

ACCORD LITERARY BOLOGNA, 2024



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THE SMOKE THAT THUNDERS

'An ideal story for anyone who's longed for more than what the world tells them they can be' — Kirkus, USA

Naborhi feels suffocated in her village, her life already laid out: she'll have her rite of passage at sixteen, marry the man her aunt and uncle have arranged for her, and spend her life bound to her house, husband, and children.

When Naborhi begins having strange, vivid dreams and meets a mysterious animal that becomes instantly bonded to her she finds her choices are very different to those prescribed for her: she learns that she is being guided by the gods.

Joining forces with a boy called Atai they journey to rescue a kidnapped prince and Naborhi realises there is more than just her freedom at stake: she is part of a much grander scheme orchestrated by the gods, and she must race to stop a war that has already been set in motion.

Woven through with Urhobo and West African folklore and mythology, *The Smoke That Thunders* is a gripping young adult fantasy that heralds the arrival of a powerhouse debut author.

Teen/YA 13+ 65,000 words.
USA Publisher Norton Books for Young Readers April 2024
(audio and bookclub rights USA sold)
Brazil: Saraiva



THE CURSED PRINCESS

Princess Uvo has worked hard to tame her curse. A curse which grants her uncontrollable unnatural strength. She is also determined to be a Jávwe, an elite group of protectors in her father's kingdom who keep the reappearing monsters that terrorise the kingdom at bay.

But soon after she becomes a Jávwe, a more sinister enemy is revealed when Ren-Rae, a strange looking boy with a unique magic comes in search of her. With the kingdom on the verge of ruin, Princess Uvo may have no choice but to embrace her curse to save her people.

A sweeping romantic fantasy in the vein of Tricia Levenseller and Sarah J Maas drawing on traditional Urhobo folklore

Teen/YA 13+ 60,000 words.
Ms available April 2024

ERHU KOMÉ, NIGERIA



BLESSING MUSARIRI, ZIMBABWE

ALL THAT IT EVER MEANT

Named a 2024 Honor Book by the CABA committee, USA

'Meditative and humorous ... wise and lyrical. A gorgeous, richly rewarding novel for thoughtful readers.'
— School Library Journal *Starred review*

'(A) powerful homage to family.'
— Publishers Weekly *Starred Review*

'An inventive, exquisitely written story of family, love, and loss. A stunning, heart-breaking twist at the end will have readers turning back the pages to immediately reread this remarkable novel.'
— Kirkus *Starred Review*

Three children are returning to Zimbabwe after the untimely death of their mother – a journey that none of them particularly welcomes but one which will offer them all the opportunity to come to terms with events of the past.

Mati is the middle child, who tells the story of her mother's death and its aftermath as the family journeys back to the parents' homeland for a long camping vacation. Her elder sister, Chichi, is rebellious and argumentative in her grief and makes life difficult especially for her father, while Tana, Mati's young brother, finds real delight in the adventure. Mati sees the world a little differently from the others and is visited at random moments by an opinionated, glamorous, gender-neutral spirit named Meticais whom only she can see and hear. Is Meticais a ghost or a figment of her imagination?

This is a powerful, warm-hearted and richly evocative novel of love, loss and healing and the way in which a journey can offer ta family the chance to really see themselves. (It also has a wickedly unexpected and brilliant twist!)

Blessing Musariri lives in Harare, Zimbabwe.

Teen/YA 14-16. 50,000 words. Ms available
USA publisher: Norton Books for Young Readers January 2023
UK & Commonwealth (ex sub-Saharan Africa): Head of Zeus
Nigeria: Ouida Brazil: Saraiva

WHEN IT IS YOUR TURN FOR MIDNIGHT

A story of how families simply don't have a straightforward formula.

During a heated family dispute Chianti finds out that the man who is raising her isn't her biological father. The family splinters and Chianti sets off on her own to her maternal grandmother in Mutare near the Mozambican border. Her grandmother lives in a cul de sac where she and her best friends and business partners are ex-combatants making a living from upcycling choice pieces from second hand clothing bales.

