

To: SA PEN Members  
E-Newsletter No. 22/2013 – 21/12/2013



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

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Happy festive season greetings to all SA PEN members and may 2014 be a successful word-filled year for you and yours. Kind regards from the SA PEN executive committee. Write! Africa Write! AND Read! Africa Read!

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**The Chains Will Shivel into Foil**

**By Mandla Langa**

First published at <http://www.pen.org/blog/chains-will-shivel-foil>, 5th December 2013

Nelson Mandela’s contribution to the struggle against apartheid was anchored on his clear understanding of the need for freedom of speech. Even his detractors admit that he regarded this freedom as irreducible, even during his 18 year imprisonment on Robben Island, where some stringent voices aimed to rebut his calm advice on ANC strategy and tactics. Soon after his release in February 1990, writers such as Nadine Gordimer, Vikram Seth, Wole Soyinka, Joyce Carol Oates, Nurrudin Farah, and June Jordan collaborated in an anthology called *Colours of a New Day*. Understanding the power of the word, Mandela wrote the foreword: “The lyrics and melodies of musicians, the poems and stories of writers have shown in the most graphic way how apartheid is abhorred and condemned by all progressive humankind.”

Mandela’s work in the ANC—work which saw the burgeoning of the arts in South Africa in the period he was president—was rooted in his own intolerance with strictures. Many a time he chided officialdom in instances where voices—even voices in opposition to his own party—have been threatened.

One wants to believe that the building blocks towards the democracy that he championed throughout his life can only be strengthened. There will be attempts here and there—human beings being so fickle and susceptible to power and its trappings—for some of Mandela’s colleagues to tinker with these freedoms, including freedom of speech. But people like him have created in the South African society such an intolerance for any form of censorship that these attempts will come to naught. The chains being wrought by some of those in positions of power will simply shivel into foil. Mandela’s instinct for freedom lives on.

**RIP Nelson RolihlahlaMandela. 1918 - 2013**



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**SA PEN Press Release: South African PEN alarmed at outrageous treatment of Cape Times Editor, 16th December 2013**

SA PEN is profoundly concerned at the summary dismissal last week of acclaimed *Cape Times* editor Alide Dasnois. Preliminary information is that Dr Iqbal Survé, chairman of the Sekunjalo group which recently bought the Independent Newspapers group, took personal exception to an earlier item in the *Cape Times* reflecting unfavourably on another Sekunjalo company. Dr Survé contributed a rebuttal duly published in the *Cape Times* while also reputedly initiating legal action against the editor (Dasnois) and the responsible journalist, Melanie Gosling. Subsequently Ms Dasnois was dismissed on the unrelated ground that the *Cape Times* had not made the death of Nelson Mandela its front page lead. It would appear that Dr Survé acted

impetuously before realizing that the *Cape Times* had in fact produced a remarkably comprehensive wrap-around supplement about Mr Mandela.

SA PEN has the impression that the new owner of Independent Newspapers has not yet comprehended the treasured and universal concept of editorial independence, a deeply established principle that distinguishes all highly regarded information media, and is fundamental to the success of every democratic open society. SA PEN is already alert to the threats to democracy in South Africa posed by the recently enacted “Secrecy Bill”, and we are well aware that “freedom of the press” is under attack in all oppressive regimes around the world. It is particularly unfortunate that this matter has coincided with the passing of Nelson Mandela and the wide publicity given to all that he stood for.

SA PEN also dismisses claims by Survé that the removal of Dasnois was because the paper had suffered a decline in circulation. The circulation decline is similar to that suffered by most newspapers in South Africa and elsewhere in the world as a result of the rise of social media. The *Cape Times* case was aggravated by the decision in 2012 by another English language daily in Cape Town, the *Cape Argus*, to change to a 24-hour paper which meant that its morning edition was in competition with the *Cape Times*, a factor not mentioned by Survé.

The seemingly reckless dismissal of Dasnois is being taken up by the S A National Editors Forum and SA PEN aligns itself with any considered move to help restore the editorial independence of the *Cape Times* and the job-security of journalists in the Independent Newspapers group.

