

SHANGWE NEWS ISSUE 8 – February 2008

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1. Welcome

Welcome to the 8th edition of Shangwe News – the quarterly on-line 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.

Apologies for no October 2007 edition of Shangwe News – this was due to the Editor being overseas for 3 months.

Shangwe would like to thank everyone that participated with poetry events at the Poetry Café in 2007. Special thanks to Peter Kallon (aka Achilles) who hosted Shangwe for three months while the usual host was abroad. Special thanks to Grace Quansah (aka Akuba) for hosting other book reading events.

If you have any comments or information for the newsletter please email:
nmarts2003@yahoo.co.uk

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

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

Since the last newsletter (July '07), the following Shangwe Poetry Nights were hosted by Peter Kallon and held on:

- **Thursday 30th August 2007**, featuring Olumide Popoola and Sidel Stewart (aka Comfort).
- **Thursday 27th September 2007**, featuring Natalie Fiawoo and Dorothy Fryd.
- **Thursday 25th October 2007**, featuring Georgina Banield.
- **Thursday 29th November 2007**, featuring Virgin Poets.

Coming soon....

The next Shangwe Poetry Night will be held on **Thursday 27th March 2008** upstairs in the Studio at the Poetry Café, Covent Garden and hosted by Peter Kallon. Publicity details will be distributed nearer the time.

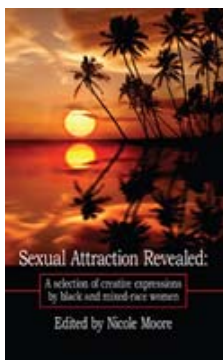
3. Shangwe's 1st Anthology: *Brown Eyes* – Update

As a result of being contacted by an organisation called RED (Reading Education Development), Shangwe's first anthology *Brown Eyes* was selected as recommended reading at RED's independent panel held on 12th August 2007.

RED offers books and suggested reading lists that package multicultural books within segments such as age, language, gender, themes, and helps to make choosing books for different ethnic groups easier. For more details about RED, please refer to Shangwe News – Issue 7 at www.shangwe.com/news.htm

Brown Eyes has been revised recently and is now available from Troubador Publishers www.troubador.co.uk Tel: 0116 255 9311 and/or from www.amazon.co.uk priced £9.99 (plus p+p).

4. Shangwe's 2nd Anthology: *Sexual Attraction Revealed* – Update & Caribbean Connection



On Friday 19th October 2007, Shangwe participated in **WORDPOWER International Black Literature Festival & Book Fair**. This key Black History Month event was presented by Centerprise as part of the Bicentenary of the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act of 1807 Commemoration.

Held at Brixton Library and hosted by Grace Quansah (aka Akuba), Readings from *Sexual Attraction Revealed* were presented by Patsy Antoine who discussed her essay 'The Poetry of Unspoken Words'. Using a questions and answers approach, 25 attendees had the opportunity to discuss their own creative writing journeys and received key advice from Patsy on how to tap into the creative writing scene.

The evening concluded with the award winning poem 'The Awakening of Elmina' by Grace Quansah, published in *Unheard Voices* by Malorie Blackman, Corgi Press 2007, in which Grace pays homage to her ancestors held captive at Elmina Castle, Ghana, during the Slave Trade.

As part of cultural interaction and book promotion activities, the Editor, Nicole Moore visited Kingston, Jamaica in December 2007 and as a result copies of *Sexual Attraction Revealed* are now available in the Kingston Bookshop www.kingstonbookshop.com, at the Marcus Garvey Research/Reference Library www.garveylibertyhall.com and at the University of West Indies Bookshop, www.uwimona.edu.jm. Plans are underway to continue promoting the book and to provide poetry readings and seminars in Jamaica sometime this year.

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. Poets' Corner – Sidel Stewart aka 'Comfort'

Mini Me

Mini me? Mini who? Mini She!
The child can't be older than two or three
Yet there she toddles in shoes meant for teens
Anklets and kitten heels, no socks to her knees

I blame the parents, Brats Dolls and MTV
'Cause images all around, often disturb me
Six-year old girls play in groups of two and three
Singing "Don'cha wish your girlfriend was hot like me?!"

It used to be fun, to dress like our Mums
We'd stare in the mirror with towels on our buns
Lipstick strewn faces innocent and pure
No mascara for us though, that was going too far

Earrings and necklaces hung from our parts
Hairbrushes for mics as we sung out our hearts
We wanted to be Whitney and dance with somebody
But made do with Sisters and friends we called family

Afro-puffs, ribbons, braids and Alice bands
Granny and Mummy could do wonders with their hands
Our hair always looked pretty, the ribbons matched our clothes
Stocking foots worn to bed, to keep neat our 'fro's

After the games, the stilettos and the dresses
We'd return to our age, of Buckle-Shoes, tights and sweaters
Care Bear Tops, Leggings, Tracksuits and Trainers
Two balls up the wall and Hopscotch entertained us

Praying from delivery and the first sight of texture
Your baby would have 'good hair' just like her father

Pressing, hot combing, relaxing her crown
No time for plaiting, you're going out on the town!

Synthetic plaits, adorn your toddlers scalp
Causing her to itch and to shout
Your words of comfort, barely decrease it
"Leave it alone, come here, let me grease it!"

A five-year old's beautiful, natural nappy flair
Destroyed by images of Mum's fake, flowing hair
Weave down your back, extensions galore
What about the Afro, do you **so** deplore?

Why does the woman, dress your teens hair
With chemicals and treatments that burn and sear
Not fit for **her** skin, so latex she wears
All the while, your Daughter grins and bears

Fake acrylic nails and chemical solutions
Technicians wear masks to protect **them** from the pollution
Fumes up your nose, eyes itch and smart
Airbrushed designs, French polish, stars and hearts

Ladies; my Nubian Queens
Where is the self-love to teach our teens?
When you look in the mirror, with your hand on your heart
You should realise, beauty, was there from the start

We've been fed bare lies, been told nuff untruths
Looking like a Black woman does not make you uncouth
It makes you a Queen, that some people fear
But fi dem business, I don't care!

Fathers, accept responsibility too
Remember back when, it was just the two of you?
Slow jams and grinding, pillow talk and fighting
Nine months down the line, Fatherhood's now your time!

Nurture her, take an interest in her life
Teach her self-esteem, to walk tall with pride
Your input's required, for the duration of the journey
Instill in her, to use her mind not her body

Fatherhood is full, not part-time caring
Pay attention to what your Daughter is wearing
Her milkshake brings all the boys to the yard
But do you know, if she has to charge?

Teen pregnancy, is every parent's nightmare
But have you taught her how to have sex and take care?
Her body is a temple, her 'Narni' is special
So why the abortion, for the second time, **this year?**

Brothas, Sistas, what the hell is going on?
When and where did it all go so wrong?

Your examples are ingested
By the seeds that you've created
Lets raise our Girls with class
And give Mini Queens a fighting chance!

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NB: Comfort is a new writer from East London, who has studied Journalism and Media Studies. Having taken part in Farrago's Summer Poetry Slam 2007, performing at Poetry Unplugged at the Poetry Café, Inspire, Word 4 Word at the Stratford Theatre Royal, BrixTongue and Poetry in Motion, Comfort intends to continue writing and performing thought provoking poetry. She is currently in the process of writing a novel.

6. 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 April 2008** for the May 2008 edition.

Please email your submissions to: nmarts2003@yahoo.co.uk

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