

THE CAINE PRIZE
FOR AFRICAN WRITING

Always something new from Africa

Annual report
2013

'Report on the 2013 Caine Prize and related activities'

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Introduction

On 21st March 2013 Chinua Achebe died in Boston. He was a patron of the Caine Prize and one of the giants of African literature. Our Vice President, Ben Okri, paid tribute to him at the Award Dinner in Oxford in July saying he was “a writer who had passed in to the canon...Chinua Achebe was undeniably Literature with a capital L”. In the same year we also lost Father Alvaro Ribeiro, who was the Chair of Judges in 2004 and had been a long term supporter of the Prize at Georgetown University where we have continuing links. Our Chairman, Jonathan Taylor, paid tribute to him at the Award Dinner.

The 2011 Caine Prize winner NoViolet Bulawayo was shortlisted for the 2013 Man Booker Prize for her debut novel *We Need New Names*, published by Chatto and Windus. The novel features her Caine Prize winning short story “Hitting Budapest” (which was first published in *The Boston Review*) as the first chapter and certainly fulfils the Chair of Judges, Hisham Matar’s assessment that “NoViolet Bulawayo is certainly a writer who takes a delight in language.”

This year was the first year in which an African born in America succeeded in winning Caine Prize. Tope Folarin, a Nigerian American, with Nigerian parents, won the Prize for his story “Miracle” published in *Transition* magazine, which was born in Kampala, Uganda, and bred in the diaspora, now published at Harvard. His win inspired a conversation in the literary world about the boundaries of the far-flung African diaspora and what it means to be an African writer. This debate is fuelled by NoViolet Bulawayo’s inclusion on the Man Booker shortlist. Set in both Zimbabwe and the USA, NoViolet’s home-grown Zimbabwean talent has been nurtured by American academic institutions such as Cornell and Stanford and is now recognised as not only the first Zimbabwean to make the shortlist of the Man Booker Prize, but also the first black African woman to be shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize.

So while we support writers now living and working in the diaspora, we continue to be committed to making Caine Prize stories available to read on the African continent. There are now seven African co-publishers in Nigeria, Kenya, South Africa, Uganda, Zambia, Ghana and Zimbabwe and we hope to continue to add to this list of publishing partners. We are delighted that this year we have been approached by a French publisher called Zulma who hope to publish 12 Caine Prize winning and shortlisted stories in translation in a French language anthology next year. We have also begun an exciting new project with Mukoma wa Ngugi at Cornell University to translate the last six Caine Prize winning stories in to African languages. We hope to launch the translations at a conference at Cornell next autumn. In addition we have been approached by a new international literary magazine for the Arabic language called Kikah, to introduce our winning and shortlisted stories to readers in Arabic and hope to develop this relationship in 2014.

This year’s anthology *A Memory This Size* features the stunning cover designed for us by the acclaimed designer Michael Salu, who blends the image of oil on water with diametric design of printed African fabrics. We hope Michael will design future covers for us in a similar style creating a more branded look for our anthologies. The anthology is available as an e-book supported by Kindle, iBooks and Kobo and we are continuing to develop our partnership with the literacy NGO Worldreader to make the first nine award-winning stories since 2000 available free to African readers via an app on their mobile phones.

2013 Prize

“Africa’s most important literary award.” – *International Herald Tribune*

This year’s Prize was won by Tope Folarin for his story ‘Miracle’ published in *Transition* Issue 109 (Bloomington, 2012) <http://dubois.fas.harvard.edu/transition-magazine>. Tope Folarin is the recipient of writing fellowships from the Institute for Policy Studies and Callaloo, and he serves on the board of the Hurston/Wright Foundation. Tope was educated at Morehouse College, and the University of Oxford, where he earned two Master’s degrees as a Rhodes Scholar. He lives and works in Washington, DC. He is working on a novel and signed up with an agent at Lippincott Massie McQuilkin in New York, who also represents Uwem Akpan and Nadine Gordimer.

The 2013 shortlist was selected from 96 entries from 16 African countries and comprised Pede Hollist (Sierra Leone) for ‘Foreign Aid’ from *Journal of Progressive Human Services*, Vol. 23.3 (Philadelphia, 2012) www.tandfonline.com/loi/wphs20#.UZOV4bVlk_g; Abubakar Adam Ibrahim (Nigeria) for ‘The Whispering Trees’ from *The Whispering Trees*, published by Parrésia Publishers (Lagos, 2012) www.parresiapublishers.com; Elnathan John (Nigeria) for ‘Bayan Layi’ from *Per Contra*, Issue 25 (USA, 2012) www.percontra.net; Chinelo Okparanta (Nigeria) for ‘America’ from *Granta*, Issue 118 (London, 2012) www.granta.com. All these stories are available to read and download on our website.

Among the five stories chosen are an unprecedented four Nigerian entries. Two of the writers shortlisted, Elnathan John and Abubakar Ibrahim attended the Caine Prize workshop in Uganda in April 2013.

The panel of judges was chaired by Dr Gus Casely-Hayford, art historian and broadcaster, who presented the eight part documentary series ‘Lost Kingdoms of Africa’ on the BBC. Joining him were the award-winning Nigerian-born artist, Sokari Douglas Camp; author, columnist and Lord Northcliffe Emeritus Professor at UCL, John Sutherland; Assistant Professor at Georgetown University, Nathan Hensley and the winner of the Caine Prize in its inaugural year, Leila Aboulela. This is the first time that a past winner of the Caine Prize has taken part in the judging. We thank them warmly.

The Chair of Judges summarized the shortlist as “Outstanding African stories that were drawn from an extraordinary body of high quality submissions. The five contrasting titles interrogate aspects of things that we might feel we know of Africa – violence, religion, corruption, family, community – but these are subjects that are deconstructed and beautifully remade. These are challenging, arresting, provocative stories of a continent and its descendants captured at a time of burgeoning change.”

Gus Casely-Hayford praised the winning story, saying: “Tope Folarin's ‘Miracle’ is another superb Caine Prize winner – a delightful and beautifully paced narrative, that is exquisitely observed and utterly compelling”.

Entries and shortlist analysis

“A fledgling generation of African writers, shortlisted for prizes, need readers all over the world to embrace their work” – Erica Wagner, T2, The Times

To date 18 countries in Africa have been represented on the Caine Prize shortlist. In addition to Anglophone writers, we have shortlisted authors in translation from 5 countries: Benin, Djibouti, Tunisia, Congo-Brazzaville and Mozambique. Since the Prize was founded in 1999 we have received eligible submissions from over a thousand writers from 37 African countries. The countries we have received eligible entries from are: Algeria, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Cameroon, Comores, Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, Sudan, Tanzania, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

The 2013 Workshop

“A springboard for emerging writers to enter the world of mainstream publishing.” – Sunday Independent, South Africa

This year’s workshop, our eleventh, was held at the Garuga Beach Resort on Lake Victoria, Entebbe, Uganda. We are grateful to Beatrice Lamwaka and Hilda Twongyeire of FEMRITE for finding the venue for us and to Goretti Kyomuhendo at the African Writers Trust, for all her useful advice. Lizzy Attree attended and organised the workshop with animateurs Veronique Tadjou (Cote d’Ivoire) and Pamela Nichols (UK/South Africa) who are both based at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg. Twelve writers took part from six African countries and two participants have since been shortlisted (for stories published previously).

Arrangements were made with the British Council to ensure writers interacted with students at a local school. Writers visited St Mary’s Boys Catholic School in Kisubi and held a successful reading of both writers’ stories and stories the students had written themselves.

FEMRITE also organised a book launch at the Barn Steakhouse in Kampala which was attended by the British High Commissioner. Copies of the Ugandan edition of *African Violet* were on sale (and sold out). It was a very successful evening. We thank all our partners and the participants for their commitment to the process.

Anthologies

The 2013 anthology *A Memory This Size and other stories* was published on 1st July 2013 and contains the stories from the 14th annual Caine Prize shortlist, along with those from our 11th workshop for African writers. The stories were praised in a review of the anthology in *The Sunday Times* magazine in South Africa on Sunday 6th October 2013 as "Superb... Meet talented writers you’ve never read before, many of whom will go on to write books that you will not be able to resist buying”.

Copies of *A Memory This Size* were on sale at all the Caine Prize public events (see below) and overall sales are so far encouraging.

Sales of the 2012 anthology *African Violet and other stories* total 9,603, a significant increase on the previous year's sales. The increase is largely due to the 3,000 copies ordered by Sub-Saharan Publishers in Ghana who have made sales to schools. Otherwise Kwani? ordered 1,000 copies, Bookworld 500, FEMRITE 1,000, Cassava Republic 2,000, 'ama Books 300 and Jacana Media 700.

Assuming similar numbers are ordered by co-publishers this year, this will add a total of 8,400 to current sales of 987 copies of *A Memory This Size* in the UK, US, Australia and New Zealand since July.

These figures include sales of ebooks and we have sold over 300 (in total) of the 10 years anthology; the 2011 and 2012 editions. The potential for this to develop in the UK and US markets and Africa are growing every day.

Translation

Three translation projects are in process, with the French publisher Zulma embarking on an anthology of twelve stories to be published next year. The stories have been selected by the French editor from the last three years of Caine Prize anthologies and the writers will be paid 300 Euros each for their stories. Academics at Cornell University is leading the African language translation venture which will be launched at a conference on African Literature in the World in Autumn 2014. At present the proposal entails translating Tope Folarin's "Miracle" and Rotimi Babatunde's "Bombay's Republic" in to Yoruba; NoViolet Bulawayo's "Hitting Budapest" in to Ndebele; Femi Terry's "Sticking fighting days" in to Kiswahili; EC Osondu's "Waiting" in to Igbo and Henrietta Rose-Innes' "Poison" in to Afrikaans or Xhosa.

We expect that by working with the new Arabic language literary magazine Kikah we will be able to encourage and facilitate a similar project of translation of Caine Prize winning stories in to Arabic.

Public Events

There has been a wide ranging programme of public events spanning the UK, Africa and the USA.

