



Press release

LEADING SOUTH AFRICAN WRITERS BILLED FOR THE LONDON BOOK FAIR 2010

The British Council and The London Book Fair announce the South Africa Market Focus Cultural Programme: *One Nation, Many Voices*

LONDON, 10 FEBRUARY 2010—Now in its third year as Market Focus Cultural Programme partner, the **British Council** together with The London Book Fair is delighted to announce The London Book Fair Market Focus **Cultural Programme: ‘One Nation, Many Voices’**, which this year will feature 47 authors, poets, playwrights, activists and academics, representing nine of the eleven official spoken languages of South Africa.

This is the biggest and most varied festival of South African writing ever to take place outside South Africa. **Dr. Mamphela Ramphele**, the first woman and first black South African to hold the position of Vice-Chancellor at the University of Cape Town, is the keynote speaker at this year’s London Book Fair Chairman’s Breakfast. The London Book Fair’s Author of the Day on Tuesday 20th April will be author and activist **André Brink**, and contributing to the diverse programme are South African Poet Laureate **Professor Keorapetse Kgositsile**; acclaimed author **Damon Galgut** (short-listed for the Man Booker Prize in 2003); political activist and writer, **Achmat Dangor**; prestigious novelist **Gillian Slovo**; multi-award-winning poet, writer and academic **Antjie Krog**; children’s writer **Beverley Naidoo**; as well as **John van de Ruit**, **Jonny Steinberg**, **Zakes Mda**, **Zoe Wicomb** and **Professor Njabulo Ndebele**. Together, these and other writers (see notes to editors for a full list of participants) will address the following topics at The London Book Fair:

- **South Africa 2010, Writing sport**
The effect that the FIFA Soccer World Cup will have on writing, reading and politics
- **Acquiring South African Content**
- **South Africa in Context**
Non-fiction writing in South Africa
- **Imagining South Africa**
Fiction Writing in South Africa Today
- **Writing Crime in South Africa**
- **The New South African Reader**
Reading development and the reading culture in South Africa today
- **One Nation Many Voices**
How writing in English can be informed by a writer’s indigenous language
- **South Africa in Africa**
Why is South Africa seen as distinct from the rest of Africa?
- **South African Literary Journals**

Gillian Slovo, the UK based South African novelist says: "What a bounteous array! I am proud to appear alongside such an impressive line-up of writers, activists and poets who will gather in London for this excellent event. South African achievements in literature are on clear display with Commonwealth prize winners, Booker prize winners, Nobel and Poet Laureates and feisty novelists. Despite our different pasts and different language groups, we all share a passionate belonging to that wonderful and sometimes terrible, always lively country that is South Africa. One Nation, many voices!"

Seminars will take place in meeting rooms within the Earls Court Conference Centre, and as in previous years, the popular PEN Literary Café in the main atrium will be the setting for authors 'in conversation'. External seminars at The British Library, Foyles Bookshop and The Southbank Centre will be open to the public, and will explore the following issues:

- **A Country of Extremes**
How South African authors approach the dichotomies in their society
- **Writing Conflict**
The continued resonance of Anti-Apartheid writing in South Africa
- **Unity and the National Story**
What does it mean to be South African?
- **Negotiating the Past**
The importance of remembering and forgetting a troubled past
- **An Evening of Comedy, Performance, Poetry and Spoken Word from South Africa**
- **Bafana Bafana / Boys Boys**
Being a man in modern South Africa

Susie Nicklin, Director of Literature, British Council, says: "It is wonderful to see this range of writers, partners and venues on our cultural programme for South Africa. By listening to such a variety of voices we are initiating a conversation which will result in South African audiences re-engaging with British writing, as we have done in India and the Arab World, through live literature performances, contemporary literature in the English Language Teaching classroom and curriculum work with higher education partners."

Alistair Burtenshaw, Group Exhibition Director, The London Book Fair says: "Our Market Focus programme has a great track record not only in showcasing new territories and new talent but also in opening new markets and commercial and cultural opportunities to our many international exhibitors and visitors. We are pleased that the British Council is once again working with The London Book Fair on this major cultural and trade initiative, and we are delighted to welcome such a stellar line up of South African writers."

