

To: SA PEN Members

E-Newsletter No. 18/2013 – 11/10/2013



**THE SOUTH AFRICAN CENTRE OF
PEN INTERNATIONAL**

A World Association of Writers

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SA PEN meets Ethiopian PEN – 6th November 2013, Johannesburg



SA PEN will be holding a reception on the evening of Wednesday, 6th November 2013, to welcome members of Ethiopian PEN to South Africa. More details to follow but please diarise in the meantime. All SA PEN members are invited to attend.

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SA PEN Press Release, 26th September 2013 – International Translation Day

On Monday, 30th September, PEN International will be celebrating International Translation Day. As a country endowed with eleven official languages, South Africa is well placed to appreciate the importance of translation in making texts written in one language accessible to other language groups in the country. Translation can contribute immeasurably to improving communication and understanding between our different language communities.

In 2011, the Translation and Linguistic Rights Committee of PEN International drew up the Girona Manifesto which formulated 10 guiding principles on linguistic rights. Among these is the declaration that “the translation of texts, especially the great works of various cultures, represents a very important element in the necessary process of greater understanding and respect among human beings.”

In South Africa, with its very low literacy rate, it is particularly important to focus on promoting literacy and a love of reading in the young. The following statement by Carole Bloch, Director of PRAESA (The Project for the Study of Alternative Education in South Africa) highlights this:

On International Translation Day we celebrate the invaluable role of children’s literature in bringing children together through story. What greater hope could we have for our youngest citizens than that they grow up marvelling at and wanting more of the treasury of stories from the vast patchwork of world culture, past and present? Stories that have travelled and crossed borders through translation allow us all to discover what it means to be human, in both unique and shared ways.”

In addition to translating existing stories from English, African languages and other world languages, PRAESA’s Nal’ibali National Reading for Enjoyment Campaign is engaged in creating stories in several languages and using them daily in reading clubs. Through this process, and especially by translating a variety of lively and interesting stories, a culture of reading can be encouraged. SA PEN supports PRAESA in its innovative Nal’ibali project which stimulates a love of reading and an appreciation of literature among the young and the adults they spend time with in their communities.

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PEN International celebrates International Translation Day

On International Translation Day, PEN International celebrates the work of translators around the world and calls for members to take action for the release of two Turkish translators held in pre-trial detention for nearly two years.

Translation and Linguistic Rights

30th September marks International Translation Day, celebrated each year on the feast of St Jerome, the Bible translator and patron saint of translators. Translation and translators play a fundamental role in PEN International’s mandate. PEN’s Girona

Manifesto specifically calls attention to the importance of translation in protecting and advancing linguistic rights:

8. The translation of texts, especially the great works of various cultures represents a very important element in the necessary process of greater understanding and respect among human beings.

As PEN's Translation and Linguistic Rights Committee Chair, Josep-Maria Terricabras Nogueras writes today, translation also plays a fundamental role in the advancement of understanding and peace. At this year's PEN International Congress in Iceland, the T&LRC passed five resolutions relating to translation and linguistic rights.

PEN Centres Celebrate

Today, PEN Centres around the world are celebrating International Translation Day. Belarusian PEN is holding a special joint event with the e-journal of translated literature, <http://www.prajdzisvet.org>. For the third year running, Belarusian PEN will today award the PrajdzisVet Prize for the best translated literary works of 2012. Meanwhile, PEN Langue d'Oc has published an e-book of translations by Occitan writers to celebrate. In London, English PEN is holding the International Translation Day symposium at the British Library where Ngugi Wa Thiong'o earlier today praised translation as "the factor with the single greatest impact on the history of ideas." English PEN member, Isabel del Rio, who is participating in the event explores translation in a blog to mark the day.