Thursday 4 July

The British Council supported lunch for the five 2013 shortlisted writers at the Clarence on Whitehall in London which was very successful with 20 publishers, agents and media guests in attendance.

The Royal Overseas League event in the evening was chaired by Lizzy Attree and introduced the 2013 shortlisted writers to a London audience for the first time. A less formal layout than previous years, with guests on round tables with a glass of wine was very successful.

Friday 5 July

The academic event at the British Library (with ASA UK & part of Africa Writes) featured Zoe Wicomb and Doreen Baingana in discussion with Professor Stephanie Newell. Doreen Baingana then chaired a discussion with the shortlisted writers. The event was followed by a dinner at the British Museum hosted by the Royal African Society. We thank ASA UK warmly for their support.

Saturday 6 July

The Book group event at the British Library as part of Africa Writes was hosted by Tricia Wombell, founder of the blog Black Book News and co-ordinator of the Black Reading Group (London's longest running black book group), following a joint book group meeting at Waterstone's Piccadilly in May when the shortlisted stories were discussed. This event was well programmed occurring just before the main event Ngugi wa Thiongo in conversation with his son Mukoma wa Ngugi.

Sunday 7 July

The Southbank event was chaired by Nii Parkes from African Writers Evening who was in conversation with the 2013 shortlisted writers.

Wednesday 10 July

A workshop was arranged with the British Council to focus on publishing (with Cathy Rentzenbrink), the role of agents (with Juliet Mushens from The Agency) and screen writing (with Rory Kilalea).

7-11 September 2013

Following the success of the 2011 & 2012 Caine Prize winners NoViolet Bulawayo and Rotimi Babatunde's participation in the first two Open Book Festivals, Tope Folarin took part in three events at the third Festival in Cape Town. Co-directed by Frankie Murray and Mervyn Sloman from The Book Lounge and supported by Leopard's Leap vineyard each year the festival supports the creation of a library in a local school (this year in Mitchell's Plain). The events were held at the Fugard Theatre and studios linked to the District Six Museum Homecoming Centre in Cape Town.

Monday 9 September 2013

'Short stories – an eternal love' featured Tope Folarin, Liesl Jobson, Reneilwe Malatji and Khosi Xaba discussing their short fiction with Michiel Heyns in the Fugard Annexe 1, Cape Town.

Tuesday 10 September 2013

'Caine Prize 2013' featured Tope Folarin in conversation with with Chris Ouma discussing his winning story 'Miracle' in the Fugard Studio, Cape Town.

Wednesday 11 September 2013

'Location Location Location!' featured NoViolet Bulawayo, Teju Cole, Tope Folarin and Mukoma wa Ngugi who discussed the intersection of national identity and place, chaired by Yewande Omotoso in the Fugard Studio, Cape Town.

The Open Book Festival featured more than 100 events over five days, there were more than 100 authors including two of Granta's Best of Young British Novelists, Kamila Shamsie and Sunjeev Sahota, joined the newly crowned 2013 Caine Prize winner in Cape Town. Overall the Caine Prize presence was widely recognised and effective.

Friday 27 September 2013

Africare hosted a panel discussion at Pace University on how African identity is communicated in contemporary literature and media. Uzodinma Iweala moderated a panel comprised of Hannah Pool, TMS Ruge, Dr. Carole Boyce Davies and Tope Folarin.

Wednesday 30 October 2013

'The Caine Prize night of African Writing' featuring Gus Casely-Hayford, Allah Allfrey, Sokari Douglas Camp and Bernardine Evaristo discuss the state of African literature and its impact on, and success in, the UK and US publishing industry, at Brixton Library as part of Black History Month.

Tuesday 5 November 2013

Tope Folarin will appear at the Harvard Book Store for an Evening with Transition Magazine.

Saturday 16 November 2013

Tope Folarin will appear at Brooklyn Public Library, New York, as part of AfriLit 2013.

February – March 2014

As has been the case in recent years, the winner has been invited to undertake a residency at Georgetown University in Washington at the Lanaan Center for Poetics and Social Practice. Tope has decided to take up the opportunity in February 2014 and we intend to organise further events in the USA around his schedule.

Finance

The Prize and its attendant programmes came in on budget, and, despite inevitable rises in costs, net expenditure on them has been held fairly steady over the past four years. There were no exceptional items other than travel to South Africa for the 2013 Caine Prize winner and the Administrator to attend the Open Book Festival which was considered worthwhile.

Details of income and expenditure, with a provisional budget forecast for next year, are attached separately.

The principal supporters and partners of the 2013 Prize were The Oppenheimer Memorial Trust, The Booker Prize Foundation, Miles Morland, Weatherly International plc, China Africa Resources plc, and CSL Stockbrokers. The DOEN Foundation primarily supported the workshop in Uganda and support was also received in kind from the British Council, FEMRITE and the African Writers' Trust. The British Council and Commonwealth Writers, a cultural initiative of the Commonwealth Foundation, and the Lennox and Wyfield Foundation also gave valuable support. Kenya Airways and the Beit Trust both provided travel grants for workshop participants. John and Judy Niepold gave a generous private donation and there were also a pleasing number of private donations occasioned by the dinner.

We are most grateful for the valuable and vital support in kind we receive from: the Royal Overseas League (for accommodation); Bodley's Librarian Sarah Thomas (for the Divinity School); Frances Cairncross, Rector of Exeter College, Oxford for the use of her Garden and Drawing Room to hold the reception before the Dinner; Edwin Wulfsohn, Stenham Resources and Raitt Orr for providing meeting rooms.

In addition we would like to thank: Richard Dowden, Richard May, Sheila Ruiz, Dele Fatunla and Fadil Elobeid at the Royal African Society; Marion Wallace of the British Library; Stephanie Newell and Ranka Primorac of ASAUK; Jacqueline Auma, founder and organiser of the London Afro-Caribbean Book Group; Tricia Wombell, founder of the blog Black Book News and co-ordinator of the Black Reading Group; Nii Parkes, founder of African Writers' Evening; and the Southbank Centre.

Finally we would like to thank the Trustees of Africa 95 and members of the Caine Prize council for all their help and support.

We are immensely grateful for all this help without which the Caine Prize would not be Africa's leading literary award.

Media Coverage (see pages 11 – 28)

This year our aim was to generate equally impressive print and broadcast coverage of the Caine Prize, as well as to expand the Prize's online presence. A summary of the results show that this year we have received the widest coverage yet for the Caine Prize.

A total of five press releases were disseminated between February and November 2013. In April, we sent the first ever release on a workshop which received some local media interest in Uganda. The workshop is a valuable element of the Caine Prize, in assisting writers on the continent to develop their writing, and from a PR perspective it is important to share information on this essential component of the Prize with a wider audience. We will therefore continue to report on workshop developments in future years.

With the announcement of the shortlist in May, the blogosphere went wild - encouraged by our frequent tweeting, alongside regular Facebook and website updates - with over 20 different bloggers (from all over the world) writing mostly positive reviews on the shortlisted stories. For the five months prior to the announcement of the winner, we ran articles - written by the judges - on the Caine blogs page. This helped to engage and inform the public on the judging process, and boosted the Prize's following on Twitter.

Early approaches were made to several news agencies to see if they would be interested in covering the announcement dinner and interviewing the shortlisted writers during their time in London. We were successful in arranging for *Vox Africa* to interview two of the shortlisted writers on the Sunday before the announcement. *Reuters* news agency filmed the award ceremony in Oxford, interviewing the Chair of Judges and Tope Folarin. They also included an interview with Rotimi Babatunde, the 2012 winner, in Nigeria in their edited footage.

We were close to securing *BBC News at 10* to record the live announcement, but unfortunately this did not work in the end. However, we were not short of BBC coverage – with Caine Prize features on a range of programmes including *BBC Weekend* (interviewing Gus Casely Hayford & Pede Hollist), *BBC Outlook* (interviewing shortlistee Chinelo Okrapanta), *BBC Africa* (interviewing all the shortlisted writers on their first day in London). *BBC Focus on Africa* (TV) and *BBC The World* both interviewed Tope Folarin on the day after he was announced the winner. Two online articles were also run on the *BBC Africa website*. Other outlets which broadcast interviews with Tope Folarin included *Sahara TV*, *Arise News* and *Colourful Radio*.

In July, the news of Tope Folarin winning the Prize was picked up throughout the world, most notably by *The Guardian*, *The Independent*, *New Statesman* and the *BBC*, in the UK, *The Washington Post*, *CNN*, and *LA Times*, in the US, and *The East African* (Kenya), *The Sunday Nation* (Kenya), *This Day Live* (Nigeria), *Sunday Times* (South Africa) and *The Sunday Independent* (South Africa) in Africa. After a media alert sent to AFP-Relaxnews giving them notice of the announcement, the wire ran a complimentary piece on the Prize entitled: "Caine Prize awarded to "Miracle" author Tope Folarin" – which was picked up by over 20 outlets in Europe, Africa, Asia and North America.

Features on the Caine Prize were also included in several magazines, including *Overseas*, the Royal Over-Seas League's magazine, *The Africa Report*, which is widely disseminated throughout Africa, *MAGASINET UDVIKLING*, published by the development aid section of the Danish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, and *Msafiri*, Kenya's in flight magazine – which featured The Caine Prize on eight pages in their September edition. All the copy was written by Raitt Orr.

Website development

The Caine Prize website continues to be developed as time and funds allow. Trustees are identified on the Council Members page which includes pictures and brief biographies of 51 council members and a new Trustees page has also been added. We have added a Supporters page which displays all the logos of our Sponsors and Partners, Supporters and Friends. There is also a new How to Donate page with details of how to support the Caine Prize for potential funders in the UK, Europe and Africa, as well as a detailed section with instructions for how to donate from the USA. The Caine Prize Blog [<http://caineprize.blogspot.co.uk>] features short pieces written by each of the 5 Judges from March to July and the Winners page includes updated details of 48 of the previously shortlisted writers that will be updated annually, and, of course, details of all 14 winners of the Caine Prize.