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A warm **welcome to new member:** Anton Krueger



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**Sunday Times Literary Awards – 2014 judging panels announced**

Congratulations to SA PEN member Shaun Johnson on being chosen to judge the 2014 *Sunday Times* Alan Paton Award for non-fiction, along with Bill Nasson (Chair) and Elinor Sisulu.

The *Sunday Times* Fiction Prize judges are Annari van der Merwe (Chair), Sindiwe Magona and Ivan Vladislavić.

The shortlists will be announced at the 2014 Franschhoek Literary Festival, while the winners will be announced in June 2014.

Go to <http://bookslive.co.za/blog/2013/12/13/books-live-exclusive-the-2014-sunday-times-literary-awards-judging-panels/> for more information.

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**PEN International Press Release: Chinese writer and political activist Liu Xiaobo must be released after five years without freedom, 6th December 2013**

Five years ago, on 8th December 2008, writer, political activist and former President of the Independent Chinese PEN Center, Liu Xiaobo was arrested and subsequently imprisoned. At the time of his arrest, he was calling for peaceful political reform, greater human rights and multi-party democracy in China, articulated in Charter 08, a manifesto originally signed by more than 300 Chinese writers and intellectuals.

PEN International, the worldwide organisation of writers, is reiterating its call for Liu's immediate and unconditional release.

*"Liu was detained two days before the intended publication of Charter 08, which declared that the provision in the China's Criminal Law concerning "the crime of incitement to subvert state power" must be abolished."* said Marian Botsford Fraser, Chair of PEN's Writers in Prison Committee.

*"On 25th December 2009, that exact provision was used to convict Liu to the 11-year sentence he is currently serving. The declaration in the Charter, "We should end the practice of viewing words as crimes" remains one of the most powerfully simple indictments of the practices of the government of China against its citizens."*

In October 2010, he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his continued, non-violent struggle for freedom of expression and human rights. In prison and unable to collect the prize, he was represented by an Empty Chair – a

symbol used by PEN to remember imprisoned writers at its meetings - at the award ceremony in Oslo on 10th December 2010.

His wife, Liu Xia, was placed under strict house arrest in the days following the announcement of the award. More than three years later she remains held incommunicado without charge at her home in Beijing.

On 6th December 2012, Associated Press (AP) journalists penetrated her compound and spoke to her. In the interview she described her house arrest as more "absurd and unbelievable" than a Kafka novel. The

Chinese authorities have consistently denied that she is detained.

As the fifth anniversary of Liu Xiaobo's arrest approaches, security

appears to be tightening around her. This has led to increased concern regarding the mental health of Liu Xia, who is reportedly suffering from depression.

The imprisonment of Liu Xiaobo and house arrest of his wife, Liu Xia, is emblematic of the continued crackdown on voices of dissent in the country. China has increasingly adopted invasive and insidious techniques of monitoring and surveillance, coupled with harsh punishment for those who defy censorship rules.

Many other writers, bloggers and journalists are also in prison, and more recently the Chinese authorities have stepped up measures to prevent critical reporting by blocking access to news



sites that question the government and its business practices and refusing to confirm visa renewals for foreign correspondents who will have to leave the country if their visas are not extended.

PEN International believes that these latest restrictions on websites and signs that foreign reporters may not be welcome are yet more signals of the unwillingness of the Chinese authorities to allow dissent,

particularly when they pertain to investigations into officials and associated issues of transparency and accountability.

On the fifth anniversary of Liu Xiaobo's arrest PEN International demands the immediate and unconditional release of Liu Xiaobo, Liu Xia and all those detained in China for exercising their basic right to freedom of expression.

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### **Forthcoming events**

- ❖ **International Data Privacy Day** – 28th January 2014
- ❖ **Jaipur Literature Festival** – 17th to 21st January 2014.  
<http://jaipurliteraturefestival.org/>

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### **The Rise of Digital Repression: a PEN Interactive Report**

Digital media have enabled writers to reach new audiences around the globe, but the promise of these technologies can come at a terrible cost: governments are increasingly imprisoning and persecuting writers for what they write, blog, and post online. Go to <http://www.pen-international.org/newsitems/the-rise-of-digital-repression-a-pen-interactive-report/> to view revealing statistics from PEN's caselists over the past 12 years.

