

SHANGWE NEWS ISSUE 7 – July 2007

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1. Welcome

Welcome to the 7th edition of Shangwe News – the quarterly newsletter that aims to keep you informed of past events and gives you a preview of future topical events, along with the opportunity to network, and/or contribute a poem or article. The purpose of *Shangwe News* is to promote new and diverse creative writing.

If you have any comments or information for the newsletter please contact Nicole Moore, on 07960 120468 or by email at nicole@shangwe.com

2. Shangwe Poetry Nights Held at the Poetry Café, Covent Garden.

Shangwe is the vibrant and energising monthly performance poetry space, hosted by Nicole Moore, which showcases and promotes fresh emerging artists' talent in a supportive atmosphere.

On **Thursday 3rd May 2007**, Shangwe Poetry Night featured 'Achilles' and Janett Plummer aka Melted Demerara with open mic performances from 'Akuba', Bryan Bailey and Danielle.

On **Thursday 31st May 2007**, Shangwe Poetry Night was hosted by Grace Quansah aka 'Akuba' and featured Maggie Harris and Bryan Bailey.

On **Thursday 5th July 2007**, Shangwe Poetry Night was hosted by Peter Kallon aka Achilles and featured Sarah Green and Lyrically Gifted.

On **Thursday 26th July 2007**, Shangwe Poetry Night featured Yvonne Selina Weekes and Bryan Bailey with open mic performances from Nicola Greenwood and Sophia.

3. Shangwe's 1st Anthology: *Brown Eyes* – Update

Shangwe has been contacted by a newly formed organisation called RED (Reading Educational Development), set up to encourage multiculturalism through literacy and entertainment by offering a wide selection of books from A – Z categories aimed at young people. RED launches in September 2007.

Shangwe's first anthology *Brown Eyes* has been selected as recommended reading for their adult list, which mainly appeals to colleges, sixth forms and prison libraries. RED's independent reviewing panel meeting will take place on 12th August 2007, which means that *Brown Eyes* has the opportunity of being reviewed and endorsed.

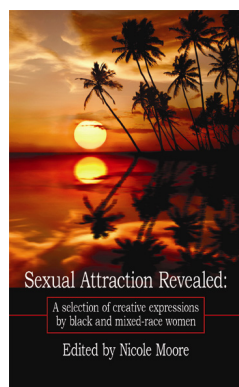
The reviewing panel consists of a group of influential professionals such as David Lammy (Minister of Skills), Angie Lemar (Comedienne, actress, writer & Choice FM radio DJ), Tim Campbell (the winner of the first series of *The Apprentice* & entrepreneur) & Mike Clarke (Chief Director of London Libraries Development Agency) just to mention a few. All panellists have a good understanding of multicultural Britain and the problems faced by Black & Minority Ethnic groups, and how literacy can contribute towards combating this. The campaign is being sponsored by Barclays Bank, Choice FM (Capital Radio Group) and Times Educational Supplement.

RED offers books and suggested reading lists that package multicultural books within segments such as age, language, gender, interest, subject matter, themes, cultural and religious groups, and helps to make choosing books for different ethnic groups easier.

To help combat the literary problems the UK faces, RED together with the National Literacy Trust, are launching Star Reads 2007, a campaign that has been running successfully throughout 2006, having had celebrities such as Children's BBC Presenter Reggie Yates, Singer Keisha White and Actor Ami Ameen featured on posters highlighting the importance of reading; in schools, hospitals, libraries and other government run agencies. Check out www.starreads.org

4. Shangwe's 2nd Anthology: *Sexual Attraction Revealed: A selection of creative expressions by black and mixed-race women*. Edited by Nicole Moore.

Sexual Attraction Revealed: Shangwe's second title was published by AuthorHouse in May 2007. This anthology of poetry and autobiographical writing is eclectic and revelatory. The 19 authors are women from African and African-Caribbean backgrounds ranging from their early twenties to early fifties, living in the UK, offering us an insight into their distinct and diverse creative writing perspectives.



The Book Launch Party was held on 29th May 2007 at the International Champagne Bar, 116 St Martins Lane, London WC1. The event was hosted by Grace Quansah aka 'Akuba'. Thanks to *Sexual Attraction Revealed* contributors' Patsy Antoine, Loseca Austral, Louise Hercules, Hyacinth Myers, Janet Plummer, Grace Quansah and Tina Tamsho-Thomas who read from the collection on the night.

Sexual Attraction Revealed is published by Shangwe, priced £9.99 and available from www.authorhouse.co.uk, www.amazon.co.uk or order by email at bkorders@authorhouse.com

5. Sexual Attraction Revealed: Reading Events planned

Thursday 20th September 2007 (8-10pm) Shangwe in collaboration with Gala Casino, Regent Street, Northampton present: *Sexual Attraction Revealed*, An Evening with Nicole Moore, Editor.

Friday 19th October 2007 (8-10pm) Shangwe in collaboration with Brixton Library present: *Sexual Attraction Revealed*, an Evening with Nicole Moore Editor.

6. Poets' Corner – Yvonne Weekes

The Evergreen Tree – an extract (first published in *Volcano*, 2006)

My deepest memories are being burnt away one by one;
my childhood gossip buried in an avalanche of billowing ash.
You cannot understand that at night a tiny grain of dust
in my bed can awaken me,
though it is merely innocent fluff that has settled.
I should feel safe, but I don't; I am in a foreign land and homeless.
They've told me that I am welcome here,
but your prayers are rarely for me.
I am too close.
Bosnia is safer.

I search for and sometimes find smiling
and welcoming faces,
but you cannot understand the pain or the terror
I have in dreams.
As my island goes up in smoke, taking with it
my sister's house,
my once treasured haven; and the smoke of the church
where I once worshipped and taught my son to pray,
wafts up to heaven,
my heart is drowned in a blaze of fire.
When you speak of your recent marital tiff –
a mundane expression of everyday living
(of which I too can speak) –
and your mother's death or mine,
I understand as part of all human experience,
but the flagellation of my country, where nothing
will grow, you cannot understand.

You cannot understand the terror I feel even
with the rising sun,
the fear that everyone I know has vanished and
no graves are marked,
that the laughter of farmers whose produce
I once quibbled over
has been silenced in an avalanche of flames.

I am afraid to think of all that emerald turned
to deathly white.

You cannot understand that my Evergreen Tree,
where I once argued politics,
can never grow again, nor crown my head
with its majestic splendour.
I remain silent.
I have learnt to scream quietly.
I've been practising for two years.
Even my son lying next to me can't hear my cry,
though his own pierces the air.
He thinks too often of home,
his family and friends, scattered in distant lands.
You say you care. But I cannot hear you.
I can only read your lips.

NB: **Yvonne Weeks** was born in London to Montserratian parents and grew up in both London and Montserrat. Yvonne is a teacher, actress and Theatre Arts Consultant with over 25 years experience. Her work was first published in *Charting the Journey* (Sheba Feminist, UK) in 1988 and her writings have appeared in numerous anthologies. *Volcano*, which won the Frank Collymore Award in 2004, is her first full length writing published by Peepal Tree Press (2006).

7. Shangwe News – next edition

Shangwe News is distributed to a target audience of black & mixed-race women of African & Caribbean descent in the UK and to other relevant and interested parties

If you would like to write an article of between 500 to 1000 words (max) or submit a poem (any theme) for the next issue of *Shangwe News*, the copy deadline date is: **20th September 2007** for the October 2007 edition.

Please email your submissions to: nicole@shangwe.com

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