



CORA-Nigeria Prize for Literature Info Fact sheet

The 2025 *CORA-Nigeria Prize for Literature Book Party* celebrating the 11 longlisted titles and authors for the 2025 NIGERIA PRIZE FOR LITERATURE holds...

Date: SUNDAY AUGUST 3

Time: 1 PM (Exhibition & Book signing - 1pm – 2pm)

Venue: Grand Ballroom, Lagos Continental Hotel, Victoria Island, Lagos

NB: Kindly RSVP as indicated on the Attached Invitation Card.

Why the Book Party

Since 2010, the CORA has been a critical force in the projection of the longlisted works to the attention of the public. This is through the annual **CORA-NPL BOOK PARTY**. To CORA, the eleven on the longlist are the very best titles and writers in the genre this season. It means that, out of the so many (Over 250) entries for the year's edition of the Prize, the eleven titles are exceptional, and, any of them could indeed clinch the coveted Prize.

The objective of the Book Party as manifested in the past editions is **to ensure that we bring the longlisted writers and books face-to-face with the literary audiences, so that we could create conversations around the work and the author.**

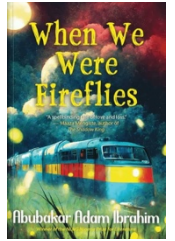
In its 16th edition, the Book Party has become **a respectable platform** through which the NPL longlisted writers are engaged on their work by the public. This is the core reason we initiated the CORA-NPL Book Party, essentially to celebrate the accomplishment of the author, and celebrate their individual work on the milestone.

SYNOPSIS & PROFILES

When We Were Fireflies: Synopsis

WHEN brooding artist, Yarima Lalo, encounters a moving train for the first time, two serendipitous events occur. First, it triggers memories of past lives in which he was twice murdered—once on a train. He also meets Aziza, a woman with a complicated past of her own, who becomes key to helping him understand what he is experiencing. With a third death in his current life imminent, together they go hunting for remnants of his past lives. Will they find evidence that he is losing his mind or the people who once loved or loathed him?

More at: <https://masobebooks.com/ng/book/when-we-were-fireflies/>



ABUBAKAR ADAM IBRAHIM: Profile



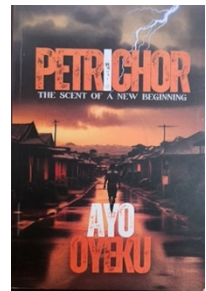
CREATIVE writer and journalist, Adam's novel, *Season of Crimson Blossoms*, won the Nigerian Prize for Literature in 2016. His debut short-story collection *The Whispering Trees* was longlisted for the inaugural [Etisalat Prize for Literature](#) in 2014, with the title story shortlisted for the [Caine Prize for African Writing](#). He has won the BBC African Performance Prize and the ANA Plateau/Amatu Braide Prize for Prose and in 2014, he was selected for the [Africa39](#) list of writers aged under 40 with potential and talent to define future trends in African literature. *'Dreams and Assorted Nightmares'* is his third book and second collection of short stories. More at:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abubakar_Adam_Ibrahim

PETRICHOR, The Scent of a new Beginning: Synopsis

IN 1976, young Jola steps into St. Michael's Anglican Missionary School with dreams of a brighter future — only to stumble into a nightmare. Beneath the warm smile of Reverend Powell, a white missionary principal, lies a monster who wields God's name to justify unspeakable cruelty. When Jola's desperate bid for freedom ends in betrayal and a river's dark embrace, he claws his way back to a mother who will stop at nothing to protect him. But justice slips through their fingers as tragedy strikes, leaving scars that time can't heal. Decades later, as Nigeria unfurls its democratic wings, in 1999, love finds Jola in the form of Chinelo — tempest of grace vowing to regain his stolen years and get him justice. More at:

