

## Editorial

By Oupa Lehulere

**T**his 3rd edition of My Class introduces a new event that will be flighted at the Jozi Book Fair. The 'Encounters' are sessions where literature engages in a conversation with other art forms like music, photography, painting, or film, among others. Literature has been an inspiration for many other art forms, and has also been inspired by other art forms.

In this edition we look at the Encounters session, "Literature meets Photography", in which Finnish and Sami author IMA will talk to her book *SOUNAT – This beloved land*. In this book of poetry literature engages in a conversation with photography. This edition also looks at challenges facing indigenous language publishers in South Africa. As with her South African counterparts, IMA is also an activist author dedicated to promoting the Sami language in Finland, which at this stage is spoken by only a few people.

In the exhibitor section we profile Chimurenga, ReUnited Siblings and Sol Plaatjie Trust. Between them, these three independent publishers provide a link between South Africa's classical literary heritage and modern innovative trends in writing and publishing.

Lastly, this edition reports on an important partnership Jozi Book Fair is developing with Read SA. Read SA is an initiative by South African writers committed to promoting a culture of reading, writing and publishing. The partnership is aimed at creating new groups of readers, promoting South African literature and thereby stimulating local publishing that reaches a wider audience.

Enjoy the reading!



## Announcements

Newcomers to the Jozi Book Fair 2010 as exhibitors are:

- **Goethe-Institut:** is the cultural institute of the Federal Republic of Germany. Besides promoting knowledge of the German language abroad and fostering cultural co-operation, the Goethe-Institut's focus is particularly on the development of and involvement with previously disadvantaged groups of the South African population. Goethe-Institut will be hosting an exhibition on children and football as part of the Jozi Book Fair's children's programme this year.
- **French Institute in South Africa:** is the cultural agency of the French Embassy in South Africa. It organises around fifty artistic events per year with the objective of promoting French and French-speaking culture from both Africa and the Indian Ocean to the local public.
- **Porcupine Press:** was formed in November 2009 in response to the growing demand from writers of all genres wanting to see their work published. They offer the full range of professional publishing expertise in editing, production, distribution and marketing of high-quality books. Porcupine Press will be launching 6 books in association with Stephan Phillips. There will also be an official of Porcupine Press as a publishing house that will be available for new and prospective authors during this year's Jozi Book Fair.

## Headliner Profile: IMA

By Searatoa van Driel

**I**nger-Mari Aikio-Arianaick (IMA), an accomplished Finnish poet, filmmaker and journalist, will be a panelist in several events of this year's Jozi Book Fair. IMA's recent work is a book of poetry *SOUNAT- This Beloved Land*, published this year. *SOUNAT* is a collaborative book of poetry and photography, where IMA was asked to write poetry to compliment photographs by photographer, József Timár.

Aikio-Arianaick has always advocated and promoted Finland's indigenous language, Sami, through all the work she has done. Sami, much like the San language in South Africa, is spoken by a few people and there is a struggle to revive it.

IMA did Sami and Finnish studies at the University of Oulu from 1980 to 1982. She then became the editor, photographer and proof-reader for the Sami newspaper, *Sami Aigi* from 1982 to 1988. In 1988, IMA completed a course in radio and then went on to work as a news journalist and producer for the Sami radio station, YLE Sami Radio, where she worked for ten years. In 1992, IMA passed the official translator exams from Northern Sami to Finnish and from Finnish to Sámi. IMA has also worked on Sami children's programmes.



To date, IMA has published five books of poetry, one of them, published in 2001, was nominated for the Nordic Literary Prize and the Sámi Council Literature Prize.

Her poetry is in Sami but has been translated in English, Finnish, Norwegian and Swedish. IMA's poetry is detailed and often humorous, about herself and others, often exposing the prejudices people have to the different.

IMA's film career began in 2004, when she completed her first short documentary film in Sami, about a Finnish rapper, who raps in Sami as a way promoting Sami for young people. IMA played the role of editor and director in the 6 min-doccie. Since then, IMA has directed seven other short film and documentaries, all of which have tried in some way to document the Finnish experience and promote Finnish culture.

## Exhibitor Profiles:

By Searatoa van Driel

### Chimurenga

**C**himurenga is a pan-African publication of art, writing, culture and politics published out of Cape Town and was founded by Ntone Edjobe in March 2002.

Chimurenga features work by both emerging and established voices, and has received excellent reviews for its originality and the quality and diversity of its content. The journal is published in print form three times a year and online monthly. The Chimurenga journal is also published through performances called "Chimurenga Sessions".

Other Chimurenga projects include Chimurenganyana, Chimurenga Library, African Cities Reader and Pan African Space Station.



