

To: SA PEN Members  
E-Newsletter No. 21/2013 – 23/11/2013



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

P O Box 732, Constantia, 7848, Cape Town  
Nonprofit Organisation Registration Number 069-564-NPO  
SARS Tax Exemption Reference No. PBO930031735

email: [rudebs@icon.co.za](mailto:rudebs@icon.co.za) (Secretary), [anthonyf@icon.co.za](mailto:anthonyf@icon.co.za) (President)  
[www.sapen.co.za](http://www.sapen.co.za) or <http://www.facebook.com/southafricanpen>

**CONTENTS:**

- Welcome to new members
- Book Launch – *Dance with Suitcase* by Dawn Garisch, 3rd December, Cape Town
- Message from Margie Orford, SA PEN Executive Vice-President, to the SA PEN membership – 22nd November 2013
- SA PEN Press Release: 16/11/2013 - PEN South Africa commemorates International Day of the Imprisoned Writer, 15th November 2013
- John Ralston Saul, President of PEN International is currently visiting Gauteng
- Africans must speak up for journalist jailed in Ethiopia, by Zakes Mda
- AERODROME calls for short story submissions
- ENGLISH PEN Press Release: Doris Lessing 1919 – 2013
- Call for Nominations: 2014 IPA Freedom to Publish Prize. Deadline = 6th January 2014
- *Carapace* Covers by Maryna Fraser
- Season's Greetings card address list - writers in prison or their families
- Publications received
- Press Release: New ticketing system for National Arts Festival
- Sillerman Book First Book Prize for African Poets – Deadline = 1st December 2013
- Ethiopian PEN board members' training, Johannesburg, November 2013
- 2013 South African Literary Awards
- Message from SA PEN Vice-President Geoff Haresnape
- To read more about South African author, Masande Ntshanga...
- Forthcoming events
- Members' Publications: *Dance with Suitcase: A Memoir resting on Movement*, by Dawn Garisch

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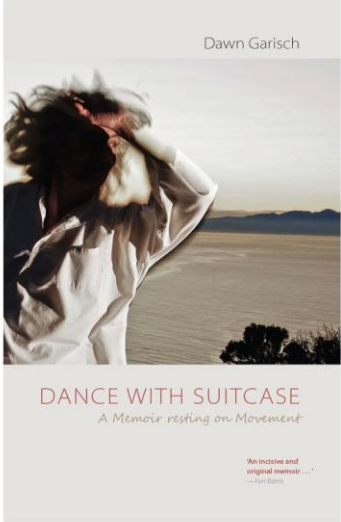
A warm welcome to new members: Niq Mhlongo, Rachel Zadok and Barbara Nussbaum.



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**Book Launch – *Dance with Suitcase* by Dawn Garisch, 3rd December, Cape Town**

## INVITATION



Tiber Tree Press and The Book Lounge  
invite you to the launch of

**DANCE WITH SUITCASE**  
*A Memoir resting on Movement*  
by  
DAWN GARISCH

**WHEN:** Tuesday, 3rd December  
**TIME:** 5:30 for 6pm  
**WHERE:** The Book Lounge, 71 Roeland St  
**RSVP:** [booklounge@gmail.com](mailto:booklounge@gmail.com)  
or 021 462 2425

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Dawn will be in conversation with Karin Schimke

"An incisive and original memoir..." KEN BARRIS

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**Message from Margie Orford, SA PEN Executive Vice-President, to the SA PEN membership – 22nd November 2013**

Dear PEN members and friends



SA PEN has partnered with PEN Zambia previously so we have been excited to recently work with another African PEN Centre. In early November, SA PEN and the WITS Justice Project, part of the Wits School of Journalism, partnered to facilitate a training course on freedom of expression and related topics to the board of Ethiopian PEN. The programme, funded by PEN Norway, with a generous contribution by PEN America, is the first in what we hope will be a series that focus on freedom of expression work in post-conflict countries where such rights are seriously curtailed. The course was a great success in that it enabled, in the words of the President of PEN Ethiopia, us to ‘identify key weakness of PEN Ethiopia and help the board members to prepare and organise for possible challenges. To share some of the best practices of South African PEN and to network and partner with likeminded organisations.’

