



SOUTH AFRICA

THE SOUTH AFRICAN CENTRE OF PEN INTERNATIONAL

A World Association of Writers

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To: SA PEN Members

E-Newsletter No. 16/2014 – 06/11/2014

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SA PEN PRESS RELEASE, 04/11/14

Mandla Langa new Executive VP of PEN South Africa

We are delighted to announce that Mandla Langa is now Executive Vice President of PEN South Africa, having served as a board member since June 2011.

Langa is a distinguished novelist. He was born in Durban and educated at the University of Fort Hare. He went into exile in 1976 and his first novel, *The Tenderness of Blood*, was published in 1987. *The Lost Colours of the Chameleon*, won the 2009 Commonwealth Writers Prize (Best Book in Africa). His most recent novel is *The Textures of Shadows*, a riveting account of the bloody birth of the new South Africa.

In 2007, Langa received South Africa's National Order of Ikhamanga (Silver) for literary, journalistic and cultural achievements, the citation specifying his "excellent contribution to the struggle against apartheid, achievements in the field of literature

and journalism and contributing to post-apartheid South Africa through serving in different institutions"

PEN South Africa is honoured to have so fine writer with a lifelong commitment to freedom of expression and human rights in an executive position.

Mandla steps into Margie Orford's shoes following Orford's recent appointment as President of PEN South Africa. Mandla says: "I am humbled by the appointment as Executive Vice-President of PEN South Africa. I hope to avail myself for service and thank our President, Margie Orford for showing trust in me."

Margie Orford
President, PEN South Africa



***Mandla Langa & Margie Orford, PEN Dialogue, Open Book Festival, September 2014
Note the PEN "empty chair" on the right – representative of those authors imprisoned,
etc., and unable to attend PEN events.***

Photo courtesy of Liesl Jobson

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Forthcoming events

- ❖ **International African Writers' Day** - 7th November 2014.
- ❖ **Prins Albert Leesfees** - 7th to 9th November 2014.
www.princealbert.org.za/forthcoming/leesfees-2014/leesfees-programme-2014/
- ❖ **Aldeburgh Poetry Festival** – 7th to 9th November 2014, UK.
www.thepoetrytrust.org/festival/programme/
- ❖ **PEN International Day of the Imprisoned Writer** – 15th November 2014
- ❖ **International Day To End Impunity For Crimes Against Journalists** – 23rd November 2014. www.daytoendimpunity.org

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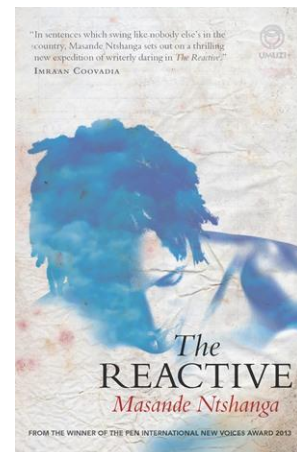
Book Launch: *The Reactive* by Masande Ntshanga, 7th November, Cape Town

In a city that has lost its shimmer, Lindanathi and his two friends Ruan and Cecelia sell illegal pharmaceuticals while chasing their next high. Lindanathi, deeply troubled by his hand in his brother's death, has turned his back on his family, until a message from home reminds him of a promise he made years before. When a puzzling masked man enters their lives, Lindanathi is faced with a decision: does he continue his life in Cape Town, or return to his family and to all he has left behind?

Rendered in lyrical, bright prose and set in a not-so-new South Africa, *The Reactive* is a poignant, life-affirming story about secrets, memory, chemical abuse and family, and the redemption that comes from facing what haunts us most.

Masande will be in conversation with **Imraan Coovadia**. Masande Ntshanga is the winner of the inaugural, 2013 PEN International New Voices Award.

