

# Mondi Shanduka Newspaper Awards recognise country's skills

The ninth annual awards ceremony of Mondi Shanduka Newsprint and the Newspaper Association of South Africa held at Soccer City in Johannesburg earlier this week demonstrated that the power of the printed media is still excellent in South Africa.



On Wednesday, 5 May 2010, the packed programme saw awards in 15 categories, a Lifetime Achiever award, the special categories of South African Story of the Year and South African Newspaper Journalist of the Year, a Print Media Fellowship and the Frewin, Joel Mervis and McCall awards.

## Category winners

The winners in the competition's 15 categories were singled out from 41 shortlisted candidates selected among 604 entries.

- Hard News - Julian Rademeyer and Felix Dlangamandla - 'Perdfris Shaik' (*Rapport*). The winning entry provided the first clear and uncontested evidence that Shabir Shaik was not complying with his parole conditions. This was strong journalism, incontrovertible and full of power.
- Analysis and Commentary - Brendan Boyle - 'The loud, loutish dumbing down of government' (*Sunday Times*). The column was well-written and well-argued, tackling a complex subject succinctly and effectively for the target audience. Most impressive was the writer's skill in analysing the troublesome features of a one-party-dominant state within a limited space.
- Feature Writing - Oliver Roberts - 'The quest to be one' (*Sunday Times*), which covered the complex realities of people living with atypical sexual differentiation - and was written before the Caster Semenya controversy broke.

- Investigative Journalism - Adriaan Basson - 'Kitchen confidential' (*Mail & Guardian*) - a series of articles and the culmination of a three-year investigation. Traditional legwork, perseverance, courage and an ability to look for information beyond the obvious sources resulted in evidence-based reporting that has had far-reaching results.
- Creative Journalism - Nikiwe Bikitshe - 'Google me baby'; 'She can have any surname ...' (*Mail & Guardian*). Her brave pieces drag us into the fraught terrain of "male-dom" and how it misinterprets femaleness. She takes no prisoners when it comes to people in power, be it the national police commissioner or the president of the republic.
- Editorial Cartoons - Jonathan Shapiro (Zapiro), for cartoons: 'Vote ANC 94 - 09', 'Pontius Mpshe', 'When pigs flew', 'Blade's New Car' (*Mail & Guardian*) and 'Tripartitecycle' (*Sunday Times*). His combination of simple and direct draftmanship, wicked wit and ability to think sideways make him a world-class cartoonist
- Graphical Journalism - Anton Vermeulen - 'Stryd van die vaste vyf' (*Sport24*). This is the first year that graphics have been separated from cartoons, allowing a different category of work to emerge from under the shadow of Zapiro. Long neglected in the South African press, graphics show heartening signs of being taken more seriously. Only a minority of the entries, however, took the difficult step beyond pure artwork, and into either meaningful illustration and/or effective information graphics.
- Popular Journalism - Prince Chauke - 'Look how I'm beating Aids'; 'My HIV+ shame' (*Sunday Sun*). A winner in the same category last year, Prince Chauke takes the horror of Aids to switch it into an inspirational story. He recounts how kwaito star Lucas 'Stitchman' Setwaba gave up womanising, started an antiretroviral programme and disclosed his HIV status. 'My HIV+ Shame' once again uses the popular angle of a musician in a 'story with a message'.
- News Photographs - Alon Skuy - 'Shober as a judge' (*The Times*), stood out for its subtlety and imaginative character, capturing half the face of the judge who was found guilty of drunken driving. This image required quick thinking on the part of the photographer (most would have waited a second for the judge to move into the clear), and a bold decision by the picture desk, given the way the photograph was displayed under that headline.
- Feature Photographs - Jennifer Bruce - 'The last call of the sea' as well as other entries 'Carcass crackdown' and 'Staying alive in a wasteland' (*The Star*). She photographed the life countdown of a man, with photos that have a beginning and an ending and which stand out for their composition. This was a picture story that managed to be poignant without ever being sentimental, about a dying man's last wish to be taken out to look at the sea. Judges added that her other entries - 'Staying alive in a wasteland' and 'Pet carcass scandal' - could also have won this category for her graphically visual story about humans reduced to scavenging on a garbage dump and the SPCA dumping carcasses at the Randfontein Municipal Rubbish Dump.
- Sports Photographs - Ziphonke Lushaba - 'Shades of glory' (*The Star*). The judges described the winning image as poetic. They also noted that while rugby was well represented in the entries, soccer was almost absent.
- Presentation - Elsolet Joubert and Danie Toerien - 'Agter die nuus. 13' (*Sake24*) - an unusual front-page marking the farewell from the finance ministry of Trevor Manuel after 13 years in the seat. It takes an excellent photograph of Manuel and turns it into a magazine-style front page, showing just enough restraint to avoid overwhelming the photograph.
- Journalism Twenty-Ten - Rob Rose - 'Match Fixing' (*Sunday Times*) who successfully explored controversy around the practices of Match, the accredited hospitality company in regard to rentals and tours, including the perspectives from stakeholders, big and small.