If you have not had the chance already, do read Zakes Mda’s wonderful piece about the continued jailing of the Ethiopian writer and journalist, Eskinder Nega, included elsewhere in this newsletter.

Edward Snowden's explosive revelations about the Orwellian extent of the NSA surveillance of US citizens, European leaders like Angela Merkel and just about anyone else who is on the internet continues to shock. The extent of the collusion between the UK and the US on secret surveillance of all electronic communication is cause for grave concern and is being taken up by a number of PEN centres as well as by PEN International. I attended a symposium in New York last week, hosted by American PEN, the American Civil Liberties Union and Fordham University.

Titled *Surveillance: What's the Harm?* The day was built around this premise: Free expression and privacy advocates who seek to rein in proliferating surveillance powers are lacking a crucial tool to press their case in Congress, the courts, and the public arena: a clear and convincing explanation of how surveillance, and particularly the increasingly complex and often subtle forms of governmental and private-sector surveillance currently in use in the United States and other democratic societies, impacts free expression and creative freedom.

The goal for the symposium was to develop a shared agenda of action steps to help answer this question. There was a review of what is already known about harms from surveillance. I presented a paper on surveillance during Apartheid South Africa. There were case studies of surveillance in Guatemala and of present day China. The aim was to chart a course for ongoing research and information-sharing that will examine how new technologies for governmental and commercial surveillance, tracking, and data mining intersect with and impact the fundamental human right of freedom of expression — and, as the question of harms becomes clearer, to establish a foundation for advocacy by PEN and other organisations to ensure that a more informed understanding of harms is integrated into legal and policy decisions that will shape the contours of surveillance programs in the future.

The symposium was focused on the United States, but the complex issues of privacy, freedom of expression and the ubiquity of electronic surveillance are pertinent in South Africa and will, I imagine, become a focus of South African PEN's work, especially with the imminent signing into law of the 'Secrecy Bill.' The effects of surveillance in Africa will be refracted differently, but there are already some chilling early warnings. This prescient analysis from *The Guardian* might be of interest. <http://www.theguardian.com/global-development/poverty-matters/2013/nov/12/surveillance-aid-iris-scanning-gps-tracking>

We have a full programme for 2014. We will continue our work with Nal'ibali ([www.nalibali.org](http://www.nalibali.org)) the wonderful mother tongue children's reading campaign, by providing translations of children's stories into the rainbow of languages with which South Africa is blessed.

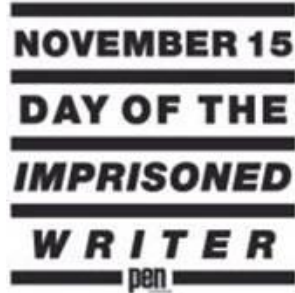
We will also be kicking off a series of PEN Public Dialogues – looking at the politics of literature and the literature of politics. I look forward to seeing you at some or all of those events next year.

The world lost one of its greatest writers this week. Doris Lessing, the Nobel laureate, wrote with a fierce intensity that cut across genre, politics and place. She will be sorely missed.

Warm wishes, Margie Orford

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**SA PEN Press Release: 16/11/2013 - PEN South Africa commemorates International Day of the Imprisoned Writer, 15th November 2013, despite flood- and book-burning threats, by Finuala Dowling**



Braving stormy weather and flash floods, Capetonians filled a tiny bookshop, Kalk Bay Books, last night to hear rousing performances of protest songs, satire, lyric poetry and fearless free speech.

The event, organised by PEN South Africa, marked the International Day of the Imprisoned Writer. An empty chair on the stage drew attention to all imprisoned and harassed writers, but especially those that were the focus of 2014: Fazil Sey (Turkey), Zahra Rahnavard (Iran) and Kunchok Tsephel Gopey Tsang (Tibet).

Opening the evening with his rousing song, 'My Way is Clear', Roger Lucey -- a songwriter banned under the apartheid regime -- held out the hope that 'When the morning breaks we will find our way/ Through the shadows deep and the light of day'.

