



AFRICAN POETRY BOOK FUND



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NEW AND ESTABLISHED AFRICAN POETS RECOGNIZED BY A NEW FUND

Kwame Dawes, Guggenheim Fellow and winner of the 2011 Barnes & Noble Writers for Writers Award, is pleased to announce the establishment of the African Poetry Book Fund and Series. Starting in January 2014, the Series will publish four new titles by African poets each year. In addition, the Series will publish an anthology every few years representing themes, ideas and poets from across the African continent. Of the four books published, one will be a winner of the Sillerman First Book Prize for African Poets, and a second will be a new and selected volume by a major African poet. The winner of the Sillerman prize will also receive a \$1000 in cash.

Ghanaian poet, Kofi Awoonor, is honoured to be the first major poet in the Series. His new and selected poems, with an introduction by fellow poet and scholar, Kofi Anyidoho, will be published in 2014.

This new, exciting Series has been made possible through seed funding from philanthropists, Laura and Robert F. X. Sillerman, whose generous contributions have facilitated the establishment of the African Poetry Book Fund. Mr. and Mrs. Sillerman welcome the use of their name for the Sillerman First Book Prize for African Poets.

The African Poetry Book Series will be the central feature of the work of the African Poetry Book Fund, established in July 2012 under Dawes' leadership at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. An Advisory Board has been established to support and guide the work of the African Poetry Book Fund. Confirmed Board Members include Laura Sillerman (President, The Tomorrow Foundation), Sulaiman Adebawale (Publisher, Amalion Publishing), Elizabeth Alexander (poet), Ellah Allfrey (Dep. Director, Granta magazine), Russell L. Goings (Poet, entrepreneur,) and Glenna Luschei (Poet, editor, and translator) and Peter Rorvik (Director, Centre for Creative Arts, South Africa).

Six internationally renowned writers serve on the Editorial Board for the Series. Ghanaian-born poet Kwame Dawes, as the founding Series Editor; South African poet Gabeba Baderoon; American novelist John Keene; Nigerian poet and novelist Chris Abani; Egyptian-American poet Matthew Shenoda; and British-Nigerian poet Bernardine Evaristo.

Key Partners

- University of Nebraska Press in the USA and Amalion Publishing in Senegal will ensure that the books are published, distributed and available worldwide in a collaborative venture.
- *Prairie Schooner*, the acclaimed literary journal, will be a key partner in this project offering administrative support and the management of the Sillerman First Book Prize for African Poets.
- Open Road Media, a digital publisher and multimedia company led by Jane Friedman, will handle the digital and e-books for the African Poetry Book Series.
- Blue Flower Arts, a leading booking agency for artists will represent the authors and promote the Series.
- The Brunel University African Poetry Prize for a portfolio of poems. Spearheaded by poet and novelist Bernardine Evaristo, the Brunel University African Poetry Prize will offer a cash award and publication in major international literary journals.

The African Poetry Book Fund with its key partners will also undertake to promote the writing and publication of African poetry through other international collaborations and partnerships, seminars, workshops and other publishing opportunities for African poets.

For general queries regarding the African Poetry Book Fund and the African Poetry Book Series contact:

James Madison Redd
Prairie Schooner
Publicity Associate
Department of English
University of Nebraska Lincoln
USA

Tel: +1 6624160302
Email: jimmyredd66@gmail.com
<http://africanpoetrybf.unl.edu>

For additional information for Africa and UK publication details contact:

Sulaiman Adebawale
Amalion Publishing
133 Cité Assemblée Ouakam
BP 5637 Dakar-Fann
Dakar, Senegal

Tel: +221 338601904
Email: publish@amalion.net
<http://www.amalion.net>
<http://www.twitter.com/amalion>
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