

CITATION IN SUPPORT OF THE NOMINATION OF SINDIWE MAGONA FOR EASA'S GOLD MEDAL

Possibly best known for her novel, *Mother to Mother*, an imaginary projection of the mother of Amy Biehl, the young American girl, who was tragically murdered in a Cape township, in conversation with the mother of the young murderer, Sindiwe Magona cemented her position as one of South Africa's best loved storytellers with her latest novel, *Chasing the tails of my father's cattle* (2015) – reviewed by Rosemary Gray in the *English Academy Review: Journal of English Studies* (forthcoming).

Born in the Transkei during the Second World War, Sindiwe finished high school by correspondence. Her unquenchable passion for education and the written word led to a BA through Unisa and later a Master's degree through Columbia University in down town New York. For twenty-two years she held a position in the United Nations at its headquarters in New York. She returned to her beloved South Africa thereafter, to retire, in theory. In practice, her social conscience and love of languages saw her producing children's books in her mother tongue and in English in furtherance of the Academy's Mission of respecting South Africa's diverse linguistic ecology; giving public lectures for the English Academy; taking leading roles in amateur theatre productions; and writing short stories, plays and novels. Deeply religious, she has produced a biography of Cape Town's Robben Island bishop. She is currently writer in residence at the University of the Western Cape, but is in great demand around the country as a keynote speaker at conferences, or as a motivational speaker or giving talks to inspire younger writers.

Dr Sindiwe Magona has received a number of prestigious awards including the Order of Ikhamanga in 2011 – for her literary and humanitarian work – as well as the Mbokodo Award in 2012, as joint winner with South Africa's first Nobel laureate and Patron of the English Academy of Southern Africa, the late Nadine Gordimer. She will read her latest short story, commissioned by the Africa Alive Archaeological team, at Unisa's Little Theatre on 5 May 2016, a collaborative English Academy event not to be missed.

Professors Rajendra Chetty and Rosemary Gray believe that the above brief outline serves to support our nomination of Dr Magona for the English Academy's highest award, the Gold Medal for distinguished service to English over a life time.

Magona's full CV is available from prof.r.gray@gmail.com on request.