Gender and human rights activist and academic Rhoda Kadalie lived up to her reputation as 'the one who says what others fear to say or hope will not be said, in a voice that cannot be ignored'. Her speech denounced the abuse of power in South Africa. 'When we censor ourselves, we imprison ourselves,' she warned.

Ingrid de Kok, whose multi-award winning lyrical poetry has quietly kept track of humanitarian crises here and abroad, read from her two most recent collections. Quoting Nobel prizewinner Szymborska's line 'Forgive me, distant wards, for bringing flowers home', de Kok's poem 'Bringing Flowers Home' perfectly articulates the guilt felt by the free and happy when they contemplate the lot of those who suffer: 'Blue ink is in my pen./My day, my village, rings/ like a silver bell/... I'm sorry./ I wish you were here.'

Finuala Dowling interviewed a 'mystery guest' with the telling name of 'Mr Deep Lee Offended', played by Tessa Dowling. Deep Lee, a 'lives-long opponent of freedom of speech' caused consternation when he threatened to set the bookshop alight.

The evening was rounded off with more songs from Roger Lucey, including a sing-along of his crowd-pleasing 'Dalai Lama'.

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**John Ralston Saul, President of PEN International is currently visiting Gauteng.** While in Johannesburg and Pretoria, he will be interviewed concerning his new novel and his participation in the UNISA Sarchi retreat, so keep an eye on the press.

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## **Africans must speak up for journalist jailed in Ethiopia**

By Zakes Mda



Comment: Ethiopia today is reminiscent of apartheid South Africa, where anyone who questions the state is a terrorist.

First published by *The Guardian Africa Network*, 5th November 2013:

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/nov/05/ethiopia-free-eskinder-nega>

The award-winning Ethiopian journalist Eskinder Nega will turn 45 this month in Kaliti prison outside Addis Ababa whilst serving an 18-year sentence as a convicted terrorist. The government in Addis would have the world believe he is a reckless, even racist, agitator bent on violent revolution. Yet, a review of the evidence against him and his writings reveals a thoughtful and principled man whose only crime has been to urge, peacefully and publicly, Ethiopia's rulers to deliver on their long broken promise of peaceful, democratic reform.

"Democracy is so important to Ethiopia, because we need it to moderate the differences between civilization and civilization," Eskinder said in a 2010 interview. "I hope the EPRDF (the ruling party) will be pragmatic enough to realise reform would be the better option, even for itself," he added. "I believe in forgiving... that we shouldn't have any grudge against the EPRDF, despite what it has done. I believe that the best thing for the country is reconciliation. I believe in the South African experience, that model."

In February 2011, inspired by the Egyptian military's tolerance of pro-democracy protesters in Tahrir Square, Eskinder wrote an article urging

Ethiopian soldiers to heed their example, should demonstrations break out in Addis Ababa. The column appeared on a US-based Ethiopian news website blocked inside his country. In response, the state security detained Eskinder, accusing him of inciting the public against the government. A senior police official threatened to kill him if he did not stop writing about the Arab Spring.

A few months later, after the government invoked a vague terrorist plot to imprison prominent journalists, lawyers, teachers, academics and other dissidents, Eskinder spoke out again: "None of the recent detainees under the terrorism charges remotely resemble the profile (of a terrorist). Debebe is probably the ultimate antithesis of the fanatic, his pragmatism, his easy nature, defines him," he wrote, referring to prominent actor Debebe Eshetu. "Neither do journalists Woubshet (Taye) and Reeyot (Alemu) and opposition politician Zerihun Gebre-Egzabher fit the profile. The same goes for the calm university professor, Bekele Gerba."

Just five days after writing those words, Eskinder was arrested again, and charged under the same terrorism charges. As evidence, the prosecution submitted a video of a town hall meeting of an opposition party where

Eskinder expressed his opinion that if repression continued, the people's patience would run out and there could be Arab Spring protests in Ethiopia. The prosecution claimed that by making such statements he was using his constitutional right to freedom of expression as a cover to overthrow that very constitution.