Chimurenganyana is a pavement literature project consisting of low cost monographs culled from the journal. Chimurenga Library is an online archiving project that profiles independent pan-African paper periodicals from around the world and is curated by the editors and contributors of the Chimurenga magazine. African Cities Reader is a collaboration between the Africa Center for Cities and Chimurenga and is an annual compendium of writing and art on African cities edited by Ntone Edjobe and Edgar Pieterse. Pan African Space Station is a 30-day live music intervention from 12th of September to the 12th of October, on radio and the internet, as well as venues across greater Cape Town.

For more information, see: [www.chimurenga.co.za](http://www.chimurenga.co.za) or alternatively contact Chimurenga by emailing [chimurenga@panafrican.co.za](mailto:chimurenga@panafrican.co.za).

### ReUnited Siblings

**R**eUnited Siblings is an independent publisher dedicated to making reading more socially accepted and available by introducing different ways of engaging the youth as well as adults in specific communities. ReUnited Siblings aims to:

- Offer an alternative way of publishing by always looking at better and innovative ways.
- Develop tangible relationships with communities, schools and other institutions where books are not readily available.
- Document our South African stories from different individuals and different perspectives in order to establish a legacy for future generations as well as a reference.
- Organize events to showcase the different works of the authors and artists that ReUnited Siblings have worked with, creating a platform for performing artists to bring their written work to life.
- Work with different art forms e.g. spoken word, visual art, music, film, dance, etc.
- Showcase the freshest established and emerging artists, thus creating a standard of quality synonymous with the ReUnited Siblings brand.



To contact ReUnited Siblings, email [info@reunitedsiblings.co.za](mailto:info@reunitedsiblings.co.za) or phone: (011) 824 1535.

### Sol Plaatje Museum

**S**olomon Tshekiso Plaatje (1876- 1932) was a South African intellectual, journalist, linguist, politician, translator, and writer. As an activist he spent much of his life in the struggle for the liberation of African people and was a founder member of the South African Native National Congress (SANNC), which would later become the African National Congress. Plaatje was editor and part-owner of *Koranta ea Becoana* (Bechuana Gazette) in Mafikeng, and *Tsala ea Becoana* (Bechuana Friend) and *Tsala ea Batho* (The Friend of the People) in Kimberley.



The Sol Plaatje Educational Trust was established in 1991 and operates from the house at 31 Angel Street, Kimberley, where Sol Plaatje lived at the time of his death in 1932.

From the inception of the Trust, the Trustees believe that the house and the projects emanating from it should reflect the legacy of Plaatje in a direct or symbolic manner. Since then a relevant museum area was established in the front rooms of the house together with a reference library in the central part of the house.

Since the launch of a publications programme in 2002 the main aim is to produce new knowledge and to add value to oral histories, indigenous language development and Plaatje's own contribution in the fields of journalism, indigenous, literature, and historical writings.

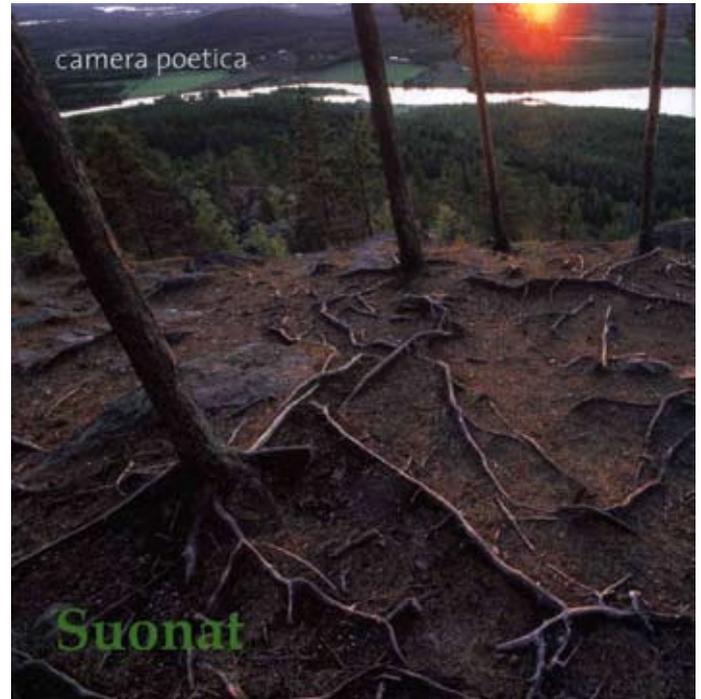
To contact the Sol Plaatje Museum and Library, call (053) 833 2526 or alternatively send an email to [solplaatje@telkomsa.net](mailto:solplaatje@telkomsa.net).

