

MACONDO LITERARY FESTIVAL - 2024 -



20th – 22nd September Program Kenya National Theatre

Friday, September 20th

various workshop venues

10 am – 12 noon (prior registration)

- 1) Can the ocean be a character? – with Shubhangi Swarup
- 2) DIY monsters: Using the familiar to write the strange – with Khadija Abdalla Bajaber

2 pm – 4 pm (no prior registration)

- 3) From manuscript to masterpiece: How to get your book to your reader – with eKitabu (at Ukumbi Mdogo)

Auditorium

4.30 pm

Opening ceremony

Hosted by Mshai Mwangola, Aleya Kassam

Free of charge

Saturday, September 21st

Auditorium

10 am – 11 am

Meet the author: Shubnum Khan (South Africa)

She writes about djinns and marvels at life's unexpected nature, with a haunted mansion and a tragic love on her mind. She has written 3 books that she wants to talk to you about. Welcome South African novelist **Shubnum Khan** on her first visit to Kenya. *Hosted by Eddy Ashioya*

12 noon – 1 pm

Poetry in Protest

How necessary is the expression of dissent and defiance today? Performance poetry has been vital in social justice movements in Kenya. Renowned Kenyan poets **Mufasa, Nyash, Slim Shaka** and **Stella Kivuti** explore the intersection of art and activism and how poets have historically used their craft to confront injustice and spark transformation. And: We will be treated to a performance by each one of them! *The conversation is gently steered by Slim Shaka*

2 pm – 3.30 pm

Let's talk Africa!*

Writers of various corners of the continent and beyond are gathered for this future-dreaming, the second one in this series. They want to explore with you: What do we as an imagined continental whole have in common? What can it mean to be African, to be a citizen of the world today? With **João Melo, Jeferson Tenório, Hamza Koudri** and **Shubhangi Swarup** *Hosted by Mshai Mwangola*

4 pm – 5 pm

The relentless ocean winds*

Uncover the surprising and often deep connections that infuse stories across the Indian Ocean. Join celebrated authors **MG Vassanji, Shubhangi Swarup** and **Johary Ravaloson** as they share how their cultures intersect, shaping and influencing literary traditions. Engage with them on shared histories, rich narratives and cultural exchanges that have linked their worlds. *Hosted by Zulfikar Hirji*

6 pm – 7.30 pm

Film Screening: Vuta N'kuvute (Tug of war) (Tanzania, 2021)

A film by Amil Shivji (1:32)

A runaway Indian-Zanzibari bride forms a strong bond with a young communist in the tungsten lit, winding alleyways and washed down walls of 1950s British colonial Zanzibar. Love and resistance escalate in their personal struggles for what they love and resist the most. **Swahili with English subtitles** *In collaboration with UnSeen Nairobi*

Ukumbi Mdogo

10.30 am – 11.30 am

Meet the author: João Melo (Angola)

He was professor, advertiser, member of parliament and minister in the Angolan cabinet. He has written poetry, short stories, novels, articles and essays. Come and laugh, cry and read with Angolan novelist **João Melo** who finds his homeland wherever he plants his field. *Hosted by Lilian Momanyi*

12.30 pm – 1.30 pm

Writing the Self

How do you become a protagonist of your future? How do writers make sense of the time we find ourselves in? We explore how to inhabit an identity with novelists **Jeferson Tenório** and **Janika Oza** *Hosted by Aleya Kassam*

2.30 pm – 3.30 pm

Visual Storytelling: World Building, Future Imagining

How does the African imagination meet reality to craft new, meaningful worlds? Visual storytelling is not only a lens to the past but also a dynamic force that can call the future into being. Join renowned master world builders, concept artists and illustrators **Yvonne Muinde** and **Naddya Adhiambo Oluoch-Olunya** as they discuss their art and experiences of building worlds through story. *Hosted by Mutendei Nabutete*

4.30 pm – 5.30 pm

Siblings, Conflict, Transformation

Much like the sea's persistent tides, siblings navigate through conflicts that shape and transform their relationship and are etched into the narrative of their collective experience. How are these complexities expressed in literature? Join a conversation between **Chigozie Obioma, Hamza Koudri** and **Janika Oza** who write siblings masterfully. *Hosted by Bhakti Shringarpure*