<https://www.amazon.co.uk/Petrichor-Scent-Beginning-Ayo-Oyeku-ebook/>



AYO OYEKU: Profile



AN Ebedi International Residency Fellow and a Humanitarian Leadership Fellow, Ayo made an early mark in 2004 when his first children's book, *First among Equals*, was selected by World Bank (Nigeria) for distribution across schools and libraries in Nigeria. Subsequently, his poems began to appear in notable journals and anthologies. In 2015, his young adult novel, *Tears of the Lonely*, won the Ezenwa Ohaeto Prize for Fiction, by the Society of Young Nigerian Writers. In 2016, he was nominated for the Pushcart Prize for his poem, *Reeds on the Rivers*. He emerged as a finalist for the Golden Baobab Prize in 2016 and 2018 for his chapter book manuscripts, *Maya and the Finish Line* and *The Era of Afrocubs*. In 2019, he won the Association of Nigerian Authors Prize for Children's Literature for his

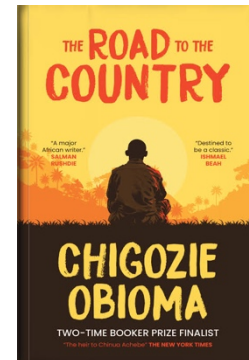
book, *Mafoya and the Finish Line*.

More at: https://books.google.com.ng/books/about/What_Happened_on_Thursday.html?id

The Road to the Country: Synopsis

SET in Nigeria in the late 1960s, *The Road to the Country* is the epic story of a shy, bookish student haunted by long-held guilt who must go to war to free himself. When his younger brother disappears as the country explodes in civil war, Kunle must set out on an impossible rescue mission. Kunle's search for his brother becomes a journey of atonement that will see him conscripted into the breakaway Biafran army and forced to fight a war he hardly understands, all while navigating the prophecies of a local Seer, he who marks Kunle as an abami eda — one who will die and return to life. Obioma's novel is an odyssey of brotherhood, love, and unimaginable courage set during one of the most devastating conflicts in the history of Africa.

More at: <https://masobebooks.com/ng/book/the-road-to-the-country/>



CHIGOZIE OBIOMA: Profile



A WRITER, described by Salman Rushdie calls “a major voice” in literature, Obioma's two previous novels, *The Fishermen* and *An Orchestra of Minorities*, were both finalists for the Booker Prize. His novels have won the FT/OppenheimerFunds Emerging Voices Award for Fiction, an NAACP Image Award, and the Los Angeles Times Award for First Fiction, and have been nominated for many others. Together, they have been translated into 30 languages. He was named one of Foreign Policy's 100 Leading Global Thinkers. He is a professor of creative writing at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln in the United States of America.

More at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chigozie_Obioma

The Middle Daughter: Synopsis

WHEN 17-year-old Nani loses her older sister and then her father in quick succession, her world spins off its axis. Isolated and misunderstood by her grieving mother and sister, she's drawn to an itinerant preacher, a handsome self-proclaimed man of God who offers her a new place to belong. All too soon, Nani finds herself estranged from her family, tethered to her abusive husband by children she loves but cannot fully comprehend. She must find the courage to break free and wrestle her life back — without losing what she loves most.

More at: <https://masobebooks.com/ng/book/the-middle-daughter/>



CHIKA UNIGWE: Profile



EDUCATED at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, KU Leuven (Belgium), and the University of Leiden in the Netherlands, from where she earned her PhD in Post-Colonial Studies, Chika's work spans novels, short stories, essays, and children's literature. Her writing, often centered on displacement, identity and belonging, and the intersections of culture, is celebrated for its lyrical intensity and unflinching honesty. Unigwe is widely translated, with her work available in more than a dozen languages, including Hebrew and Tamil. Her 2023 novel *The Middle Daughter* was longlisted for the New Voices Award, shortlisted for the Townsend Prize, and selected as a *Booksellers Pick* in the UK upon publication. She is also the author of *On Black Sisters' Street*, which won the Nigeria Prize for Literature in 2012.