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### **Index on Censorship Awards: call for nominations**

Drawing attention to international champions of free expression and their causes, the Index on Censorship Awards recognises original voices who are bravely and creatively challenging censorship today. The four categories for nominations are journalists, digital activist, advocate/campaigner and artists. Go to <http://www.indexoncensorship.org/freedom-expression-awards-2014-nominations/> to make your nomination.

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## December Junkets Competition Made Easy!

Now everyone can enter, in the sure knowledge that they can get at least 2, if not 3 or 4, answers spot-on!

So, please see the new, revised (*not* dumbed-down, heaven forbid!) Questions 3 and 4 below. (Apologies to those who have already entered: they can't now attempt those questions as I have given them the right answers. If they tell me they'd like to have another go, I will happily offer them two alternative questions. Just let me know.)

We're too small to have Giveaway Prizes for our competitions, so here are our **Give-Half-Away Prizes!** For the whole of December 2013, anyone who gets any one or more of the following questions right can buy one or both of our R90 books at half-price, i.e. R45 (you have to add p&p) – you can't get better than that!

The books are *The Southern African Impossible Book Quiz Book*, compiled by Robin Malan AND *No Place Like and other stories by Southern African women writers*, compiled by Robin Malan with an introduction by Rochelle Kapp

Here are the questions:

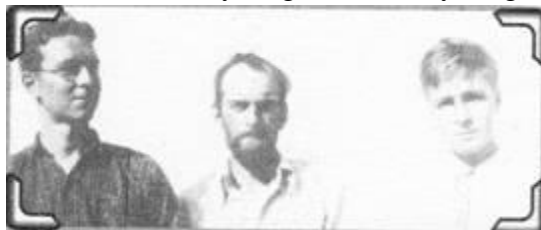
Question 1 - What is the grass doing in Doris Lessing's first novel?

Question 2 – What was J.M. Coetzee waiting for in 1980?

**New** Question 3 - Which South African novel features, as characters, Cecil John Rhodes, Rudyard Kipling, Olive Schreiner and Oscar Wilde? The novel is by Ann Harries and it has two words in its title: *M ... P ...* These two words are a synonym for 'masculine pastimes'. Here's the gang, as seen by Sifiso Yalo:



**New** Question 4 - Who were these three young men? Together they founded and edited the (mainly English) literary magazine called *Voorslag* in 1926. Each went on



to become a famous, internationally known South African writer, one a poet-and-novelist, the second a poet, and the third a kind of, sort of anthropologist. *fr. l. to r.* their first names are W ... R ... L ... and their surnames are P ... C ... v ...

Send us your answers to Qn 1 and/or Qn 2 and/or Qn 3 and/or Qn 4 on any day in December 2013. For each right answer, you will be able to order one of the two books pictured above @ R45 each. Once we've received (and marked!) your answers, we will send you an order form (including p&p amount) for you to complete and return to us, together with proof of payment. Then we'll send you your book(s). Enjoy our December Junkets! Robin Malan

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Dear SA PEN member

You are invited to **UCT Summer School 2014**. UCT Summer School is open to all regardless of qualification and does not involve examination. Please see below for courses/lectures that you may be interested in. Please click on the course titles for more detail.

**WRITERS RESEARCHING: FACT AND FICTION** - *Ron Irwin, Helen Moffett, Lauren Beukes, Angela Makholwa & Finuala Dowling*. What is the relationship between research and the writing process and between historical ‘truth’ and fictional ‘truth’? From the perils of researching erotic fiction to interviewing serial killers, five local authors explore this question through their latest works. 27–31 January 5.30 pm  
COURSE FEES Full: R375 Staff: R186 Reduced: R94

**WITH CRIMINAL INTENT: READING DETECTIVE FICTION** - *Colin Bundy*  
How does detective fiction relate to the period in which it is set? From the ‘golden age’ of British crime fiction, to the ‘hard-boiled’ or ‘private eye’ genre of early 20th century American crime fiction, to contemporary South African crime fiction, this course will examine how this work is not mere escapist entertainment, but a useful lens through which to examine broader issues. 20–24 January 5.30 pm  
COURSE FEES Full: R375 Staff: R186 Reduced: R94

