

# *Africa39*

## Authors Biographies

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Chimamanda **ADICHIE** Ngozi (Nigeria)

Born in Nigeria, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie is the author of the novels *Purple Hibiscus*, *Half of a Yellow Sun* and *Americanah* and the story collection *The Thing Around Your Neck*. Translated into over thirty languages, her work has been awarded prizes including the Commonwealth Writer's Prize, the Orange Prize and the National Book Critics Circle Award for Fiction.

Richard **ALI MUTU** (Congo)

Richard Ali Mutu writes in Lingala. The winner of the 2009 Mark Twain Prize, he published his first novel, *Le cauchemardesque de Tabu*, in 2009. He has also written poetry, monologues and theatre performance pieces.

Monica **ARAC** de Nyeko (Uganda)

Monica Arac de Nyeko is from Uganda. She was shortlisted for the Caine Prize for African Writing in 2004 for her story 'Strange Fruit', going on to win the prize in 2007 for 'Jambula Tree'.

Rotimi **BABATUNDE** (Nigeria)

Rotimi Babatunde writes poems, plays and prose fiction. His story 'Bombay's Republic' was awarded the 2012 Caine Prize for African Writing. His plays have been produced by the Young Vic in London, the Halcyon Theatre in Chicago, and Sweden's Riksteatern, among others. He lives in Nigeria.

Eileen **BARBOSA** (Cape Verde)

Eileen Almeida Barbosa is a Cape Verdean writer and advisor to the Prime Minister. She is the recipient of the inaugural National Pantera Revelation Prize 2005 for Short Stories and the Pantera Revelation Prize 2005 for Poetry. Her story collection, *Eileenistic*, was published in 2007. She is currently at work on a second collection.

A. Igoni **BARRETT** (Nigeria)

A. Igoni Barrett is the author of the story collection *Love Is Power, or*

*Something Like That*. He is the winner of a BBC World Service short story competition, the recipient of a Chinua Achebe Center Fellowship, a Norman Mailer Center Fellowship, and a Rockefeller Foundation Bellagio Center Residency. He lives in Lagos.

Jackee Budesta **BATANDA** (Uganda)

Jackee Budesta Batanda is a short story writer and independent journalist. The Africa regional winner of the 2003 Commonwealth Short Story Competition, her work has been performed on the BBC World Service and appears in publications including the *New York Times*, the *Boston Globe* and the *Mail & Guardian*. She is currently at work on a novel.

Recaredo **BOTURU** (Equatorial Guinea)

Recaredo Silebo Boturu is a poet, playwright, actor and theatre director from Equatorial Guinea. His award-winning articles have been published in the *Afro-Hispanic Review* and in both Equatoguinean and Spanish publications. His collection of poetry and plays, *Luz en la Noche* (Light in the Night), was published in 2010.

Nana **BREW**-Hammond (Ghana-USA)

Nana Ekuia Brew-Hammond is a Ghanaian-American writer living in New York. Her fiction, poetry and essays have been published by *African Writing*, *Ebony.com*, *Sunday Salon* and *Nike*, among others. *Publishers Weekly* hailed her novel *Powder Necklace* as 'a winning debut'. Most recently, she founded the blog People Who Write.

Shadreck **CHIKOTI** (Malawi)

Shadreck Chikoti is a Malawian writer. His awards include the 2013 Peer Gynt Literary Award for his forthcoming futuristic novel, *Azotus the Kingdom*. He is vice president of the Malawi Writers Union and Director of Pan African Publishers Ltd.

Edwige-Renée **DRO** (Ivory Coast)

Edwige-Renée Dro worked as a marketing assistant and community journalist in the UK before moving back to Cote d'Ivoire. Her stories have been published *Prima* magazine and *africanwriter.com*. She is currently completing work on her first novel and is the founder of Abidjan Lit, an African fiction book group.

Tope **FOLARIN** (Nigeria)

Tope Folarin made his fiction debut in *Transition* with 'Miracle' in 2012, for which he was awarded the Caine Prize for African Writing in 2013. He is a

graduate of Morehouse College and the University of Oxford, where he earned two Master's degrees as a Rhodes Scholar. He lives in Washington DC.

Clifton **GACHAGUA** (Kenya)

Clifton Gachagua is the recipient of the 2013 inaugural Sillerman Prize for African Poetry. In 2013 he was longlisted for the 2013 *Kwani?* Manuscript Project and his debut poetry collection, *The Madman at Kilifi*, was published in 2014. His work has appeared in publications including Storymoja and *Kwani?* He is currently an editor and television scriptwriter.

