



MEDIA RELEASE

To: All Media

From: UJ Prize for South African Writing

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Announcement of Winners for the 2023 UJ Prize

The University of Johannesburg Prize for South African Writing (UJ Prize) in English is pleased to announce the winners for both the Debut and the Main Prize categories. This follows a rigorous adjudication process, in which seven judges from three universities evaluated a wide array of books published in 2023. This year's adjudication panel was comprised of the following members:

1. Prof Ronit Frenkel (Chair), University of Johannesburg
2. Prof Sikhumbuzo Mngadi, University of Johannesburg
3. Prof Marzia Milazzo, University of Johannesburg
4. Dr Veronica Fasselt, University of Pretoria
5. Dr Thabo Tsehloane, University of Johannesburg
6. Prof Grace Musila, University of the Witwatersrand
7. Prof Nedine Moonsamy, University of Johannesburg

The UJ Prize is open to published South African works in English and includes all literary genres. The panel selected the following books as the winners in the respective categories:

Debut Prize Winner:

The Institute for Creative Dying by Jarred Thompson

Prof. Ronit Frenkel, Head of the English Department and Chair of the judging panel described Jarred Thompson's *The Institute for Creative Dying* as an "extraordinarily original and beautifully crafted novel that heralds the emergence of a new literary star in South Africa." Asked to comment about what makes the novel outstanding, Frenkel said, "The novel centers on five people as they navigate the idea of how to 'die delightfully' while exploring the limits of how they have lived. Thompson investigates big metaphysical questions, along with what he calls the 'crisis of the ordinary,' through these vastly different characters. The book is interspersed with moments of joy, beauty and insight while the characters seek meaning in a difficult world. Issues around mortality and the interconnectedness of everything frame the narrative in profound ways that force the reader to ponder the very same questions when the ending is already known - that, inevitably, we will all die."



Main Prize Winner

Three Egg Dilemma by Morabo Morojele

Dr Thabo Tšehloane, one of the judging panel members, said about the winning title, “Morabo Morojele’s *Three Egg Dilemma* is a witty, thought-provoking novel that blends humour with social critique. The novel masterfully navigates the complex dilemmas of modern life, grappling with tensions between tradition and identity. Morojele skillfully captures the clash between personal aspirations and societal expectations, using wit and keen observation to explore the complexities of living in a rapidly changing world. *Three Egg Dilemma* highlights the universal struggle of forging an identity in a world that is constantly shifting. Morojele’s humour and insight make the novel both accessible and profound, offering a meaningful exploration of the challenges facing contemporary African society. With its vibrant characters and satirical tone, *Three Egg Dilemma* offers readers a fresh and engaging perspective on contemporary African life.”

The winner of the Main Prize will receive prize money to the tune of R75, 000.00, and the Debut Prize will receive R45, 000.00. All the top three nominees in the respective categories will receive certificates of recognition. Congratulations to the winners and the nominees.

The prizes will be presented at a ceremony at the University of Johannesburg on 10 October 2024. The details of the ceremony will be announced in due course

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Ends

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