

## FOURTH HARGEYSA INTERNATIONAL BOOK FAIR –JULY 2011

contact: [jama@redsea-online.com](mailto:jama@redsea-online.com) | tel. ++39 3389679505  
[www.hargeysabookfair.com](http://www.hargeysabookfair.com)

### Announcement

REDSEA-ONLINE Cultural Foundation, in collaboration with other Somaliland cultural organizations, is eager to announce the Fourth Hargeysa International Book Fair (HIBF) which will take place from 22 to 26 July 2011 in Hargeysa.

HIBF is the main cultural event in Somaliland and one of the largest public celebrations of books in East Africa. Every July, HIBF brings writers, poets, artists and thinkers from Somaliland and from all over the world to share and discuss their art and literary productions with the audience. The main aim of the festival is to promote a culture of reading and writing in the country, by producing and publishing high quality Somali literature and translating international classical literature, (including fiction, poetry and drama) into Somali. We aim to enable young people to access a range of cultural heritages; our intention is to stimulate the revival of all forms of art and human expression, including painting, poetry reciting, story-telling, drama composition and of course, writing. The Book Fair is linked to its sister London's Somali Week Festival which takes place in 22-26 October.

HIBF targets not only to young audience, but to a wider sectors of the society, and it aims to help foster cultural understanding, tolerance, democracy, and an appreciation of the diversity of Somali culture and literature. In the past few years, our festivals raised the profile of reading and writing and also the integration in Somaliland of youth from different regions around the country. The main aim of the book fair in fact is to promote critically thinking culture and creative writing, to facilitate the habit of reading, to display books, from both local and writers abroad, to encourage members in the public to browse, read, engage with authors, be inspired to young people, and wider society.

Each year a theme, associated with and relevant to the issues surrounding youth and citizenship, is selected. The overall cultural programme this year will revolve around the theme of “Collective Memory.” Somaliland will be celebrating its 20 years of independence and hence the theme will touch upon events and processes that have shaped Somalilanders’ collective memories of the country. Our aim is to reflect on but also contribute to the creation of a national collective memory, through the arts. The project, this year, aims to produce its own culturally rooted literature on this theme by publishing different books, and to write a monologue drama on Somaliland's recent history: Topics such as the peace negotiation process, de-militarization, democracy and the growth of political parties, will be touched upon. Furthermore, the diversity of individual’s experiences of the new nation-state will also be captured through discussions, testimonies and different artistic genres, thus contributing to the creation of a collective memory.

### The theme: Collective Memory

Contemporary usage of the term *collective memory* is traceable to Emile Durkheim (1858 – 1917) and to his student Maurice Halbwachs (1877 – 1945). Distinct from individual memory, collective memory is shared, passed on and also constructed by a group or modern society to shape their national identity. Parts of the collective memory for a nation can be represented in a physical monument, commemorative symbols, rituals, story-telling or media production, including literary creating, fiction and non fiction production, oral poetry and so on. Both “history” and “collective memory” are publicly available social facts. The difference is, while the classical history is something “dead” and confined to the past, the collective memory is something “alive” and it can be viewed as real or current history hidden in the people’s memories, experiences, testimonies, and human stories. Whilst history can explain the actors and times (who and when) of an event, it

cannot capture the original emotion caused by the event. Preserving and archiving *collective memory* will afford people an opportunity to revisit the event and prolong its presence. We want people of different ages, different backgrounds, writers, thinkers and youth to focus on a common and shared collective memory that creates the foundation of the nation and of a national identity.

### **The format**

The basic idea of the Book Fair is to celebrate and promote the culture of reading and writing, to create a platform where authors and other artists meet their readers and the general audience. We intend to create and facilitate an atmosphere of dialogue where ideas circulate and constructive and educational debates take place. There will be book launching events, readers clubs work presentations, meeting with authors, creative writing lessons, joyful and relaxing moments with Somali lyricists, video-screening, and poetry reciting. There will also be other parallel cultural events, covering other art genres, such as a photo exhibition and an art exhibit showcasing talented young painters in Somaliland. The overall programme will be carefully crafted to stimulate and inspire people of all ages and backgrounds.