Take action

On International Translation Day, we also remember our translator colleagues who are persecuted for their work. Around the world, from conflict zones to courts, translators and interpreters are subjected to profound mistrust, discrimination and persecution for their translation work. This year, PEN International calls on you to take action on the case of writer, translator and activist Ayşe Berktaş and translator Deniz Zarakolu who remain in detention pending completion of their trial almost two years on from their arrest. To read more about their case, please go to <http://www.pen-international.org/newsitems/turkey-petition-to-free-writer-translator-and-activist-ayse-berktay/>

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Message from Translation and Linguistic Rights Committee Chair on International Translation Day, 30th September 2013

Dear PEN members,

The topic of translation gives me the opportunity to share with you some thoughts on peace. We often try to find some element or some characteristic that may define humans in an almost essential way. When we do such a thing, we usually say that humans are characterized, in front of the rest of the world, by being animals that work, or play, or smile, or create tools, etc. We may, of course, disagree on these various definitions, but we all agree in one important and specific point: humans are

the only known living beings which are able to speak, that are not just capable of producing noises or repeating sounds, as some other animals can do. After a relatively long practical learning, children are able to manage a language with almost endless possibilities, with an incredible creative power, but also with terrific capacities of offence and destruction.

Indeed, if there is any basic element to characterize human beings, language is that element. Language allows us not just to think but also to have memories, to have conscience and to get in touch with other human beings, to communicate with them. But the dream of a Babel Tower in which all would understand each other and, consequently, all would be understood, seems not just a dream but a fantasy.

Since the very beginning of humanity our ancestors spread out through the world. Hundreds and thousands of languages were created, new forms of communication were adopted. Indeed, humans are at once close and distant, very much near to each other but also very much apart from each other. Metaphorically speaking, humans didn't finish the Babel Tower precisely because there was an explosion of languages which is still in progress.

Therefore, we have to accept that the goal of understanding each other either is unachievable or can only be reached through translation. Translation implies to acquire a new proximity to others, to their culture, their way of thinking and acting. Translation means sharing not just words, but also those voices, things, habits and situations referred by the words used. Translation is never a merely external technique but an internal move towards new realities, new possibilities.

I am not saying that this move towards what is still unknown be always successful. Sometimes it is not. Unfortunately there are also bad translations, that is, there are among humans situations of trouble and misunderstanding, not just situations of agreement and peace. But at least we have to try communicating with others, we have to acquire the habit of translation. Moving towards others, sharing with others is always difficult and requires some effort, much courage.

Peace has no possibility at all without communication, without understanding, without translation of words and ideas. When we translate we cannot give peace a guarantee, but we are giving it, for sure, a chance.

Josep-Maria Terricabras
Chair of the Translation and Linguistic Rights Committee, PEN International

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Congratulations to our **M-Net Literary Award winners**:

- Imraan Coovadia for *The Institute for Taxi Poetry* (Umuzi) – English Category
- James Whyle for *The Book of War* (Jacana) – Debut Award



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Post Congress Letter from PEN International Secretary, Takeaki Hori, 4th October 2013

Dear PEN Centres,

The 79th Congress of PEN International in Reykjavík, Iceland took place from the 9th – 12th September 2013. We would like to congratulate Icelandic PEN for the tremendous success of the Congress and thank them for the warm hospitality they showed to PEN delegates. The partnerships developed between this year's hosting centre, PEN International, the Reykjavík International Literary Festival and Reykjavík UNESCO City of Literature created a unique literary feel to this year's Congress. We trust that all those Centres that attended had a positive experience. An online evaluation and feedback survey which will enable delegates to share their experiences with us will be sent to all delegates who attended Congress next week.

Please find enclosed:

1. Opening speech by John Ralston Saul, International President – see below.
2. List of general resolutions adopted by the Assembly of Delegates. (For a link to the full texts please visit: <http://www.pen-international.org/campaigns/how-to-campaign/>. A guidance document on how to use resolutions for Advocacy and Campaigning purposes will be sent to all Centres shortly. If your Centre has used a resolution in an effective way, please tell us about this so we can include this information. Information can be sent to jena.patel@pen-international.org

In addition to the Resolutions the following decisions were taken during the Reykjavík Assembly:

1. Hori Takeaki (Japanese PEN) was re-elected as the PEN International Secretary for a three-year term.
2. Jarkko Tontti (Finnish PEN) was elected as the PEN International Treasurer for a three-year term.
3. Anders Heger (Norwegian PEN) and Mohamed Sheriff (Sierra Leone PEN) were elected to the Board. Gil-Won Lee (Korean PEN) was re-elected to the Board. They are all elected for a three-year term. Haroon Siddiqui (Canadian PEN) and Philo Ikonya (Kenya PEN) came to the end of their time on the Board of PEN International. We would like to thank them both for the time they dedicated and the valued contributions they made to PEN International during their time as Board members.
4. Tone Persak, (Slovene PEN) was elected Chair of the PEN International Writers for Peace Committee for a three-year term.
5. 5. Two new Centres were elected as a member Centre of PEN International: Delhi PEN Centre and Myanmar PEN Centre.
6. The Cameroonian PEN Centre and the Israeli PEN Centre were declared dormant and the Greek PEN Centre was declared closed.
7. The Peace Committee Manifesto was approved by the Assembly of Delegates. This document will be circulated to Centres shortly.

The provisional date of the next Congress meeting is the 29th September 2014, which will be held in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, hosted by the Central Asian PEN Centre.

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More than 200 delegates from 70 Centres, joined together in Reykjavik to share ideas, discuss new campaigns and initiatives as well as highlight emerging issues and challenges to freedom of expression around the world. For an overview of events at congress got to <http://www.pen-international.org/newsitems/the-79th-pen-international-congress-reykjavik-iceland-an-overview/> . View the photos from congress at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/pen-international/> .

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79th PEN International Congress Reykjavik, Iceland, 9th to 12th September 2013 - Opening speech by PEN International President, John Ralston Saul, September 11th 2013

Someone is listening to us.

Of course, tonight, in this theatre, a thousand of you are listening. And that is a good thing for literature and for free expression.

But out there, beyond this room literally millions of people are being employed around the world to make nonsense of our concepts of the individual's right to have private conversations and private information.

We spent 200 years putting our rights as citizens in place. Free speech at the centre of them. Over the last dozen years we have allowed them to be gradually vaporized while we raise scarcely a complaint.

Over the last dozen years security has become the justification for more and more governments to undermine these rights, whether in democracies or dictatorships. And these governments all agree about priorities: secrecy. Surveillance. The amassing of information on citizens. The growth of legal tools which nullify the rules of transparent public justice. The trading of information on citizens by security forces to avoid national laws.

In some ways it is comic. Dark comedy. I will use American numbers because we have them, but I doubt that any other country could claim to be doing better. In 1989 Washington created 6 796 501 secrets. They have people who keep track. What could these secrets possibly be? The number of coffee cups? Taxi receipts? The menu for lunch in the Pentagon cafeteria. By 2009, 54 651 765 new secrets per year. Inflation would be a polite word. It is as if we are reading a fantasy novel in which Alice in Wonderland has developed a passionate relationship with Franz Kafka.

In China, thirty to fifty thousand people are employed as internet police. Why such a broad statistic? I suppose an accurate figure would be secret. A third of PEN International's cases are now related to the digital world.

These days, whenever we at PEN have delicate conversations by Skype or telephone, we welcome the crowd of listeners who will never be seen by us, but who we know are out there. We are not naïve!

What we are living through is a growing pattern of legalized infringements on free expression; of

governments using the letter, not the spirit of law; focusing on law, not justice. Perhaps most troubling, we see the invention of secret courts which allow governments to judge citizens outside of normal rights and procedures; without public transparency. A return to the habits of the middle ages. A return to Star Chamber Courts.

And all of this is done in the name of security.

So here we are, PEN International, the world's only global literary organization, with our tens of thousands of members in over one hundred countries, organized into 146 PEN Centres, with a remarkable experience defending free expression stretching back almost a century. Here we are, gearing ourselves up for yet another new chapter in the curiously endless assault on the free word.

As in an Icelandic Saga, we arm ourselves with that most dangerous of weapons – the poem, the novel; but also with organized arguments, like those in our Digital Declaration, which is the first of our new style intellectual weapons for fighting back against the encroachments of the security state.