Place : The Book Lounge - 71 Roeland Street - Cape Town
Date : Friday, 7th December 2014
Time : 17.30 for 18.00
RSVP to (021) 462 2425 / booklounge@gmail.com



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PEN International Congress in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, September 2014
By Margie Orford



The PEN International Congress was as busy as always. This is the fifth Congress I have attended and the continuity has been most productive in terms of PEN South Africa's profile, the networking opportunities and the valuable friendships – organizational and personal – that I have been able to build since my first Congress in 2010 in Tokyo.

Bishkek is in Kyrgyzstan, not an easy country to get to and not a country without profound political challenges to freedom of expression. It was, however, fascinating to see a post-Soviet state and to get to understand the challenges they have faced in establishing a democracy and now, in the current era, dealing with an expansionist Russia led by Putin. PEN International undertook a detailed assessment of the situation in Kyrgyzstan. This is available online and is well worth reading. All things considered, it was a worthwhile holding a congress in a place that is beset by political challenges and I must congratulate Central Asian PEN, and particularly their wonderful president Dalmira Tilepbergenova.

WRITERS IN PRISON COMMITTEE

I attended the Writers in Prison Committee meeting, which took place on the day before the Congress began. The resolutions to be presented to the Congress Assembly were finalized. South Africa had proposed a resolution on criminal defamation and insult laws as these are the laws, increasingly, that are used to harass and detain and prosecute writers across Africa and in many other parts of the world. This resolution was passed unanimously at Congress and is now being used to further PEN International's work. (To read the resolution go to: <http://www.pen-international.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/19.-RESOLUTION-on-Criminal-Defamation-and-Insult-Laws.pdf>). There is, unfortunately, a South African case too – we have this legislation on our statute books – and this is something that PEN South Africa will need to focus on in the future. The point is to get such legislation removed and, failing that, to ensure that South African writers and journalists are not prosecuted under these restrictive and retrogressive laws.

I was part of a very interesting panel discussion – and I must thank Raymond Louw for his input and guidance for this – on Criminal Defamation that informed the debate. Dunja Mijatovic, the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, chaired it and other participants included Masha Gessen, the Russian journalist and author who has been hounded out of Russia because of her writing. It was fascinating to see how governments all over the world are using criminal defamation and insult laws to curtail freedom of expression.

Another important focus of the Congress was the wave of homophobic legislation that has been passed in Russia and in a number of African countries. A resolution on LGBTI rights was discussed and passed by Congress. This document will be of great assistance in the work we have in the future. There have been an alarming number of cases of writers who address LGBTI issues being persecuted and jailed.

Very few African centres could attend the Congress in Bishkek. Those from West Africa were refused visas because of the Ebola crisis – as were a number of other African centres who are wholly unaffected by this. It was a real loss not to have them there, as an opportunity to consolidate the growing Pen Africa Network was lost. There will, however, be a meeting of six African PEN Centres in Johannesburg in the first week of December. WITS School of Journalism and PEN South Africa will be hosting them along with PEN International. There will be a large meeting – about twenty centres – in 2015. This meeting will also take place at Wits and will give PEN South Africa a great opportunity for connecting with writers and activists from PEN Centres across the continent.

A great deal of time was focused on the increasing numbers of countries being drawn into Russia's orbit because of Putin's expansionist ambitions. It was a rather sobering experience to hear from people who live on the periphery of what looks like increasingly aggressive rumblings of a greater Russia.

Several new centres were accepted – I was particularly pleased to see that PEN Liberia and PEN Eritrea joined the larger family of PEN International.

After the Congress I attended my first PEN International Board meeting. It was a couple of days of intense discussion about the how the organization is going to take on the challenges of the next few years – political, literary and financial. It was wonderful to meet the new Director, Carles Torner. PEN is in good, experienced and steady hands and the future of funding is encouraging.

Thank you for enabling me to go. I do hope that next year there will be another South African delegate too.