**AFTER LAUGHTER: HUMOUR IN ENGLISH LITERATURE** - *Stephen M. Finn*. Some of our greatest writers are skilled in portraying characters and events that make us smile or chuckle, shriek or cringe. Some of the humour tugs at the heart strings, some is vulgar, some is satirical, some appeals to our darker side. We laugh at ourselves, at others, at society. What do we find amusing and why? 20–22 January 11.15 am  
COURSE FEES Full: R225 Staff: R112 Reduced: R57

**HIP-HOP ACTIVISM IN POST-APARTHEID SOUTH AFRICA** *DJ Ready D & Adam Haupt*. Prophets of da City’s (POC) 1993 song *Understand where I’m coming from* expressed a deep suspicion of the emerging ‘new’ South Africa. Twenty years later, this course examines the role hip-hop has played in engaging young South Africans both creatively and politically. The final session will be a panel discussion, featuring hip-hop artists and academics, which examines the warnings of *Understand where I’m coming from*, and considers the role of contemporary hip-hop artists in post-apartheid struggles for justice and equality. 27–30 January 5.30 pm  
**COURSE FEES** Full: R300,00 Staff: R150,00 Reduced: R75,00

**THE JAZZ AGE** *Marcia Leveson*. ‘Here was a new generation,’ F. Scott Fitzgerald wrote, ‘grown up to find all Gods dead, all wars fought, all faiths in man shaken.’ The 1920s were a watershed in the culture of the Western world. Explore the issues, sights and sounds of ‘The Jazz Age’. The course will refer to literature, poetry, music, art and fashion from this extraordinary period. 20–22 January 3.30 pm  
COURSE FEES Full: R225 Staff: R112 Reduced: R57

Please visit our **website** ([www.summerschool.uct.ac.za](http://www.summerschool.uct.ac.za)) for further information, for more courses and information on how to register. See you in January! Regards,  
The Summer School Team

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**PEN International Press Release: Writers Against Mass Surveillance, 10th December 2013**

Systematic mass surveillance, with the dangers it poses to democracy, is one of the most explosive issues facing us in the 21st century. PEN has already reacted to these challenges with the PEN Declaration on Digital Freedom.

Under the name Writers Against Mass Surveillance a small group of authors has launched an appeal that has been signed by more than 500 writers from around the world, including five Nobel laureates: Orhan Pamuk, J.M. Coetzee, Elfriede Jelinek, Günter Grass and Tomas Tranströmer. Other prominent signatories include Margaret Atwood, Don DeLillo, Daniel Kehlmann, Nawal El Saadawi, Arundhati Roy, Henning Mankell, Richard Ford, Javier Marias, Björk, David Grossman, Arnon Grünberg, Angeles Mastretta, Juan Goytisolo, Nuruddin Farah, Nick Cave, João Ribeiro, Victor Erofejev, Liao Yiwu, David Malouf, Umberto Eco and John Ralston Saul.

In this appeal, the writers demand a binding “International Bill of Digital Rights” and call upon the United Nations to enforce fundamental democratic rights such as the presumption of innocence and the right to privacy in the digital realm.

This major, global writers’ initiative was organized over the space of several weeks by an international group of writers solely on the basis of personal contacts and networks.

For this reason the initiators were unable to reach all the authors they would have liked to include. PEN International and German PEN are supporting the campaign by forwarding the appeal to its members and inviting them to join as further signatories.

The initiators Writers Against Mass Surveillance would like to extend their heartfelt thanks to all the PEN Centers for their assistance.

All authors who would like to sign this appeal can send an e-mail to the following address: [George-Orwell@mail.com](mailto:George-Orwell@mail.com). Please include your first and last name and nationality. The appeal may be read at <http://www.pen-international.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Writers-Against-Mass-Surveillance.pdf>

**Update – 18th December 2013**

In one week the Writers Against Surveillance appeal has amassed over 170,000 signatures. Please add your name to the appeal and distribute this widely amongst your networks.