Chianti becomes very invested in a box of old photos, letters and journals from her grandmother's past and begins to learn that families are not only about blood but involve love, loyalty and sacrifice and that sometimes you get to choose...

Chianti must re-evaluate her role in the family and her relationship with her two younger sisters, her mother and her father. She must re-establish her own sense of worth – a rich and sometimes challenging journey of discovery.

Teen/YA 14-16 50,000 words MS available Spring 2024
UK & Commonwealth inc South Africa (ex sub-Saharan Africa and Canada) Head of Zeus



ELIZABETH-IRENE BAITIE, GHANA

THE HEART OF JEIDZI

Twelve year old Gigi lives with her parents in a quiet village in the foothills of three mountains. She will be chosen to be Queen of the Dance and with only 14 days to go until the ceremony things start to become very complicated. She meets an enigmatic old man who tells her she must help him find someone called Tenu or her nightmare of the mountain exploding will come true. The only clue Shup offers about Tenu's identity is that Tenu is the First, the Last and the Only - first in a line of warriors, the last in a line of ten generations, and the only child of their mother.

When Gigi discovers she is the mysterious Tenu everything comes in to question and the quest becomes a battle not only to save the local community but also to uncover the truth of her heritage.

Middle Grade 8 – 12. 50,000 words. Ms available Autumn 2024.

CROSSING THE STREAM

Named a 2023 Honor Book by the CABA committee, USA

‘A powerful coming-of-age story of self-discovery and overcoming fear.’
– Kirkus *Starred review*. A Kirkus Reviews Best Children’s Book of 2021

‘A fully fleshed, sensorially detailed narrative...’
– Publishers Weekly *Starred review*

Twelve-year-old Ato has longed to visit the island of Nnoma, a highly protected bird sanctuary that his late father helped build and if he and his friends Dzifa and Leslie put together a successful environmental project, they could earn one of the rare opportunities to see Nnoma. Ato has other things on his mind too: His mother recently announced that he would be spending weekends with Nana, his paternal grandmother. This was unexpected since the two do not get on! Ato is also anxiously aware of financial problems at home.

His grandmother’s stories gradually answer questions Ato has about his father and make him determined to uncover secrets in his community and help Ato and his friends, especially fearless Dzifa, discover the courage to push for truth.

Middle Grade 8 – 12. 35,000 words. Ms available.
USA Publisher: Norton Books for Young Readers May 2021
UK & Commonwealth (including Nigeria, ex sub-Saharan Africa): Cassava Republic
Ghana: Education Logistics; Italy: Giunti. Brazil Saraiva

FLYING UP THE MOUNTAIN

Named a 2024 Honor Book by the CABA committee, USA.

Ato and his friends’ project wins the coveted award and the children are set to visit Nnoma, the extraordinary bird sanctuary that very few can ever see.

Once there, they realise that there are some strange things going on and the children have to set about saving this precious protected place from unlawful exploitation. With unlikely friends and foe in the frame this exciting story shows the power of young people to make changes that improve the lives of all.

Elizabeth-Irene is a chemist and has published several books in her native Ghana. She lives in Accra with her husband and children.

Middle Grade 8 – 12. 35,000 words. Ms available
USA Publisher Norton Books for Young Readers Summer 2023
UK & Commonwealth (ex sub-Saharan Africa): Cassava Republic
Ghana: Education Logistics



EDUDZI ADODO, TOGO



THE RINGMASTER'S DARK INHERITANCE

A cinematic magical MG adventure for fans of Tim Burton, WEDNESDAY and Lemony Snicket, from the author of CHILDREN OF STARDUST.

Stay weird for life. That's Blaise's motto, anyway. But when his long-lost family rehome him from St Workowitz's Orphanage, Blaise finds himself in a hidden magical world, and life gets seriously weird. Blaise discovers he's part of an illustrious family of ringmasters, who wield a range of powerful and bizarre magics through mist rings.

But when Blaise determines to prove himself by wielding a dangerous ring called Nibansi, he unwittingly allows an old family rival a foothold into his life, putting his new family and his new home in very real and immediate danger. They've been cursed into sleep. He could lose them all. The clock is ticking, and it's all his fault.

