

Press Release

Peter Harris wins BOOKSELLERS' CHOICE AWARD 2009 with *In a Different Time*

20 August 2009, Woking

Durban author Peter Harris has won the coveted Booksellers' Choice Award 2009 with his acclaimed book *In A Different Time*. Simon Skinner, Sales Director of award sponsors' Nielsen Book, announced the winner of this year's prize at the prestigious PASA and SABA Conference dinner held at the Sibaya Conference Centre in Durban. He presented Harris with a cheque for Rand 10,000.

The award is judged by South African booksellers, who are given the opportunity to vote for the books that they most enjoyed reading, selling or promoting during the previous year.



Simon Skinner pictured with Peter Harris
Picture: Anand Govender

Harris fought off stiff competition from fellow shortlisted authors: Dana Snyman for *On the Back Roads* (Tafelberg Publishers); Jeremy Gordin for *Zuma: a Biography* (Jonathan Ball Publishers); Zapiro's *Pirates of Polokwane* (Jacana Media); Max du Preez for *Of Tricksters, Tyrants and Turncoats* (Zebra Press); and Steve Hofmeyr's *Mense Van My Asem* (Zebra Press).

In A Different Time tells the story of four young South Africans who embark on a mission that will ultimately take them to Death Row. They are highly trained and experienced assassins and the narrative details their infiltration into the country, their operations, arrest and subsequent trial. The story is set in a South Africa gripped by unrest and political tension, when the ANC was in exile and repression at its height. The characters are linked by bizarre coincidence and tragedy in a true account narrated by their attorney.

Comments on the book from some of the judging booksellers reflect its strength: "An extraordinary and poignant true story. Exposes the dark history of South Africa and a determined fight for what we believe in"; "a wonderful slice of history; emotional read" and "an astonishing and important book, brilliantly written".

Last year's winner, Craig Ray, had this to say about the award:

"Winning the Booksellers' Choice award was a surprise considering the quality of the work that '*In Black and White*' was shortlisted against. Sports books don't often win publishing awards, so simply being nominated was recognition itself."

Awards were also presented for *Independent Bookseller* and *Independent Publisher*, each recipient receives Rand 5,000. This year's winners are: The Book Lounge: Independent Bookseller Award and Berlut Books cc: Independent Publisher Award.

Nielsen Book is delighted to continue to sponsor the Booksellers' Choice Award and the Sefika Awards, particularly as these awards are not only chosen but presented by the trade in recognition of outstanding contribution to the industry. Nielsen Book sponsors similar awards in Australia and New Zealand.

Peter Harris was born in Durban and grew up in the Eastern Cape. He was educated at Michaelhouse, Rhodes and Warwick University. He practiced law for 15 years at Cheadle, Thompson & Haysom and in the early 1990s was seconded to the National Peace Accord, after which he headed the Monitoring Directorate of the Independent Electoral Commission for the 1994 election. He returned to law and did international consulting for the UN as an election operations expert in Mexico, Haiti and other places. He then was appointed Director of Programmes at the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance in Stockholm for two years. Back in South Africa he co-founded the Resolve Group Management Consultancy of which he is the current Executive Chairman.

Notes to the Editor:

Author biographies are attached. For more information about the Nielsen Booksellers' Choice Award, please contact:

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