

GET YOUR NOSE IN A BOOK AT THE CAPE TOWN BOOK FAIR



JO-ANNE SMETHERHAM

Events organiser

A host of new attractions

The Cape Town Book Fair (CTBF), a joint collaboration between the Frankfurt Book Fair and the Publishers' Association of South Africa, is the event of the year for librarians, writers, publishers and others in the book trade. This year we will be celebrating our fifth anniversary with a host of new features and attractions.

The fair will be held at the Cape Town International Convention Centre (CTICC) from 30 July to 2 August this year, and one of the focal themes will be African publishing. With far more African publishers and authors attending than in previous years, the fair promises to be a 'one-stop shop' for trading in African titles.

For the first time in its history the opening day of the Cape Town Book Fair on Friday 30 July will be a Trade and Professional Day, reserved exclusively for members of the publishing industry, librarians, education sector and others in the book trade in an effort to facilitate networking between local and international partners. There will be special seminars, matchmaking sessions and guided tours providing a unique opportunity for publishing partners to gather in one place and exchange contacts, ideas and products making the bookfair a place 'where books mean business', says CTBF's director Claudia Kaiser.

Helping librarians stay up-to-date

The trade day will be an opportunity for all exhibitors, trade visitors, librarians and school teachers to network and do business. African and foreign speakers will give seminar addresses on subjects including book selling, rights trading, digital publishing and new business models in digital publishing.

A special seminar is scheduled for librarians and other professions in the book trade which will provide opportunities to network with other librarians, authors and publishers and discuss the latest trends in publishing. Librarians will also have the opportunity to speak to the organisers of the CTBF to discuss how they might benefit from the fair and from networking with one another in future.

'Use the trade day to foster knowledge of the industry and find out about new trends,' suggests Kaiser. 'Find out more about where digital publishing is going, to be in a better position to face the future. Enjoy the authors and hook up with the fair organisers, to find out how we can work together, for example by staging events such as readings at libraries.

'We have a long-standing relationship with national as well as community libraries in South Africa, and they organise activities at the book fair,' says Kaiser. 'We hope we can collaborate with them on a continued basis and are working on projects and programmes that are sustainable.' Exhibitors are invited to stage their own professional programmes on that day as well, making the CTBF a place where publishers, book

sellers and other exhibitors can send their staff to be trained and gain knowledge', Kaiser says.

Of course, the fair is also the opportunity to look at all the new books on display and place orders. New on our web site is the Book Titles List where publishers can list all their titles published from 2008 onwards. This list is constantly updated and will be promoted to libraries, schools and other institutions before the fair. Librarians and other institutional buyers can frequently consult the list on the CTBF web site (which can be downloaded), allowing buyers to plan their visit beforehand. Exhibitors are encouraged to include a synopsis of each work.

Another highlight for trade visitors will be the Rights and Business Lounge. Here participants will be able to conduct meetings in privacy and in a business-like environment.

The fair will also use a new digital online marketing tool, 'Book2Look'. This is a web site on which publishers will be able to register all their post-2008 titles, upload reading samples and other information, and create links to a number of bookshops where the titles can be bought or ordered.

Readers can recommend the books or the reading samples to their friends and colleagues by using the links on 'Book2Look' to Facebook, Twitter and other social networking sites.

The full details of the trade day will be announced shortly, and all events will be listed on the calendar of events that will be available both online and at the Cape Town Book Fair.

'The general public is not allowed on the trade day, but on all the other three days we welcome them very much and look forward to having them, because the book fair is for the readers,' says Kaiser.

Gateway to African publishing

Established five years ago, the CTBF is the biggest book fair in Africa. To give some indication of its size, more than 43 500 people attended last year, as did 269 exhibitors and 187 authors.

The Zimbabwe Book Fair was regarded as the fair for all of Africa and when it closed, the CTBF's board of directors decided to fill the gap left open for African publishing. For this reason, Africa is to be one of the focal themes this year.

'The Cape Town fair has been very successful in the past four years, and now it's time to take it to a new level,' says Kaiser. It has already developed into the most important international book fair in sub-Saharan Africa, and we want to make it an even more useful event. Therefore it is repositioning itself as the gateway to African publishing.

'There is so much happening in the market,' she says. 'This year's fair is going to be a celebration of publishing in general, and of African publishing in particular. I'm very excited about it, because we are introducing a number of things to add value.'

South Africa was the market focus country at the London Book Fair in April 2010, which was supposed to be attended by a large contingent of South African authors and publishers. However, due to the closing of the European airspace as a result of volcanic ash clouds, a large number of people were unable to attend. The London Book Fair's choice of

South Africa proves 'that there is a lot to be discovered about the African publishing market', says Kaiser.

'There is very little trade among African publishers, although African publishers and readers have much to share on the socio-political, economic and cultural fronts,' says Brian Wafawarowa, executive director of the Publishers' Association of South Africa (PASA) and chairman of the CTBF.

The book fair aims to 'create opportunities for cultural exchange and enhance intra-Africa trade in books', he says. 'We are also hoping that the focus on Africa will make the CTBF a one-stop shop, where publishers from the rest of the world can have access to African publishers. At the moment African publishers sell very little to the rest of the world, compared to what they consume.'

'We think that bringing African publishers together is something that the Cape Town Book Fair should be able to do better than other international book fairs.'

In coming years, starting next year, the CTBF will look into choosing one specific African country as its focus for each year.

'The CTBF also hopes to allow for more meaningful interaction among African authors and professionals in the book sector; and among African authors and the rest of the world,' says Wafawarowa.