Eskinder's treatment is emblematic of the conditions facing all Ethiopians and the systematic harassment and incarceration of independent voices. Journalism has its occupational hazards the world over, but in Ethiopia it is impossible to practice the profession honestly and with integrity. The country's anti-terrorism law is sweeping and harsh. It mandates a 20-year sentence for "whoever writes, edits, prints, publishes, publicises, disseminates" statements that the government deems to support terrorism. Suspects can be held under these laws for up to four months without charge, let alone a trial – perversely reminiscent of the 90-day (and later 180-day) detention laws of South Africa under apartheid.

In fact, the anti-terrorism law of today's Ethiopia looks very much like the statutes the apartheid government enacted to suppress opposition and maintain a system declared a crime against humanity by the international community. Some of us remember vividly the Suppression of Communism Act of 1950 – later replaced by the Internal Security Amendment Act of 1976, under which even anti-communist writing was banned if it opposed apartheid, and writers were charged and convicted. Ethiopia's anti-terrorist statute is a close cousin of South Africa's Terrorism Act of 1967, which was just as all-encompassing; even the mildest opponents of apartheid became

"terrorists" under this Act. Just as in South Africa, Ethiopia's anti-terrorism law has become an instrument of terror itself.

Many people and organisations around the world have spoken on behalf and in defence of Eskinder, but whenever these gross violations of human rights happen in Africa there is either muted protest or utter silence on the part of African writers, intellectuals, artists and media. Why should these violations be Bob Geldof's business and not ours? Surely we also care about human rights because we are directly affected, even more so than those based in the west.

For two decades, Eskinder has been an indomitable free thinker who has refused to give in to anger, resignation or exile despite persistent government intimidation. When his wife, Serkalem Fasil, accepted the PEN Freedom to Write award on his behalf she said that prison had become her husband's "home away from home". Serkalem, herself a fellow journalist and newspaper editor, was imprisoned for exercising her freedom of expression, and their son was born in prison.

Eskinder's continued arrest and the harassment of his family is a travesty that all freedom-loving Africans should protest against relentlessly. It is in this light that the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights should consider the complaint filed recently by Freedom Now and the Media Legal Defense Initiative on Eskinder's behalf.

What is happening in Ethiopia is a disgrace. An African like me, who is enjoying freedom in South Africa, should have long ago protested this case in the loudest of voices. My silence was complicity. It is important to curb the impunity with which some

African governments act against the rights of their citizens. If Ethiopia can get away with it, so will your country next time, and you'll be the victim. It is first and foremost out of human decency that our voices should be

heard. But it is also out of self-interest as prospective victims of repression. As the saying goes, if we are silent today, when they come for us there will be no one left to speak.

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**AERODROME calls for short story submissions**

AERODROME will soon be publishing original short stories on a regular basis.

Short stories between 800 and 5000 words can be submitted to fiction[at][aerodrome.co.za](mailto:fiction@aerodrome.co.za), attached as a Word document (.doc or .docx). Please use “your name – story” as the file name. Writers of all nationalities are eligible to submit their stories, though their submissions must be in English.

Text should be 12 pt Arial or Times New Roman and single spaced. Only stories that have not been previously published will be accepted. Please ensure that you have carefully edited and proofread your story. Sloppy submissions will not be considered.

You will retain the copyright to your work, but by submitting it to AERODROME you give us permission to publish your story online, in print and elsewhere. You also agree to giving AERODROME online exclusivity for 30 days from the date of publication.

If your submission is successful, we'll be in touch within about six weeks.  
Alexander Matthews, Editor, AERODROME, [www.aerodrome.co.za](http://www.aerodrome.co.za)

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**ENGLISH PEN Press Release: Doris Lessing 1919 – 2013**

18/11/2013 - English PEN is greatly saddened at the news of Doris Lessing's death. She was a distinguished member of the charity and received the Golden PEN award in 2002 in honour of a lifetime's service to literature.

From her first novel *The Grass is Singing* in 1950, to her breakthrough work *The Golden Notebook*, through to her final book in 2008, *Alfred and Emily*, her writing was radical in both form and content. In recognition of her achievements, she was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 2007, becoming only the 11th woman ever to receive the prize.

