

## **Writing is a Solidarity Practice**

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Release Date: 09 November 2022

On 29 October 2022, the Jozi Book Fair Festival was hosted, at the Workers Museum in Newtown. The Writing Workshop was facilitated by Jayne Bauling (60).

Bauling, from Mbombela, Mpumalanga, who a writer by profession explained that she has been writing her whole life, from writing poetry to short stories.

In her early 20s, she took became fascinated with writing fiction novels. "The importance of writing should have to start from a personal and passionate place as that is where honesty emerges from. It is important to keep in touch with people from other realities and social issues as a fiction novel writer, using your imagination to have an upbeat ending," explained Bauling.

"The guidelines I would like to give to young writers is that, I beg they acknowledge that they are different because every writer or person is different. I urge them, to find their voice so that it is easier for people to remember them," she further added.

In the status quo of writing in modern Southern Africa, Bauling finds it inorganic as there is no truth or growth from writing. She's been alarmed to saying, "There are various ways in writing and people decide on writing fatuous books, hence I seriously urge them to find who they are first, their voice must be found before anything. Writing requires one to use emotions and to be able to dot each of them down and the reader must feel as if they can see this character written, that can be achieved by understanding your uniqueness as a writer, as it is a difficult task to write emotions, especially with novels."

When the class began Bauling's face was filled with jubilant smiles, the session produced a lot of questions and intense scrutiny. The participants were solely interested in fiction novel writing, which seemed interesting to the veteran writer.

Tiwalo Mofokeng (13), from Thokoza an aspiring writer from Tsohang Batjha, who writes short stories, poems and aspires to write a novel one day was part of a writing competition run by Khanya College themed 'Re-imagine The World, Re-make The World'. Mofokeng's short story is titled 'Phethoho' (Change).

The competition taught her patience and how to be confident. "When I write I never feel shy, because I'm being myself fully, with my story I wanted to show that alcohol consumption can destroy people's lives, especially families which means that is not a good thing," said Mofokeng.

Another participant short-story writing competition was Imenge Ndleleni (15), from Thokoza, who also writes short stories, poems and dreams of writing a novel one day and would like to recite her poetry to an audience.

Ndleleni's short story is titled 'The Journey of Life.' She reflected, "I did not win the competition but I did learn a lot and it was fun," with a beaming smile. "I prefer writing because I do not like talking much, writing makes me confident and I love that," said Ndleleni. Both ladies enjoyed the session and are looking forward to the next writing workshop.

As writing has become a scarce activity, it has always been seen as something that is done by an elite group.

"Doing these workshops helps me to engage with the youth, and what's relevant to write about, from pain to happy thoughts. These workshops also, helps me to learn about different cultures and remind me of how diverse each person is and how I can be able to write it on paper for people to read," Bauling added.

Bauling, has had an honour to turn her trilogy books into movies which will be produced by Azania Productions, under the theme 'Soccer Season, soccer is life' next year in February.

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