Ondaatje, Orhan Pamuk (Nobel laureate), John Ralston Saul (President of PEN International), Sergio Ramírez, Salman Rushdie, Elif Şafak, Eugene Schoulgin (Vice-President, PEN International), Kamila Shamsie, Mikhail Shishkin, Sjón (President of Icelandic PEN), Zadie Smith, Ahdaf Soueif, Hori Takeaki (International Secretary, PEN International), Janne Teller, Ece Temelkuran, Olga Tokarczuk, Tatyana Tolstaya, Jarkko Tontti (International Treasurer, PEN International), Ayfer Tunç, Dubravka Ugresic, Lyudmila Ulitskaya, Günter Wallraff, Per Wästberg (President of the Nobel Committee for Literature), Sarah Waters, Hyam Yared (President of PEN Lebanon), Samar Yazbek, Adam Zagajewski

Leading writers from Turkey and around the world have joined PEN, the international association of writers, to call on the Turkish authorities to respect freedom of expression as a universal and fundamental human right, and to create an environment in which all citizens are able to express themselves freely without fear of censorship or punishment.

PEN members and supporters across the globe are invited to add their voices.
Go to https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1ph-BEiLhd4ZiUsyDgoH_FESY78m3yoBCsAH6jRHf2UY/viewform

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2014 Golden Baobab Prizes – Call for submissions

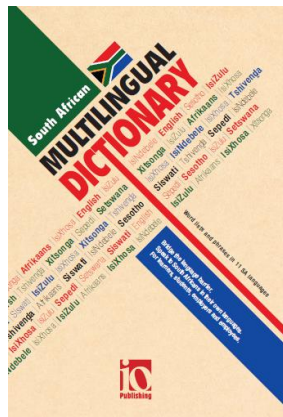
The 2014 Golden Baobab Prizes have been launched and are calling for submissions. The prizes are open to African citizens below the age of 18 and are:

- The \$2 500 Golden Baobab Prize for Rising Writers
- The \$2 500 Golden Baobab Prize for Rising Illustrators

Go to <http://www.goldenbaobab.org/prizes/rules-regulations> or contact the prize coordinator, Nanama B. Acheampong, at info@goldenbaobab.org for further information. **The deadline for submissions is 29th June 2014.**

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South African Multilingual Dictionary



IO Publishing has developed a dictionary which includes all 11 South African languages. The book has an alphabetical, tabulated list of English words with clarification(s), translated into the other 10 languages. There is also a basic phrases section and a language specified index for easy reference.

Go to www.iopublish.co.za or contact Hellen at hellen@iopublishing.co.za for further information.

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Forthcoming events

- ❖ **International Press Institute's 63rd World Congress and General Assembly** – 12th to 15th April 2014, Cape Town. www.ipiworldcongress.com/2014/
- ❖ **World Book Day** – 23rd April 2014
- ❖ **World Press Freedom Day** – 3rd May 2014
- ❖ **Chipping Campden Literature Festival** – 6th to 11th May 2014. www.campdenlitfest.co.uk
- ❖ **The dancing in other words Spier Poetry Festival** – 9th & 10th May 2014. Stellenbosch. www.spierpoetryfestival.co.za
- ❖ **Franschhoek Literary Festival** – 16th to 18th May 2014. www.flf.co.za
- ❖ **South African Book Fair (formerly the Cape Town Book Fair)** – 13th to 15th June 2014, Cape Town. www.capetownbookfair.co.za
- ❖ **National Short Story Day** - 21st June 2014. www.shortstorydayafrica.org

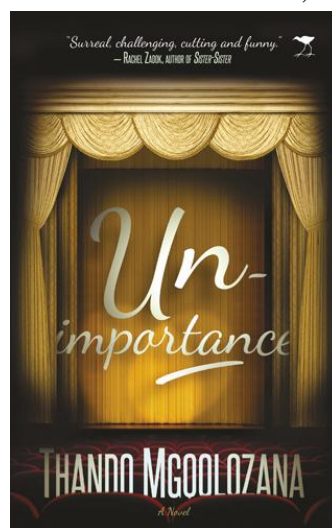
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Members' Publications

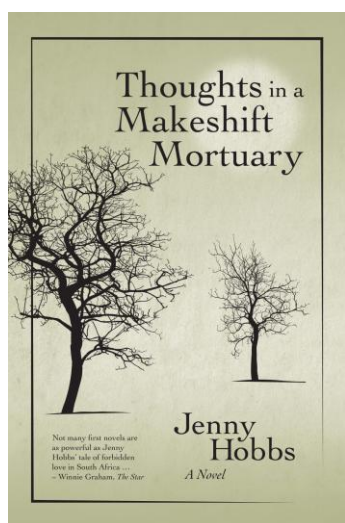
Unimportance by Thando Mqolozana

Unimportance is the gripping account of 12 anxiety-stricken hours in the life of Zizi, a university student and candidate in the upcoming SRC presidential election, and his struggle to balance his pristine public image with his darker private life.

On the morning of the presidential manifesto presentations Zizi delivers a speech no one could have expected and makes an extraordinary confession. As Zizi's words fade, and a sense of shock lingers in the air, he is faced with the reality of his actions. As the students realise that they may vote a highly flawed man into office how will they respond? What will it mean, either way? In *Unimportance*, the university is successfully displayed as a microcosm of society as Mqolozana yet again delivers to the reader a story written in his unconventional style.



Thoughts in a Makeshift Mortuary by Jenny Hobbs



1985. In a mountain village in Lesotho, a father rages as a mother weeps. Shot dead: their only daughter Rose, a teacher, and her husband Jake, an activist and poet. South Africa's laws forced them into exile, while hooded gunmen took their lives. Amid the sorrow and commotion of funeral preparations, Rose and her parents' evolving understanding of their turbulent country and of each other unfolds, always intimately connected with the lives of the women who worked for them. But all has not been lost: there was a survivor of the shooting. Hope.

Thoughts in a Makeshift Mortuary was first published in 1989. This is a new edition after 25 years.

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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 SA PEN members. Any questions regarding entry rules, entry processes, festival programmes, etc., should be forwarded direct to the relevant organisers. SA PEN 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.



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