



SA BOOK

A W A R D S

Celebrating 25 years of South African literature

PRESS RELEASE:

COOK-OFF AT GOGO'S SPAZA BY SALAMINA MOSESE TAKES THE TOP PRIZE AT THIS YEAR'S SA BOOK AWARDS

The winners of this year's South Africa Book Awards were announced last Tuesday, 23 September, at a special virtual ceremony, hosted by NielsenIQ BookData and supported by the Publishers Association of South Africa (PASA) and the South African Booksellers Association.

Celebrating the 25th Anniversary of the SA Book Awards, the awards strive to celebrate books written and published in South Africa, as voted for by South African booksellers. Winners were announced for each of the three categories Fiction, Non-Fiction and Children's with each category winner awarded R5,000. The overall winner, for the title with the most overall votes, was awarded R20,000.

The Fiction Prize was won by John van de Ruit for *Spud: The Reunion*. John van de Ruit is no stranger to the Awards with previous titles in his series, *Spud* and *Spud: Learning to Fly*, winning in 2006 and 2010 respectively. John said: *"What a thrill. Thank you to the booksellers who voted for Spud: The Reunion, but more importantly, I appreciate your incredible efforts in connecting SA authors with readers. I would also like to acknowledge Pan Macmillan SA for their belief in this book and for all their support. A shout out to Terry Morris, Andrea Natrass, Shakti Pillay and my editor, Alison Lowry, who has supervised the Spud journey from the very beginning. I look forward to meeting you all again in 2026."*

The winner of the Non-Fiction prize was *Disciple: Walking with God* by Rorisang Thandekiso and Nkhensani Manabe. With 19.3k copies sold year to date* in 2025, *Disciple* continues to top the SA bestseller charts and was the booksellers favourite Non-Fiction title last year. On accepting her award, Rorisang said: *"The impact of this book reflects a central aspect of my faith: that God will do abundantly more than I could ever imagine to reach His people. For this reason, I cannot see this as a personal win, but as a victory for the Kingdom."*

The Children's category was won by *Cook-off at Gogo's Spaza* by Salamina Mosese, illustrated by Vian Oelofsen. Salamina also went on to win the overall prize, receiving the most bookseller votes across all three categories, making *Cook-off at Gogo's Spaza* the fourth children's title to win the overall prize. On hearing she had won, Salamina said: *"To win the Children's Category for Cook-Off at Gogo's Spaza and then to be named the overall winner of the 2025 SA Book Awards is overwhelming"*

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in the best way. This story celebrates heritage, food, community, and family love — the things that have always held us together — so to see it resonate so widely is deeply moving.

I accept this award on behalf of every child who sees their family's kitchen and their history reflected in these pages. May it remind us all that our everyday stories are worthy of celebration. This award is not just mine, it belongs to every Gogo, every kitchen table, and every child who finds pride in where they come from. Thank you so much."

This year, to celebrate the 25-year Anniversary of the SA Book Awards we also asked booksellers to vote for their favourite title from the list of previous overall winners including Trevor Noah's *Born a Crime* (2017 and 2020), *How many ways to say Hello?* by Refiloe Moahloli (2021), last year's winner *Leo* by Deon Meyer (2024), *Manage your Money* by Sam Beckbessinger (2019), *Recipes for Love and Murder* by Sally Andrew (2016), the forementioned *Spud* by John van de Ruit (2006) and *The President's Keeper* by Jacques Pauw (2018).

South African booksellers voted in their hundreds and chose Trevor Noah's *Born a Crime* as their absolute favourite. Terry Morris, Managing Director of Pan Macmillan South Africa, said on Trevor's behalf: *"What an honour for Trevor Noah and Pan Macmillan to have Born a Crime and the Young Readers' edition selected by South African booksellers as their favourite overall winner of the SA Book Awards over the last 25 years. The award is a testament to the connection Trevor's story has made with readers, a connection which wouldn't have been possible without the incredible support of booksellers who are so pivotal in putting books into the hands of readers and in building audiences. It is an honour to receive this recognition and award from the industry, and on behalf of Trevor we would like to thank the booksellers and also NielsenIQ BookData for their ongoing support."*

The winners were announced on Tuesday 23 September during a special virtual ceremony and on social media using **#SABookAwards**. A recording of the award ceremony is available on request, for more information email: marketing.book@nielseniq.com

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SA Book Awards | NielsenIQ BookData

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**year to date 30 August 2025*

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SA Book Awards 2025 Shortlists:

Fiction Prize

A Short Life - Nicky Greenwall
Spud: The Reunion - John van de Ruit
The Bitterness of Olives - Andrew Brown
The Lost Love of Akbar Manzil - Shubnum Khan
The Tea Merchant - Jackie Phamotse

Non-Fiction Prize

Capitec: Stalking Giants - T.J. Strydom
Disciple: Walking with God - Rorisang Thandekiso & Nkhensani Manabe
Exit Wounds: A Story of Love, Loss and Occasional Wars - Peter Godwin
How Did We Get Here? - Mpoomy Ledwaba
Zapiro Annual 2024: Have I Got GNUs For You - Zapiro

Children's Prize

Cook-off at Gogo's Spaza:(Disaster at Gogo's Spaza 2) –
Salamina Mosese, illustrated by Vian Oelofsen
Into the Uncut Grass - Trevor Noah, illustrated by Sabina Hahn
My First South African Animals - Van den Berg
Springboekie - Fanie Viljoen, illustrated by Elsabe Ebersohn
The Speedy Six Olympics - Roslynne Toerien, illustrated by Julie Smith-Belton

Favourite previous winner shortlist:

Born a Crime - Trevor Noah (2017 and 2020)
How many ways to say Hello? - Refiloe Moahloli (2021)
Leo - Deon Meyer (2024)
Manage your Money - Sam Beckbessinger (2019)
Recipes for Love and Murder - Sally Andrew (2016)
Spud - John van de Ruit (2006)
The President's Keeper - Jacques Pauw (2018)