Russian-American journalist and writer Masha Gessen, Chair of the Writers in Prison Committee, Marian Botsford Fraser, OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, Dunja Mijatović, President of PEN South Africa, Margie Orford and Executive Director of English PEN Jo Glanville, discussing criminal defamation at the 80th PEN International Congress in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. - See more at: <http://www.pen-international.org/09/2014/the-80th-pen-international-congress-bishkek-kyrgyzstan/#sthash.sVTFGpIb.dpuf>
Photo courtesy of PEN International

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Book Launch - Books That Matter - David Philip Publishers during the apartheid years, by Marie Philip, 9th December 2014, Cape Town

New Africa Books and The Book Lounge invite you attend the launch of Marie's new publication. This is an anecdotal account -- a memoir -- of the lows and highs of a small, cheerful, underfunded but vibrant 'oppositional' publishing company, David Philip Publishers, from the year 1971 through to the birth of the new South Africa.

Place : The Book Lounge - 71 Roeland Street - Cape Town

Date : 9th December 2014

Time :17.30 for 18.00

RSVP to (021) 462 2425 / booklounge@gmail.com

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PEN International: Governments worldwide flout their obligation to protect journalists from harm

London, 30th October 2014

Many governments around the world are failing in their obligation to protect journalists from harm, PEN International said today, ahead of the first **International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists** which falls on 2nd November.

PEN has recorded 35 killings of journalists and writers since 2nd November last year. The worldwide association of writers, which monitors freedom of expression violations on its annual Case List, is asking PEN members to remember their fallen colleagues over 21 days in November.

‘There is no justification for rampant impunity,’ said Marian Botsford Fraser, Chair of PEN International’s Writers in Prison Committee.

‘Impunity imbeds sustained tragedy and loss in a society. Impunity instils an atmosphere of fear and ensures that truth is suppressed.’

2nd November is also the Day of the Dead in many Latin American countries where impunity for attacks on journalists is a major concern; 23rd November is the International Day to End Impunity, organised by IFEX, the International Freedom of Expression Exchange, of which PEN International is a founding member.

“In recent years PEN has been campaigning incessantly for an end to impunity for murders and other violent attacks, particularly in Mexico and Honduras,” said Botsford Fraser.

‘Now that the international community has recognized the importance of addressing the problem, through the creation of a day, as well as the UNESCO Action Plan for the Safety of Journalists, we hope that governments in affected countries will shoulder their responsibilities to investigate journalists’ murders and prosecute their killers in line with their obligations to do so.’

This year, PEN is calling on its members to take action in two cases:

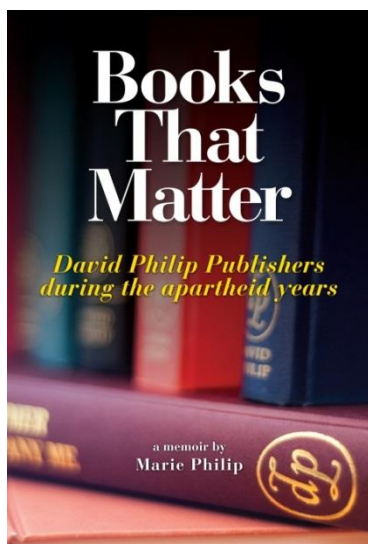
- Prageeth Ekanaliyagoda, a political analyst, journalist and visual designer for the Lanka eNews who disappeared over four years ago on 24th January 2010, two days before a general election. He had previously been kidnapped by unidentified men and held blindfold overnight. His family has received no information as to his fate but fear that government forces may have abducted him.
- Juan Carlos Argeñal, owner of Christian station Vida Televisión and correspondent in Danlí for opposition station Globo TV, who was shot and killed by unidentified gunmen in his home in Danlí, Paraíso Department, on 7th December 2013. In the months before his murder, he had received threats,

including death threats, in connection with his reporting on corruption in a local hospital and in local government. Almost 11 months on, Argeñal's murder remains unsolved and, according to his brother, Mario Argeñal - who has been active in demanding justice for the killing and who has himself been threatened - there has been almost no progress in the investigation.