Publications by Caine Prize authors

NoViolet Bulawayo's debut novel *We Need New Names* published by Chatto and Windus in the UK in 2013 was shortlisted for the MAN Booker Prize.

2008 winner Henrietta Rose-Innes took second place in the BBC International Short Story Competition in 2012 for her short story "Sanctuary". Shortlisted in 2003 and 2010, Ken Barris' novel, *Life Underwater*, was published in 2012 by Kwela Books and won the University of Johannesburg Literary Prize in 2013. Charles Mungoshi, shortlisted in 2000, published his most recent novel *Branching Streams Flow in the Dark* in 2013 through the family run Mungoshi Press. Yewande Omotoso, who took part in the 2012 writers' workshop, was shortlisted for the 2012 Sunday Times Fiction Prize for her debut novel *Bom Boy*.

Lizzy Attree
Administrator

Jonathan Taylor
Chairman

30 October 2013

2013 Caine Prize media coverage

Print Media Cuttings

Publication	Type of publication	Date
Sunday Nation	Newspaper (page 20)	June 16 th
The Sunday Independent (South Africa)	Newspaper (page 21)	July 14 th
The East African	Magazine (page 22)	July 13-19
Sunday Times Magazine (South Africa)	Magazine (page 23)	21 st July
The Africa Report	Magazine (page 23)	No. 53 – August-September
Sunday Nation	Newspaper (page 24)	1 st September
The World Today	Magazine (page 25-26)	1 st October
Sunday Times Magazine (South Africa)	Magazine (page 27)	6 th October
The Mercury	Newspaper (page 27)	October
ROSL Overseas magazine	Magazine (page 28)	September - November
MAGASINET UDVIKLING: published by the development aid section of the Danish Ministry for Foreign Affairs	Magazine	November
Msafiri	Magazine	September

Press Release: Caine Prize 2013 Judging Panel Announced

Publication	Type of publication	Date
Booktrade.info	Online	14 th February
The Zimbabwean	Online	14 th February
The Tanjara	Online	14 th February
Regator	Online	15 th February
BooksLive	Online	15 th February
Geosi Reads: A World of Literary Pieces	Online	18 th February
The Kwani? Manuscript Project	Online	

Caine Prize workshop to be held in Uganda

Publication	Type of publication	Date
Ghana MMA	Online	3 rd April
Moonchild's Temple	Ten Days at the Caine Prize Writing Workshop	12 th May
National Book Trust of Uganda	Online	May

Fourteenth Caine Prize shortlist announced

Publication	Type of publication	Date
OnePageWeekly	Online	1 st May
Naija Stories	Online	15 th May
Vanguard	Online	15 th May
Flair Nigeria	Online	15 th May
Channels	Online	15 th May
Information Nigeria	Online	15 th May
The Nation	Online	16 th May
National Mirror Online	Online	16 th May
Yahoo! 7 News	Online	16 th May
Leadership	Online	17 th May
The Guardian Nigeria	Online	17 th May
This Day Live	Online	18 th May
360nobs	Online	22 nd May
Daily Newswatch	Online	24 th May
Africa Book Club	Online	27 th May

Blog posts on shortlist

Publication	Type of publication	Date
Africa Book Club	Over 90 Entries Received for 2013 Caine Prize	24 th February
New Internationalist	Over 90 Entries Received for 2013 Caine Prize	27 th February
British Council	Caine Prize competition comes to Uganda	28 th February
The Maravi Post	Budding Malawian Writer Michael Phoya To Attend Caine Prize Workshop in Uganda	4 th April
Malawi Guide	Two Malawian writers invited to prestigious Caine Prize workshops in Uganda	8 th April
London Review of Books	Mzungu Prizes	26 th April
Daily Monitor	Caine Prize anthology launched	27 th April
Books Live	New Kwani? Manuscript Prize Contrasted to the Caine Prize	6 th May
The Christian Science Monitor	A 'novel' idea for spreading literature in Africa: The cellphone	9 th May
All Africa	Nigeria: Ten Days At the Caine Prize Writers' Workshop	12 th May

Richard Ali's blog	Ten Days at the Caine Prize Writing Workshop	12 th May
The Nation	Four Nigerian writers among five shortlisted for 14th Caine Prize	16 th May
The Guardian Nigeria	Four Nigerians make Caine Prize for African writing 2013 shortlist	17 th May
Weekly Trust	Nigeria's Four Caine Prize Nominees	18 th May
All Africa	Nigeria: Media Trust Reporter Shortlisted for Caine Prize	18 th May
Daily Trust		18 th May
Africa In Words	Literary Prizes: Joining the Caine Prize 'Blog-Carnival'	20 th May
Imagenations: Promoting African Literature	Nigeria Dominates the 14th Caine Prize Shortlist – 2013	20 th May
The Naija Writer	How To Write A Caine Prize Story (Whatever That Is) Part 1	20 th May
360 nobs	Caine Prize shortlist – Nigeria dominates the list	22 nd May
Saraba Mag	A Review of The 2013 Caine Prize Shortlisted Stories By Damilola Ajayi	22 nd May
Information Nigeria	Four Nigerian Writers Shortlisted For Caine Prize	22 nd May
The New Inquiry	Blogging the Caine, 2013	22 nd May
The Naija Writer	How to Write A Caine Prize Story (Whatever That Is) Part 2	22 nd May
Saraba magazine	A Review of The 2013 Caine Prize Shortlisted Stories	22 nd May
Bookshy: an African book lover	Blogging the Caine Prize, 2013	24 th May
Naija	"I wasn't expecting the Caine Prize nomination" – Elnathan John speaks on 'Conversations with Mercy Abang'	27 th May
Parresia blog	Chuma Nwokolo: Critical Praise for "The Whispering Trees"	29 th May
The Airship	The Caine Prize's Prehistories: Tope Folarin's "Miracle"	31 st May
Africa in Words	Blogging the Caine Prize: Tope Folarin's 'Miracle'	31 st May

Critical Literature Review	2013 Caine Prize Shortlist (1)	31 st May
The Airship Daily	The Caine Prize's Prehistories: Tope Folarin's "Miracle"	31 st May
Multimodal Machaut	Caine Prize Carnival	4 th June
Method to the Madness	Blogging the Caine Prize – Pede Hollist "Foreign Aid" and the Diaspora Conversation	4 th June
Brittle Paper	Brittle Paper Interviews Caine Prize Shortlistee Tope Folarin	5 th June
The Airship Daily	The Caine Prize's Prehistories: Pede Hollist's "Foreign Aid"	6 th June
Books Live	Caine Prize Fiction Friday: "Miracle" by Tope Folarin	7 th June
The Missing Slate	Caine Prize: Miracle, by Tope Folarin	7 th June
Metropole	Nigeria and the Caine Prize	7 th June
Parrésia Publishers	Parrésia Author, Abubakar Adam Ibrahim's "The Whispering Trees", is on Caine Prize 2013	7 th June
Daily Monitor	Climbing literary ladders at the Caine Prize	8 th June
The Airship Daily	The Caine Prize's Prehistories: Abubakar Adam Ibrahim's "The Whispering Trees"	12 th June
The Missing Slate	Caine Prize: Foreign Aid, by Pede Hollist	14 th June
Daily Nation	Chinelo: How I conceived story in Caine Prize shortlist	15 th June
Books Live	Caine Prize Fiction Friday: "Foreign Aid" by Pede Hollist	21 st June
The Missing Slate	Caine Prize: The Whispering Trees, by Abubakar Adam Ibrahim	21 st June
Black Book News	Book Club: Reading the Caine Prize Shortlist	23 rd June
Africa in Words	Writing Africa's Futures: an ASUK/Caine Prize Event	23 rd June
The Airship Daily	The Caine Prize's Prehistories: Elnathan John's 'Bayan Layi'	25 th June
Books Live	Caine Prize Fiction Friday: "The Whispering Trees" by Abubakar Adam Ibrahim	28 th June
Nigerians Talk	Tope Folarin Speaks to NigeriansTalk	1 st July
isthisAFRICA?	Caine Prize 2013 Shortlist	July

National Book Trust of Uganda	Tope Folarin's Miracle: a review	July
National Book Trust of Uganda	A review of Pede Hollist's Foreign Aid	July
K. Travula	The 2013 Caine Prize Shortlist	July

2013 Caine Prize Anthology is published

Publication	Type of publication	Date
New Internationalist	A Memory This Size and other stories: The Caine Prize for African Writing 2013	15 th May
Daily Monitor	Caine prize anthology launched	27 th April
Granary	Caine prize anthology launched	5 th July
Amabooks	The Caine Prize Anthology 2013 - A Memory This Size - published in Zimbabwe	6 th August

Tope Folarin wins 13th Caine Prize for African Writing : Press

Publication	Type of publication	Date
The Guardian	The Caine prize for African writing shortlist – in pictures	5 th July
RSSPUMP News	Caine Prize awarded to "Miracle" author Tope Folarin	7 th July
The Guardian	What makes a 'real African'?	7 th July
Brittle Paper	Why Tope Folarin Is A Surprising But Perfect Pick For The Caine Prize	7 th July
The Guardian	What makes a 'real African'?	7 th July
Books Live	Tope Folarin Wins the 2013 Caine Prize for African Writing	8 th July
Bella Naija	I Believe in Miracles! Nigerian Writer Tope Folarin is the 14th Winner of the Caine Prize for African Writing with his Story "Miracle"	8 th July
Channels	Tope Folarin Wins 2013 Caine Prize for African Writing	8 th July
Celebrating Progress Africa	Nigeria's Tope Folarin wins the 2013 Caine Prize for African Writing	8 th July
Green Biro	Nigerian Writer Tope Folarin wins the 2013 Caine Prize for African Writing	8 th July