It is difficult for publishers from other African countries to attend the fair but the Goethe-Institut in South Africa will be awarding grants to 12-15 publishing houses from sub-Saharan African countries, so that their representatives can attend. These grants have been organised in a partnership between the Goethe-Institut, the CTBF and the African Publishers' Network.

'The grant recipients will include a number of young people eager to learn and contribute to the sector in Africa, as well as more experienced publishers who have much to share with their colleagues.'

'The grant also aims to encourage more young people and women to remain in the publishing industry,' he says. The preference will be for publishers who have the potential to sell their content beyond their domestic markets.

Nobel Peace Prize winners honour fair

The Cape Town Book Fair is delighted to announce that Nobel Prize winner Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu and Nobel Prize for Literature laureate Professor Wole Soyinka will be the keynote speakers at the official opening of the fair.

'We are very excited about our guests and we are especially honoured that Archbishop Desmond Tutu will be launching his children's story book bible, **Children of God** at the fair.'

Children of God is Tutu's retelling of 56 of the most popular children's stories from the Old and New Testaments. Tutu describes it as 'a

culturally sensitive bible that tells the message that God is the God of all people', and whose overall themes are relationships and reconciliation.

The book was illustrated by authors from countries around the world and has already been translated into 12 languages, including Afrikaans, isiXhosa, isiZulu, Italian, German and French. The launch of the book will be open to the media and invited guests, and will be telecast via satellite to publishing houses around the world who are attending the fair.

'This is a cause for celebration,' says Tutu, in anticipation of the launch. 'I'm looking forward to holding that brand-new book in my hands at the book fair. It's been a two-year project and it's very close to my heart.'

The Archbishop has dedicated his book his friend the late Dr Luke Stubbs, a fellow Anglican priest whose idea it was to create this bible and have Tutu as the story-teller. The book comes with a CD audio version of the stories, told by Tutu.

Professor Soyinka, who is an outspoken critic of dictatorships in Africa and around the world, has just launched **You must set forth at dawn**, a memoir of the political history of Nigeria, where he was born. He will be a guest speaker at the opening ceremony and will publicise the book at the fair. 'Soyinka's presence underscores how the CTBF will be a truly African fair,' Kaiser says.

Meet the authors

Like every year, the fair will offer an exciting programme of events.

Many (other) renowned authors will also attend the fair. International bestselling writer Jodi Picoult will launch her new book **House rules**, which is about a boy with Asperger's Syndrome, and Chris van Wyk, author of **Shirley, goodness and mercy**, will launch **Eggs to lay, chickens to hatch**. Van Wyk's first book was a memoir of growing up in Johannesburg under apartheid. **Eggs to lay** is another childhood memoir but includes his family's domestic worker Agnes, a figure who was absent before.

Other authors attending include award-winning German-Dutch author Lutz van Dijk, whose books include **Stronger than the storm** and **A history of Africa**; Ingo Schultze, the German author of the short-story collection **33 moments of happiness**; Fred Khumalo; Emma Chen, author of **Emperor can wait**; Jay Naidoo, who wrote **Fighting for justice**, and Marion Keim, author of **uMama, Mandla Langa**, and many more.

Sales and exhibition manager of the CTBF Sadika Ahmed says that other attendees will include international publishers and printers from China, India, Britain and Europe.

The African delegates will include the recipients of the Goethe-Institut grant, as well as other independent African publishing representatives.

The Korean Publishers' Association will attend, as will a large contingent from the Arab world, among which one of the largest, the Abu Dhabi Authority for Culture and Heritage from the UAE, and delegates from the United Nations Publications and the United Nations Environment Programme.

'The United Nations has always felt this is a great opportunity for them and has always donated its left-over books to our library services,' Ahmed says.

'The Cape Town Book Fair is a premier event where all these publishers will meet the African and South African public.'

Wide-ranging literacy campaign

In a very exciting new project, the CTBF will work with the Frankfurt Book Fair - a part-owner of the CTBF - and other organisations, to launch several new literacy projects.

Reading rooms

The Literacy Campaign (LitCam) aims to establish several reading and learning rooms which will be set up in underprivileged areas.

The reading rooms will be built by Violence Prevention through Urban Upgrading which cooperates with other organisations, among them the Women for Peace Centre in Mfuleni. The first reading rooms will be built in Khayelitsha and Mfuleni in Cape Town. The reading and education rooms will be officially inaugurated on 29 July 2010, on the eve of the fair, with workshops, readings and cultural events to be held at the reading rooms throughout the year.

Writing competition

A writing competition will also be launched for the youth from the townships and members of the Women for Peace Centre. The competition will be called *Football moments - short stories from the townships*. It will last six months and the winners will be announced at the book fair next year, where they will have a chance to read their stories to an audience. 'We also hope to find a publisher for the stories,' says Kaiser. The writing competition will also be launched in the newly built community library in Khayelitsha, when it is completed in October.

During the book fair there will be a number of readings by authors living in the townships, and writing workshops will be held in all the townships where the reading rooms are to be built.

Literacy conference

In another move the CTBF is to host a conference on literacy, in co-operation with LitCam. This will be the first regional LitCam conference and the focus will be on basic education. Organisations working with literacy will be invited and the theme will be *Literacy and the marginalised youth*.

Project Literacy will once again host a fundraising dinner in co-operation with the CTBF. Details will be forthcoming.

Get free tickets and follow developments

Librarians are invited to email <info@capetownbookFair.co.za> to register with the Cape Town Book Fair to receive regular updates on the fair. Each library that registers will receive two complimentary tickets.

Entry fee to the CTBF is R60 per day, per adult. To find out more, log on to www.capetownbookFair.com or follow the book fair's updates on Facebook. If you want to receive a regular update on the fair via a newsletter please send your request to <info@capetownbookFair.co.za> or register on the web site to receive the newsletter.

