

# MACONDO LITERARY FESTIVAL - 2023 -



## 15th – 17th September Program Kenya National Theatre

Friday, September 15th

### various workshop venues

**starting at 10 am  
(prior registration only)**

- 1) Drawing our stories – with Chief Nyamweya
- 2) Character Interiority – with Makena Onjerika
- 3) Exploring your niche through poetry and storytelling – with Slim Shaka

### Auditorium

**4.30 pm**

**Opening ceremony**

featuring:  
Two opening roundtables with our guest artists  
Short readings from the works of our guest authors by The Orature Collective  
with Mshai Mwangola, Aleya Kassam

Saturday, September 16th

### Auditorium

**10 am – 11 am  
Rhyme and Space**

A silent, immersive spoken word poetry experience that celebrates our history, the power of language and the beauty of silence. Poets will perform with digital images and augmented reality. A multi-sensory performance that transports you to another dimension. a performance by Creative Spills

**12 noon – 1 pm  
Visual Novels: African World-Crafting & Imagined Histories**

Macondo foregrounds the rich world of the African graphic novel as a powerful and significant literary form. A generation that inhabits technology-enabled futures has been creating fascinating story worlds that colourfully challenge assumptions of what form the African story takes and what place it occupies in real and imagined worlds. What do history and home mean to them?

with **Mutendei Nabutete, Salim Busuru and Gado**  
Host: Grace Kerongo

**2 pm – 3 pm  
Writing generations, writing countries, writing home\***

Their novels speak families vividly, the individuals and the collective, over generations. As historical novels, that means they also speak countries. Engage with novelists **Leila Aboulela, Hemley Boum and Jennifer Makumbi** on their extraordinary writing of our histories, and how significant their work is for our futures.  
Host: Oduor Obura

**4 pm – 5.30 pm  
Let's talk Africa!\***

For the first time, writers of all of Africa's language writing zones are gathered at the festival. How do they transcend the language worlds with their stories? What do we as an imagined continental whole have in common? What can it mean to be African today?  
with **Aminatta Forna, Youssef Fadel, Djamila Ribeiro, Yvonne Owuor**  
Host: Mshai Mwangola

**6 pm – 7.30 pm  
Film Screening: The Battle of the Sacred Tree (1994)**

A film by Wanjiru Kinyanjui (1:20)  
Traditional beliefs come into conflict with missionary zeal in a Kikuyu village where life revolves around a sacred tree that exerts a strange power over everyone around it. This delightful Kenyan comedy tells the story of a free-spirited, strong-willed woman who defies social convention.

### Ukumbi Mdogo

**10.30 am – 11.30 am  
Meet the author:  
Hemley Boum (Cameroon)**

An accomplished novelist, poet and essayist, winner of the Grand Prix Littéraire d'Afrique Noire, Hemley is finally introduced to an English-reading audience with *Days Come and Go*, her first novel to be translated into English. What else have we been missing?  
Host: Beverly Ochieng

**12.30 pm – 1.30 pm  
Meet the author:  
Youssef Fadel (Morocco)**

"To be a writer, you have to be against the state." Does this statement resonate with you? Credited to be one of the most important writers of Morocco, a funny one on top of it, and one who comes up with the most beautiful titles for his novels, welcome Youssef Fadel on his first visit to Kenya and spend time with him discovering his world.  
Host: Oduor Obura

**2.30 pm – 3.30 pm  
Africa Book Launch:  
Kalaf Epalanga (Angola/  
Portugal)**

He tried to buy Lisbon for half price. He makes music, wins awards with his band, but says that he's neither a singer nor a musician. Who is Kalaf Epalanga? What roles do crioulo, kizomba, kuduro and cachupa play in the life of a man who, of course, is a writer at heart? Celebrate with him the publication of his first novel to be translated into English, "Whites can dance, too"  
Host: Aleya Kassam