Naija Stories	Nigerian, Tope Folarin, Wins The Caine Prize	8 th July
Media Career Services	Tope Folarin wins 2013 Caine Prize for African Writing	8 th July
Indiana University Press Blog	Tope Folarin wins Caine Prize for African Writing	9 th July
LA Times	Nigerian American Tope Folarin takes Caine Prize for African lit	9 th July
This Day live	Nigerian Author Wins Caine Prize	9 th July
The Skanner	Nigerian Tope Folarin Wins Prestigious Caine Prize	9 th July
Leadershub.org	Tope Folarin Wins 2013 Caine Prize for African Writing	9 th July
Good News Nigeria	Nigeria's Tope Folarin wins 2013 Caine writing prize.	9 th July
Nigerian Watch	Tope Folarin wins this year's Caine Prize for African Writing with his short story about pastors called Miracle	9 th July
The Trumpet	Tope Folarin wins 14th Caine Prize for African Writing	9 th July
Vanguard	Nigerian author, Tope Folarin wins Caine Prize	9 th July
CNN	Nigerian Tope Folarin wins Caine Prize for tale of deceit in Texas church	9 th July
BBC News	Caine Prize finalists on why they write	9 th July
BBC News Africa	Nigeria's Tope Folarin wins Caine writing prize	9 th July
New Statesman	Nigerian literature is going from strength to strength	9 th July
The Bookseller	Folarin wins Caine Prize	9 th July
New Internationalist	Tope Folarin wins 2013 Caine Prize	9 th July
Hindustan Times	Caine Prize awarded to "Miracle" author Tope Folarin	9 th July
The Guardian	Caine prize won by Tope Folarin's 'utterly compelling' short story	9 th July
Los Angeles Times	Nigerian American Tope Folarin takes Caine Prize for African lit	9 th July

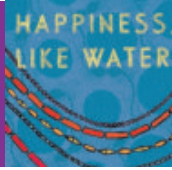
Harvard Gazette	Transition author Tope Folarin wins 2013 Caine Prize for African Writing	9 th July
Commonwealth Writers	Nigerian Tope Folarin wins Caine Prize	9 th July
Wasafiri	Tope Folarin's Short Story 'Miracle' wins the Caine Prize for African Writing 2013	9 th July
ITN Source	UNITED KINGDOM: Nigeria's Tope Folarin, wins 2013 Caine prize for African writing.	9 th July
Linda Ikeji's blog	Nigerian writer Tope Folarin wins Caine writing prize	9 th July
360nobs.com	The 2013 Caine Prize goes to Tope Folarin	9 th July
Nigeria Intel	Nigeria's Tope Folarin wins 2013 Caine Prize for African Writing	9 th July
Flair Nigeria	Nigerian Tope Folarin Wins 2013 Caine Prize	9 th July
African Sun Times	Another Nigerian, Tope Folarin, Wins Caine Prize for African Writing	9 th July
Star Africa.com	Nigeria's Tope Folarin wins Caine Prize for African writing	9 th July
Africa Research Online	Tope Folarin wins fourteenth Caine Prize for African Writing	10 th July
Africa Magic	Tope Folarin wins Caine Prize	10 th July
Face 2 Face Africa	Nigerian American Author Tope Folarin takes Caine Prize for African literature	10 th July
Daily Maverick	The Caine Prize controversy: How African do you have to be?	11 th July
Iamfar.com	Nigeria's Tope Folarin Wins Caine Prize	11 th July
The Independent	Boyd Tonkin: American dreams, African realities - and the literary cult of the crossing	12 th July
Leadership	Nigeria's Tope Folarin Wins Caine Prize For African Writing	12 th July
The East African	Nigerian preacher story wins Caine Prize	12 th July
Renew Naija	NIGERIAN WRITER, TOPE FOLARIN'S WINS 14TH CAINE PRIZE FOR AFRICAN WRITING	12 th July

Standard Digital	Nigerian boy's tale in America wins this year's Caine Prize	13 th July
All Africa	Nigeria: What Caine Prize Means to Me - Tope Folarin	14 th July
The Chronicle	Nigerian-American Author Scoops Major Literary Prize	15 th July
Books Live	Caine Prize Winner Tope Folarin's "African-ness" Examined	16 th July
The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education	Morehouse College Graduate Wins the Caine Prize for African Writing	26 th July
Nigerian Tribune	Tope Folarin, winner, 2013 Caines •First African in the diaspora to win the £10,000 prize	3 rd August
Global Times	Africa-centered Caine Prize awarded to 'Miracle' author Tope Folarin who hails from US	7 th October
The Washington Post	Tope Folarin finds his place in the literary world	July
Nigerian Telegraph	Tope Folarin wins Caine Prize	July
GeneAfrique	Nigeria's Tope Folarin is the winner of the 14th Caine Prize for African writing.	July
The New Inquiry	Miracles and Wonder, Faith and Diaspora: On Tope Folarin's "Miracle"	July
African Studies Centre (University of Oxford)	Tope Folarin wins Caine Prize for African Writing	July
African Spotlight	Nigeria's Tope Folarin has won the 2013 Caine Prize for African Writing	July

2013: Audio

Publication	Type of publication	Date
BBC World Service	BBC World Service - Outlook	8 th July
Arise News	Tope Folarin interview	8 th July
Vimeo	Tope Folarin - Winner of the Caine Prize 2013, speaking on the eve of the announcement.	8 th July
Vox Africa's show 'Shoot the Messenger'	Pede Hollist and Chinelo Okparanta	8 th July
BBC World Service – The World	Nigerian-American Author Tope Folarin Wins Caine Prize for 'Miracle'	9 th July
VoxAfrica	Nigerian-American writer Tope Folarin awarded the Caine Prize	9 th July
Sahara TV - Ep 81	Keeping It Real With Adeola	14 th July
BBC Weekend	Interview with Gus Casely-Hayford and Pede Hollis	July

Chinelo Okparanta teaches at Colgate University in the US, where she is an Olive B. O'Connor Fellow in Fiction. She is also the author of the book, *Happiness, Like Water*.



AUTHOR'S BIO

books&culture

Chinelo: How I conceived story in Caine Prize shortlist

BY CARLOS MUREITHI
cmureithi@ke.nationmedia.com

Nigerian writer Chinelo Okparanta moved to the United States when she was ten. And unlike her fictional character Etoniru in the short story *America*, she has a rational outlook of the “land of opportunity”.

“Thanks to my Nigerian upbringing, I am a more objective observer of things in the United States,” she says.

But the opposite could also be true: “I’d like to think my stay in America has made me a more objective observer of things back home”.

Okparanta, whose short story has been shortlisted for this year’s Caine Prize for African Writing, sees herself as a constructive critic of both the United States and Nigeria.

Yet *America* exemplifies the somewhat out of shape fantasy among some Nigerians that the United States is a dream country to be in. For them, the United States is an abstraction, a sort of utopia. It is a place where you go for answers and a place that always has those answers waiting for you.

“It was the general consensus in Port Harcourt (and I imagine in probably most of Nigeria as well) that things were better in America,” the protagonist in *America* narrates.

“This is a discussion that Okparanta has heard among family members and friends whenever she is in Nigeria.

“Many of them have mentioned going to America to pursue their studies, to gain employment, to own a home, a car, etc. There’s also a great desire to own American products – beauty soaps and creams, brand-named American clothing: Calvin Klein, bebe, DKNY, etc.” Okparanta tells *Lifestyle*.

The conversation about the United States was also a dominant one in her debut short story collection *Happiness, Like Water*. In the piece, the dream of opportunity and accomplishment in America consume the book’s characters.

Different issues

In *America*, the protagonist Nnenna Etoniru seeks to go to the United States as a means of escape from different issues in her home country, Nigeria.

Etoniru, a science teacher by profession, embarks on a third trip from Port Harcourt to the American Embassy in Victoria Island, Lagos, Nigeria for a visa interview appointment. Her previous two attempts at getting the travel pass were unsuccessful. But she’s still at it because she wants to go and be with her girlfriend Gloria, who probably found a way of allowing herself to get lost in America after moving there from Nigeria three years earlier.

With flashbacks and stories-within-stories, Okparanta tells Etoniru’s story against a backdrop of the topics of oil, and homosexuality, in Nigeria.

It’s not strange what made her write the story that took her a week to complete.

Says Okparanta: “I was back home in Nigeria and National

Electric Power Authority (Nepa) had just taken light. Nigeria, despite its oil wealth, has been far from successful at accomplishing equal distribution of electricity”.

“At that time, my cousin, who had gained admission into several universities in the United States, was preparing for a visa interview, and I was helping her with the preparation. What would be credible reasons for a Nigerian to want to go study in the United States instead of in Nigeria? The Gulf oil spill had just happened. The story came to me then.”

In *America*, Okparanta writes of how criminal gangs tap oil straight from the pipelines, rebel militias steal oil, refine it and sell it to help pay for their weapons, and old oil rigs that had been left abandoned by oil companies now explode.

She admits that she’s not an expert in oil matters, but is of the view that Nigeria would benefit from creating Nigerian-owned, Nigerian-run refineries. And as far as environmental protection, it would have to begin with improving the system of education – making things like textbooks and lab equipment more available to Nigerian students.

Government officials

“But something will have to be done to ensure that government officials in charge do not fall into the temptation of accepting bribes,” she adds.

America doesn’t mark the only time a Caine-shortlisted has touched on homosexuality. Last year, Malawian Stanley Kenani’s *Love on Trial*, which was about a man arrested

for “unnatural offenses” and “indecent practices between males,” was shortlisted for the prize.

“Jail time, fines, stoning or flogging, depending on where in Nigeria you were caught,” Okparanta writes of the consequences of being gay in Nigeria.

“Two weeks ago, Nigeria’s House of Representatives voted to ban gay marriage and outlaw any groups actively supporting gay rights.

“I think it’s unfortunate, but I’m not surprised. A similar Bill was passed back in 2011, making homosexuality—and the aiding and abetting of it—a crime punishable by 10-14 years in prison,” says Okparanta.

“Of all the things that are considered abominations, such inhumane treatment of fellow human beings should be among the greatest of abominations.”

So perhaps the United States would be the best place for Etoniru and Gloria’s kind of love.