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**PEN International Press Release: 2nd November declared International Day To End Impunity For Crimes Against Journalists, 28th November 2013**

As the number of journalists killed in the course of their work continues to rise, PEN International welcomes the news that the Third Committee of the United Nations has voted to create an international day to protect journalists. The UN General Assembly's Social, Humanitarian and Cultural committee voted unanimously to make 2nd November the annual International Day To End Impunity For Crimes Against Journalists

PEN International and its worldwide community of writers has long campaigned for increased and effective protection for journalists and an end to the climate of impunity that allows attacks against journalists to go unpunished.

*'In parts of the world, impunity is the most insidious challenge to freedom of expression...Justice is compromised,'* said Marian Botsford Fraser, Chair of PEN International's Writers in Prison Committee.

*'Crimes against citizens go unreported and unpunished. And in fear for their lives, reporters, bloggers, writers see self-censorship as the only way to survive.'*

The resolution unequivocally condemns all attacks, intimidation and violence against journalists and media workers, and calls on all Member States of the UN to promote a safe and enabling environment in which journalists and media workers can work independently and without interference. It also supports the United Nations Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity – a plan created to assist member states in developing national laws to prosecute the killers of journalists and establish a U.N. inter-agency mechanism to evaluate journalist safety.

PEN International has continuously campaigned for an end to impunity for crimes against journalists around the world. In 2011, the organisation began celebrating the Day of the Dead – which falls on 2nd November – as a day when its members remember writers who have been killed and for the deaths of which impunity persists, which has become an annual event.

In 2012 a large PEN International delegation assembled in Mexico, one of the most dangerous countries in the world in which to be a writer, led by its full executive and representatives of all seven North American PEN Centres. PEN put forward specific recommendations, met with key government figures and held public events.

In late 2012, coinciding with the International Day to End Impunity on 23rd November organized by IFEX, of which PEN International is a member, PEN International published the anthology *Write Against Impunity*, a literary protest highlighting the escalating violence against journalists, writers and bloggers in Latin America – in particular Mexico, Honduras and Brazil – and the impunity enjoyed by those who commit these crimes.

During a follow-up visit to Mexico in March 2013 PEN found that progress to protect writers and journalists had been slow. In a submission to the UPR process, PEN

International joined PEN Guadalajara to outline its concerns for the safety of journalists and made series of recommendations to effectively protect journalists.

*'It's high time that the world paid more attention to the steadily increasing death toll of journalists and this day will be an annual focus'* said Ann Harrison, Programme Director of the Writers in Prison Committee.

*'Journalists' murderers should understand that the world is watching and will not tolerate these crimes'.*

From January to June 2013, PEN International recorded the killings of at least 4 writers, including journalists, in connection with their work. Another 11 were killed for unknown reasons.

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### **International Radio Playwriting Competition 2013**

We are delighted to be launching this year's BBC World Service International Radio Playwriting Competition in partnership with the British Council. Now in its 24th year, the competition has some exciting additions!

There are two first prizes - the best radio play by a writer with English as their first language and the best by a writer with English as their second language. The overall winners will each receive £2 000 sterling and a trip to London to see their play being recorded for broadcast on BBC World Service.

We are very happy to run this year's competition in partnership with Commonwealth Writers again and to welcome our co-producers - The Open University. This has allowed us to introduce another prize – the Georgi Markov prize for the most promising script.

The playwriting competition welcomes scripts from anyone living outside the UK, whether established or new, and encourages writers to use the immense power and accessibility of the medium of radio drama – to tell your story, use your imagination and have your “voice” heard. Reading your plays – and hearing the winning plays on air – is a unique way of hearing what's happening around the world.

Do take the time to read the rules and tips at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p0043kb2/profiles/international-p0043kb2> before you send us your script. Thank you for entering. **Closing date is midnight GMT on the 31st January 2014.**

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## **The 2014 Franschhoek Literary Festival Wine Writers' Awards**

Wine writers invited to submit entries for two prizes.

In the 6th year of the annual Franschhoek Literary Festival Wine Writers' Award, the opportunity has been created for two writers to win prizes with a total value of R25 000.