‘Doris Lessing was a much admired member of English PEN, who generously supported our work with disadvantaged communities in the United Kingdom. Her death is a great loss for us and for literature,’ said Jo Glanville, director of English PEN.

To read PEN International's tribute go to: <http://www.pen-international.org/newsitems/doris-lessing-1919-2013/>

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International  
Publishers  
Association

23, avenue de France  
CH – 1202 Geneva  
Tel: +41 22 704 1820

[borghino@internationalpublishers.org](mailto:borghino@internationalpublishers.org)

6 November 2013

## **Call for Nominations: 2014 IPA Freedom to Publish Prize**

**The closing date for nominations for the 2014 IPA Freedom to Publish Prize is 6 January 2014.**

The Prize will be awarded on 27 March 2014, during the IPA Congress in Bangkok, and the recipient will receive CHF20,000, thanks to the generous sponsorship of the following publishers: Albert Bonniers Förlag, Elsevier, HarperCollins, Holtzbrinck Publishing Group, Kodansha, OUP, Penguin Random House, and Simon & Schuster.\*

Nominees can either be publishers who have recently published controversial works in the face of pressure, threats, intimidation or harassment from government or other authorities; or publishers with a long and distinguished history of upholding the values of freedom to publish and freedom of expression.

IPA member organisations, members of the IPA Freedom to Publish Committee, individual publishers, and international professional and non-government organisations working in the field of freedom of expression can nominate candidates for the IPA Freedom to Publish Prize.

Those nominating must explain the reasons behind their choice of candidate in writing (in English, French or Spanish) using the attached form as a template. Nominations should be submitted to the IPA's Policy Director, José Borghino ([borghino@internationalpublishers.org](mailto:borghino@internationalpublishers.org)) no later than close-of-business (Geneva time) on **6 January 2014**.

Thank you very much for your cooperation and for supporting this important endeavour in the field of freedom to publish.

***Please disseminate this call for nominations and the attached nomination form to your members and other networks ASAP.***

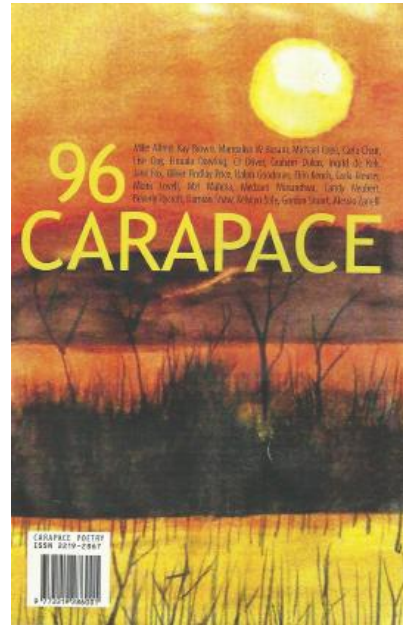
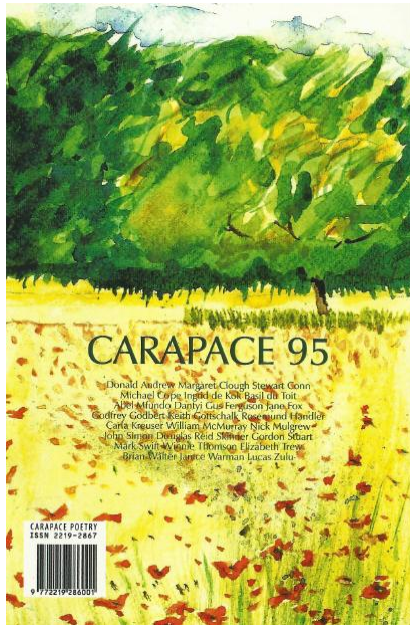
Yours sincerely,  
Ola Wallin: Chair, IPA Freedom to Publish Committee



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**Carapace Covers**

Member and poet Maryna Fraser is also responsible for the paintings that grace the covers of the latest two issues of *Carapace*:



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**Season's Greetings card address list - writers in prison or their families**