Words. That is what we have. And it makes us, apparently, the most dangerous, the most threatening force in the world today since almost no politicians or soldiers or business leaders are in prison, while 800 of us are. And many of us are killed or under house arrest.

It is a great compliment. A great tribute to the power of the sonnet, the haiku, the ghazal, the ferskeytla.

I say all of this here, in one of the world's most open societies, where

people can speak out and so do speak out.

That is a very good reason for PEN to be here. But we are also here because we believe that the reality of hundreds of languages in danger around the world represents a threat to free expression. What greater loss of free expression can there be than for a people to lose their language and with it at least part of their culture. Iceland is one of the great examples of the opposite. With a language spoken by few and a strong creative tradition – and that is as much a reality today – your culture continues to strengthen.

We thank Icelandic PEN, led by Sjón, for inviting us here and making this possible. We thank the Reykjavik International Literary Festival for their partnership. We thank the people of Reykjavik for their welcome, and for letting us walk through their streets to protest the infringements on citizens' rights in Russia. We ask all of you to think of our many colleagues in prison, from Liu Xiaobo in China, to Dawit Isaak in Eritrea.

But think also of the three young writers from South Africa, Mexico and Canada who have emerged from our first New Voices Award. Young writers around the world came forward to take part. There is always a winner in a competition. But we are trying to open doors to the reality of literature, which is continuity. These three – José Pablo, Claire and Masandé – are part of it.

We all know the tragic 9/11 of a dozen years ago. But think of that terrible day, forty years ago exactly, the Pinochet Coup. Yet here we are, with my friend Antonio Skármeta, celebrating the role of language in the return of democracy to Chile.

Is our belief in language and creativity naïve? The answer is this. It is naïve to believe in secrets and security and war as a way of life. You know the great line repeated in the Njal's Saga – “The hand's joy in the blow is brief”.

Or the great Chinese writer, Lu Xun: “Do we have freedom of expression?” If the answer is unclear – and today it is unclear – then, he insisted, “the first step is to fight for that freedom of expression”.

Or Halldór Laxness: “Books are the nation's most precious possession, books have preserved the nation's life

You ask, what do we do at PEN. It's quite simple. We follow the advice of Halldór Laxness and Lu Xun.

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Volunteer needed - PEN International Day of the Imprisoned Writer, 15th November 2013, Johannesburg

Further to the success of the event held in Cape Town last year to commemorate the Day of the Imprisoned Writer, plans are afoot to hold another Cape Town event this year. SA PEN would also like to hold an event in Johannesburg. **Please contact Deborah (rudebs@icon.co.za) if you would like to help organise a Johannesburg event.**

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Congratulations to **André Brink on recently being awarded the Medaille Grand Vermeil de la Ville de Paris.** The award is given each year to those who have made significant cultural contributions not just to France, but also to the entire world.

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PEN International is seeking a talented International Programmes Director to develop our education, human rights, literary and civil rights programmes across the world. Full details of the role and an ideal candidate specification can be found here: <http://www.pen-international.org/work-with-us/>.

Based in the international secretariat in London this is a key role within our Senior Management Team. Interested applicants are advised to submit a CV and a detailed cover letter showing clearly how your experience matches the role specification and what you feel you would bring to PEN. Please submit your application to Laura McVeigh, Executive Director at laura.mcveigh@pen-international.org by **25th October 2013**. Shortlisted candidates will be contacted about interviews in early November.

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Masande Ntshanga’s acceptance speech

On being awarded the inaugural PEN International New Voices Award, 11th September 2013, in Reykjavick, Iceland Masande said:

I'd like to thank my mother and father, the rest of my family and my friends back home. I'd also like to thank my supervisor Imraan Coovadia, who nominated me and still gives me writing advice. I'd like to thank South African PEN, PEN International, and Icelandic PEN especially, for the opportunity to come out to Iceland and be part of Congress. This story is also in dedication to the overlooked spaces in our society, and I feel honoured to represent the one I came from by being named the first New Voice. I'm in deep gratitude to PEN, the judging panel, and everyone who was involved in affording me the opportunity. And of course, once again, to my friends and family back home.

