

Top newspaper journalists acknowledged

The Standard Bank Sikuville Newspaper Journalism Awards have been announced for 2012 and, despite the migration from print to online, newspapers are still robust sources of news. This was reportedly evident in this year's calibre of the winners' stories, photographs, designs and layouts and was unsurpassed by other mediums, said the judges.

Story of the Year

The South African story of the year, 'Shoot to Kill: Inside a South African Police Death Squad', written by Stefan Hofstatter, Mzilikazi Wa Afrika and Rob Rose of the *Sunday Times*, was deemed by the judging panel, convened by Paula Fray, to be exemplary of newspaper journalism. "The story, which also topped the Investigative Journalism section, set the standard for well-researched, well-written and tenacious journalism. The trio has always delivered high quality work despite working in often dangerous conditions - thus, they all won journalists of the year too," said Fray.

Said the judges of the story of the year, "In a year of major stories - the e-toll saga, COP 17, political intrigue - the media challenge was not finding a story but telling that story well. The South African story remains varied and our challenge remains how to reflect the nuances of our society. In the story of the year, we sought quality journalism that reflected the South African "story" that represents our successes and challenges as a nation. Not only is this a fine example of investigative journalism achieved under difficult circumstances but it also reveals societies underlying challenges and its silent heroes."

SA Journalist of the Year

Stephan Hofstatter, Mzilikazi Wa Afrika and Rob Rose, *Sunday Times*.

The reporters of the year set the standard for well-researched, well-written and tenacious journalism with a winning entry described by the judges as an "example of investigative journalism at its best".

Their entries to the Sikuville Awards reflect a consistent body of work of a high standard that is sustained despite working in difficult and dangerous conditions.

Allan Kirkland Soga Award

The Allan Kirkland Soga Award went to Professor Guy Berger for his contribution to the craft of journalism in this country and internationally. Professor Berger has helped grow journalism in South Africa through his work as a reporter, an editor, a journalism teacher, an academic, a respected columnist and analyst and as a relentless media freedom activist.

Winners

Category	Entrant	Story & Comments	Publication	Award
Hard news	Angelique Serrao	"Gauteng tollroads" - The winning story, written in a succession of front-page leads, told the sorry story of the tolls, from government arrogance, to the final backing down. The reports had consequences; it was a real hard news story affecting everyone, well told.	<i>The Star</i>	Winner
Analysis, commentary and background	Ma Malan	"Abduction" - The winning entrant dealt with the traditional practice of ukutwala, in which young girls are forced into marriage. She transformed what could have been an uninviting issue-based story into an engaging human interest story by sensitively foregrounding the experience of a teenager who was abducted. Malan also thoughtfully supplemented the account of the teenager's grandmother with a range of other voices (both for and against ukutwala as practised in their village). This approach made the story even more powerful and rendered any explicit commentary entirely superfluous.	<i>Mail & Guardian</i>	Winner
Enterprise news	Yolande Stander	"Death over the counter" - The journalist stumbled upon a problem, in this instance the sale, by some pharmacies in the Eastern Cape, of potentially dangerous scheduled medication to minors without an accompanying prescription. She conducted a thorough investigation and follow-up which included the voice of several experts who provided context for the story. As a result of her work, the South African Pharmacy Council subsequently announced that it would launch an investigation that could potentially lead to pharmacies losing their licenses.	<i>Weekend Post</i>	Winner
Feature Writing	Hanlie Retief	"Melanie Steyn, My man di Sondag - verkragter" - The story marked a real departure for reportage on sexual violence and murder. Retief offers a very rare incite into the Sunday Rapist through the eyes of his wife. She takes an unfolding news story and approaches it from a unique angle, she allows the rapist's spouse to speak, to sketch the normal backdrop to his heinous double life. She fills in big gaps in the public imagining of a man whose crimes captured a country. She does so without sensationalism or sentimentality. She hones her story with narrative skill and a command of her language.	<i>Rapport</i>	Winner
Investigative journalism	Stephan Hofstatter, Mzilikazi Wa Afrika and Rob Rose	"Shoot to kill: Inside a South African police death squad" - This is a fine example of investigative journalism at its best. The exposé of the alleged murderous activities of an elite unit of the SAPS in KwaZulu-Natal is now the subject of a major court case involving a large number of policemen. Apart from well-researched details of the unit's activities - under difficult circumstances - the journalists obtained damning and macabre pictorial evidence of the alleged perpetrators celebrating after a kill. The story has had repercussions both inside and outside court, which reverberated at high levels of authority in the ranks of the police and government.	<i>Sunday Times</i>	Winner
Creative Journalism	Tanya Pampalone	"Confessions of Walmart shopper" - Pampalone had to go in disguise as she was abandoning her principles. Shame. But great writing, well done.	<i>Mail & Guardian</i>	Winner
Editorial Cartoons	Jonathan Shapiro	"Mac Maharaj side-order" - The standard of editorial cartooning in this country improves every year. Most newspapers can count on having at least one sophisticated editorial cartoon in each edition. The major improvement has been to the quality of the draughtsmanship. The more difficult trick, making a sharp point while avoiding the obvious, is more elusive. For that reason, we have awarded first prize, yet again, to Shapiro, for his still-unmatched ability to make barbed comment seem effortless. The winning cartoon manages to incorporate Mac Maharaj's name into the MacDonald's sign, make a pun on fries and lies, and get across Mac's blithe insouciance about the whole affair.	<i>Mail & Guardian</i>	Winner
Graphic journalism	Jaco Grobbelaar	"South African's global arms exports" - Media24's graphic design department overshadows this category with world-class work. The various Media24 newspapers provide generous space to infographics, often entire pages. The three winners all submitted examples of sophisticated and hugely ambitious work, making for a difficult choice. In the end the verdict went to one of Grobbelaar's less complex graphics, which offered an instant understanding of where in the world South Africa sells its arms. He also submitted an astonishing wall poster guide to the Rugby World Cup containing hundreds of items, ranging from the fauna of New Zealand to the stadiums to the top players.	<i>City Press & Rapport</i>	Winner
Popular Journalism	Warda Salvester	"Little hands do devils' work" - The winning entry about children being recruited for a life in gangsterism, is a fine example of public interest tabloid journalism. In addition to the main article it carries important social tips and available resources for parents and community workers to deal with the problem. The piece was presented in an accessible manner and easy reading style.	<i>Daily Voice</i>	Winner
News Photographs	Simphiwe Nkwali	"Crawling" - One image stood out - that by Simphiwe Nkwali - who captured a great news moment that tells the story of ordinary people driven to extreme measures after a decade and half of poor service delivery. The heavily armed policeman, seemingly unmoved by the man's pain, reflects resident's view of a government that has lost touch with its people. This entry was described by one judge as 'world class, of a standard that any international newspaper would be happy to use on page one'.	<i>Sunday Times</i>	Winner