Writers who live in South Africa are invited to enter the short-form and/or long-form categories. Wine journalism on a South African wine topic, published in either local or international publications or websites, will be considered.

Writers entering articles for consideration for the short-form prize should submit 6-8 pieces of up to 1000 words each, written for a column or a blog.

Entries for the long-form prize should be between 1000 and 4000 words, and can either be unpublished, or published between 1st March 2013 and 28th February 2014. Only one entry per writer will be accepted in this category. Entries in South African languages other than English will be translated prior to judging.

The closing date for submission is **Monday, 31st March 2014**. Articles should be submitted in MSWord format to [publicity@flf.co.za](mailto:publicity@flf.co.za). Please supply the following information on a separate page: author, publication, date of publication, article title and author contact details. Please supply short-form pieces in one batch.

The entries will be sent, without names attached, to a panel of independent judges. Local radio broadcaster John Maytham will once again be on the judges' panel. Two additional judges, to be announced at a later date, will join him.

The judging panel will consider the following criteria in making their decisions:

- Excellent, well-informed writing of literary quality
- Technical accuracy
- Fresh perspectives and insights
- Good storytelling – wit and humour welcome
- In the case of the short-form entries, consistent excellence throughout the year.

The judges' decision will be final.

The winner in each category will receive R12 500, and the overall winner, chosen from the two category winners, will receive an original artwork. The winner in the long-form category will be considered for publication in the *Sunday Times*.

The prizes the 2014 Wine Writers' Awards are funded by the Franschhoek Literary Festival, and will be presented by the CEO of the Franschhoek Wine Valley at a special FLF event on Friday, 16th May 2014.

For information on the Franschhoek Literary Festival or the Wine Writers Awards, contact Ann Donald at [publicity@flf.co.za](mailto:publicity@flf.co.za).

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**October letter from John Ralston Saul, International President, to the PEN membership.** 15th November 2013

Dear PEN members, Dear friends,

I am writing this on November 15th, the Day of the Imprisoned Writer. A year ago some twenty of us from around the world were in Istanbul and Ankara with PEN Turkey, meeting with political leaders and drawing attention to the endangered state of free expression, with so many writers in prison or endlessly on trial. In some ways the situation is now worse. The government and the courts are not acting in a more responsible way. But these things do not go in a straight line. Yesterday I was on the phone with a senior writer in Istanbul who insisted that now at least the fundamental issues of free expression have been dragged out into the public place and therefore into the public debate – and this has happened, he insisted, in part because of the PEN Delegation’s intervention.

The situation in Mexico is similar in some ways – our role, working closely with the three PEN Centres in Mexico, has been to get the essential importance of free expression onto the public agenda. Only in the public space do writers have real influence.

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October is the month of the Frankfurt Book Fair and I was there with James Tennant, as well as Ola Wallin and Martin Kaunitz from Swedish PEN and Tiina Lehtoranta from Finnish PEN. We held a public event to focus on the Publishers Circle intervention in Myanmar.

Ronald Blunden of Hachette, Jo Lusby of Penguin and Ola Wallin, talked to a crowd of publishers about their time in Yangon working with emerging Myanmar publishers. We also held a

private session to discuss our future strategy – how to improve on the sort of workshops we developed in Yangon, how to follow-up in Myanmar and what country to go to next. John Makinson, Chair of Penguin Random House took part with Sarah MacLachlan, President of House of Anansi Press, Peter Wilcke, CEO of Norstedts and Per Almgren, CEO of Natur & Kultur.

The very good news is that the German Holtzbrinck Publishing Group has now officially joined the Circle, as has the British I.B. Tauris & Co. Ltd. Their Chairman and Publisher, Iradj Bagherzade, also took part in the morning’s private session.

Finally, German PEN ran an important public event on the situation in Mexico. There was a large crowd. This is the PEN way – we will keep on drawing attention to situations such as that in Mexico as long as the problems remain.

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During this time Russian PEN took a stand in support of the Bolotnaya Square prisoners with 57 of the Centre’s members signing their names. I should add that a number of us will be in Moscow in late November. I will tell you all about that in my next letter.

