

PEN South Africa newsletter / Issue 7, 2019 / Freedom Day Message from PEN SA President, Nadia Davids; Profiles of formerly imprisoned PEN SA members, Justice Albie Sachs and Mandla Langa; calls for submissions; new members, and more!

Does this look weird? [View this email in your browser.](#)
Missed an issue? [Check our archives.](#)



Issue 7
24 April 2019
 ISSN 2410-2210



Freedom Day Message from PEN SA President, Nadia Davids

The 27th of April 2019 marks 25 years of democracy in South Africa. At PEN SA we find ourselves thinking carefully not only about the urgencies of present and future freedoms, but also about our country's past. For the last few weeks our research team has been reading about and talking to writers who were imprisoned under Apartheid rule, artists who were jailed for their beliefs, punished for their work, sequestered from the world, at best subject to extreme harassment, at worst tortured, but who wrote nonetheless, each word an act of astonishing resistance, each sentence inching us closer towards collective freedom.

In this issue, we ask Justice Albie Sachs and Mandla Langa - South African writers who were jailed under the Apartheid regime - to share their thoughts about the

relationship between art and activism and the importance of organisational solidarity. We've paired their insights with a brief biography, created in-house by PEN SA.

We are deeply grateful to them both for their generous and inspiring participation in this issue; these profiles inaugurate a longer-term PEN SA project that focuses on South African writers who have suffered political imprisonment. Our aim is to attend to a large and gaping gap in the public archive by developing an accessible online resource about these South African writer-activists. Our short biographies will later be twinned (where possible) with an in-depth interview with each writer about their work and imprisonment.

While our researchers are working to assemble as many names as possible, we welcome impute from our members. Please do contact us at any point with a writer you believe we should profile. We welcome all suggestions and leads!

A joyous and meaningful Freedom Day to you all.

Nadia Davids
PEN SA President



"Punished for being good" - a biography of Justice Albie Sachs

"Writers converse in solitude with their words. By the nature of their work, they are amongst the loneliest people on earth. But writers in prison suffer a particularly acute and perverse castigation in their loneliness," wrote Justice Albie Sachs in response to PEN SA's request to share his thoughts around art and activism.

Despite being imprisoned twice, first from 1963-4 and again in 1966, and an attempt on his life while in exile in Mozambique, Sachs remained committed to the struggle

against apartheid and has played a major role in the legal, political and cultural life of South Africa.

Read more about Justice Sachs' life and work.



"The height of obscenity is to imprison writers" - a biography of Mandla Langa

"The world today, full of noise of the powerful, which is aimed at drowning the voices of poets, has never needed artists, writers more." These are the poignant words Mandla Langa shared in the lead-up to PEN SA's Freedom Day newsletter.

As a young man, Langa became actively involved in the South African Students' Organisation (SASO) and was arrested in 1976, subsequently spending 101 days in prison. During this time, he continued to write, recognising the importance of using his pen to expose the evils of the apartheid system.

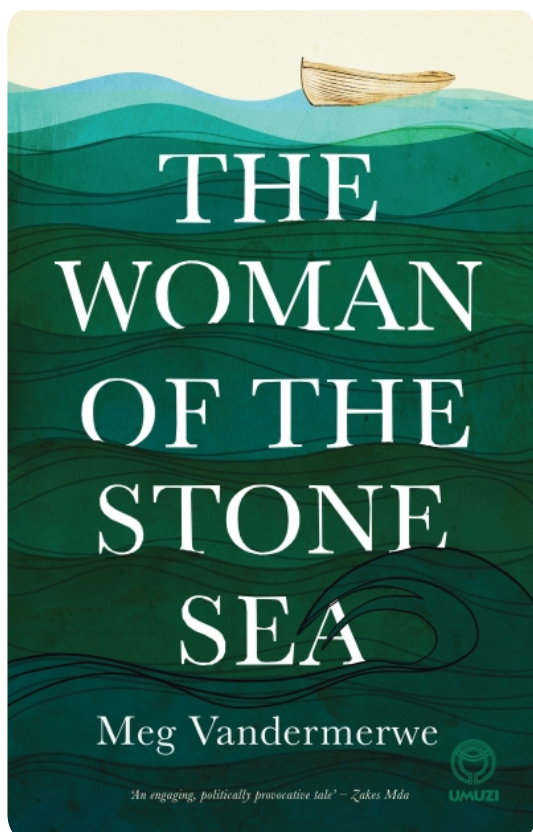
Upon release, he went into exile and participated in Umkhonto we Sizwe's military training camps throughout Africa, producing poetry alongside fulfilling his political duties. In 1991, Langa became the first South African to receive the Arts Council of Great Britain Bursary for creative writing.

Read more about Langa's life and work.

MEMBERS' NEW TITLES

CALLS FOR SUBMISSIONS

[South African Literary Awards \(SALA\)](#)



New and upcoming releases from PEN SA members includes *The Woman of the Stone Sea* by Meg Vandermerwe.

Please send us your new releases to newslettereditor@pensouthafrica.co.za.

MEMBERS' NEWS

Warmest congratulations to the following PEN SA members whose books have been longlisted for the Sunday Times Literary Awards: Imraan Coovadia, Beyers de Vos, Maya Fowler, Terry Kurgan, Claire Robertson, Mark Winkler and Rahla Xenopoulos.

[Read more.](#)

[extends call for submissions \(Deadline 30 April\)](#)

[Calling all first-time authors: submit your manuscript for the Dinaane Debut Fiction Award \(Deadline 31 May\)](#)

[Apply for the Logan Nonfiction Program \(Deadline 15 June\)](#)

[Call for Submissions: Geko Mofolo Prize for Outstanding Fiction in Sesotho \(Deadline 31 July\)](#)

[Submit your indigenous language poems to Basque PEN for a Year of Indigenous Languages 2019 special project. \(Deadline 15 May\)](#)

[Submit your essay/poem/short story to Penn Review's Spring Reading Period \(Deadline 21 April\)](#)

[Call for papers: Africa Century International African Writers Conference \(Deadline 10 June\)](#)

[Calling all southern African women writers: submit your manuscripts to Modjaji Books \(Submissions open 1 March\)](#)

[Dryad Press announces open submissions for poetry \(Deadline 30 April\)](#)

[Click here to view all calls for submissions](#)

WELCOME

Welcome to new PEN SA Professional Members, Prof Barbara Boswell and Genna Gardini.

Send us your news

Had a book published recently? Attended or participated in a festival? Won an award? Achieved a personal milestone of note? We welcome any news of your activities for future issues of the PEN SA newsletter. Please let us know if your email changes so we can update our mailing list.

Please email your contributions
to newslettereditor@pensouthafrica.co.za



Twitter



Website

Copyright © 2018 PEN South Africa, all rights reserved. All information included in this newsletter is passed on to you as a service to PEN SA members or friends of PEN SA. Any questions regarding entry rules, entry processes, festival programmes, etc., should be sent directly to the relevant organisers.

[unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)

This email was sent to <<Email Address>>
[why did I get this?](#) [unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)
PEN South Africa · Tokai · Cape Town, Wc 7966 · South Africa