### **CORE EVENTS**

- A high profile **debate and discussion forum**, organized and attended also by young people, is one of the main events of the book fair. These series of debates cut across generations, and each year youth delegations from different regions across the country gather to create a unique forum through which audience and authors meet to exchange thoughts and opinions.
- Another highlight of the cultural program is the presentation of the yearly **Sheeko iyo Shaahid literary award**, reserved for young short story writers. Whilst this competition is aimed at young people, we have opened it to anyone under the age of 40. We believe some older writers never had the opportunity to develop their literary skills, as the country was at war for 15 years. This year we expect even more participation, based on the trends set in the past three years. Books containing the winning stories of the past years have been published and the event has been created and followed by many young people. The 4<sup>th</sup> edition of the under-40s short story writers will be launched and an award will be presented to the authors of last year's *Sheeko iyo Shaahid* competition. Volume three of the series, comprising the winning stories from last year's competition, will be distributed to the participants of the 2011 competition, the winners of the previous competitions and all the participants of the 2010 competition.
- HIBF-2011 will introduce the "**moving library**" tour, which will commence a week prior to the Festival. A bus carrying books and representatives of 9 regional Readers Clubs will tour all major cities in the country prior to the festival (members of these clubs work throughout the year presenting books to local communities). In every city there will be an event in which the readers clubs and the other youth organizations will promote the books, and encourage participants and local citizens to embrace reading as a hobby. There will be "*darandoorri*" (reading together) sessions in which selected national and international renowned literature will be read by young people e.g., some members of the readers clubs will read excerpts of George Orwell's "Animal Farm" translated by late Mohamed Yusuf Arten and re-published by Ponte Invisibile as well as other books by authors participating on the tour. Books will be distributed to the cities and villages along the routes of this tour, and lyrical composition, specifically commissioned for event, will be performed in every city. After the tour, the regional youth and readers clubs representatives will go to Hargeysa, and showcase their work at the book fair. They will also be asked to make their work

relevant to the theme of collective memory.

- **Short courses: writing and photography.** Due to a lack of adequate training available to young journalists and the new members of the reading clubs we intend to organise short writing courses for those struggling with the language. Our aim is engage a small group of 18 young writers and reporters (1 member from each of the Reading clubs, 5 from Somaliland press and the 12 winners of the Sheeko iyo Shaahid) to provide language, grammar and creative writing workshops. As our idea is to promote different forms of arts among the young people, and to create artistic skills, we identified this year the necessity to promote also skill in photography. Thus, an intensive photography course for 7-10 young people will be also be organized before the book fair. The course attendees will volunteer as photographers of the book fair.
- **Book launching.**  
A number of new books published specifically within this year's book festival will be launched and world-renowned authors will be invited. We will also invite and encourage the launch of other new books authored by local writers. Over four days sessions, books will be on display and people will have an opportunity to read, review and purchase books from the publishers/books sellers/authors who may want to take their literary production in the book fair.  
The books launched throughout the festival will touch on various aspects relating to the theme of collective memory. Exploring experiences both within Somaliland and across the Diaspora, the books will investigate a range of topics including historic events, socio-economic changes, citizenship, identity and modernity and tradition.  
The programme of the events will include all books that will be launched during the HIBF. If you know about a book suitable to be launched or you are author of one, please contact to the organizers before **1 April 2011** so I can be included into the programme.
- **Video screenings.**  
Last year's video documentation will be screened. The video shows how young people in Somaliland think on about the theme of citizenship. They explained with their own words and definitions.