“Her (Etoniru’s) reasons (for moving to the United States) are understandable,” says Okparanta.

Okparanta’s narratives in *America* are exciting. Here she is on the days after oil producers came to Nigeria: “Now the mangroves are dead, and there is no birdsong at all.



Nigerian writer Chinelo Okparanta. COURTESY | NATION

And, of course, there are no fish, no shrimp, and no crab to be caught. Instead, oil shoots up in the air, like a fountain of black water, and fishermen lament that rather than coming out of the water with fish, they are instead harvesting Shell oil on their bodies.”

Except the story fades out in the latter stages, just as Etoniru’s visa interview at the American embassy ends. This point would have been a good one to end at.

In fact, Okparanta declares in the passage: “The story should end there, but it doesn’t.”

Attaining visa

Still, she takes us through Etoniru’s seemingly regretful thoughts about attaining the visa she so badly wanted, and an unneeded story within a story about a boy, his mother, a goat, a wicked old man, a golden hen and golden coins.

Okparanta, who is one of four Nigerians out of five writers whose stories were shortlisted for this year’s Caine Prize, was born in Port Harcourt, Nigeria.

She was awarded an Astraea Foundation for Justice Lesbian Writers Fund grant in 2011 and was a nominee for the United States Artists Fellowship in Literature the following year.

She teaches at Colgate University in the US, where she is an Olive B. O’Connor Fellow in Fiction.

Her sources of inspiration are varied.

“There are many works that have had an impact on me. Chinua Achebe’s *Things Fall Apart*, Mariama Ba’s *Une Si Longue Lettre*, Antoine de St.

Exupery’s *Le Petit Prince*, Kate O’Brien’s *The Land of Spices*. I also enjoy reading the stories of Alice Munro. I like what she does with structure, and I like that she often deals with themes related to women and women’s rights,” she says.

In her count, Okparanta has had around a dozen short stories published in literary magazines such as *Granta*, *The Kenyon Review*, *The Iowa Review*, *Conjunctions* and *Subtropics*.

She’s currently working on her debut novel, *Under The Udala Trees*.

“I’m hoping to be done revising by the end of this year, for publication hopefully by the end of 2014,” she says.

In the end, Okparanta hopes that *America* highlights the complex emotions involved in deciding whether to leave or to remain in one’s native country. The winner of the £10,000 (\$11.34 million) prize is set to be announced at a celebratory dinner at the Bodleian Library, Oxford, on Monday, July 8.

THANKS TO MY NIGERIAN UPBRINGING, I AM A MORE OBJECTIVE OBSERVER OF THINGS IN THE UNITED STATES.”

MORE

Others in competition for the July award



Title: Bayan Laiy
Writer: Elnathan John
Nationality: Nigerian
Publication: *Per Contra*, Issue 25
Synopsis: A story about street children in a modern-day Nigerian slum with electoral violence going on in the area.



Title: Miracle
Writer: Tope Folarin
Nationality: Nigerian
Publication: *Transition*, Issue 109
Synopsis: Religion and the guiltability of those caught in the deceit that sometimes comes with faith.



Title: Foreign Aid
Writer: Pede Hollist
Nationality: Sierra Leone
Publication: *Journal of Progressive Human Services*, Vol. 23.3
Synopsis: An immigrant returns to his native Nigeria hoping to save his family from the country’s problems.



Title: The Whispering Trees
Writer: Abubakar Adam Ibrahim
Nationality: Nigerian
Publication: *The Whispering Trees*
Synopsis: A man living with blindness overcomes the tribulations brought about by the accident that caused it.

This week Nigeria's Tope Folarin won the 2013 Caine Prize for African Writing for the short story below



ENTER AND TAKE YOUR PEW: 'Miracle' is a story set in Texas in an evangelical Nigerian church where the congregation has gathered to witness the healing powers of a blind pastor-prophet. PICTURE: REUTERS

MIRACLE

OUR HEADS MOVE simultaneously, and we smile at the tall, svelte man who strides purposefully down the aisle to the pulpit. Once there, he raises both of his hands then lowers them slightly. He raises his chin and says let us pray. "Dear Father, we come to you today, on the occasion of this revival, and we ask that you bless us abundantly, who we have made it to America, because we know we are here for a reason. We ask for your blessings because we are not here alone. Each of us represents dozens, sometimes hundreds of people back home. So many lives depend on us Lord, and the burden on our shoulders is great. Jesus, bless this service, and bless us.

We ask that we will not be the same people at the end of the service as we were at the beginning. All this we ask of you, our dear savior, Amen."

The pastor sits, and someone bolts from the front row to the piano and begins to play. The music we hear is familiar and at the same time new; the bandleader punches up a pre-programmed beat on the cheap electronic piano and plays a few Nigerian gospel songs to get us in the mood for revival.

We sing along, though we have to wait a few moments at the beginning of each song to figure out what he's playing.

We sing joyful songs to the Lord, then songs of redemption, and then we sing songs of hope, hope that tomorrow will be better than today, hope that, one day soon, our lives will begin to resemble the dreams that brought us to America.

The tiny Nigerian gospel music ends when the pastor stands, and he prays over us again. He prays so long and so hard that we feel the weight of his words pressing down on us. His prayer is so insistent, so sincere, that his words emerge from the dark chrysalis of his mouth as bright, fluttering prophesies.

In our hearts we stop asking if and begin wondering when our deeply held wishes will come true. After his sweating and shaking and cajoling he shouts another Amen, a word that now seems defiant, not pleading.

We echo his defiance as loudly as we can, and when we open our eyes we see him pointing to the back of the church.

Our eyes follow the line of his finger, and we see the short old man hunched over in the back, two men on either side of him. Many of us have seen him before, in this very space; we've seen the old man perform miracles that were previously only possible in the pages of our Bibles. We've seen him command the infern to be well, the crippled to walk, the poor to become wealthy. Even those of us who are new, who know nothing of him, can sense the power emanating from him.

We have come from all over North Texas to see him. Some of us have come from Oklahoma, some of us from Arkansas, a few of us from Louisiana and a couple from New Mexico. We own his books, his tapes,

his holy water, his anointing oil. We know that he is an instrument of God's will, and we have come because we need miracles. We need jobs. We need good grades. We need green cards. We need American passports. We need our parents to understand that we are Americans.

We need our children to understand they are Nigerians. We need new kidneys, new lungs, new limbs, new hearts. We need to forget the harsh rigidity of our lives, to remember why we believe, to be loved, and to hope.

We need miracles. We murmur as the two men help him to the front, and in this charged atmosphere everything about him makes sense, even the irony of his blindness, his inability to see the wonders that God performs through his hand.

His blindness is a confirmation of his power. It's the burden he bears on our behalf, his residence in a space of perpetual darkness has only sharpened his spiritual vision over the years. He can see more than we will ever see.

When the old man reaches the pulpit his attendants turn him around so he's facing us. He's nearly bald - a few white hairs cling precariously to the sides of his shining head - and he's wearing a large pair of black sunglasses.

A bulky white robe falls from his neck to the floor. Beneath, he's wearing a flowing white agbada.

He remains quiet for a few moments - we can feel the anticipation building, breath by breath, in the air. He smiles. Then he begins to hum. A haunting, discordant melody. The bandleader tries to find the tune among the keys of his piano, but the old man slaps the air and the bandleader allows the searching music to die.

He continues to hum and we listen to his music. Suddenly he turns to our left and points to a space somewhere on the ceiling.

"I DEMAND YOU TO LEAVE



REMARKABLE: Tope Folarin, winner of the 2013 Caine Prize, next to a bust of Sir Michael Caine, after whom the prize is named. Picture: David Fleming.

THIS PLACE!" he screams, and we know there is something malevolent in our midst. We search the area his sightless eyes are probing, somewhere in the open space above our heads. We can't see anything, but we raise our voices in response to the prophet's call.

Soon our voices are a cacophonous stew of Yoruba and English, shouting and singing, spitting and humming, and the prophet from Nigeria speaks once more: "We must continue to pray ladies and gentlemen! There are forces here that do not wish for this to be a successful service. If we are successful in our prayers that means they have

failed! They do not wish to fail! So we cannot expect that our prayers will simply come true; we must fight!"

We make our stew thicker; we throw in more screams and prayers until we can no longer distinguish one voice from another. Finally after several long minutes, the prophet raises his hands: "We are finished. It is done."

And we begin to celebrate, but our celebration lacks conviction - we haven't yet received what we came here for.

The prophet sways to the left of our tepid praise. The man on his belt stands and dabs his forehead. The prophet clears his throat and reaches forward with his right hand until he finds the microphone. He grabs it, leans into it.

"I have been in the US for two months now..." he begins, rhythmically moving his head left and right, "I have been to New York, to Delaware, to Philadelphia, to Washington, to Florida, to Atlanta, to Minnesota, to Kansas, to Oklahoma, and now, finally, I have arrived here."

We cheer loudly.

"I will visit Houston and San Antonio before I leave here, and then I will go to Nevada, and then California. I will travel all over this country for the next month, visiting Nigerians across this great land, but I feel in my spirit that the most powerful blessings will happen here."

We holler and whoop and hug each other for his words are confirmation of the feelings we've been carrying within ourselves since the beginning of the service.

"The reason I am saying that the most powerful blessings will happen here is because God has told me that you have been the most faithful of his flock in the US. You haven't forgotten your people back home. You haven't forgotten your parents and siblings who sent you here, who pray for you every day. You have remained disciplined and industrious in this place, the land of temptation. And for all your hard work, for your faithfulness, God is going to reward you today."

Some of us raise our hands and praise the Father. A few of us bow our heads, a few of us begin to weep with happiness.