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International Poetry Competition Castello Di Duino

Entries are now open for the International Poetry Competition Castello Di Duino. This competition is open to writers under 30 years of age and participation is free. This year’s theme is “I / YOU, (Dialogue /Love / Friendship / Hate / Every type of Otherness even Humans and Environment...” There are three sections to the competition:

- Section I - Unpublished Poems – Deadline = 8th December 2013**
- Section II - Theatre: Monologue or Dialogue between 2 people - Deadline = 8th December 2013**
- Section III - School Projects - Deadline = 7th January 2014**

Competition rules and details are available at <http://home.castellodiduinopoesia.org/bandi-stranieri/> or email valeragruber@alice.it. Prizes will be awarded at a ceremony to be held on the 23rd March 2014 and include cash prizes, medals, cups and plates. The poems of the winners and a selection of the best poems will be published for free by “Ibiskos Publishing House Risolo” (Empoli, Italy) (Sponsor of the Competition), in both the Italian and English version together with a CD in the original languages. The proceeds of the sales will be devoted to Luchetta-Ota-D’Angelo-Hrovatin Foundation for children war victims (www.fondazioneeluchetta.org).

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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* 96, August 2013
- *Japanese Book News* 77, Fall 2013

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From: pen@pencatala.cat
Sent: Thursday, September 19, 2013 12:06 PM
To: mailing_PEN_Int@pencatala.cat
Subject: Catalan PEN - Deletrix Project (EN/ES)

Dear Colleagues,

The Catalan PEN, with the generous contribution of the photographer Joan Fontcuberta, 2013 Hasselblad Award Winner, and the collaboration of Arts Santa Mònica Centre, is organizing the Deletrix exhibition that will take place on **November 12**, in the mentioned venue in Barcelona.

The series Deletrix by Joan Fontcuberta registers direct examples of censorship on written texts throughout history, reminding us of the importance of fighting for freedom of expression.

Taking these images as a reference point, the Catalan PEN has started the production of a book in which a number of well known writers, such as Herta Müller, John Ralston Saul, Emmanuel Pierrat and Antonio Skármeta among others, contribute with thoughts on these silent testimonies of intolerance and lack of respect of freedom.

To finance this project we have decided to use crowdfunding, where, in return for a financial contribution, we offer the art book and works by Fontcuberta, depending upon the amount provided.

Please go to <http://vkm.is/deletrix> to see the Deletrix page and for further information on different aspects of the project.

We would like to ask for your active collaboration and maximum diffusion of our initiative, in order for us to be able to achieve this important milestone for PEN. Moreover, through Deletrix you have the opportunity of becoming the owner of a signed copy of work by one of the foremost photographers of our times.

We hope that you find this project interesting and that you will be one of the active participants who, through their compromise, make it possible. We would greatly appreciate your taking a leading role on this project.

For further information about the project, and also if you are interested in having this exhibition in any of your literary festivals, do not hesitate to contact us on deletrix@pencatala.cat.

Thank you very much in advance, we hope to see your name among those which will make **Deletrix** possible!

Sincerely,
Raffaella Salierno, Secretary General, PEN Català

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Open Book Festival 2013 - Feasting on books / The future of the novel is multimedia, maybe, by Justin Fox



Last week, Cape Town played host to the third edition of the Open Book Festival from 7th to 11th September. Organised and run by the indefatigable Book Lounge team, it was once again held in the East City district, centred around the Fugard Theatre, and comprised more than 130 events. These featured over 100 local and international authors who presented their latest work, engaged in panel discussions, gave readings and workshops, and took part in the writers' equivalent of theatre sports. There was a healthy mix of ticketed and free events with something for every kind of bookworm and literature lover.

This year had a stellar line-up of guests. Scottish crime writer Ian Rankin drew big crowds, as did Patrick de Witt and Kamila Shamsie. Doyen of Scandinavian noir, Henning Mankell, was billed as a headline act, but contrived to break his foot while passing through London in transit. He promises to make a better effort next year ... and watch where he's walking.

