

Introduction

My first year as Administrator has featured a great deal of change at the Caine Prize. In April we appointed the internationally acclaimed Nigerian writer Ben Okri as our Vice-President and deputy editor of *Granta* magazine, Ellah Allfrey, became our new Deputy Chairperson. We are committed to making Caine Prize stories available to read on the continent, so we are delighted that this year we have agreed co-publishing arrangements with three more African publishers. FEMRITE in Uganda, Sub-Saharan Publishers in Ghana and Bookworld Publishers in Zambia join the long-standing partnerships we already have with Jacana Media in South Africa, Cassava Republic in Nigeria and last year's addition of Kwani? in Kenya. We have also added to the website substantially and created a blog as well as developed our Facebook and Twitter presence. And finally we have developed a partnership with the literacy NGO Worldreader to make the first nine award-winning stories available free to African readers via an app on their mobile phones.

Selected from 122 stories from 14 African countries, this anthology contains the stories from the 13th annual Caine Prize shortlist, along with those from our 10th workshop for African writers which was held in South Africa earlier in the year. Stanley Kenani was shortlisted in 2008 and Billy Kahora received an honourable mention in 2007. For the first time the Chair of Judges summarized the shortlist as showing 'the range of African fiction beyond the more stereotypical narratives. These stories have an originality and facility with language that made them stand out. We've chosen a bravely provocative homosexual story set in Malawi; a Nigerian soldier fighting in the Burma Campaign of World War Two; a hardboiled *noir* tale involving a disembodied leg; a drunk young Kenyan who outwits his irate employers; and

the tension between Senegalese siblings over migration and family responsibility.'

This year's shortlist has already garnered press interest, and was the subject of 'A Blogger's Guide' in the *Independent on Sunday* on 6 May 2012, in which it was dubbed 'The No 1 African Short Story Competition'. The 2012 shortlist comprises:

- Rotimi Babatunde (Nigeria) 'Bombay's Republic' from *Mirabilia Review*, Vol 3.9 (Lagos, 2011)
<http://mirabilia.webs.com/>
- Billy Kahora (Kenya) 'Urban Zoning' from *McSweeney's*, Vol. 37 (San Francisco, 2011) www.mcsweeneys.net
- Stanley Kenani (Malawi) 'Love on Trial' from *For Honour and Other Stories*, published by eKhaya/Random House Struik (Cape Town, 2011) www.randomstruik.co.za
- Melissa Tandiwe Myambo (Zimbabwe) 'La Salle de Départ' from *Prick of the Spindle*, Vol 4.2 (New Orleans, June 2010) www.prickofthespindle.com
- Constance Myburgh (South Africa) 'Hunter Emmanuel' from *Jungle Jim*, Issue 6, (Cape Town, 2011)
www.junglejim.org

The winner will be decided by a panel of judges chaired by author and Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature Bernardine Evaristo. Joining her are: award-winning cultural journalist Maya Jaggi; Zimbabwean poet, songwriter and writer Chirikure Chirikure; Associate Professor at Georgetown University Samantha Pinto; and the award-winning CNN television correspondent Nima Elbagir. As has been the case in recent years, the winner will be invited to undertake a residency at Georgetown University at the Lanaan Center for Poetics and Social Practice. We also intend to consolidate invitations to take part in events at the Open Book Festival in Cape Town and the Museum of African Art in New York.

This year's workshop took place at Volmoed, in the Valley

of Heaven and Earth (*Hemel en Aarde*), near Hermanus in South Africa. We are greatly indebted to Bernhard Turkstra for hosting us with such warmth and generosity and to Marie Philip who, amongst many other things, helped us to find Volmoed. The 10 workshop participants from six different African countries were guided by the celebrated writers Henrietta Rose-Innes (South Africa) and Jamal Mahjoub (Sudan). Two Nigerian writers were unable to join us, despite our best efforts, due to unresolved visa and immigration issues between the South African and Nigerian governments.

The principal sponsors of the 2012 Prize were the Oppenheimer Memorial Trust, the Booker Prize Foundation, Weatherly International plc, China Africa Resources plc and Miles Morland. The British Council also gave valuable support, and Kenya Airways and the Beit Trust both provided travel grants for workshop participants. There were other generous private donations, and vital help in kind was given by: the Royal Over-Seas League; Bodley's Librarian; the Rector of Exeter College, Oxford; the Royal African Society; Jacqueline Auma of the London Afro-Caribbean Book Group; Tricia Wombell, Coordinator of the Black Reading Group and Black Book News; the Southbank Centre; Nii Parkes at African Writers' Evening; the School of Oriental and African Studies; Kings College London; and the Institute of English Studies, University of London. We are immensely grateful for all this help, most of which has been given regularly over the past years and without which the Caine Prize would not be Africa's leading literary award. I believe this year's shortlist and the workshop stories contained in this anthology represent the best of African short fiction published in 2012.

Lizzy Attree

Administrator of the Caine Prize for African Writing

Caine Prize 2012
Shortlisted Stories