### **Lifetime Achiever Award**

South African arts journalist, Adrienne Sichel, who has been described as a 'national treasure' for her contribution to the coverage of the performing arts - is the winner of the 2009 Alan Kirkland Soga Lifetime Achiever award presented by

## Special categories

The winners in the special categories of South African Story of the Year and South African Newspaper Journalist of the Year were also recognised for their excellence in newspaper journalism.

Gcina Ntsaluba of the *Daily Dispatch* clinched the South African Story of the Year for the story 'Broken Homes', which was about delivery - or, as represented by this story, non-delivery. The investigation into low-cost housing construction tenders in the Eastern Cape used the best of traditional journalistic methods to investigate at firsthand the delivery of sub-standard housing and its impact on the communities. In nine weeks, and over visits to seven towns, Ntsaluba documented a litany of dodgy deals. Ntsaluba produced a story that had impact beyond the borders of the Eastern Cape. It led to intervention by the Minister of Human Settlements and a visit from the Parliament's Housing Portfolio Committee.

Stephan Hofstatter was named as Journalist of the Year for various articles including 'The real trouble with land reform' in *The Weekender* and 'Fat cats milk R100-m fund' in the *Sunday Times*.

"In his land reform piece, he provides a fascinating yet compact analysis of land reform, reflecting a wide range of perspectives in it - including workers, owners and experts. This piece was thus especially strong on multi-sourcing and giving all views a hearing (even those that disagreed with the main thrust of the analysis). It was well written - and it flows nicely, which can be difficult with such a complex subject. The article demonstrates a depth of insight, which can only come from having spoken to as many people as possible," commented the judges.

"The article on "Fat Cats" covered the complexity of an emerging scandal at the Land Bank. It provides a lot of good detail, demonstrating reporting acumen and highly effective story-telling talent. His other submissions were also of high quality."

## Print Media Fellowship

At the function, the Print Media South Africa (PMSA) honoured Peter Sullivan with a Print Media Fellowship for his determination, dedication and integrity in a passionate drive for the betterment of the South African newspaper industry.

In his 28-year career, he has held several posts, culminating in his appointment as editor of *The Saturday Star* and then *The Star* between 1995 and 2001. Following his editorship of *The Star*, he held the position of editor-in-chief at Independent Newspapers, which included his representation on several industry bodies, ensuring that they played their rightful role in securing the future of the newspaper industry. It is his contribution and commitment in this arena that earned him the fellowship.

## Frewin, Joel Mervis and McCall awards

The annual Frewin, Joel Mervis and McCall awards, which have been in existence for a collective 120 years, recognise newspaper excellence in advertising, printing and production, layout and typography as well as the balance between the use of pictures and graphics.

*Die Burger* won the Frewin Award, which recognises urban daily newspapers with a circulation above 50 000. The judges had this to say about the winner, "Overall this paper presents a solid visual delivery, with an extremely neat and tidy appearance."

*Volksblad* clinched the McCall Award, which honours urban daily newspapers with a circulation of 50 000 or less. "A professional-looking paper with a very good, consistent visual delivery," said the judges.

The Joel Mervis Award, which recognises urban weekly newspapers irrespective of their circulation, was presented to *Naweek Beeld*. "Good, sound visual presentation. Interesting pictures, well presented to support news articles. *Beeld* has

proved to be one of the country's top newspapers for 2010. The skills employed to maintain such a fine paper are phenomenal," commented the judges.

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