**4.30 pm – 5.30 pm  
Meet the author:  
Kossi Komla-Ebri (Togo/Italy)**

"Our identities are never static, but dynamic. They are formed and transformed continuously, in the encounter and relationship with the other." This is what motivates this Togolese-Italian author, who once was a surgeon, and once founded the Network of the Black African Diaspora in Italy. Discover the diversity, the humor and the humanity of his writing.  
Host: Aleya Kassam

\* available as livestream on our YouTube channel

Sunday, September 17th

### Auditorium

**10 am -11 am  
Kenya Writes**

This session, started in 2022, continues our serial spotlighting on some of the exciting writing coming out of Kenya today. Authors **Carey Baraka, Lutivini Majanja and Silas Nyanchwani** share their writing journeys and imagine East African writing futures.  
Host: Beverly Ochieng

**12 noon – 1.30 pm  
100 Years of Samosas:  
An East African Story**

In this storytelling performance, **Aleya Kassam** shares the epic story of one family across the generations, re-making home, one samosa at a time. Because even as home changes, the samosas are always there. *Developed in Story Sosa Season 1*  
Followed by a conversation with **Zahid Rajan** about the Asian community in East Africa and their relationship to home(s).

**2 pm -3 pm  
One day I will write about this place\***

Few events have a more disrupting impact on a person than migrating to another land. How does the process of home-creating unfold in a 'strange' land? How does the human quest for a story of the world we can inhabit in safe intimacy unfold in a place of initial discomfort? Are you making a home in another language? We discover the migrant experience with three writers who are living it and discuss a glossary of words informed by a shared experience: leaving home.  
with **Kossi Komla-Ebri, Kalaf Epalanga, Jennifer Makumbi**  
Host: Natasha Kimani

**4 pm -5 pm  
Aminatta Forna's Window  
Seat\***

She is one of the most accomplished writers of our time. Her writing has been about memory, displacement and what constitutes us as humans. Let's share the window seat with Aminatta Forna to take a gaze at what kind of home making in our stories is possible.  
Host: Mshai Mwangola

**6 pm – 7 pm  
Juliani in concert at Macondo!**

### Ukumbi Mdogo

**10.30 am -11.30 am  
New Daughters of Africa**

200 women writers of African descent are featured in this extraordinary anthology, published three decades after the pioneering *Daughters of Africa*. A conversation between British-Montserratian novelist **Yvonne Edwards** and Kenyan Caine Prize winner **Makena Onjerika** whose short stories appear in the collection.  
In collaboration with *Stimmen Afrikas*  
Host: Natasha Kimani

**12.30 pm – 1.30 pm  
Imagine, Future, Maps**

Here are gifted story-crafters who project cosmologies, re-imagine pasts to engage the present and summon the future: Given the prevailing winds of time transforming what most had come to believe the world to be, engaging these writers' world-building and future-sculpting flair, what unexpected, refreshing, meaningful stories, ideas and questions can they conjure to renew the energies of our Africa nows and tomorrows? How does Africa become the main protagonist in a story of the future?  
With **Jennifer Makumbi, Masande Ntshanga**  
Host: Garnette Oluoch-Olunya

**2.30 pm – 3.30 pm  
The home in a story**

How do writers create elements of home in a story? Where does the inspiration for it come from? Do they use their own memories of home in a story, and how do they invent the idea of home for others? Does the story ever become a home to the writer during the creating process? How do story characters make it through the door and find a place on the writer's page?  
With **Leila Aboulela, Youssef Fadel, Yvonne Edwards**  
Host: Ismail Enashe

**4.30 pm – 5.30 pm  
The Displaced/  
Unplaced "Other"**

Two thinkers and writers who share a home, their country, with a community that historically dominated or still dominates people of African descent. Against this consciousness, how do they think, write and dream home? What are commonalities in their experiences of inhabiting South Africa and Brazil? **Masande Ntshanga** (South Africa) and **Djamila Ribeiro** (Brazil) in conversation.  
Host: Ismail Enashe