Can Blaise work with his peers and learn to wield shadow and thunder magic through Nibansi, in time to put a stop to Mavenmore's plans, protect his family and save the Twilight Castle?

Teen 11 – 15. 60,000 words. MS available Spring 2024

CHILDREN OF STARDUST



'Brimming with adventure, tenacity and magic.' Kirkus
Starred review

Zero ekes out a living rescuing stranded inter-galactic travellers who crash land on his planet. One of his rescues however heralds a complete change of fortune for Zero as he finds himself the guardian of a very special power which gives him access to a secret guild whose mission is to recover the lost mask of the shaman king. Soon a group of misfits is on the road trying to unravel mysteries and intrigues that go back millennia and could bring an abundance of riches, or the wrath of the gods upon their heads. This exhilarating, freshly original and playful sci-fi/fantasy drama rockets through space on an epic quest to protect the galaxy.

Edudzi Adodo lives in Togo where he works in the family business. He has been an avid reader since childhood and sees his writing as drawing on the magical worlds of literature he has long found pleasure from.

**Science fiction Teen 11 – 15. 60,000 words. Ms available
USA Publisher: Norton Books for Young Readers October 2022**

KING OF BITTERS

ELAINE NSOESIE, CAMEROON/USA

When Isa's parents go missing she is led to believe that they have fled the country, seeking safe refuge in the neighbouring state. When their bodies are found in the nearby lake she quickly realises that there is a fiction being created about their lives. Her job is to find out why. The story of the state's repression of its people, of Isa's own parentage and her mother and fathers resistance to the autocratic regime under which they live is a big riddle waiting to be solved in this exciting drama that looks at issues surrounding the use of AI, intrusive surveillance and the rights of the individual to make choices not always in the state's best interests.

Elaine O. Nsoesie is an internationally recognised data scientist and professor of public health at Boston University. She researches, writes, and speaks about the intersection of data, algorithms, race, and health inequities. Her essays have appeared in the Boston Globe, NPR, The Conversation, and Think Global Health. She was born in Cameroon and moved to the US at the age of sixteen. This is her first novel.

Teen (13+) ms available autumn 2024, 50,000 words



MICAL PHILIPPOS, ERITREA

THE CHILDREN OF THE MARK

A brilliantly realised dual narrative fantasy YA for fans of the 'Magisterium' series and *Children Of Blood And Bone*.

When Mak and Nessa first meet, their mutual dislike is instant. But their pasts are intertwined, and contact between the two girls awakens their *issa*, magical energy and talent. Mak learns that she and Nessa are actually both orphans from war-torn Everlorre, a world infused by *issa*. When the girls enrol in the Roca Luna Academy of Magic they do not intend to have anything to do with one another – until that is they are forced together to save themselves from someone, or something, intent on doing them both harm.

An exciting older middle grade novel of magic, family secrets and friendships forged against all odds.

Mical lives in Eritrea where she works as an academic focusing on women's issues.

Teen. 10-14. 60,000 words MS available Spring 2024



HIWOT WALELIGN, ETHIOPIA

TITLE TBC

Two young people caught in the limbo of the long end of year school holiday and before they go off to university or college. Each has their own issues to deal with and each is struggling to make choices that they are happy with. Then they meet each other, and joy, adventure and happiness become part of their stories as they unravel the dilemmas facing them to do with themselves, their families and their futures. A delightful love filled coming of age novel that celebrates that tricky time which can also be one of the happiest times in a young person's life.

Celebrating friendship, being brave, dealing with difficult choices and ultimately being yourself.

Hiwot Walelign Workneh has been working for different news outlets and related companies as a contributor, editor, translator and anchor for over a decade. She has an academic background of English literature and finished her doctoral degree on African magical realist novels in 2020. She recently started creative writing and her first young-adult novella submitted for Code-Ethiopia's 2017 competition won the Burt Awards at national level.

Teen 12+ 40,000 words, ms available autumn 2024.