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In mid-October our International Vice-President, Joanne Leedom-Ackerman and Sarah Hoffman from PEN American Centre, went to Qatar to support the jailed poet Mohammed al-Ajami, who has just been condemned to 15 years of prison for two poems. It was a tough trip, but an essential first step in launching an international campaign. Fifteen years for two poems. I repeat, fifteen years for two

poems. Authoritarian regimes exist in a deeply contradictory state of mind. They dismiss the importance of thought and creativity, yet demonstrate the opposite by their punishment of writers. It is a wonderful, terrifying testimony to the power of the word.

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Late in the month I was in Belgrade on other business, but was able to spend a lot of time with our Serbian Centre – Vida Ognjenovic, Neda Nikolic Bobic, Vladislav Bajac and others – going over the evolution of the PEN Balkan Network and other regional issues.

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After a month in various parts of Europe I cannot help but comment on the return of hate speech. This is as true in Western Europe as it is in

Central or the Balkans. All of this is related to the rise of populism. I keep coming back to this. The rise of ugly populism. We are now witnessing the rise of open, mainstream racism in several major European democracies. There is an apparently growing fear of *the other* in some parts of society. Incidents of violence related to race. An anti-democratic atmosphere in many circles. These are uncertain, troubling times and we must be firm and clear about the role of writers, literature and free expression in affirming the sort of open atmosphere proper to a healthy society.



Best wishes to you all,  
John Ralston Saul

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**African Folktales Onstage! plays for pre-teens – call for contributions**

compiled by Fatima Dike, André Lemmer, Robin Malan & Omphile Molusi

We have not yet received as many contributions as expected for this project. So, we would like to remind you of the details:

- Junkets Publisher is looking for short stage adaptations of African folktales to include in a collection of plays for the upper Grades of the primary school and the lower Grades of the high school, especially for performance or for rehearsed class presentation.
- You must submit by email to [info.junkets@iafrica.com](mailto:info.junkets@iafrica.com)
- **Closing date is 31st January 2014.**
- Publication-date is late-2014.

So, please, get writing! Or check through your drawers for those stage adaptations you made of African Folktales! And submit! Robin Malan

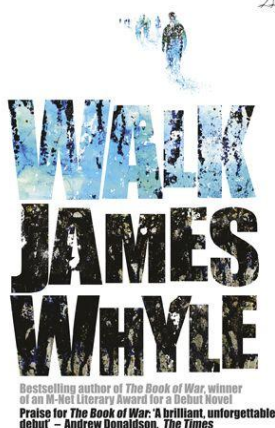
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Had a book published recently? Attended or participated in a Festival? Won an award? Achieved a personal milestone of note? The compiler would welcome any news of your activities for future issues of the SA PEN e-newsletter. Please e-mail your contributions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

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## Members' Publications

### Walk by James Whyte, published by Jacana Media



✂ *Walk* is the story of a journey taken on foot, a deadly perambulation down the wild coastline of Southern Africa. It started at Lambasi in northern Pondoland and it ended not far from what we now know as Port Elizabeth. It is a hike that every South African should have the privilege of taking. For the survivors of the Grosvenor, as they clambered onto the rocks in 1792, they might as well have crash landed on Mars.

*Walk* takes the reader, step by step, day by day, on the castaway's horrific journey. While indisputably fiction, it steers a good deal closer to the historical truth than most nonfiction found on the shelves.

*Walk* is a tale of suffering rivaling Aspley Cherry-Garrard's *The Worst Journey in the World*. It is the true story of a boy's survival in the face of impossible odds. It is a haunting parable on the meeting of Europe and Africa.

### Shooting Snakes by Maren Bodenstein, published by Modjaji Books



An old man is woken by the wailing of a prophets. Sitting on the veranda and staring into the dry veld he is beset with images of snakes hiding in the cellar beneath him. His peace is further disturbed by visits from his angry daughter, Susanna. Memories of his childhood on a remote mission station in Venda come flooding in. Johannes remembers his father's internment at Koffiefontein during World War II, leaving him and his sister free to make friendships, explore the mythical forests that surround their house and to connect with the spirit world of the Bavenda. On his return, the missionary tries to impose order on the mission station with tragic consequences.

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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>