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<http://kiswahiliprize.cornell.edu/>

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THE MABATI-CORNELL KISWAHILI PRIZE FOR AFRICAN LITERATURE

2018 Winners Announcement

The Winners of the 2018 Mabati Cornell Kiswahili Prize for African Literature were announced today January 23, 2019 by the board chair, Abdilatif Abdalla.

The prize, founded in 2014 by Dr. Lizzy Attree (Richmond/Goldsmith's) and Dr. Mukoma Wa Ngugi (Cornell University), has the express goal of recognizing writing in African languages and encouraging translation from, between and into African languages.

This year the Prize will be awarded in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania on 15 February, 2019, organized by ALAF Ltd, a member of the Safal Group.

The 2018 Winners are:

Fiction

- *Mungu Hakopeshwi* a novel by Zainab Alwi Baharoon (Tanzania) \$5,000

Poetry

- *Moto wa Kifuu* by Jacob Ngumbau Julius (Kenya) \$5,000
Fire of the Coconut Shell
(an idiomatic expression in Kiswahili because the fire doesn't last long)

As previously announced, the other works shortlisted were:

Poetry

- *Wino wa Dhahabu* by Bashiru Abdallah (Tanzania)
- *Sauti Yangu* by Mohamed Idrisa Haji (Tanzania)

Fiction

- *Kilinge cha Hukumu ya Dhambi* by Yasini Hamisi Shekibulah (Tanzania)
- *Makovu ya Uhai* by Shisia Wasilwa (Kenya)

Selected from 116 entries the manuscripts were read by 3 judges: Ahmad Kipacha, a Lecturer of Research Communication with the Nelson Mandela African Institution of Science and Technology in Tanzania, Natalie Arnold Koenings, a fiction writer, Swahili

and English literary translator, and anthropologist at Hampshire College in Massachusetts, USA, and Rocha Chimerah, Professor of Kiswahili Linguistics at Pwani University, Kilifi, Kenya, a literary critic and novelist.

The 15,000 dollar prize is awarded to the best unpublished manuscripts, or books published within two years of the award year, across the categories of fiction, poetry and memoir, and graphic novels. This year only 2 first prize winners in each category were selected. The winning entries are published in Kiswahili by Mkuki na Nyota Publishers and East African Educational Publishers (EAEP). And the best poetry book published in English translation by the Africa Poetry Book Fund. For more information about the prize, please visit: <http://kiswahiliprize.cornell.edu/>

Notes to Editors

The Prize is primarily supported by Mabati Rolling Mills of Kenya (a subsidiary of the Safal Group), The Office of the Vice Provost for International Affairs at Cornell University and the Africana Studies Center at Cornell University.

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The Office of the Vice Provost for International Affairs at Cornell University provides leadership on and helps oversee internationalization efforts at Cornell. Its goal is to work with schools, colleges, and centers to develop, support and implement plans pertaining to the university's international dimension. The Office provides support for the new Internationalization Council, chaired by the vice provost.

http://international.cornell.edu/international_vision

The Africana Studies and Research Center enriches the academic, cultural, and social environments on the Cornell University Ithaca campus. Website: <http://www.asrc.cornell.edu>

Mkuki na Nyota Publishers is an independent, vibrant Tanzanian imprint publishing relevant, progressive, liberating, affordable and entertaining content. Established in 1991, Mkuki na Nyota Publishers emerged in response to the general absence of high quality, independent publishing in Tanzania. Its mission statement is to publish, “Relevant Books, Affordable Books, and Beautiful Books.”

They have successfully published 2017 poetry winner Dotto Rangimoto’s *Mwanangu Rudi Nyumbani* (December 2018) and will publish Ali Hilal Ali’s novel *Mmeza Fupa* (January 2019). <http://www.mkukinanyota.com>

East African Educational Publishers is one of Africa’s leading publishers. EAEP strives to juggle the seemingly contradicting values of publishing works of enduring value cutting across the social, cultural, political and economic spectrum of society and at the same time excelling as a viable business that is ready to face the realities and vagaries of the technology age. They published 2015 winners A.S. Manyanza and Enock Maregesi’s novels *Penzi la Damu* and *Kolonia Santita* in 2016. <http://www.eastafricanpublishers.com>

The Africa Poetry Fund promotes and advances the development and publication of the poetic arts through its book series, contests, workshops, and seminars and through its collaborations with publishers, festivals, booking agents, colleges, universities, conferences and all other entities that share an interest in the poetic arts of Africa. Website: <http://africanpoetrybf.unl.edu/>

Board of Trustees: Abdilatif Abdalla (Chair), Mukoma wa Ngugi, Lizzy Attree, Happiness Bulugu, Walter Bgoya, Henry Chakava, Chege Githiora, Abdulrazak Gurnah, Carole Boyce Davies, Rajeev Shah, and Ngugi Wa Thiong’o.

Judges - 2018

Ahmad Kipacha completed his doctorate in 2005 specializing in Swahili dialectology at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London. He previously attended undergraduate and post-graduate studies in Swahili and English Studies at the University of Dar es Salaam. He is currently a lecturer of Research Communication with the Nelson Mandela African Institution of Science and Technology, Arusha, and Head of the Department of Governance, Leadership and Humanities within a school of Business Studies and Humanities. He is also a Senior Associate of Swahili Language with MS-TCDC in Arusha, Tanzania. His current research interest focuses on the Swahili languages, literary criticism and interfaces between Swahili folklore and social entrepreneurship.

Nathalie Arnold Koenings is a fiction writer, Swahili and English literary translator, and anthropologist. Published under the name N.S. Koenings, her fiction, including the novel *The Blue Taxi* and the story collection *Theft*, are set in East Africa, where she grew up. Her

stories have also appeared in *Story Quarterly*, *Glimmer Train*, and *The Enkare Review*. Her translations into English of work by Mwenda Mbatiah, Mohammed Said Abdulla, and A. S. Manyanza have appeared in the *New Orleans Review*, *Words Without Borders*, and *Asymptote*. Her translation into Swahili of Tope Folarin's short story 'Genesis' was part of a Swahili translation project of the Caine Prize for African Writing. In anthropology, her work, published in *Swahili Forum*, *Research in African Literatures* and elsewhere, is focused on oral history, social memory and geography on Pemba Island, Zanzibar. Nathalie teaches Creative Writing and anthropology at Hampshire College in Massachusetts, USA.

Rocha Chimerah is a Professor of Kiswahili Linguistics at Pwani University in Kenya. He received his PhD from Ohio University in the USA in 1989, taught in Rwanda for 8 years and has published many papers in refereed journals in East Africa and abroad in the areas of Kiswahili Linguistics, Language and Literature. He has written a number of acclaimed novels and plays. Among his published novels are *Nyongo Mkalia Ini* and *Siri Sirini* (a three-volume sequel). He won the Noma Award in 2000 for his co-authorship of the book *Ufundishaji wa Fasihi: Nadharia na Mbinu*. His book, *Kiswahili: Past, Present and Future Horizon* was listed in the 100 Best African Books of the 20th Century Award in Harare, Zimbabwe, in 2002.

The website is: <http://blogs.cornell.edu/kiswahiliprize/>

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