Stanley **GAZEMBA** (Malawi)

Stanley Gazemba is a journalist and the author of three novels: *The Stone Hills of Maragoli*, *Khama* and *Callused Hands* and eight children's books. A recipient of the Jomo Kenyatta Prize, his articles and stories have appeared in publications including 'A' is for Ancestors, the Caine Prize Anthology, the *East African* and the *New York Times*.

Mehul **GOHIL** (Kenya)

Mehul Gohil was born in Nairobi, Kenya. He is the winner of the *Kwani?* 'The Kenya I live In' short story prize in 2010. His fiction has been published in *Kwani?* and on several online platforms including Short Story Day Africa. His journalism has appeared in publications including the *Shaban Journal* and chessbase.com.

Hawa Jande **GOLAKAI** (Liberia)

Hawa Jande Golakai was born in Liberia and has lived in several African countries. Her debut novel, *The Lazarus Effect*, was shortlisted for the 2011 *Sunday Times* Fiction Prize, the University of Johannesburg Debut Prize and longlisted for the Wole Soyinka Prize. She works as a medical immunologist and is currently completing her second novel.

Shafinaaz **HASSIM** (South Africa)

Shafinaaz Hassim is a South African writer and sociologist. She is the author of the novel, *SoPhia* (2012) and several works of nonfiction. A social commentator and contributor to the *Mail & Guardian*, her work has been short-listed for the K Sello Duiker Award and the University of Johannesburg Debut Prize for Creative Writing.

Abubakar Adam **IBRAHIM** (Nigeria)

Abubakar Adam Ibrahim's debut story collection *The Whispering Trees* was

long listed for the inaugural 2014 Etisalat Prize for Literature; the title story was shortlisted for the 2013 Caine Prize for African Writing. A 2013 Gabriel García Márquez Fellow, he won the BBC African Performance Prize in 2007. He lives in Abuja, Nigeria where he works as an arts editor for a national newspaper.

Stanley Onjezani **KENANI** (Kenya)

Stanley Onjezani Kenani was born in Malawi and currently lives in Switzerland. He has twice been shortlisted for the Caine Prize for African Writing, in 2008 and 2012. He is the author of the story collection *For Honour and Other Stories* and is currently working on his first novel.

Dinaw **MENGESTU** (Ethiopia-USA)

Dinaw Mengestu was born in Addis Ababa and is the award-winning author of three novels, including *All Our Names*, published in 2014. His journalism and fiction appears in publications including *Harper's*, *Granta* and the *New Yorker*. The recipient of numerous awards including the *Guardian* First Book award and a 2012 MacArthur Foundation genius grant, he currently lives in New York City.

Nadifa **MOHAMED** (Somalia-England)

Nadifa Mohamed was born in Hargeisa and moved to England with her family in 1986. Her first novel, *Black Mamba Boy*, was shortlisted for the *Guardian* First Book Award and was awarded the Betty Trask Prize. In 2013 she was selected as one of *Granta's* Best of Young British Novelists. Her second novel is *The Orchard of Lost Souls*.

Nthikeng **MOHLELE** (South Africa)

Nthikeng Mohlele was born in 1977 and grew up in Limpopo and Tembisa township, South Africa. A graduate of the University of the Witwatersrand, he is the author of the novels *The Scent of Bliss* and *Small Things*.

Linda **MUSITA** (Kenya)

Linda Musita is a writer, editor and lawyer. She is a literary agent at Lelsleigh Inc in Nairobi and an editor at the *Star* newspaper. Her fiction has been published on the Storymoja publishers' blog and the *Daily Nation*. A Storymoja Hay Festival 2012/13 fellow, she is currently working on her first novel.

Sifiso **MZOMBE** (South Africa)

Sifiso Mzobe was born in Durban, South Africa. His debut novel, *Young Blood*, was awarded the 2011 Herman Charles Bosman Award, the 2011

*Sunday Times* Fiction Prize, the 2011 South African Literary Award and the Wole Soyinka Prize for Literature in Africa. He currently works as a freelance journalist and is writing his second novel.

Glaydah **NAMUKASA** (Uganda)

Glaydah Namukasa is a midwife and writer. Currently chairperson of the Uganda

Women Writers' Association, Femrite, her awards include the Macmillan Writers Prize for Africa. Her short stories are published in anthologies in Uganda, South Africa, UK, US and Sweden. She is the author of three children's books and is currently completing her first novel.

Kioko **NDINDA** (Kenya-England)

Kioko Ndinda is a Kenyan-born writer and filmmaker. Her stories have been published in *Fresh Paint - Literary Vignettes by Kenyan Women*, and Amka Space for Women's Creativity and other publications including *Sanaa* literary magazine. A new story is forthcoming in *Jalada Africa*, an African writers' collective.

