

To: SA PEN Members

**E-Newsletter No. 4/2013 – 15/03/2013**



**THE SOUTH AFRICAN CENTRE OF  
PEN INTERNATIONAL**

**A World Association of Writers**

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**Man Asian Literary Prize – Tan Twan Eng wins!**

Congratulations to Tan Twan Eng on winning the 2012 Man Asian Literary Prize yesterday. Tan is the first Malaysian author to win this Prize. Tan won with his novel *The Garden of Evening Mists*, which is only the second time the Man Asian Literary Prize has been won by a novel originally written in English. All previous winners, except *Ilustrado* by Miguel Syjuco (2008), won as English translations.



To read more go to <http://www.manasianliteraryprize.org/>

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Congratulations to **Maryna Fraser** on having a poem published in *Poems of Loss and Survival*. (*Mithra Publishing, UK*) A collection of poems written by authors from all over the world.

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**British Council call out for playwrights**

**New writing opportunity with international theatre, Royal Court**

**Applications deadline Sunday, 14th April 2013.**

The British Council is offering South African playwrights the opportunity to work with one of the UK's leading national theatre companies for a new writing project.

There are 12 places for emerging playwrights who can show evidence of a track record of writing plays regardless of whether they have been published or performed. The applications will be assessed by a panel consisting of representatives of the British Council, Royal Court and South African theatre professionals.

Royal Court will travel to South Africa to host the workshop (held in Magaliesburg from 6th to 14th July) which aims to support each playwright in writing a new contemporary play. The workshop will be designed for the needs of each writer, explore individual interests, and by the end of the week each writer will be asked to propose an outline of a new idea for a contemporary and original play.

Following the workshop, the participants will be asked to submit their play to the Royal Court who will continue to work with playwrights over the coming two years to develop the plays.

Please send your application, with the below items, to Lois Anguria ([lois.anguria@britishcouncil.org.za](mailto:lois.anguria@britishcouncil.org.za)):

- a brief statement (motivation letter) of why you would like to attend the workshop
- a single page CV including your date of birth and gender
- one scene from a recent play you have written and a synopsis of that play
- two letters of recommendation.

We ask that the application be in English, and the workshop will be conducted in English, but samples of your work can be written in any language and we will arrange for appropriate translations to be made. Successful applicants will be announced on the 7th May 2013.

For more information please visit [www.britishcouncil.org](http://www.britishcouncil.org). You can also keep in touch with the British Council through [www.twitter.com/britishcouncil](http://www.twitter.com/britishcouncil) and [www.blog.britishcouncil.org](http://www.blog.britishcouncil.org). Alternatively contact Lois Anguria, British Council South Africa, on [lois.anguria@britishcouncil.org.za](mailto:lois.anguria@britishcouncil.org.za) or (011) 560 9340 if you have any further queries.

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## **Letter to the Editor, From Ronnie Kasrils, Cape Town**

It gives me no satisfaction to have publicly warned, along with others, that our country needed to be on guard against the sinister growth of security powers and the culture of police brutality. In fact I raised this with my communist party comrades soon after I resigned from government in September 2008.

My conscience was affronted by common police brutality against black people as I grew up in the 1940-50s. I was motivated by the sickening-force of the Sharpeville massacre in 1960 to join the ANC-led liberation movement. I did not anticipate that along with so many ordinary South Africans I would witness in a democratic South Africa abominations such as the police killing of Ficksburg activist Andries Tatani; the Marikana massacre of striking mineworkers; the shooting of protesting farm labourers in the Cape wine lands; and now this latest bloodcurdling imagery of a Mozambican taxi driver, Mido Macia, being dragged to his death behind a police van. I had become concerned long before this of reports of beatings, torture and deaths in police cells; the constant attacks on protest demonstrations; the “shoot to kill” exhortations of police ministers; the numerous reports involving police corruption; the use of conspiracy theories to deal with opponents of government; and the move to strengthen the powers of the government security cluster by dubious means. Add to this the bizarre occasion where six young would-be recruits perished in a Pietermaritzburg recruitment drive recently and one has a picture of a force bordering on chaos.

All of this in a country where the Constitution and Bill of Rights is dedicated to protecting the safety of our people. The one saving grace has been the number of journalists who have projected these stories, and in the grizzly death of the taxi driver, a member of the public who apparently captured the ghastly deed on amateur video. **One imagines that such information would not be available under the newly-cast Protection of Information legislation.** In 1994 we established a police service not a police force. All that was reversed in 2009 with a repugnant military ranking system. It is government that carries responsibility for this banana-state militarisation.

It behoves our government, ruling party, opposition, the public and entire civil society to ensure that the menacing culture of police brutality, so reminiscent of the apartheid and colonial era, be transformed into an ethos compatible with the compassionate values we fought and sacrificed for.

What our President needs do to arrest this descent into police state depravity is dismiss his minister and commissioner of police in order to send a clear signal that a reformed system of policing is imperative; revert to the earlier reforms of the police service with strong civil oversight and transparency; institute a far reaching civic education programme of the type instituted within the department of defence in the 1990s; ensure the thorough retraining of officers and personnel in terms of responsible conduct and service; and provide assertive leadership to weed-out corruption and punish rotten apples in deed not mere word. These are just some much needed measures to turn the tide and create a police service that serves our people and country.