## Programme Updates: Focus On IMA

By Searatoa van Driel

nger-Mari Aikio-Arianaick (IMA), an author from Finland who mainly writes in the indigenous language, Sami, will participate in two Jozi Book Fair events this year.

The first event will be the seminar titled Mother Tongue and Indigenous Language Literature and Publishing. Having been involved in the publishing and promotion of Finland's indigenous language, Saami, and writing Saami poetry, IMA will offer her experience as an indigenous language poet in this event. She will be sharing the panel with the Guest of the Jozi Book Fair, Lindsey Collen.



The Mother Tongue and Indigenous Language Literature and Publishing seminar will take place on the 7th of August from 11:00 to 12:00, as part of the JBF 2010 programme happening at Museum Africa.

The other event that Ima will participate as a panelist in an event that is new to the Jozi Book Fair, titled "Encounters".

The "Encounters" events are several panel discussions taking place at the book fair. The idea of these discussions is to explore the interaction or 'encounter' that literature has made with the various other art forms, and how literature has inspired the production of other art forms and vice versa.

Aikio-Arianaick's latest poetry offering is a collaborative book, *SOUNAT-This Beloved Land*, in which she was given photographs taken by Hungarian photographer, József Timár, and asked to produce poems to accompany them. This is an example of the relationship between literature and other art form that we would like to explore and why IMA will be one of the panelists in the "Encounter" event; "Literature Meets Photography".

The "Encounters: Literature Meets Photography" event will take place on the 8th of August from 14:00 to 15:00, as part of the JBF 2010 programme happening at Museum Africa.



## From the World of Books Jozi Book Fair Meets Read SA!

By Searatoa van Driel

One of the Jozi Book Fair's main long-term objectives is to rebuild progressive publishing networks, and to facilitate interface between writers and the public. The Jozi Book Fair specifically met with Read SA to initiate co-operation for both the long- and short-term.

Read SA is a campaign initiative started by a number of South African writers to encourage South Africans to read, emphasising that "it is hip to read and to be well-read".

The Read SA initiative's aim is to create exposure of South African writers to the South African public, thus getting the public interested in South African literature written by South Africans. Read SA aims to do this by visiting to schools, launching books in popular spaces like the Time of the Writer Literary Festival, and any other creative ways that would bring literature to a broader nationwide audience.

The University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg and the University of Cape Town in Cape Town shared Read SA's vision and has agreed to give a base of operations to Read SA, thus enabling Read SA to utilise writers from all over the country with as little infrastructure and funding as possible, as the initiative is still young and fresh.

The co-operation between Jozi Book Fair and Read SA entails several things.

Firstly, we aim to use the partnership between Jozi Book Fair and Read SA to create a space to share experiences and contacts, thus creating a broader network of organisations and initiatives interested in promoting a culture of reading. The partnership also aims to reconnect with the ground swell of literary activism that emerged out of the anti-apartheid struggle, which will form a big part of the Jozi Book Fair's constituency and also a big part of the audience that Read SA aims to reach.

A concrete plan that has come out of this partnership was to use the infrastructure that Khanya College can provide and the writers that are part of Read SA to take literature to libraries and schools at a grassroots level in the short and medium-term.



## Challenges Facing Indigenous Language Publishers

By Nomsa Hlatshwayo

The Jozi Book Fair has constantly affirmed its commitment to stimulating a strong culture of reading and writing as a means of meeting the various challenges that face post-Apartheid South Africa. One of these challenges is decline of indigenous language literature and indigenous knowledge systems. The fair's aim is to provide a platform for all those who are excluded from mainstream and largely elitist literature circles.

Mosala-Masedi Publishers and Booksellers is an indigenous literature and indigenous knowledge systems publishing house, owned by Mosala Masedi, which specialises in various literature genres. Masedi and his wife Ellen are the authors of a total of 26 titles that focus on capturing traditional Setswana customs and norms. The titles range from anthologies, short plays, adult non-fiction and children's literature. They have managed to fuse contemporary African culture with age old Setswana teachings and their focus has been to assist post-apartheid youth in their quest for identity formation.

The interview I conducted with Masedi highlighted the increasing difficulty that he faced in gaining access to mainstream publishing. This according to him was due to the increased apathy that predominantly white publishers have towards indigenous literature. His discontent ultimately led him to self-publish as a means of creating a situation that would allow him to publish freely from the constraints of an untransformed publishing system.

For Masedi promoting indigenous languages and knowledge systems is a means for him to preserve and cultivate Setswana cultural customs as well as solidify the role of indigenous literature as a medium for social commentary and socio-political awareness. He believes that western exceptionalism has served to disrupt the development of language formation amongst a majority worst affected by illiteracy.

Mosala Masedi Publishers and Booksellers will be exhibiting and hosting indigenous poetry workshops at the Jozi Book Fair 2010.

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