

Press Release

Alex Smith wins this year's Booksellers' Choice Award 2011

Wednesday, 17 August 2011, Woking, UK

Writer, teacher, textile merchant and bookseller, Alex Smith is the winner of this year's award for: *Four Drunk Beauties*

Simon Skinner, Sales Director Nielsen BookData, presented Alex Smith with a cheque for Rand 20,000. Nielsen has sponsored the Booksellers' Choice Award and supported the Sefika Awards for many years. Following the awards presentations, Simon Skinner said: "I was delighted to present the award to Alex Smith and to offer my warm congratulations both to her and to Random House, her publisher. We are proud to support these awards and work with publishers, booksellers and writers to reward writing of a very high calibre. Last year's winner was John van de Ruit who previously won in 2006 and there has been a string of high profile authors winning this award in the past. We are delighted to be associated with the South African book industry."



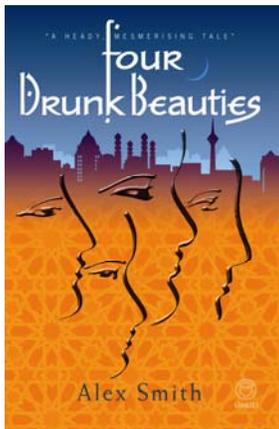
(pictured above Alex Smith, winning author receiving her cheque from Simon Skinner, Nielsen)

The prestigious awards ceremony is part of the PASA and SABA Annual Conference. Guests from publishing, bookselling and authors gathered at the Vineyard Hotel, Cape Town to support and reward colleagues for their outstanding contribution to the book trade.

Stephen Johnson, Managing Director Random House Struik said: "It is hard to overestimate the value of the Nielsen Booksellers' Choice Award for the book trade in South Africa. For over a decade its unique position in the local world of letters has created excitement and interest in many of our fine writers that South African booksellers love reading, selling and promoting. At Random House Struik my colleagues and I are hugely thrilled that so many of our authors have successfully captured bookseller imaginations sufficiently to win this significant Booksellers' Choice Award.

Our Umuzi imprint is no exception and we wish Alex Smith warm and sincere congratulations on this achievement. In doing so we must also express our gratitude to both Nielsen and especially to the

booksellers in this country. It is their sustained interest in promoting local writers that makes what we spend much of our lives doing as worthwhile as what it is.”



Four Drunk Beauties by Alex Smith published by Random House Struik

Left to rot in an Iranian prison under the shadow of death, Kamaal tells fellow-insurgent Drew the story of the four drunk beauties - Elvira the housekeeper and ex-assassin, Lou the Senegalese sculptor, virtuoso cellist Mimi, and Adriette, a food fundi from the Free State. The two men follow the beauties' wild chase through Iran in pursuit of a killer, a quest undertaken to prevent a catastrophe.



Alex's first two titles were: *Algeria's Way* and *Drinking from the Dragon's Well* and has previously been shortlisted for the SA PEN Literary Awards and for the Sanlam Prize for Youth Literature.

2011 shortlist:

- *50 People Who Stuffed Up South Africa* by Alexander Parker
Illustrations by: Zapiro published by Burnet Media
- *Awesome South Africa: The Best, Greatest, Craziest, Biggest and Funniest* by Derryn Campbell,
published by Awesome SA Publishers
- *Evita's Kossie Sikelela* by Evita Bezuidenhout published by Random House Struik
- *Happiness is a Four-letter Word* by Cynthia Jele published by Kwela Books
- *Zoo City* by Lauren Beukes published by Jacana Media

Freda van Wyk, Managing Director of BookData/SAPnet, commented: “We are delighted to continue our support of the Sefika and Booksellers' Choice award and to work with Nielsen and our colleagues in South Africa to reward authors, booksellers, publishers and librarians for their contribution to our industry”.

Sefika Annual Awards 2011:

Best Academic Publisher of the Year – Oxford University Press
Best Education Publisher of the Year – Via Afrika Publishers
Best Trade Publisher of the Year – Penguin Group (SA)

Best Academic Bookseller of the Year – Protea Boekwinkel, Hatfield
Best Education Bookseller of the Year – African Book Connection
Best Trade Bookseller of the Year – Bargain Books

Library Supplier of the Year – Hargraves Library Service, Cape Town

Our warmest congratulations to all the winners and everyone shortlisted.

Notes to Editor:

The Booksellers' Choice Award is chosen and presented by the South African book trade in recognition of outstanding contribution to the industry. The winner is chosen from the list of titles submitted that they have most enjoyed reading, selling or promoting over the past year. The award is only open to South African authors who are published in South Africa and celebrates the excellence and high standard of South African writing.

For more information about the Nielsen Booksellers' Choice Award, please contact:

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About Nielsen Book

Nielsen has four key brands: Nielsen Registration Agencies (ISBN and SAN Agencies for UK & Ireland, ISTC), Nielsen BookData, Nielsen BookNet and Nielsen BookScan. The Nielsen BookData service provides comprehensive, enriched and timely bibliographic data worldwide. There is a range of information services for booksellers, libraries and publishers in 100 countries around the world. The Nielsen BookNet service provides value-added transaction services to the industry. The Nielsen BookScan service provides the world's only continuous retail monitoring service for English-language books in the UK, Ireland, US, Australia, South Africa, Italy, New Zealand, Denmark, Spain and India. The company launched Nielsen LibScan in 2009, allowing the collection and analysis of library borrowing data. To-date, 55 UK public library authorities have joined the panel and the aim is to continue building this number in 2011. The group employs 120 staff in the UK. The company is wholly owned by Nielsen. For more information, please visit: www.nielsenbook.co.uk

About Nielsen

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