PATRICK OCHIENG, KENYA

DISPLACED

When a group of children become a group of friends after they find themselves living together in an East African refugee camp all sorts of adventures begin to unfold.

When the children realise that the reason that the camp is often without water is because a ruthless gang are capitalising on the inhabitants need for water and operating a cartel over supply they know that they have to do something about it.

Step forward a wonderful rag-tag group of unlikely saviours in this fun adventure story in an unlikely setting that goes some way to remind readers that children will always be children and even in challenging circumstances humanity will win out.

Middle grade 9 – 13. 40,000 words. USA: Lerner Publications Brazil: FTD

PLAYING A DANGEROUS GAME

‘...there’s great appeal in the distinctive setting and the universal quality of the boys’ attitudes, camaraderie, and interactions with their world. Look for more from this new voice from Kenya.’ — Booklist review

‘An entertaining picture of a boy’s life between social classes.’ — Kirkus Reviews

‘Four ordinary boys, a creepy puzzle to solve, and a fumbling route to heroism add up to a rewarding read.’ — Horn Book Magazine

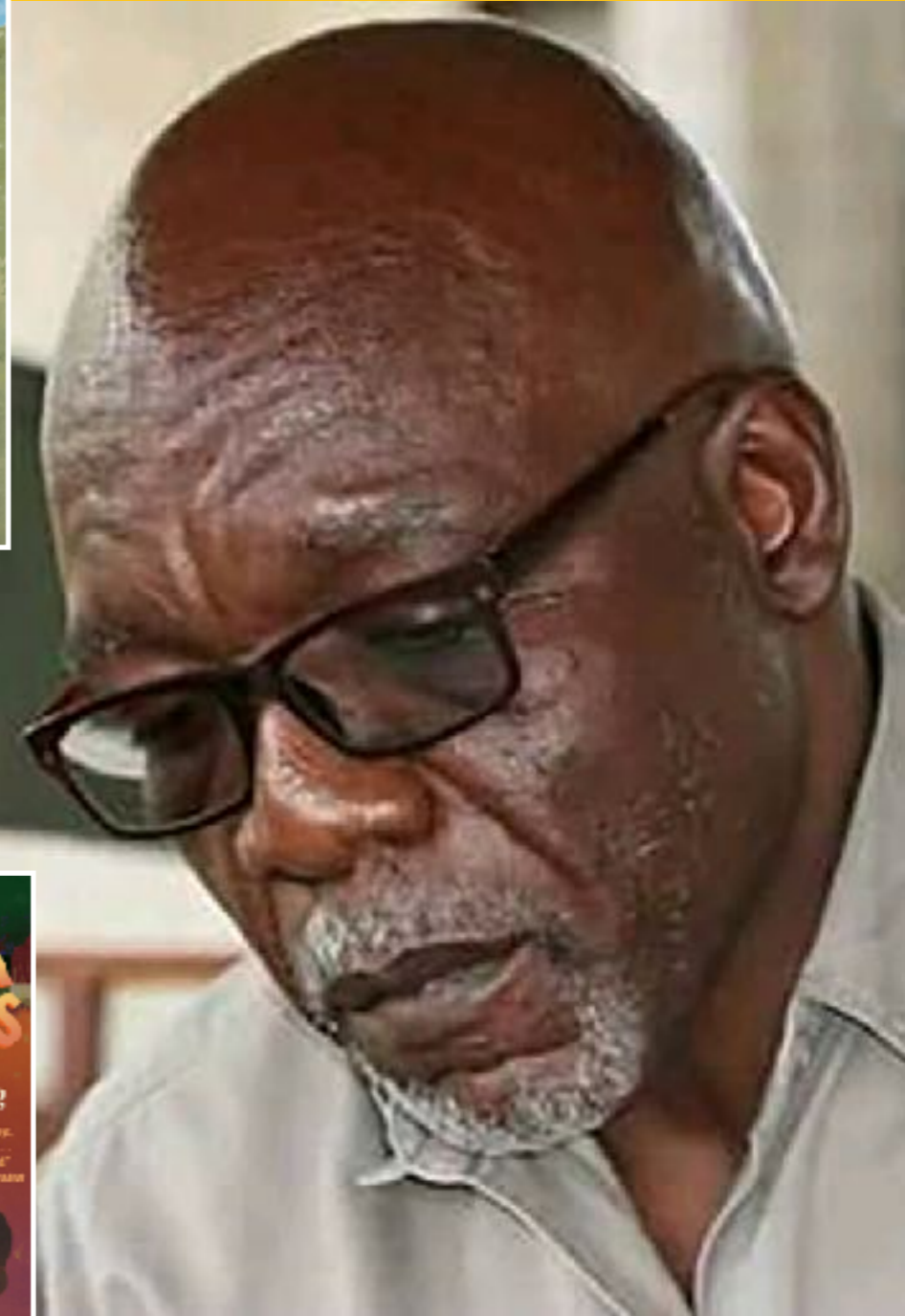
Lumush and his three friends, Dado, Mose and Odush live with their parents in Railway Estate. When they are not in school, they are running free and exploring the wreck of a deserted house on Desai Street, a house the boys believe is haunted because of the strange goings on late into the night.