PEN International have sent us a list of writers who are currently in prison and in need of good cheer as the festive season approaches. Please contact me should you like to send a greeting card to a prisoner and I will provide you with all the details – [rudebs@icon.co.za](mailto:rudebs@icon.co.za). Deborah Horn-Botha, Secretary, SA PEN

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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](mailto:rudebs@icon.co.za)

- *Italian PEN Club magazine*, Oct-Dec 2013. Received by email. All previous issues are also available on their website, [www.penclub.it](http://www.penclub.it).
- *The Taipei Chinese PEN - A Quarterly Journal Of Contemporary Chinese Literature From Taiwan*, Summer 2013, No. 164

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**Press Release: New ticketing system for National Arts Festival**

20th November 2013

The ticketing system which powers the iconic Edinburgh Fringe is poised to change the way South Africans experience the arts from 2014, with the National Arts Festival in Grahamstown being the first to introduce its audiences to “one of the world’s most efficient, robust, versatile and secure systems”.

The Scottish event, the largest arts gathering in the world, sells over 2.5 million tickets each August. From next year, the same software that powers those sales will be used in Grahamstown, in terms of a new partnership announced today between the Festival and Edinburgh-based technology company Red61.

“This is an amazing, world-class system, unlike anything we’ve encountered,” Festival CEO Tony Lankester said. “The software was custom-written specifically to simplify the experience of attending a Festival such as ours, which has many venues and hundreds of performances taking place in a concentrated period of time,” he said. The partnership will save festivalgoers valuable time and effort, while bringing a streamlined and simplified planning and booking experience to their desktops, smartphones and tablets without compromising on security, Lankester maintains. “Security was our number one priority. We wanted to introduce a system which protected the private data of our customers and of artists. The next thing we looked for in a system was simplicity. Customers don’t want to spend hours navigating a cumbersome site with archaic rules. This system will let our audiences plan their Festival visit online and then book quickly and securely using their phones or tablets, wherever they are,” he said. “While this technology itself isn’t new, the way the customer experience is put front and centre of this software is unlike anything on offer in the South African marketplace. It is easy, quick, safe, intuitive and is an absolute joy to use,” he said.

Only a couple of years since its introduction, the software has become the *de facto* standard for arts events around the world. “We sell tickets not just in Edinburgh, but also in Adelaide, Brighton, Perth and Abu Dhabi,” Red61 Managing Director Tony Davey said.

Grahamstown is the first African festival to use the software, a fact that means a lot to Red61. “One of our early investors and our current Chairman, William Burdett-Coutts who runs the iconic Assembly venues in Edinburgh, performed at the inaugural National Arts Festival when he was a Rhodes student in 1974. The fact that we are introducing Via to Grahamstown 40 years later makes us proud,” Davey said.

The 40th edition of the National Arts Festival, Grahamstown will take place from 3rd to 13th July 2014. See [www.nationalartsfestival.co.za](http://www.nationalartsfestival.co.za), or the National Arts Festival Grahamstown on Facebook, or @artsfestival on Twitter, for more information.

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**Sillerman Book First Book Prize for African Poets – Deadline = 1st December 2013**

The Sillerman Book Prize is for a book-length manuscript of poetry (at least 50 pages), and there's no fee to submit. The winner will receive USD \$1,000 and publication through both the University of Nebraska Press and Amalion Press in Senegal. The contest is open to African writers who have not previously published a book-length collection. (An “African writer” is taken to mean someone who was born in Africa, who is a national or resident of an African country, or whose parents are African.). Entries close on the 1st December 2013.

For full contest rules, submission guidelines, and to submit your manuscript, visit the Sillerman Book Prize website at [http://africanpoetrybf.unl.edu/?page\\_id=21#sillerman](http://africanpoetrybf.unl.edu/?page_id=21#sillerman)

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**Ethiopian PEN board members’ training, Johannesburg, November 2013**

During the second PEN Ethiopia National Writers’ Congress, held in April 2013, PEN Ethiopia requested training on freedom of expression and related topics as a preparation for the third PEN Ethiopia congress which will be held under the theme of “freedom of expression and literature in Ethiopia.”

