

Mondi Paper Newspaper Awards - Finalists

The Newspaper Association of South Africa and Mondi Paper – South Africa's largest supplier of newsprint – have announced the finalists in the first annual Mondi Paper Newspaper Awards. This initiative aims to pay tribute to South African newspaper journalism and recognise exceptional work in its related disciplines.

The categories for the inaugural year of the Mondi Paper Newspaper Awards are News Writing, Feature Writing, South African Story of the Year, Creative and Opinionated Journalism, Photographic Journalism and Presentation.

The inaugural year attracted 258 entries, all of which are based on work published during 2001. The Feature Writing category was the most popular with 82 entries followed by Creative and Opinionated Journalism with 45 entries. The News Writing and Photographic categories both called 40 submissions while the Presentation category called 26 entries. South African Story of the Year drew 25 entries.

Professor Guy Berger, convenor of the judging panel and head of the Department of Journalism and Media Studies at Rhodes University, remarks, "The panel was heartened by the enthusiasm shown for the competition, and the evident pride that many journalists took in their work. The entries ranged from small papers to the country's biggest, with small town journalists showing no hesitation in vying with their Johannesburg and Cape Town counterparts."

The finalists in the Features category are Sheena Adams of *The Star* for "Tears and anger as 'red ants' go on the march" and other stories on the Bredell land issue, Willemien Brümmer of *Die Burger* with her piece on the AIDS orphans, Owen Coetzee of *Sunday Argus* and Johann van Zyl of *Die Burger* with his feature, among others, on the U-boats.

The finalists in the Creative and Opinionated Journalism category are Jonathan Shapiro for his *Zapiro* cartoons (which appeared in *Sunday Times*, *Sowetan* and *Mail & Guardian*), Phylcia Oppelt (*Sunday Times*), Yves Vanderhaeghen (*Natal Witness*) and Christi van der Westhuizen (*Beeld*).

The finalists in the News category are Robyn Chalmers of *Business Day* for her series on the telecommunications policy, *The Star*'s Nalisha Kalideen with her series on the Johannesburg serial rapist and Elise Tempelhoff with her 'Kanker water' series in *Beeld*. The *Sunday Times* Investigations Team, comprising André Jurgens, Leonard Ndzhukula (a.k.a. Mzilikazi wa Afrika) and Jessica Bezuidenhout, are nominated for their series of reports on the Tony Yengeni debacle.

The finalists in the Photographic category are Kim Ludbrook, Neo Ntsoma and Siphwe Sibeko – all of *The Star* – and Schalk van Zuydam of *Beeld*.

There are four finalists in the Presentation category. Three of these finalists submitted entries surrounding the September 11th World Trade Centre disaster. They are Johan du Plessis of *Diamond Fields Advertiser*, Celesté Louw of *Beeld* and Godfrey Heynes of *Cape Times*. David Hazelhurst of *The Star* is nominated for, among others, his page bearing short stories on each casualty following the Ellis Park tragedy.

Nominations for The South African Story of the Year include Robyn Chalmers of *Business Day* for her

feature on Coleman Andrews and Willem Jordaan and Jan-Jan Joubert of *Die Burger* for a number of submissions. The *Sunday Times* Investigations Team once again receives a nomination for their coverage of the Yengeni saga.

Berger adds, "The results are representative of the judges' views as a whole. In turn, the judges themselves are representative of a wide range of perspectives and backgrounds – each bringing unique insight and experience to bear in the process."

The judging panel, convened by Professor Guy Berger, head of the Department of Journalism and Media Studies at Rhodes University, comprised Professor Jakes Gerwel, prominent academic, university leader and former cabinet secretary; Khanyi Dhlomo-Mkhize, editor of True Love and respected SABC television news anchor; Peter Magubane, famous veteran South African photojournalist; Latiefa Mobarra, executive director of the South African National Editors Forum; Ken Owen, columnist and former *Sunday Times* editor; Joe Thloloe, one of journalism's "elder statesmen" and key news figure at e-tv; and Zubeida Jaffer, freelance writer and former head of Independent Newspaper's parliamentary bureau.

Winners and finalists will be acknowledged at an awards ceremony on 13 March 2002 to be held at the Sandton Convention Centre. The winner in each of the six categories will be awarded a Mondi nib trophy, a cash prize of R8 000 and a framed certificate.

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