At its recent 80th international Congress in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, PEN's Assembly of Delegates passed resolutions condemning freedom of expression violations in a range of countries, including reference to violence against journalists and impunity in Honduras, Mexico, Iraq, Syria and Ukraine.

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Badalisha – now mobile enabled



Badilisha Poetry X-change

world's largest audio archive
of african poetry
now mobile enabled

9:04 AM
100% ■■■■■

Africa represents over 15% of the global population yet it only reflects 2% of what is published annually. What we have to say to ourselves and the rest of the world matters. To support the relevance of our perspective, Badilisha Poetry X-Change has now made the poetic voices of Africa accessible via smart and feature phones on www.badilishapoetry.com.

A project of the Africa Centre, Badilisha Poetry X-Change formed its distinctive online platform in 2012, and now hosts recordings of over 350 poets from 22 countries in Africa and the African diaspora. Badilisha represents the largest audio archive of African poets in the world, it also houses poet profiles, interviews and unpublished poetry in multiple African languages.

The website has been widely embraced internationally, but to make its content more accessible on the Continent making it mobile phone friendly was central. Mobile phones are at the forefront of an information revolution in Africa. They are inspiring fast-moving change in banking, retail, education, healthcare, agriculture and now enable the people of this Continent to hear their very own poetic voices on the go. Listen on your phone or any other device by going to www.badilishapoetry.com.

Badilisha will also be hosting a series of crowd-sourced poetry events on Twitter. Follow [@badilishapoetry](https://twitter.com/badilishapoetry) for more.

@badilishapoetry
 Badilisha Poetry X-Change

Members' Publications

Books that Matter - David Philip Publishers during the apartheid years, by Marie Philip

South Africa in the 1970s was a divided and increasingly traumatised country, seemingly permanently in the toils of apartheid, and with little space available for open discussion of apartheid policies or awareness of just what those policies were meaning in the lives of people.

It was in this context that David Philip, a South African already involved for several years in publishing, became convinced there must be more opportunity for books with informed discussion and debate to be written and published within the country. He persuaded his wife Marie, also with publishing experience, that they could together set up their own independent publishing company, to publish 'Books that matter for Southern Africa'-- in social history, politics, literature, or whatever, good of their kind and ready to challenge mainstream apartheid thinking.

This is an anecdotal account -- a memoir -- of the lows and highs of a small, cheerful, underfunded but vibrant 'oppositional' publishing company, David Philip Publishers, from the year 1971 through to the birth of the new South Africa.

About the Authors:

David and Marie Philip, South Africans of many generations, were both born and schooled in Cape Town. David, after a short spell in the army at the end of WWII, went on to Magdalen College, Oxford, in those heady post-war years of material shortages but amongst students of many different ages and backgrounds. He loved all of it – C S Lewis as his tutor in English, cricket on soft green fields, long summer evenings – but his plan and desire was always to get into publishing back in South Africa.

Marie (then Marie van Ryneveld) met him briefly during those years but her plan was different: she graduated from the University of Cape Town in an eclectic mixture of languages and Constitutional History and Law, maybe to do something vaguely diplomatic but above all to write and to travel, first to Paris. In the meantime she agreed to a temporary job as an assistant to David over Christmas in the small bookshop he was setting up in Cape Town for the Stationers, Galvin and Sales. From there each in turn found employment with the local branches of international publishers – Marie with Longmans Green, and David with the Oxford University Press.

They were married in 1953. By the time they retired in 1999 from David Philip Publishers, the company they had set up together in 1971, they had not only been living, working, and playing with words together for more than 40 years, but had jointly been in the book trade for nearly 100 years.

'David and Marie Philip started an independent publishing firm in South Africa during some of the darkest days of censorship. Their unintimidated aim was to publish good books. In spite of all odds, they have come of age as among not only the bravest but also the most highly regarded of our publishers. I am happy to be on their list.'
Nadine Gordimer, 1992

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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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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.



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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>