Feature photographs	Antoine de Ras	"The Long Road Home" - The hands-down winner in a strong category this year, Antoine de Ras's highly evocative series of portraits of Bangladeshi refugees on a bus awaiting deportation to Tunisia was the first choice of all judges. The most beautiful work submitted this year. De Ras's portraits of refugees leaving Libya are not only visually exquisite, but are powerful on several levels. In one we see the reflection of the sky and a quintessentially African tree in the window, the haunted sadness of the Bangladeshi man, who ironically looks Arabic, the white highlight on the left is almost a map of Libya, overlaid with a windowpane stained and scratched to look like driving rain beneath the blue of the sky. Altogether a series that stood out for every judge.	<i>The Star</i>	Winner
Sports Photographs	Matthew Jordaan	"Super Steyn" - Jordaan's perfect moment of Dale Steyn's catch to dismiss Murali Vijay was a deserved winner. Although we see similar images throughout the year, Jordaan has managed to add an extra element in making Steyn's catch appear effortless. The disbelief of the batsman is apparent as the umpire cranes for a better view of this great moment.	<i>Cape Times</i>	Winner
Presentation (Layout and Design)	Rudi Louw	"2011 The good, the bad and the great" - The winning design, a double page spread, was an excellent example of how to marry together large numbers of elements in an elegantly composed page that mastered complex typography and space, without feeling cramped or intimidating.	<i>City Press</i>	Winner
Online Reportage	Nadine Theron/Le Roux Schoeman/Werner Erasmus	"Matrieks in Margate" - The winner is a fly-on-the-wall documentary examining the "rite of passage" by the country's matric students as they celebrate their new-found freedom. It was an interesting and often eye-opening account on the "class of 2011's" prevailing views on key issues like alcohol, sex, money and morals. This story spanned video, text and social media. It was a cross-platform story that was of an exceptional quality. The results also speak for themselves, the three videos produced achieved more than 200 000 views (that's the monthly circulation of some newspapers) and the social media interactions achieved around 800 comments.	Touchlab/Beeld/Die Burger - Media 24	Finalist Winner
Online Multimedia	Demelza Bush and Nickolaus Bauer	"Marching for Malema" - This is a video report by M&G's online reporters on the unfolding chaos and riots in inner city Johannesburg during the disciplinary hearing of controversial former ANCYL president Julius Malema. The internet presents a convergence opportunity for newspapers, allowing them to present not only in text, but in audio and video too. Reporters can be multimedia storytellers, encompassing both text and video to take advantage of the Internet as an interactive medium. If a newspaper is to play in this space however, it should produce video and audio that is broadcast quality, applying the same high standards it applies to that of the written word. We felt the production quality, the content and the editing of this piece was broadcast quality and a model for other newspaper companies to follow. This entry won due to the high quality of the reportage. It was a gripping watch and added value to the mainly text-based coverage of the online edition and the newspaper.	<i>Mail & Guardian</i> online	Winner

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