

**EMBARGOED UNTIL 00.01
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Olufemi Terry Wins 2010 Caine Prize for African Writing

Sierra Leone's Olufemi Terry has won the 2010 Caine Prize for African Writing, described as Africa's leading literary award, for *'Stickfighting Days'* from *Chimurenga* vol 12/13, Cape Town. The Chair of Judges, *The Economist's* Literary Editor Fiammetta Rocco, announced Olufemi as the winner of the £10,000 prize at a dinner held this evening (Monday 5 July) at the Bodleian Library in Oxford.

Fiammetta Rocco said "ambitious, brave and hugely imaginative, Olufemi Terry's *'Stickfighting Days'* presents a heroic culture that is Homeric in its scale and conception. The execution of this story is so tight and the presentation so cinematic, it confirms Olufemi Terry as a talent with an enormous future."

Olufemi Terry was born in Sierra Leone of African and Antillean parentage. He grew up in Nigeria, the U.K, and Cote d'Ivoire before attending university in New York. Subsequently, Olufemi lived in Kenya and worked as a journalist and analyst in Somalia and Uganda. He lives in Cape Town where he is writing his first novel. His writing has appeared in *Chimurenga*, *New Contrast* and *The Caine Prize for African Writing's* Eighth Annual Collection.

Also shortlisted were:

- Ken Barris (South Africa) *'The Life of Worm'* from *New Writing from Africa 2009*, published by Johnson & King James Books, Cape Town
- Lily Mabura (Kenya) *'How Shall We Kill the Bishop?'* from *Wasafiri* N°53, Spring 2008
- Namwali Serpell (Zambia) *'Muzungu'* from *The Best American Short Stories 2009*, published by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, Boston MA
- Alex Smith (South Africa) *'Soulmates'* from *New Writing from Africa 2009* [as above].

Fiammetta Rocco is a third-generation Kenyan. She was educated at Oxford University where she read Arabic. Her investigative journalism has won awards on both sides of the Atlantic. She is now the literary editor of *The Economist* and the author of *The Miraculous Fever Tree: The Cure that Changed the World*. She is joined on the panel by *Granta* deputy editor Ellah Allfrey, Professor Jon Cook of the University of East Anglia, award-winning novelist Hisham Matar and Georgetown University Professor Samantha Pinto.

Once again the winner of the £10,000 Caine Prize will be given the opportunity to take up a month's residence at Georgetown University, Washington DC, as a 'Caine Prize/Georgetown University Writer-in-Residence'. The award will cover all travel and living expenses.

Last year the Caine Prize was won by Nigerian writer EC Osondu for his short story '*Waiting*' from Guernicamag.com, October 2008. Chair of judges Nana Yaa Mensah called it "a tour de force describing, from a child's point of view, the dislocating experience of being a displaced person. It is powerfully written with not an ounce of fat on it – and deeply moving."

Previous winners include Uganda's Monica Arac de Nyeko, for '*Jambula Tree*' from *African Love Stories*, Ayebia Clarke Publishing, 2006, and Brian Chikwava, from Zimbabwe, whose first novel *Harare North* was published in 2009 by Jonathan Cape. Sudan's Leila Aboulela, winner of the first Caine Prize in 2000, will publish her new novel *Lyrics Alley* in January 2011 with Weidenfeld & Nicolson, and this August will see the publication by Hamish Hamilton of *Oil on Water*, the third novel by Nigerian writer Helon Habila, who won the second Caine Prize in 2001.

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Notes to Editors

The Caine Prize, awarded annually for African creative writing, is named after the late Sir Michael Caine, former Chairman of Booker plc and Chairman of the Booker Prize management committee for nearly 25 years. The Prize is awarded for a short story by an African writer published in English (indicative length 3,000 to 10,000 words). An "African writer" will normally be taken to mean someone who was born in Africa, or who is a national of an African country, or whose parents are African, and whose work has reflected that cultural background.

The African winners of the Nobel Prize for Literature, Wole Soyinka, Nadine Gordimer and J M Coetzee, are Patrons of The Caine Prize, as is Chinua Achebe. Baroness Nicholson of Winterbourne is President of the Council and Jonathan Taylor is the Chairman.

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