

THE SOUTH AFRICAN LITERARY AWARDS (SALA) ANNOUNCES THE 2009 WINNERS

The unique and diverse adjudicating panel of the South African Literary Awards (SALA), the country's premier awards system celebrating our rich and multi-faceted literary heritage, newly partnered with the National Arts Council (NAC), has finalized the process of evaluating and assessing entries for the 2009 edition of this growing and maturing literary competition.

Winners of these prestigious Awards, in the following categories, will be announced at a media conference on the 27th July 2010 in Joburg. The Awards ceremony will be on 8th December 2010.

1. First-time Published Author Award
2. Poetry Award
3. Literary Translators Award
4. Lifetime Achievement Literary Award
5. The Nadine Gordimer Short Story Award For Writing in African Languages (in the RSA),
6. The k. Sello Duiker Memorial Literary Award (for novels and novellas)
7. Literary Journalism Award
8. Posthumous Literary Award

"In selecting the winning submission, the panel based its choice on language and style, literary merit, appeal in terms of being South African, universal and transcending time, enhancing social cohesion and promoting nation building and creativity in terms of innovation, creative use and blending of genre, and appropriate application of writing skills", said Raks Morakabe Seakhwa, the South African Literary Awards Project Director.

The process of adjudication is rigorous and comprehensive, underpinned by robust debate among the panelists because of the quality of submissions as well as the variety of the entries. Submissions on this fourth (4th) year of the competition have improved tremendously, broadly representative of all official languages in the country, concluded Raks Morakabe Seakhwa

Professor Zodwa Motsa, chairperson of the SALA Advisory Board and professor in English and linguistics at UNISA, added that "adjudicators are not fixated with their own preferences. Ours is a fair, honest and engaging process where we look at all the literary works submitted objectively. We also reward innovation of those writers breaking new ground. This year saw most of the writers creating folk literature, which is a focal point in African oral literature (orature)".

"It is a stimulating session where the spirit of co-operation among the adjudicating panel reigns supreme without compromising the intensive intellectual interrogation approach when assessing the quality of the submissions", concluded Prof. Motsa

"We are very proud to be associated with this ground breaking project. The Awards are a complementary facet of initiatives that promote the culture of reading, writing and learning", said Ms Annabell Lebethe, the CEO of the National Arts Council.

"Our primary aim is to contribute towards taking South Africa's literary heritage to greater heights. Through SALA, we contribute to the nourishment of the minds of the South African society. The celebration of our rich and diversified literary culture is crucial to the fundamental transformation project of the country's socio-economic, political and cultural landscape. The National Arts Council is a proud partner of the SALA", concluded Ms Lebethe.

The SALA 2009, now in their 4th edition, are founded and managed by the wRite associates in partnership with the National Arts Council (NAC), Nutrend Publishing and Sowetan and the Aggrey Klaaste Nation-building Projects. Since inception, 56 leading literary legends in the country have been honoured, including Africa's first and only female Nobel Literary Laureate, Nadine Gordimer, South Africa's first black woman to publish a novel in English, Miriam Tlali and the South African National Poets Laureate, Profs. Mazisi Kunene and Keorapetse Kgositsile.

The 2010 call for submission opens on the 7th June 2010 and closes on the 30th July 2010. For more information please visit www.sala.org.za