In addition to the exciting programme in April, The British Council, in collaboration with Writer's Centre Norwich, is delighted to announce an exclusive appearance by one of South Africa's most renowned writers, **J M Coetzee**, at the Worlds Literature Festival in June. Coetzee received the Nobel Prize for Literature in 2003 and has won the Man Booker Prize twice, for *Life and Times of Michael K* (1983) and *Disgrace* in (1999).

The British Council Market Focus Cultural Programme aims to highlight the brightest ideas and most creative voices from South Africa to audiences' right across the UK, and will also be travelling to Birmingham, Wales, Liverpool, Newcastle and Scotland, showcasing new writings and offering author readings, creative writing workshops and discussions. By touring this festival of South African authors the British Council gives readers access to new experiences of literature and aims to promote understanding between cultures.

The official partners for South Africa Market Focus from the UK include: Activair, African Writers Abroad & Sable magazine, Canon Collins Trust, Commonwealth Foundation, English PEN, Foyles, International PEN, Newcastle University, Portobello Books, SOAS, South Africa High Commission, Southbank Centre, The British Library and Writer's Centre Norwich. The official partners from South Africa include: MAPPP-SETA, NB publishers, Pan Macmillan, Penguin SA, Premier Freight, Publishers Association South Africa, Random House Struik, and South Africa Tourism.

- ENDS –

MEDIA ENQUIRIES:

For further information about The British Council South Africa Market Focus Cultural Programme, please contact: Fiona McMorrough / Helen Barnes, FMCM Associates, on: 020 7405 7422 email: fionam@fmcm.co.uk / helenb@fmcm.co.uk

For further information about The London Book Fair Market Focus 2010, please contact: Julia Walker at Midas Public Relations on 020 7361 7860 or julia.walker@midaspr.co.uk

Note to Editors:

THE MARKET FOCUS

The Market Focus programme, now in its seventh year, was first created in 2004 for LBF to draw attention to certain countries and highlight the trade links with this territory, its publishing industry and the opportunities for conducting business with the rest of the world. In the first year of the initiative, the countries highlighted were Slovenia, Slovakia, Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic, followed in 2005 by Australia and New Zealand, in 2006 by Mexico, in 2007 by Spain, in 2008 by the Arab World and in 2009 by India.

The British Council is the UK's international organisation for educational opportunities and cultural relations. We work in over 100 countries worldwide to build engagement and trust for the UK through the exchange of knowledge and ideas. We work in the arts, education, science, sport and governance and last year over 128 million people benefited from our projects. We are a non-political charitable organisation which operates at arm's length from government. For more information about the British Council's Literature department, please visit: www.britishcouncil.org/arts-literature

THE LONDON BOOK FAIR

The London Book Fair is the global marketplace for rights negotiation and the sale and distribution of content across print, audio, TV, film and digital channels. Taking place every spring in the world's premier publishing and cultural capital, it is a unique opportunity to explore, understand and capitalise on the innovations shaping the publishing world of the future. The London Book Fair brings you direct access to customers, content and emerging markets. The London Book Fair 2010 will take place from 19th – 21st April. For more details, please visit: www.londonbookfair.co.uk

FULL LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Achmat Dangor, Andre Brink, Angela Makholwa, Antjie Krog, Beverley Naidoo, Breyten Breytenbach, Chris van Wyk, Damon Galgut, Deon Meyer, Elias Masilela, Etienne van Heerden, Fiona Snyckers, Fred Khumalo, Gillian Slovo, Henrietta Rose-Innes, Imraan Coovadia, Ivan Vladislavic, J. M. Coetzee, Janine van Rooy (stage name Blaq Pearl), John van de Ruit, Jonny Steinberg, Keorapetse Kgotsile, Kevin Bloom, Kgebetli Moele, Kopano Matlwa, Lesego Rampolokeng, Malika Ndlovu, Dr. Mamphela Ramphele, Mandla Langa, Mark Gevisser, Marlene van Niekerk, Masoja Msiza, Maxine Case, Nadia Davids, Ndumiso Ngcobo, Niq Mhlongu, Njabulo Ndebele, Pieter Dirk-Uys, Pumla Dineo Gqola, Rachel Holmes, Sihle Khumalo, Sindiwe Magona, Sipiwo Mahala, Thando Mqgolozana, Zachariah Rapola, Zakes Mda, Zoe Wicomb, Zukiswa Wanner.

www.britishcouncil.org

www.londonbookfair.co.uk

19-21 April 2010

www.writerscentrenorwich.org.uk

20-25 June 2010



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