It is not ghosts, though, that they have to fear but the malevolent Mwachuma the owner of the junk yard who by day spends all his time in his yard, but by night with accomplices, drives out in his old Bedford lorry to steal coffee (black gold) from the Railway yard and store it in the ‘ghost’ house. As the boys are drawn into a criminal underworld the dangers to them and their families increase.

Patrick lives in Kenya and was longlisted for the 2018 Short Story Is Dead Long Live The Short Story and for the Syncity NG 2018 Anthology prize. He has also been published in Kikwetu, Munyori, Brittle Paper and other literary publications.

Middle Grade 9 – 13. 40,000 words.

USA Publisher Norton Books for Young Readers September 2022



RUBY YAYRA GOKA, GHANA



EVEN WHEN YOUR VOICE SHAKES

Selected by Rise: Feminist Book Project as an Honor Booklist Title 2023 in association with the ALA - American Library Association

When Amerley is offered a job working as a maid in the house of one of her mother's old school friends she knows she has to take the opportunity. Her wages will feed her family, help her sisters stay in school and mean that her mother won't have to worry about them all so much. Her move isn't easy but as she becomes used to the new life away Amerley starts to settle in - until the day she is assaulted by the son of her employer.

In this powerful book Ruby Goka looks at issues of class, economic power and gender politics in Ghana. Through the life of an ordinary girl Ruby Goka suggest that change comes about through resistance and action.

Ruby Goka is the author of several very successful books in Ghana. She works as a dentist as well as being an author.

**Teen/YA 14 – 16. 50,000 words. Ms available
USA publisher Norton Books for Young Readers
Brasil: FTD; Nigeria: Ouida Books**



THE CHOSEN ONE

When Emenyo is eleven her thirteen-year-old sister Esinam is taken to live with a priest in his compound after a crime is committed by an uncle. She is Trokosi – a token of atonement.

Emenyo is ambitious for her life. She wants to become a successful market trader, she wants to have fun with her friends, and she wants to be free. But the family remains dogged by bad luck and the priest suggests that providing another trokosi will help the family be rid of the bad luck that is following them and Emenyo is sent this time.

As a young bride of the priest Emenyo won't however accept all that is proscribed for her, she has plans of her own and is determined not to be lost to a practise that she has no faith in.

This historical novel is full of energy, a belief in female empowerment and concern for the way in which society sometimes has to be questioned to allow positive change for all.

Teen 14 – 16. 50,000 words. MS available

Accord Literary is a literary agency for children's book creators based in Africa. Since 2019, we have been working with a selection of authors and well-established publishing houses around the world to bridge the gap between African storytellers and the international book market. Our goal is to put excellent children's books into the hands of young readers across the globe.

As an organisation, Accord literary is invested in informing and supporting the next generation of children's book writers, illustrators and creators. We host workshops, master classes, virtual events and creative retreats in collaboration with some of the international book industry's most experienced and knowledgeable people who share our belief in the joy of reading and the power of storytelling to make change in the world.

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