"But in order for your blessings to be complete, you will have to pray today like you have never prayed before. You will have to believe today like you have never believed before. The only barrier to your blessing is the threshold of your belief. Today the only thing I will be talking about is belief. If I have learned anything during my visits

“**THE ONLY BARRIER TO YOUR BLESSING IS THE THRESHOLD OF YOUR BELIEF**”

to this country, it is that belief is only possible for those who have dollars. I am here to tell you that belief comes before dollars. If you have belief, then the dollars will follow. Silence again. We search our hearts for the seedlings of doubt that reside there. Many of us have to cut through thickets of doubt before we can find our own hearts again. We use the tolerance to uproot our doubt and we pray that our hearts will remain pure for the remainder of the service.

"Let me tell you, great miracles will be performed here today: People will be talking about this day for years and years to come. And the only thing that will prevent you from receiving your share is your unbelief..."

At this moment he begins to cough violently, and the man on his right rushes forward with a handkerchief. He places the handkerchief in the prophet's hand, and the prophet coughs into it for a few seconds, and then he wipes his mouth. We wait anxiously for him to recover.

He laughs. "I am an old man now. You will have to excuse me. Just pray for me!"

"We will pray for you Prophet" we yell in response.

"Yes, just pray for me, and I will

continue to pray for you."

"Thank you Prophet! Amen! Amen!"

"And because you have been faithful, God will continue to bless you. He will anoint you. He will appoint you!"

"Amen!"

"Now God is telling me that there is someone here who is struggling with something big, a handicap that has lasted for many, many years."

We fall quiet because we know he is talking about us.

"He's telling me that you have been suffering in silence with this problem, and that you have come to accept the problem as part of yourself."

We nod in agreement. How many indignities have we accepted as a natural part of our lives?

"The purpose of my presence in your midst is to let you know that you should no longer accept the bad things that have become normal in your lives. America is trying to teach you to accept your failures, your setbacks."

Now is the time to reject them! To claim the success that is rightfully yours!"

His sunglasses fall from his face, and we see the brilliant white orbs quivering frantically in their sockets, two full moons that have forgotten their roles in the drama of the universe. His attendants lunge to the floor to recover them, and together they place the glasses back on his ancient face. The prophet continues as if nothing happened.

"I do not perform these miracles because I wish to be celebrated. I perform these miracles because God works through me, and He has given me the grace to show all of you what is possible in your physical and spiritual lives. And now God is telling me; you, come up here."

We remain standing because we don't know to whom he is referring. "YOU! YOU! YOU! YOU! YOU! YOU! YOU! YOU!"

We begin to walk forward, shyly, slowly. I turn around suddenly and I realize I'm no longer a part of the whole. I notice, then, that the lights are too bright, and the muggy air in the room settles, fog-like, on my face. Now I am in the aisle, and I see the blind old man pointing at me.

"You, young man. Come here. Come up here for your miracle!"

■ *This is an excerpt from Miracle, which appeared in Transition, Issue 108 (Bloomington, 2012). It will also appear in Folarin's forthcoming novel The Proximity of Distance.*

MARGARET BUSBY

The Caine Prize for African Writing has always been a good identifier of talent, and NoViolet Bulawayo, a writer of Zimbabwe's post-independence "born-free" generation, has delivered on the promise shown in her 2011 prize-winning story *Hitting Backstop*. Her new novel, *We Need New Names* (Random Strunk) is a story of now, dealing with some of the dreams and nightmares spawned by Zimbabwe's political woes.

Bulawayo immerses us in the world of 10-year-old Darling and her friends Shbo, Bastard, Chipi,

Godknows and Stima - a child's-eye view of a world where there is talk of elections and democracy but where chaos and degradation come everyday reality, where death and sickness and the threat of violence lurk.

Memories remain of a time before - before houses were bulldozed and people had to live in tin shacks in a shanty town misleadingly named Paradise, trying to hold on to dignity while

families fracture.

Yet there is no shortage of laughter as the children invent a life of adventure, mischief and make-believe, stealing guavas and playing "Find Bin Laden" or the country game: "Everybody wants to be the USA and Britain and Canada and Australia and Switzerland... Nobody wants to be rags of countries like Congo, like Somalia, like Iraq, like Sudan, like Haiti and not even this one we live in - who

wants to be a terrible place of hunger and things falling apart?"

For Darling, at least, a better future seems about to unfold: she is set to join an aunt working in America ("Destroyed Michigan").

However, rather than a new paradise, Darling finds a land of coldness: "I mean, coldness that makes like it wants to kill you, like it's telling you, with its snow, that you should go back to where you

came from". Food can never fix the hunger for home.

This heartrending dilemma of displacement is powerfully summed up: "When things fall apart, the children of the land scurry and scatter like birds escaping a burning sky."

"They flee their own wretched land so their hunger may be pacified in foreign lands, their tears wiped away in strange lands, the wounds of their despair bandaged

in faraway lands... Look at them leaving in droves despite knowing they will be welcomed with restraint in those strange lands because they do not belong... knowing they will have to walk on their toes because they must not leave footprints on the new earth."

Adjusting to adolescent life in the US inevitably brings cultural collisions and awakenings, including a palpable loss of innocence when she is drawn into

watching unspeakable internet porn.

At points, the story could be read as a case-study in alienation and assimilation.

Nevertheless, most affecting of all is the early intimate depiction of Darling and her sub-teen gang, with their speaking eyes and quick-witted banter - a wonderfully original set of characters whom Bulawayo allows a convincing combination of innocence and knowledge.

Their indomitable energy spirit and hope, often in the face of truly painful odds, are just memorable. - The Independent

books

Nigerian preacher story wins Caine

Folarin becomes the fifth Nigerian to win the 14-year-old award with his short story *Miracles*, writes CARLOS MUREITHI

With four out of the five finalists for this year's Caine Prize for African Writing being Nigerians, the odds were clearly in the West African country's favour.

Nigerian Tope Folarin, won the prize for *Miracle*, a tale set among Nigerian expatriates in an evangelical Nigerian church in Texas, US.

Folarin beat the competition from compatriots Chinelo Okparanta (*America*), Elnathan John (*Bayan Layi*), Abubakar Adam Ibrahim (*The Whispering Trees*), and Sierra Leonean Pedo Hollist (*Foreign Aid*).

He becomes the fifth Nigerian to win the 14-year-old award, the previous being Rotimi Babatunde for his short story *Bombay's Republic*, last year.

Folarin's *Miracles* is deserving of a win, as he shows readers how religious deception makes people gullible.

The story is told from a church in Texas where Nigerians go for worship. Christians are gathered to see a prophet who has been going to different parts of the US preaching and "performing miracles."

The congregation engages in prayer and music before the preacher-prophet, a short, old man who performs miracles "that were previously only possible in the pages of our Bibles" arrives.

To him, the Texas lot has been the most faithful to God; a message passed to him by the creator Himself. So God is going to reward this group through the preacher-prophet.

The Nigerians in Texas are desperate. They hope that one day soon, their lives will begin to resemble the dreams that brought them to America.

Their hopes lie in the miracle-worker who ironically is blind, in addition to being in a bad state of health as evidenced by his violent coughing as he preaches.

However, the immigrants don't have much of a choice. They have needs: jobs, good grades, Green Cards, American passports, among other things.

His blindness is a confirmation of his power. "It's the burden he bears on our behalf; his residence in a space of perpetual darkness has only sharpened his spiritual vision over the years. He can see more than we will ever see," the narrator, simply referred to as a young man in the short story, says.

He too holds this thought, at least until he gets an eye-opener as Folarin describes.

The preacher-prophet points the narrator out in the congregation so that he can perform a miracle on him. He makes an indirect reference to the young man's asthma and eye problems. The asthma could have been a wild guess, but the victim wears spectacles, hence has challenges with his eyesight.

Then he prays for the man in the hope of healing him, but he does it in such a crude manner that the young man is forced to admit that he has been healed.

"The prophet steps forward and blows in my eyes, and then he rubs my temples," the young man says of the miracle worker's attempt to heal his eyesight problem. "The prophet



Tope Folarin, winner of this year's Caine Prize. Pictures: Courtesy

presses my temples again, and again, and each time I regain my balance."

Folarin, who resides in the US and is the first writer based outside Africa to win the £10,000 (\$15,000) prize, has given us a sense of the prevailing belief in Christian supernaturalism. He colourfully shows the promise of prosperity that religion holds for Africans.

At many points, Folarin's writing is full of 'we', 'us' and 'our' as the male narrator takes us through the story:

"We have come from all over North Texas to see him. Some of us have come from Oklahoma, some of us from Arkansas, a few of us from Louisiana and a couple from New Mexico. We own his books, his tapes, his holy water, his anointing oil. We know that he is an instrument of God's will, and we have come because we need miracles."

The primary voice in the

story feels the same way the rest of the characters do. His feelings and emotions are in unison with the rest of the congregation; perhaps the writer's way of showing the "herd mentality" that makes it so easy for them to be duped.

In addition, Folarin breaks down the provocative topic of miracle healing and helps us understand that a society is made up of truths and lies, and often, both must be cultivated in order for the community to survive.

Though it is an intriguing story, *Miracle*, which was published in the 109th issue of *Transition*, a publication of Harvard University, is rather short. But it's possibly for this reason that it will form part of Folarin's forthcoming novel, *The Proximity of Distance*.

Let's hope that the delightful intensity and compelling nature of the story will be sustained.

BOOK SHORTS

On Saudi Arabia: Its People, Past, Religion, Fault Lines — and Future

By Karen Elliott House. (Vintage, \$16.95.) House, a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist who has been reporting on Saudi Arabia for more than 30 years, unveils this inscrutable oil-rich country — where "Saudis endlessly manoeuvre through winding paths between high walls of religious rules, government restrictions and cultural traditions" — and compares its regime to the Soviet Union in its final days.

The Oath: The Obama White House and the Supreme Court

By Jeffrey Toobin. (Anchor, \$16.) This lucid follow-up to *The Nine* (2007) examines the court's internal dynamics under Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr. and its fraught relationship with President Barack Obama. Toobin recounts bitterly contested decisions, exploring their historical contexts and their possible social and political consequences.