The international contingent was joined by a posse of local heavyweights, including Athol Fugard, Andre Brink and Wally Serote. In addition, the new wave of exciting Gauteng writers – Songeziwe Mahlangu, Niq Mhlongo, Kgebetli Moele and Nthikeng Mohlele – had a chance to present their work to a Cape Town audience. Included on the bill were three names that have been making waves in the world of African letters: Teju Cole, Tope Folarin and

Man Booker-shortlisted NoViolet Bulawayo.

The festival kicked off somewhat unconventionally with a prelaunch book-domino extravaganza: an attempt to break a Guinness World Record at Cape Town's Central Library. The nail-biting event saw organisers knock down a domino chain of 2586 books to beat former record holders Seattle Public Library.

Frivolity dispensed with, the festival got down to more serious book business. The main events were themed around weighty topics such as the future of the novel, writing politics and crime, while the fringes saw lively sessions focusing on poetry and comic-book creation.

A popular series of panel discussions concerning the future of literature looked at everything from the perennially hailed 'death of the novel' to the heroic efforts of independent bookshops. A lively discussion between novelists Imraan Coovadia, Henrietta Rose-Innes and Teju Cole, chaired by UCT's Hedley Twidle, considered possible future directions for fiction. With readerships on the decline, print runs shrinking and serious lit on the back foot, many in the industry are looking to the lifeboats.

However Cole claimed that the current climate of uncertainty was not all bad. The need for serious interpretations of the world would remain and new forms and mediums are sure to emerge. He suggested that collaborative writing and e-books featuring sound, video and

even embedded advertising were the likely next steps.

Coovadia and Rose-Innes were more circumspect, contending that the novel was a very particular art form, crafted by one person over an extended period, and enjoyed over days by the reader. It was, in its own way, a sacred if anachronistic pact between author and reader. Both novelists felt uncomfortable with multi-media and collaborative trends. Indeed, they relished the constraint imposed by the printed word that forced readers exclusively into an interior world. 'I'm neurologically wired for traditional reading and writing,' said Rose-Innes.

By contrast, Cole thought there was an attractive selflessness in such future possibilities and that these were sure to answer a future need, even at the serious end of the literary spectrum. 'Ultimately, the medium doesn't matter that much,' he argued. 'Every form eventually finds a way to create its own quiet spaces, its own interiority.'

There's no doubt technology will exert a powerful influence on the future of literature. Publishers and agents are scared and confused: no one knows who will be made redundant. Authors are always scared and confused, so no change there.

An extension of this theme took the form of a discussion chaired by *City Press*'s Ferial Haffajee about long-form journalism and its possibilities in the South Africa marketplace. With the traditional printed book under siege and journalism boxing itself into a corner where the 500-word, Google researched snippet passes for journalism, where do creative alternatives lie?

British journalist Will Storr commented that budget cuts in media houses are the equivalent in business of taking a product such as Cadbury and cutting back on the ingredients to save money. 'As a business plan, it's like saying let's slash production costs and make the chocolate shitter. That's exactly what's happening to good journalism.'

One option is pay-for-view, online offerings that are longer and more in-depth than mainstream newspaper and magazine articles. Novelist Brent Meersman suggested that stories have a natural length which is seldom catered for in the press. Haffajee concurred and lamented the fact that in both long- and short-form journalism 'the one great voice that is always missing is the voice from the ground: the miner, the nurse, the domestic worker.'

In a further extension to this debate, I took part in a discussion on travel writing, chaired by Don Pinnock. Apart from a few exceptions (fellow panellist Sihle Khumalo being one) sales of South African travel books are on the decline. New avenues, such as the long-form online space – provided by the likes of Anton Harber's *Mampoer* and Media 24's *Tafelberg Shorts* – might offer a cheaper, shorter, easier-to-publish alternative to the travel book.