Norwegian PEN responded to the request positively and swiftly and provided funding for the full board of PEN Ethiopia (7 members) to travel to Johannesburg to attend a training programme offered by SA PEN and the WITS Justice Project from 4th to 9th November 2013.

The programme had a mix of theoretical and practical presentations, group discussions and guest talks which included:

- Freedom of expression – theory and real-world examples
- Human rights – international law and concepts
- Humanitarian diplomacy – concept, case examples, tools
- Human Rights reporting
- Use of digital media
- Ethiopian context – legal, political, cultural and
- PEN training – practical training on running a PEN affiliate
- Case studies – from countries that have faced similar situations and those who still continue to do so.
- PEN Ethiopia vision, mission and objective setting
- Guest lectures: given by well-known writers and journalists from South Africa as well as members of the Wits Journalism department and the PEN South Africa membership.

SA PEN members were invited to attend a reception for the Ethiopian PEN board members on Wednesday, 6th November 2013. The documentary *Richtersveld: Road to Restitution*, concerning the issues of land rights and ownership, was screened at this event.

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**2013 South African Literary Awards**

Congratulations to Karen Jayes (*For the Mercy of Water*) on winning the K. Sello Duiker Memorial Literary Award and to Imraan Coovadia (*Transformations: Essays*) on winning the Creative Non-Fiction Award.



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**Message from SA PEN Vice-President Geoff Haresnape**, 9th November 2013 – My wife Lesley, and I, have just returned from a seven week trip to Canada and the UK. While in Canada, I read poems from my latest collection *Where The Wind Wills* to an audience of staff members and postgraduate students in the English Department at Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia. While in England, Les and I were entertained to luncheon at Clare Hall Cambridge by Dr Rosemary Luff, college librarian and senior tutor. Rosemary is collecting my publications for the Clare Hall Library.

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**To read more about South African author, Masande Ntshanga**, the winner of this year's PEN International New Voices Award go to:

<http://www.oprahmag.co.za/view/2570/sas-masande-ntshanga-wins-2013-pen-international-new-voices-award>

<http://www.jamesmurua.com/south-african-wins-pen-internationals-inaugural-new-voices-award/>. James Murua is a Nairobi based Literature blogger.

<http://www.citypress.co.za/lifestyle/write-stuff/>

<http://bookslive.co.za/blog/2013/11/21/pen-internationalnew-voices-winner-masande-ntshanga-discusses-the-inspiration-for-space/>

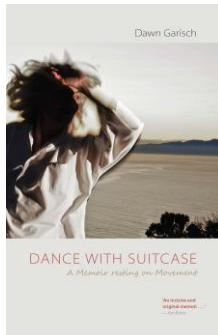
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**Forthcoming events**

- ❖ **Moscow International Non-Fiction Book Fair** - 27th November to 1st December 2013. <http://www.moscowbookfair.ru/eng/about.html>
- ❖ **International Data Privacy Day** – 28th January 2014

## Members' Publications

### *Dance with Suitcase: A Memoir resting on Movement*, by Dawn Garisch



In *Dance with Suitcase* Dawn Garisch, medical doctor and award-winning author and poet, courageously exposes the narratives that have shaped her as she moves through her life — escape and barricade, stillness and whirlwind, grief and exuberance, proposing that the spontaneous dance she practices is a medium of both self discovery and self-recovery, bringing playful and surprising elements into awareness.

*“So, there’s this suitcase. If I were the choreographer of my life, in the planning stages before anything had happened, or else at the end when all is done, and nothing can be altered, I would begin with that. Start with a bare stage, except for a large, cardboard case, the kind my father used while travelling in Africa on business, with a big enough cavity for a dancer to scrunch up in. The first problem would be claustrophobia; then how to emerge, how to step outside the confine.”*

*Dance with Suitcase*, written as a companion piece to the critically acclaimed *Eloquent Body*, is both a memoir of Dawn’s life experience and her philosophy around movement, dance and expressing creativity.

Beautifully illustrated with photography by Bettie Coetzee-Lambrecht, art work by Kai Lossgott, and images from the author’s own collection, this is a unique memoir that fans of Dawn’s writing will cherish and new readers to Dawn’s work will delight in.

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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](mailto: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.