* available as livestream on our YouTube channel

Sunday, September 22nd

Auditorium

10 am – 11.30 am

Kenya Writes

Since its inception in 2022, this session continues to shine a light on the vibrant literary scene evolving in Kenya. Join us as authors **Kiprop Kimutai, Scholastica Moraa, Buke Abduba, Alexis Teyie** and **Scholar Akinyi** reveal their creative journeys and envision the future of East African writing with their exhilarating stories and ideas. *Hosted by Mercy Kirui*

12 noon – 1 pm

Book Launch "Insurgent Feminisms: Writing War"

A collection that disobeys the rules of war writing by its explicit focus on gender. The book raises questions about how women write war, the urgency of witness, personal and collective memory, the question of genre and what might constitute an insurgent feminism. A conversation with co-editor **Bhakti Shringarpure** and author **Hassan Santur**. *Hosted by Garnette Oluoch-Olunya*

2 pm – 3 pm

Enchanted waters – Literary glimmerings of the boundless sea*

Immerse yourself in the African seas' boundless imagination. Join authors **Khadija Abdalla Bajaber, Shubnum Khan** and **Johary Ravaloson** as they reveal the magic and marvels that flow from the ocean's depths onto their pages. Discover how their tales are inspired by the complex, feral, raw, mysterious biography of the sea. How do these writers allow wonder and the mysterious to shape their telling of a story? *Hosted by Yvonne Adhiambo Owuor*

4 pm – 5 pm

The Audacity of Prose: A conversation with Chigozie Obioma*

For this Nigerian-born two-times Booker Prize shortlisted writer, to do "unheard-of" things with language is the most important factor. With his third novel just out in May, we chat with **Chigozie Obioma** about contexts versus tradition, writing historical fiction and the imaginative worlds of his stories. *Hosted by Bhakti Shringarpure*

6 pm – 7 pm

The Ocean speaks

A contemporary dance-based performance incorporating text, poetry, soundscapes, and visual impressions. It reflects upon the precolonial, colonial, and current significance of the Ocean in the formation of African nations, their current state and future, focusing on Kenya. *Choreographed by Adam Chienjo*

Ukumbi Mdogo

10.30 am – 11.30 am

Oceanic Threads: Tales of Family and Migration

Human beings have always turned themselves into global migrants, venturing across oceans. In this journey, families are both lost and found, and their stories reveal the intricate dance of adapting to new worlds while negotiating identity and tradition. A reflection on the stories of **Janika Oza** and **MG Vassanji** who have explored the themes in their novels. *Hosted by Zulfikar Hirji*

12.30 pm – 1.30 pm

Voices of Nature: Writing Non-Human Worlds

How can we bring the voices of oceans, forests, and the creatures that inhabit them to life on the page? Join novelist **Shubhangi Swarup** and biologist **Dino Martins** for an illuminating conversation on writing the non-human world with truth, empathy, and imagination, transforming nature from a mere backdrop into a living, breathing protagonist in our stories. *Hosted by Devika Singh*

2.30 pm – 3.30 pm

Bi Kidude: Bila Spika

In this staged reading, we hear the brazen story of Bi Kidude, queen of Taarab and Unyago, legendary musician and teacher, Zanzibar born, singing to sold-out audiences worldwide at over 100 years of age. Followed by a conversation about the ways our stories are carried – in music, in the ocean, in our bodies, in each other. *Hosted by The LAM Sisterhood*

4.30 pm – 5.30 pm

Tides & Transitions: Navigating History

Colonialism, slavery, forced migration and the appropriation of historic trade networks have wounded our sea relationships. Writers **MG Vassanji** and **Shubnum Khan** and researchers **Zulfikar Hirji** and **Mshai Mwangola** discuss how Indian Ocean literature illuminates historical injustices and disruptions. How do these narratives uncover the legacies that shaped the region? *Hosted by Godwin Siundu*