City of Bohane

By Kevin Barry. (Graywolf, \$15.) In Barry's first novel, set in Ireland around 2053, the once-great city of Bohane is infested by vice and split along tribal lines. Logan Hartnett runs the Fancy, the city's most fearsome gang, but his old nemesis has resurfaced and has designs on the woman Hartnett stole from him years earlier.

Becoming Dickens: The Invention of a Novelist

By Robert Douglas-Fairhurst. (Belknap/Harvard University, \$16.95.) Concentrating on Dickens' early career, this sharp-eyed biography takes us through the 1830s and the completion of *Oliver Twist*, his second novel — and the first whose title page bears his name rather than the alias under which he wrote *Sketches by Boz* and *The Pickwick Papers*.

Memoir of a Debulked Woman: Enduring Ovarian Cancer

by Susan Gubar. (Norton, \$16.95.) In 2008, Gubar, the co-author of a seminal feminist text, *The Madwoman in the Attic*, received a diagnosis of ovarian cancer. In a voice both straightforward and brave, she attempts to share and make sense of her frightening experience: this book is at once a memoir, a review of sobering medical facts, and a compilation of cancer reminiscences and descriptions of illness in literature and art.

New York Times Syndicate

finalists

The Caine Prize is awarded for a short story by an African writer published in English (3,000 to 10,000 words). Folarin was announced this year's winner at a celebratory dinner held at the Bodleian Library in Oxford on July 8.

Apart from Tope Folarin's *Miracle*, the finalists selected from 96 entries in 16 African countries were:



Title: *Foreign Aid*
Writer: Pedo Hollist
Nationality: Sierra Leonean
Publication: Journal of Progressive Human Services, Vol. 23.3



Title: *The Whispering Trees*
Writer: Abubakar Adam Ibrahim
Nationality: Nigerian
Publication: The Whispering Trees



Title: *America*
Writer: Chinelo Okparanta
Nationality: Nigerian
Publication: Granta, Issue 118



Title: *Bayan Layi*
Writer: Elnathan John
Nationality: Nigerian
Publication: Per Contra, Issue 25

Sunday Times (South Africa)

Nigeria's Tope Folarin has won the 2013 Caine Prize for African Writing, known informally as the "African Booker". The US-based author's winning short story, 'Miracle', is set in an evangelical Nigerian church in Texas. Folarin received £10 000 for his efforts.

For more detail on his win, visit www.caineprize.com.



The Africa report

Good times



D. FLEMING/CAINE PRIZE

TOPE FOLARIN

Born and raised in the US, this year's winner of the Caine Prize won over the judges with 'Miracle', a short story about a dynamic Nigerian pastor in the US. Folarin was one of four candidates of Nigerian descent.



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NHIAL BOL AKEN

In July, the editor of South Sudanese newspaper *The Citizen* said he was considering exile after threats from security agents on account of his anti-government views. He claims his life and family are in danger.

The Caine Prize for African Writing is named in memory of the late Sir Michael Harris Caine. As he intended, the is open to writers from anywhere in Africa for work published in English. The first prize was awarded in 2000, at the Zimbabwe International Book Fair 2000, and the 2001 Prize at the Nairobi Book Fair in September 2001.

ABOUT THE PRIZE

books&culture

NEWS IN BRIEF

Artists, journalists meet in Nairobi
Artists and journalists convened at the Nairobi National Museum on Tuesday for a workshop aimed at improving their working relationship. The forum provided different approaches to the understanding of what artists do, what they expect from journalists, and vice-versa. Speaking at the event attended by stakeholders from the Nairobi National Museum, Kenya Visual Artists Network (KVAN) and Arts Journalists Network (AJN), KVAN chairman Adrian Nduma, said: "It is necessary for us to have frequent dialogue to reach an understanding that is beneficial to all of us." "We want to bring you more into the artists' world," KVAN secretary Allan Green told journalists.

Zimbabwean author makes the Guardian first book award longlist
We Need New Names, a novel by Zimbabwean author NoViolet Bulawayo, has been included in the longlist for the Guardian first book award 2013. Bulawayo's book tells the story of Zimbabwe and the African diaspora through the experiences of Darling, a young girl. Her book is up against 10 other works which include remarkable psychoanalytic case studies



in *The Examined Life* by Stephen Grosz, and comedy *The Hive* by Gill Hornby. This year's longlist for the £10,000 prize comprises five non-fiction titles, five novels and a collection of poems. It sees authors "grappling with very contemporary issues", Lisa Allardice, the Guardian Review's editor and chair of the judges, said. She described Lottie Moggah's *Kiss Me First* - about computer games addict Leila, who agrees to pose as vivacious, bipolar Tess - as "a true thriller for the Facebook generation". The winner will be announced in November at a party in Tate Modern, an art gallery in London.

'Twerking' added to Oxford dictionary
'Twerking', a sexually provocative dance made famous partly by Miley Cyrus, an American actress and recording artiste, has been included in the Oxford Dictionaries Online. The term joins other entries such as 'omishambles', 'selfie', 'dorp' and 'phablet' in the quarterly update. Cyrus brought the move to many people's attention in her *We Can't Stop* music video and did so again during her performance with Robin Thicke at the VMA Awards. The dance move's listing reads: "The twerk, v.: dance to popular music in a sexually provocative manner involving thrusting hip movements and a low, squatting stance."

Compiled by Carlos Mureithi
@CarlosMureithi

American wins 2013 Caine Prize for African writing



Tope Folarin
PHOTO | COURTESY

But Folarin is African too even though he has little connection to the continent

BY CARLOS MUREITHI
@CarlosMureithi
cmureithi@ke.nationmedia.com

Tope Folarin is an American. He is a Nigerian too. And he was neither born in the African continent, nor has he had extensive physical interaction with it, things that have made observers fuss about his winning this year's Caine Prize for African Writing.

The writer is a victim of his hyphenated nationality, but he is taking no prisoners.

"I am who I am. Oftentimes, people want to pin you on a board because

they are not comfortable with those who don't fit inside a box," he tells *Lifestyle*. "I am a Nigerian and an American. I take up both IDs."

Folarin was on July 8 announced winner of what is considered Africa's leading literary award for his *Miracle*, a short story from the 109th edition of *Transition*, a publication of Harvard University.

The tale portrays the gullibility of those caught in religious deceit. It is set in an evangelical Nigerian church in Texas where a congregation has gathered to witness the healing powers of a blind pastor-prophet.

Miracle was praised by Gus Casely-Hayford, this year's chair of judges, for being "another superb Caine Prize winner - a delightful and beautifully paced narrative, that is exquisitely observed and utterly compelling".

It was chosen ahead of Elnathan John's (Nigeria) *Bayan Layi*, Pede Hollist's (Sierra Leone) *Foreign Aid*, Abubakar Adam Ibrahim's (Nigeria) *The Whispering Trees*, and Chinelo Okparanta's (Nigeria) *America*.

On the debate about Folarin's

"Africanness", Simon Allison most recently wrote in the *Daily Maverick*, a South African online newspaper: "I've read it (*Miracle*). It's lovely. But is it really African? ... The problem is that Folarin is not the most African author around, at least on the surface."

Folarin's narrative is a captivating one.

Maintain links

"The reason why *Miracle* is compelling is that it shows how people (Nigerian immigrants) desperately try to maintain links to Nigeria. This story seeks to connect us abroad to those at home," Folarin says.

Home: that place where one lives. Folarin was born in Utah, the United States, to Nigerian immigrants. He attended college in Maine, Georgia, and the University of Cape Town in South Africa, after which he was a Galbraith Scholar at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government and a Rhodes Scholar at the University of Oxford.

"I studied there (South Africa) for a few months," he says.

The writer reveals that he has only been to Nigeria once before - in 1989, the year of his birth, and that his stay in the United States has shaped his view of his parents' nation of birth.

"My sense of Nigeria has been formed on what has been passed on to me," he says.

He now lives and works in Washington, DC.

This year's Caine Prize-shortlisted works all fit certain conditions, a set of which read: "The Prize is awarded to a short story by an African writer published in English, whether in Africa or elsewhere ... 'An African writer' is taken to mean someone who was born in Africa, or who is a national of an African country, or whose parents are African".

So although Folarin doesn't have a strong connection to Africa, his work was eligible for entry into the competition.

Lizzy Attree, an administrator of the Caine Prize for African Writing, explains to *Lifestyle*.

"Tope Folarin qualifies for the Caine Prize as both his parents are African, so he is of 'African parentage' as it states in the rules," she says.

"This brings a wider meaning of the term 'Africa': "The definition has been expanded," Folarin says.

The Caine Prize isn't the only award that provides such a regulation though. A new fund dubbed the "Morland Writing Scholarship", which aims to help "writers in the early stages of their career to write and to earn a living outside writing at the same time", has among its rules one that indicates it will be open to anyone who has been born in Africa or both of whose parents were born in Africa.

Folarin is currently finishing writing his debut novel - *The Proximity of Distance*.

Like *Miracle*, it touches on identity. "It's about how someone comes to recognise who they are in the United States; someone who was born and raised there," the writer says of the novel that will feature *Miracle* as a chapter in it.

Folarin hopes to visit Nigeria later in the year.

REVIEW

Guide on how to make a living from self-employment

Title: Make Millions in Kenya Today
Author: Wilson Macharia
Price: Sh260
Publisher: Neno Booksellers
Reviewer: Beth W. Ndirangu

WHAT LEADS young people to destroy their lives with illicit brews and drugs, and how can this unfortunate trend be contained? Why do some civil servants who are doing well and scaling the corporate ladder perform dismally in their own businesses after they are retrenched?

These seemingly unrelated scenarios are the kind of questions Wilson Macharia seeks to answer in his book titled *Make Millions in Kenya Today*.

The palatial homes dotting our landscape, some complete and others in different stages of construction, are evidence of a relatively rich nation. Unfortunately, a lot of money in our country is in the hands of a minority.

In Kenya, business is highly competitive and many young people who lack saleable skills or the wherewithal to do business in such an environment have given up hope and engage in a dangerous lifestyle to numb the challenging reality.