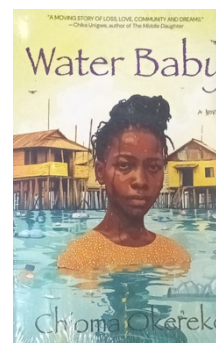
More at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chika_Unigwe

Twitter: @chikaunigwe; @themiddaughter; Facebook: @chikaunigwe; Instagram@chikaunigweauthor

Water Baby: Synopsis

IN Makoko, the floating slum off mainland Lagos, Nigeria, 19-year-old Baby yearns for an existence where she can escape the future her father has planned for her. With opportunities scarce, Baby jumps at the chance to join a newly launched drone-mapping project, aimed at broadening the visibility of her community. Then a video of her at work goes viral and Baby finds herself with options she could never have imagined -- including the possibility of leaving her birthplace to represent Makoko on the world stage. But will life beyond the lagoon be everything she's dreamed of? Or has everything she wants been in front of her all along? It is a coming-of-age story based on the real settlement of Makoko in Nigeria.

More at: <https://masobebooks.com/ng/book/water-baby/>



CHIOMA OKEREKE: Profile



AN award-nominated novelist, short story writer, and poet whose work spans continents and cultures with lyrical precision and emotional depth, Okereke's writing is deeply informed by the dissonance and insight that come from living between worlds. Her early years navigating identity and visibility across shifting cultural landscapes shaped her instinctive attention to the margins — to the characters, voices, and moments that might otherwise go unseen. What began as a journey in performance poetry evolved into a passion for prose, as she found greater sanctuary in the written word. Her debut novel, *Bitter Leaf* (Virago), was shortlisted for the Commonwealth Writers' Prize, and her short story *Trompette De La Mort* was named First Runner Up for the inaugural Costa Short Story Award.

More at: <https://chiomaokereke.com/>

Fine Dreams: Synopsis

SET in a fictional town, at a fictional school, *Fine Dreams* centers on four young friends, the stars of their school's track team. While studying for exams, they are kidnapped and taken to a terrorist encampment. Two are claimed as "wives" by their captors, one is forced to wear a suicide vest, and each is subjected to appalling violence and terror. While their stories resonate with a widely publicised 2014 abduction, these four young women could have been taken in any of the many incidents that have plagued the Nigerian people for years. Even though they are abducted and abused by men in power and forced to survive in a dark place, these resilient young women recover their dreams and hopes to live in daylight once again..

More at: https://books.google.com.ng/books/about/Fine_Dreams.html



LINDA N. MASI: Profile



WINNER of the Juniper Prize for fiction, winner of the Indies Foreword Silver Award for Multicultural Adult Fiction and a Best New Fiction finalist in the International Book Awards, Linda N. Masi's work has appeared in *Locomotive*, *Tupelo Quarterly*, *Blackberry: A Magazine* and elsewhere. Some of her other works have been anthologised in *Songai 12* (in honor of the Port Harcourt - UNESCO World Book Capital Program), *Nothing to See Here* (ed. Hilda Twongyeirwe), and *The Beggar's Story and other Stories* (ed. Elechi Amadi). She holds an MFA in creative writing from the University of Mississippi; and a PhD in English (creative writing focus) from Texas Tech University.

More at: <https://go.authorsguild.org/members/9553>

Leave My Bones in Saskatoon: Synopsis

SEEN through the eyes of Owoicho, a television presenter seeking a better life for himself and his family, *Leave my Bones in Saskatoon* spans two cultures and continents. The story begins with Owoicho's good news. He can't wait to tell his family that their permanent residency application to Canada was successful. But while he was in Abuja, happy about this breakthrough, somewhere in the outskirts of Makurdi, a dark and troubling event threatens to torpedo all the plans he and his wife, Ene had of moving their family to Saskatoon. We also meet Ochanya, Owoicho's teenage daughter who has to deal with the twin shock of losing close family and the unavoidable transition from girl to adolescence that pitches her against the people that love and care for her the most. With everything Owoicho and Ochanya have to deal with, do they still make it out to Canada as planned and whose bones are in Saskatoon?