**ONDJAKI** (Angola)

Ondjaki was born in Luanda. He is the recipient of numerous prizes, including the 2008 Grande Prémio de Conto Camilo Castelo Branco awarded by the Portuguese Writers' Association and the Prémio Jabuti. His novel *Os Transparentes* was awarded the Saramago Prize in 2013. He currently lives in Rio de Janeiro.

Okwiri **ODUOR** (Kenya)

Okwiri Oduor was born in Nairobi, Kenya. Her novella, *The Dream Chasers* was highly commended in the Commonwealth Book Prize, 2012 and her work has appeared or is forthcoming in Amka and Femrite anthologies, the *New Inquiry*, *Kwani?*, *Saraba* magazine, and Africa Writing Online. She is a 2014 MacDowell Colony fellow.

Ukamaka **OLISAKWE** (Nigeria)

Ukamaka Olisakwe was raised in Kano State. Her debut novel, *Eyes of a Goddess*, was published in 2012. Her stories have appeared in various online journals and blogs including *Saraba*, *Sentinel Nigeria*, Short Story Day Africa and Naija Stories. She writes a weekly column for the Nigerian *Telegraph*.

Chibundu **ONUZO** (Nigeria)

Chibundu Onuzo's debut novel, *The Spider King's Daughter*, was longlisted for the

Desmond Elliott Prize, shortlisted for the Dylan Thomas Prize and the Commonwealth Book Prize. She writes comment pieces for the *Guardian*, with a special interest in Nigeria. She is currently completing a Masters in Public Policy and writing her second novel.

Taiye **SELASI** (Ghana-Nigeria-England)

Taiye Selasi was born in London of Ghanaian and Nigerian parentage. Raised in

Massachusetts, her debut novel, *Ghana Must Go*, was published to international acclaim in over 13 countries. In 2013 she was selected as one of *Granta's* Best of Young British novelists. She lives in Rome and is writing her second novel.

Namwali **SERPELL** (Zambia)

Born in Lusaka, Namwali Serpell is an assistant professor at the University of California, Berkeley. She is the author of a book of literary criticism and her fiction has appeared in publications including *Callaloo*, *Tin House* and *The Best American Short Stories 2009*. She was shortlisted for the 2010 Caine Prize for African Literature and is a Rona Jaffe Foundation Writers' Award recipient.

Lola **SHOYENIN** (Nigeria)

Lola Shoneyin is the author of three volumes of poetry and two children's books. *The Secret Lives of Baba Segi's Wives*, her debut novel, was long-listed for the Orange Prize for Fiction and won the PEN Oakland Josephine Miles Literary Award and the Ken Saro-Wiwa Prose Prize. She is the director of the Aké Arts and Book festival.

Nii Ayikwei **PARKES** (Ghana)

Nii Ayikwei Parkes is a writer, editor and performance poet. His debut novel, *Tail of the Blue Bird*, was shortlisted for the Commonwealth Prize and translated into Dutch, German, French and Japanese. He is the publisher at flipped eye publishing, one of the reading series.

Novuyo Rosa **TSHUMA** (Zimbabwe)

Novuyo Rosa Tshuma is a Zimbabwe-born writer. Her short fiction has appeared in publications including the 2010 *Caine Prize Anthology*. She was awarded the 2009 Yvonne Vera Award and her debut collection was published 2013. She is currently a Maytag Fellow at the MFA Creative Writing Programme at the University of Iowa.

Chika **UNIGWE** (Nigeria)

Chika Unigwe was born in Enugu, Nigeria. She is the author of *On Black Sisters Street* and *Night Dancer*. She is the most recent winner of the Nigeria Literature Award and her work has been published extensively in journals and papers around the world including the *New York Times* and the UK *Guardian*.

Mary **WATSON** (South Africa)

Mary Watson published her debut story collection, *Moss*, in 2001 and was the 2006 winner of the Caine Prize for African Writing. She is the author of the literary thriller *The Cutting Room*, and a contributor to several anthologies. Her work has been translated into languages including Arabic, Italian, German and Dutch.

Zukiswa **WANNER** (Zambia)

Zukiswa Wanner was born in Zambia of South African and Zimbabwean parentage. Her debut novel, *The Madams*, was published in 2006. She is the author of three additional novels as well as being a regular contributor to publications including the *New African*, the *Mail & Guardian*, *Elle* and *O* magazine.

Mohamed Yunnis **RAFIQ** (Tanzania)

Mohamed Yunus Rafiq is a writer and independent documentary film maker. The coauthor of a poetry collection, *Landscapes of the Heart*, he is also a member of the internationally acclaimed hip-hop group Xplastaz collective based in Tanzania and the co-founder of Aang Serian Peace Village, a youth-led cultural preservation organization.