## SPECIAL EVENTS

- **Opening and closing events with music and poetry reciting.**  
To enhance the books fair's festive and educational atmosphere, poets and lyricists will be invited to entertain the audience in a great festive yet educational event on the opening and closing days. There will be a stage event both in opening and closing day.
- **Commemorating Madar: a young and talented painter**  
Madar Osman was young artist and a teacher, who only last year demonstrated a unique talent. Unfortunately Madar died in a car accident soon after the Hargeysa International Book Fair and Mooge Festival of 2010. This year we will showcase his art production and some of his most interesting works will be displayed during the book fair.
- **The Science Awareness Day**  
The Science Awareness Day is significantly important to Somaliland's development in the long terms. Somaliland needs to move shift its emphasis on manufacturing nation rather than the notion of relying on other nations' gift aids. With the motto "Science for Sustainable

Development', the Day hopes to mobilise the energy and resources of the diaspora community to effectively contribute to development of Somaliland.

- **Photo exhibition: Somaliland faces**

Professional photographers and photojournalists will be invited to display their photographs of the people and the land.

## **PRE AND POST LITERARY PRODUCTION**

A number of books will be published and/or translated into Somali before the Hargeysa International Book Fair, and they will be delivered to Hargeysa in time in order to be launched during the book fair. These include books specifically related to the theme of the year and commissioned by the organizers:

- See in the programme of events the list of books being published this year.

After the book fair, several materials will be published, including:

- Proceedings book on the Book Fair, including all the papers presented
- Educational material for the Creative Writing course.
- Volume four of *Sheeko iyo Shaahid* winning stories collection. This competition is a flagship asset for our cultural program, and is intended to inspire the youth to get involved in critical thinking and in composing, storytelling, preserving and participating in Somali culture and arts.
- Audio-visual: A DVD Documentary Film containing the Moving Library Tour, the drama and lyrics produced for the reading promotion, and the major events of the HIBF-2011.

All materials produced during and for the Book Fair, including the documentary film and printed literature, will be presented in our sister Somali Week Festival 2011 in October and then in several other European countries including Denmark (November 2011), The Netherlands (December 2011) and January 2012 (Italy).

### **Guest of honour country.**

As in the past years, HIBF will host a guest country by inviting writers and publishers of that country. Literature from and on that country will be displayed during the book fair. For this year's festival, we are exploring the best option among a set of guest honour countries.

## **GUEST SPEAKERS**

### **Keynote speakers, guest authors and artists**

HIBF-2011 will feature prominent national and international authors, artists and speakers, including Somaliland based authors, diaspora based authors as well as internationally celebrated authors who will present their literature. The invited keynote speakers will be announced soon. In the meantime, the organizers invite all authors and publishers who may want to present their literature to contact them before 1 **April 2011**. Please send your inquiry to [jama@redsea-online.com](mailto:jama@redsea-online.com).

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **Venue**

Guriga Shaqaalaha, Hargeysa, Somaliland.

**Event dates**

July 22 - 26, 2011

**Event hours**

09:00 A.M. – 8:00 P.M.

**ADVERTISING AND PROMOTIONAL COMMITMENTS****Dhaxalreeb Magazine issue**

A special issue of the Dhaxalreeb magazine, dedicated to the Book Fair and to the theme of the year will be commissioned. Selected authors and thinkers will be invited to write articles on issues touching on collective memory. Printed in 2000 copies, the magazine will be distributed free of charge.

**Exhibition Book Fair Directory**

An exhibition directory shall be produced to serve as a comprehensive guide to the Hargeysa International Book Fair. It shall include a short biography of each exhibitor, who will also be asked to produce a brief summary of his/her work. Exhibitors who may wish advertise in the directory will be charged a small cost.

**Publicity**

Awareness is created through news/photo releases and featured articles in major newspapers and radio stations.

**Invitations**

Invitations outlining dates, time and summary of exhibits, shall be circulated to key target groups. Admission to all the events of the Hargeysa International Book Fair will be free.

**Posters**

Posters, billboards, streamers and banners shall be installed in strategic areas to generate greater awareness amongst the general public.

**OTHER ISSUES****Media Partners**

[-]

**Social Networks**

We invite you to be a fan of Hargeysa International Book Fair on facebook.com and follow Hargeysa International Book Fair on twitter.com. Both links are available on our website: [www.hargeysabookfair.com](http://www.hargeysabookfair.com).

For further information please check [www.redsea-online.com](http://www.redsea-online.com) | [www.kayd.org](http://www.kayd.org)