More at: <https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/123503348-leave-my-bones-in-saskatoon>



MICHAEL AFENFIA: Profile



A TWO-TIME finalist for the Chinua Achebe Prize for Literature, Afenfia's writing has also made the shortlist for the Glengarry Book Award. His novels *Rain Can Never Know*, *The Mechanics of Yenagoa*, and *Leave My Bones in Saskatoon* explore themes of migration, identity, and the human condition across continents. His other books include *When the Moon Caught Fire*, *A Street Called Lonely*, *Don't Die on Wednesday* and an anthology of short stories and poems, *Head of the Baptist*. His seventh novel, *Dear Algorithm: The Wedlock Show* is set for release just before Christmas 2025 by Griots Lounge and Paperworth Books

More at: <https://michaelfenfia.com/>

This Motherless Land: Synopsis

SPLIT between England and Nigeria, two extraordinary cousins are set on vastly different paths as they come to terms with their shared family history. Quiet Funke is happy in Lagos. She loves her art teacher mother, her professor father, and even her annoying little brother (most of the time). But when tragedy strikes, she's sent to England, a place she knows only from her mother's stories. To her dismay, she finds the much-lauded estate dilapidated, the food tasteless, the weather grey. Worse still, her mother's family are cold and distant. With one exception: her cousin Liv. Free-spirited Liv has always wanted to break free of her joyless family. She becomes fiercely protective of her little cousin, and her warmth and kindness give Funke a place to heal. The two girls grow into adulthood the closest of friends. But the choices their mothers made haunt Funke and Liv and when a second tragedy occurs their friendship is torn apart.

More at: <https://www.narrativelandscape.com/product/this-motherless-land/>



NIKKI MAY: Profile



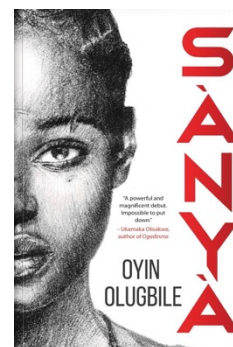
AN Anglo-Nigerian - born in Bristol and raised in Lagos, her debut novel *Wahala* won the Comedy Women In Print New Voice Prize, was shortlisted for the Diverse Book Award and the Fingerprint Debut of the Year Award, and longlisted for the Goldsboro Glass Bell Award. It's being turned into a major BBC TV drama series. *This Motherless Land*, her second novel, was shortlisted for the 2025 Edward Stanford Prize for Fiction with a Sense of Place. It is currently being adapted for TV.

More at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nikki_May

SANYA: Synopsis

SÀNYÀ always felt different. And everyone that knew her — the people in the village she grew up in, her beloved brother, Dada, her Aunt Abike, and even her parents before she was born—knew that there was something special about her, too. After an unspeakable tragedy causes her to leave home and grow up too soon, she is devastated to find that her incredible powers are linked to a future which she must fight, even at the cost of her very soul. She begins life anew, hoping that the dark prophesy would somehow rewrite itself. Soon, however, her carefully crafted life and identity becomes the catalyst for a deadly war that will tear her family apart, and doom everything she holds dear.

More at: <https://masobebooks.com/ng/book/sanya/>



OYIN OLUGBILE: Profile



A CULTURAL storyteller, whose writing reimagines African myths, matriarchal power, and spiritual memory, Oyin holds a Bachelor's degree in Theatre Arts from the University of Lagos and a Master's degree in Leadership and Development from King's College London. She is the co-author of *The Road to Good Governance in Nigeria and Africa* and has written several screenplays exploring identity, spirituality, and intergenerational transformation. She has received multiple recognitions for her work across literature, education, and leadership, including: CANEX Prize for Publishing, 2024 – Longlist (SANYA), and FutureEd Awards, 2023 – Winner, Best Learning Support, and Women Economic Forum Awards, 2023 – Winner, Iconic Women Creating a Better World for All