Political debate, from gender issues to the Syrian meltdown, provided another running theme at Open Book. A '50 Shades of Feminism' panel brought together a group of strong female voices to explore contemporary gender politics. Another panel looked at the writing revolutions of the Arab Spring. Closer to home, the impressive mother-son duo of Mamphela Ramphele and Hlumelo Biko discussed

the state of the nation while Adam Habib dissected South Africa's 'suspended revolution'.

Gillian Slovo spoke about the way economic inequalities were presented in her own work. In a discussion with novelist Niq Mhlongo, she explored the way fiction was able to express the feelings and emotions around political issues in a way that journalism or academic writing could not. 'Fiction can lay bare the way society is carrying the rage of its past,' she said.

No contemporary book fest would be complete without its bloodthirsty gang of crime writers. Ian Rankin led the pack with a series of readings, interviews and panel discussions. I tagged along to Talking Turkey, his conversation with James Clelland over a dram or two of whisky. Rankin read from his latest, unpublished Inspector Rebus novel. He spoke about his childhood obsession with creating alternative worlds and how this had unexpectedly morphed into a career. The essence of writing for him was play. He spoke, too, about how crime writing seemed to be a perpetual rereading of the Jekyll and Hyde urtext.

For him, great crime fiction created a masterful sense of place and he found that reading, for instance, Deon Meyer gave him an insightful window on contemporary South Africa. Indeed, Rankin said he often reads crime fiction the way other people might read travel books. 'The best crime fiction is social and political,' he said. 'It demonstrates how a society and a political system creates fertile ground for particular types of crime.' It's no wonder South Africa is producing great work in the genre.

Around the edges of the crowd-pulling events were a number of decent fringe offerings. For instance, this year's day-long 'Poetica', curated by Toni Stuart and festival co-organiser Frankie Murrey, ranged from a 'Pen as Sword: Poetry as a Tool for Social Change' discussion and a poetry slam to an Afrikaaps talk which looked at the importance of this Capetonian dialect in the work of local poets. 'Poetica sought to bring disparate poetry audiences together in the same room and to broaden horizons,' said Murrey.

The organisers were keen to stress that Open Book is not just about five pleasurable days spent in the company of authors. The festival seeks to make a lasting contribution to the cultural landscape of Cape Town.

To this end, Open Book has committed to handing over one library per year to disadvantaged schools. 'Libraries are central to our drive to create readers in and around the city, hence the Open Book Library Project,' explained event organiser Mervyn Sloman. Westridge High School in Mitchell's Plain is this year's beneficiary and will receive a well-stocked library, thanks to help from Equal Education, local publishers and the generosity of the public, many of whom purchased books for donation.

Open Book and Granta Publishers in the UK have teamed up on another innovative library project. Each year, a vast number of unsold books overseas are pulped while library shelves in South Africa stand empty. Granta committed to covering the costs of shipping some 25 000 doomed works to Cape Town. These provided innovative stage installations at the Fugard Theatre during the festival. After the event closed on Thursday, librarians from around the country

were invited to help dismantle the installation and take the books to stock their shelves . Now *that's* a worthy project.

Justin Fox is a freelance writer and photographer based in Cape Town.

His first novel, Whoever Fears the Sea, is a nautical tale set in Somalia and is due out in January 2014.

First published in *The Sunday Independent* 15/09/2013.

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Entries for the **2015 City Press Non Fiction award** are open and **close on 30th April 2014**. Go to www.tafelberg.com for more info.

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Forthcoming events

- ❖ **Frankfurt Book Fair** – 9th to 13th October 2013. www.buchmesse.de/en/xbf/
- ❖ **Poetry Africa Festival** - 14th to 19th October 2013, Durban. www.cca.ukzn.ac.za/index.php/festivals
- ❖ **BookBedonned Literary Festival** – 24th to 26th October 2013, Richmond. www.richmondnc.co.za
- ❖ **Jozi Book Fair** – 25th & 26th October 2013, Museum Africa, Johannesburg. www.jozibookfair.org.za
- ❖ **PEN International Day of the Dead** – 2nd November 2013. www.pen-international.org/newsitems/day-of-the-dead-2013/
- ❖ **PEN International Day of the Imprisoned Writer** – 15th November 2013

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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.