**This letter was previously published in the *Business Day, Cape Times* (4th March), *Business Day* and *The Times Johannesburg* (5th March).**

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**PEN International & Universal Periodic Reviews – Mexico, China & Nigeria**

12/03/13 - PEN International has recently submitted a report on its freedom of expression concerns in Mexico to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights as part of its Universal Periodic Review of the country in October this year. This submission was prepared in conjunction with PEN Guadalajara. The report is available at <http://www.pen-international.org/pen-international-and-pen-guadalajara-contribution-to-the-17th-session-of-the-working-group-of-the-universal-periodic-review-submission-on-mexico/>

13/03/13 - PEN International has recently submitted a report on its freedom of expression concerns in China to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights as part of its Universal Periodic Review of the country in October this year. The report is available on request from [rudebs@icon.co.za](mailto:rudebs@icon.co.za).

13/03/13 - PEN International has also submitted a report on its freedom of expression concerns in Nigeria to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights as part of its Universal Periodic Review of the country in October this year. This submission was prepared in conjunction with PEN Nigeria, Committee to Protect Journalists, and the International Publishers Association. The report is available on request from [rudebs@icon.co.za](mailto:rudebs@icon.co.za).

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Today, 8 March 2013, marks International Women’s Day.



This year to mark this occasion the PEN International Women Writers Committee will be presenting at the 57th Session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), which focuses on ‘The Eradication and Prevention of all Forms of Violence against Women and Girls’.

PEN’s submission to the CSW, below, will address in particular the critical issue of violence against women writers striving to improve access to information and exercising their right to Freedom of Expression.

Laura McVeigh, Director, PEN International

**PEN International’s Oral Statement at the 57th CSW Session**  
**8th March 2013 – International Women’s Day**

PEN International is the world’s leading association of writers. We work to defend freedom of expression

and to promote literature. Our global network of 145 Centres is active in over 100 countries and our Women Writers Committee works directly with writers including journalists, poets, novelists, translators and bloggers.

## **Women Writers and Freedom of Expression**

Freedom of expression as elaborated under the UDHR and ICCPR is a fundamental human right and the cornerstone of a democratic society. Women writers, through their promotion of the freedom of ideas, opinions, and information, play a crucial role in advancing plural, inclusive and equal societies. Their reporting on all human rights issues, including violence against women, is essential to the promotion of women in society and the protection of their rights. PEN International's research, however, demonstrates that too often women writers are subject to violence from both State and non-State actors in an attempt to punish and deter them from carrying out this critical work.

Violence against women writers is a truly global concern. PEN International is currently campaigning on cases of brutality targeting women from Russia, where justice remains long overdue for the murders of journalists Anna Politkovskaya and Natalia Estemirova; to Pakistan, where the shooting of 11 year old blogger and educational activist Malala shocked the world; to Liberia, where Mae Azango, reporting on Female Genital Mutilation received threats that she would be "cut" to make her "shut up"; to Mexico, where investigative journalist Lydia Cacho was attacked and forced into hiding for her work exposing child abuse and sex-trafficking.

Sadly, these examples represent only a fraction of the shocking number of instances of such violence. PEN's Writers in Prison Committee is actively monitoring cases where women writers have been raped, beaten, harassed, had teeth broken during questioning, and their family members, even their unborn children,

threatened because of their work. Although the context in which this abuse is perpetrated varies hugely, it is clear that in all of these situations women writers have been directly targeted for their role in advancing freedom of expression.

Violence and intimidation against women writers is intended not only to silence them speaking out but to have a chilling effect on freedom of expression across society. Where such violence is tolerated, all of society suffers.

### **What is required?**

Existing measures to protect women writers are limited. PEN therefore calls upon member States to acknowledge the significant role of women writers in the advancement of freedom of expression. We ask that States protect women writers from violence perpetrated by State and non-State actors by recognising such violations and by offering effective security measures.

Fighting impunity is essential for the security of women writers. PEN calls for States to ensure that such violence is promptly and impartially investigated and that those responsible are punished in an appropriate manner. Women writers must be recognised as the experts in their own protection – it is essential that interagency efforts to eliminate and prevent violence specifically engage women in the design of protection programmes.

PEN is deeply interested in strengthening our existing networks, such as our partnership in the Implementation Strategy of the UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity, in the support of women writers at risk. We are eager to engage with partner

organisations and intergovernmental bodies concerning the design and implementation of protective measures.

On the occasion of International Women’s Day, PEN calls upon all parties to join with us in celebrating their vital contribution and remarkable courage.

Women writers face extraordinary risks due to their work for the promotion of freedom of expression.

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Are you involved in the **formatting of Ebooks** or know of someone who is? If so please contact Deborah at [rudebs@icon.co.za](mailto:rudebs@icon.co.za).

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A warm **welcome to new member**: Jacques Coetzee



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**Forthcoming events**

- ❖ **Mandela Bay Book Fair** - 15th to 17th March 2013, Port Elizabeth
- ❖ **Time of the Writer International Writers Festival** – 18th to 23rd March 2013, Durban. [www.cca.ukzn.ac.za](http://www.cca.ukzn.ac.za)
- ❖ **Knysna Literary Festival** – 19th to 24th March 2013. [www.knysnaliteraryfestival.co.za](http://www.knysnaliteraryfestival.co.za)
- ❖ **World Book Day** – 23rd April
- ❖ **World Press Freedom Day** – 3rd May 2013
- ❖ **Franschhoek Literary Festival** – 17th to 19th May 2013. [www.flf.co.za](http://www.flf.co.za)

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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.