More at: <https://masobebooks.com/ng/writer/oyin-olugbile/>

oyinolugbile@gmail.com | Instagram: @heyitsoyin | Twitter/X: @HeyItsOyin

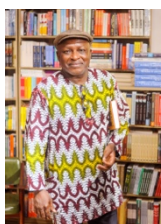
New York, My Village: Synopsis

FROM a suspiciously cheap Hell's Kitchen walk-up, Nigerian editor and winner of a Toni Morrison Publishing Fellowship, Ekong Udousoro, is about to begin the opportunity of a lifetime to learn the ins and outs of the publishing industry from its incandescent epicentre. While his sophisticated colleagues meet him with kindness and hospitality, he is soon exposed to a colder, ruthlessly commercial underbelly — callous agents, greedy landlords, boorish and hostile neighbours; and, beneath a superficial cosmopolitanism, a bedrock of white cultural superiority and racist assumptions about Africa, its peoples, and worst of all, its food. Reckoning, at the same time, with the recent history of the devastating and brutal Biafran War, in which Ekong's people were a minority of a minority caught up in the mutual slaughter of majority tribes, Ekong's life in New York becomes a saga of unanticipated strife.

More at: <https://www.goodreads.com/en/book/show/56783758-new-york-my-village>



UWEM AKPAN: Profile



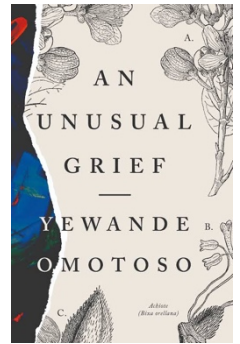
HIS first book, *Say You're One of Them*, a collection of short stories, published in 2008 by Little, Brown, made the "Best of the Year" list at *People* magazine, *Wall Street Journal*, and other places. It made the 2009 Oprah Book Club selection. A *New York Times* and *Wall Street Journal* #1 bestseller, it has been translated into 12 languages. *New York, My Village*, published 2021 by WW Norton is his second book and first novel. He has been a Fellow at the Black Mountain Institute (University of Nevada, Las Vegas, 2010), Institute for the Humanities (University of Michigan, 2011), Yaddo Foundation (Saratoga Springs, New York, 2012), the Cullman Center (the New York Public Library, 2013) and the Hang Center for Catholic Intellectual Heritage (Loyola University Chicago, 2017).

More at: <https://www.uwemakpan.com/>

An Unusual Grief: Synopsis

HOW do you get to know your daughter when she is dead? This is the question that haunts Mojisola as she grapples with the sudden loss of her daughter, Yinka and the unresolved fractures in their relationship. She is forced to confront the dysfunctions of her life that have led her to this point, evading her errant husband and mourning their estranged daughter alone. Mojisola's grief takes her from Cape Town to Johannesburg where she holes up in Yinka's apartment, unearthing the life that she had built for herself there. Walking a mile in Yinka's shoes, Mojisola slips into a clandestine underworld, where she learns to break free from the bondage of the labels, wife and mother. In this new world of feline companionship, reignited talents and unlikely friendships with Yinka's acerbic landlady Zelda, Mojisola's understanding of life and her place within it, is built anew.

More at: <https://www.yewandeomotoso.com/>



YEWANDE OMOTOSO: Profile



ARCHITECT and designer, Yewande's debut novel, *Bom Boy*, was published in 2011 by Modjaji Books in Cape Town, and won the 2012 South African Literary Award for First-Time Published Author; shortlisted for the South African *Sunday Times* Fiction Prize, and for the M-Net Literary Awards 2012; it was also runner-up for the 2013 Etisalat Prize for Literature, following which Omotoso took up a 2014 Etisalat Fellowship at the University of East Anglia. She was a 2013 Norman Mailer Fellow and, recipient of a Miles Morland Scholarship in 2014. She hadl also being longlisted for the 2017 Bailey's Women's Prize for Fiction. Born in Barbados and grew up in Nigeria, she currently lives in Johannesburg.

More at: <https://www.yewandeomotoso.com/>