This is the same reality that civil servants face after they retire. Armed only with a naive outlook of the business environment they are being ushered into, they perform dismally

in business.

But, despite these odds, there is hope for an individual willing to start a business - and even make millions! - if he or she faces the daunting reality and patiently learns the skills necessary to survive in this competitive environment.

Research

First of all such a person will need to purposefully research and establish the business that matches their strength and commit time to learn all that it takes to break even.

According to the author, you will never make money in a line you do not understand well. True, business

starts with an idea, but research is what will protect you from throwing good money after bad.

This book is written in a simple, every day language. The author also uses local scenarios to illustrate points.

As he says in one of the chapters, his aim is "not just to psyche the reader by feeding them with catchy motivational statements and leaving them reeling in hollow excitement."

The book also provides those hoping to start a business with a guide on how to register a business in Kenya, identifies some "hot" businesses and briefly discusses proven approaches of starting them.

REVIEW

Things come together

African literature's rich heritage must embrace the wider horizons of modern writers, argues Mukoma Wa Ngugi

An African literary canon is both a blessing and a curse. A blessing because standing on the shoulders of writers such as Chinua Achebe, author of the archetypal African novel *Things Fall Apart*, and my father, Ngugi Wa Thiong'o, I do not have to prove to myself or to the world that Africans can produce culture and philosophy. This is the blessing – the gift of taking so many things for granted.

This blessing is also a curse. The African literary canon has started to feel like a prison for writers who want to experiment with form and content, to challenge and expand the very definition of African literature.

What is interesting in Africa's case is the question of what happens when a literature of resistance, a literature formerly in the margins of the colonial order, becomes established and bravely codifies its own aesthetic into a literary law. A codification that leads to only one kind of African literature and only one kind of African writer. What was historically a positive movement, in an era in which African literature is braving new frontiers, becomes an aesthetic prison.

'American wins 2013 Caine Prize for African Writing,' a Kenyan paper announced when Tope Folarin received the accolade. Folarin was born to Nigerian parents and has lived in the United States, but like me he believes in one having and owning multiple heritages. In the same article that declares him American, he tells the Kenyan reporter, 'I am a Nigerian and an American. I take up both IDs.' On what basis then did the journalist, who clearly wanted to tap into the angst surrounding Tope's win and citizenship, declare him an American?

Unless cultural critics are going to do the work of immigration officers, it should suffice for Folarin to say he identifies as both. An African writer should be anyone who wishes to be



identified as one. And being an African should not come at the expense of one's multiple identities in the same way an African novel should be allowed to convey multiple cultures. African writers are braving new frontiers; our critics in the rush to police African cultural production are lagging behind.

I am reading *Black Ghosts*, a novel by Ken Kamoche about a Zimbabwean who is a university student in a racist China. Yes, today China on the African continent is giving us the big old Russian-British-

French-American bear hug. But the truth of it is that there are Africans in China who are facing debilitating racism. In spite of this they are living and inter-marrying with the Chinese. And one day their Afro-Chinese children will write about their experiences and open up new frontiers for the African literary tradition. In the meantime, is Kamoche to be declared a Chinese writer in the same way the Kenyan paper that declared Folarin American? The most dangerous trend in



African literature is not the denial of its multiple identities, it is the labelling of African writing dealing with the contradictions of poverty amid wealth, or freedom alongside sexual violence, or the irony of exchanging American dollars for Chinese yuan, as ‘poverty porn’. For the image-conscious critic, African writers are bad for the tourism industry. Where are the images of tall skyscrapers, sunny beaches and rotund smiling African businessmen, they ask.

The Nigerian writer Helon Habila in a

Africa’s literary landscape has widened as writers emerge from the diaspora, making the literary canon feel constricting

review of NoViolet Bulawayo’s *We Need New Names* judged it as suffering from a ‘Caine Prize aesthetic’, meaning that the novel was written in an ‘African aesthetic of suffering’ for Western consumption.

But as James Baldwin said, we write from what we know and we cannot write outside of our times. NoViolet is writing from what she knows and in her times. She raises issues that are outside the radar of the traditional African novel.

The first half of *We Need New Names* – which has been shortlisted for this year’s Man Booker Prize for Fiction – paints a Zimbabwe of continuing poverty at a time of land redistribution, where the Chinese have become such a presence that they are part of children’s play.

The second half of the book raises questions of first and second-generation Africans in the United States that are vastly different from the questions of Africans at home. There is a distinct reality of the African diaspora that is finding expression in our writing.

For example, I had not thought about first and second-generation African immigrants as having life and death concerns that are any different from, let’s say, my relatives in Kenya. I preferred to think in terms of solidarity, in terms of remittances, in terms of us abroad as pretty much being an extension of Africa. We are, after all, going to go back, always thinking of going back even as we age. But two years ago my father and I were invited by young first-generation Kenyans in Seattle to talk about culture and identity. They are born to Kenyan parents who want their children to assimilate, but African languages take a backseat to learning English. The children are growing up with Kenyan names but without the substance of language and culture.

At the same time, they are dealing with racism in addition to an angst-ridden relationship with African-Americans. African-Americans and Africans see each other through the eyes of racism – a hopeless war-ridden tribal people meeting a drug-ridden lazy people leading to all sorts of painful tensions.

In some households, as immigration laws follow the doctrine of attrition, of making it impossible for Africans without documentation to survive, families are breaking up as parents are forced to move to immigrant-friendly states or to go underground while their children, with legal papers, remain above ground. These are real and urgent issues that are being reflected in the literature coming from the diaspora. We are simply writing what we know, in the best way we know how.

Instead of trying to bottle writing coming from the diaspora into a narrow canon, we should be creating a new vocabulary to help us talk about Afro-Chinese fiction, or diaspora transnational African literature, that is reflecting the battles of trying to survive in the new frontiers. Let African literature burst through the seams. Let African literature be many things. In a way, aren’t the Man Booker Prize or the Commonwealth Book Prize recognition of an extended connected but distinct literature in English? What the literary critic Adam Beach calls the British metaphysical empire?

I deeply love that we are having these debates in African writing. Without these tensions, a literary tradition cannot grow. Fights are good for literature because without them even the prized literary canon stagnates. But we should at least agree, that an African literary canon against which all new experimental, frontier-breaking literature is measured is simply a bad idea.

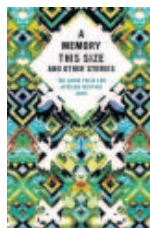
Mukoma Wa Ngugi teaches at Cornell University and is the author of Black Star Nairobi (Melville, 2013) and Nairobi Heat (Melville, 2011)

Sunday Times (South Africa)

A Memory This Size and other stories: The Caine Prize for African Writing 2013 ★★★★★

Chris Brazier (Jacana, R150)

BOOK buff



This book contains the five shortlisted stories for the leading literary prize in Africa, plus 12 other tales by African writers. The winning story, "Miracle" by Tope Folarin (Nigeria), tells of a short-sighted man who attends a church ceremony in America and is targeted by a bogus miracle healer. It is superb. Two other favourites are "The Strange Dance of the Calabash" by Wazha Lopang (Botswana) and "Howl" by Rotimi Babatunde (Nigeria). Meet talented writers you've never read before, many of whom will go on to write books that you will not be able to resist buying.

— *Edyth Bulbring @edythbulbring*

The Mercury

A MEMORY THIS SIZE AND OTHER STORIES: THE CAINE PRIZE FOR AFRICAN WRITING 2013

Author: **Various**

Publisher: **Jacana**

Reviewer: **MARK LEVIN**

THE Caine prize is awarded annually to a short story by an

African writer published in English, whether in Africa or elsewhere.

The writer need not be born in Africa, but his parents must be African.

This was applicable to this year's winner, 'Iope Folarin, who was born and educated in the US, but whose parents are Nigerian. He also has two Master's degrees from Oxford University, as a Rhodes scholar.

He sets his story, *Miracle*, in an evangelical Nigerian church in Texas, where the pastor's reputation rests on the

"miracles" he performs. The gullible believe, but the doubters need confirmation.

Although there is the cynic in Folarin (as the ending reveals) he also understands the role of the church in a small community

There are 17 short stories in this, the 14th volume,

including two stories by Elnathan John, also a Nigerian. One of them, *A Memory This Size*, lends its title to this volume. It, too, touches on religion as an older brother struggles to cope with the drowning of

his brother 10 years earlier. Religion is not a comfort while he wrestles with the memory of a special sibling.

The Caine prize continues to gather the many-varied streams of African writing. The modern and traditional may clash in daily life, but they form part of an evolving literature.





THE FINALISTS:
(L-r) Tope Folarin,
Pede Hollist,
Chinelo Okparanta,
Elnathan John and
Abubakar Ibrahim

Caine Prize

'Miracle' wins Nigerian writer Tope Folarin the prestigious award

ROSL hosted the first in a series of readings by the finalists of the Caine Prize for African Writing, awarded annually for a short story by an African writer published in English. On Thursday 4 July, an attentive audience gathered in Princess Alexandra Hall to hear authors Pede Hollist (Sierra Leone), Abubakar Ibrahim, Elnathan John, Tope Folarin and Chinelo Okparanta (all from Nigeria) read extracts from their shortlisted stories. Guests were then given the opportunity to find out more about the writers' inspirations and motivations in the informative question and answer session that followed.

However, we all had to wait until Monday 8 July for the winner to be announced. At a dinner held at the Bodleian Library, Oxford, nominees joined past winners, celebrities and supporters to hear who would be taking home the £10,000 prize. The Chair of Judges, Gus Casely-Hayford, announced Tope Folarin as the 2013 winner for his story *Miracle*. Set in Texas in an evangelical Nigerian Church, where the congregation gathers to witness the healing powers of a blind pastor-prophet, Folarin's intriguing tale addresses themes of faith, gullibility and the American dream.

ROSL has supported the Caine Prize since 2001, providing accommodation at Over-Seas House for the finalists during their short stay in London. Visit www.caineprize.com to read the five shortlisted stories and find out more about the writers.

The Caine Prize is supported by:



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