



AWARDS FOR LITERATURE

EduArt Inc, a US based Non profit Organization founded by Dr. Joyce Ashuntantang, is Launching three annual Awards for Literature. These are awards for best Drama, Fiction and Poetry published in Cameroon or any African Country by a Cameroonian and written in English. These three awards carrying each a recognition plaque and a cash prize of 200.000 CFA have been named:

Victor E. Musinga Award for Drama
Jane and Rufus Blanchard Award for Fiction
Bate Besong Award for Poetry

The winning entries will be selected by a panel of judges drawn from a cross section of the Cameroon reading public not just literary experts. This is a vote from the general reading public. Hopefully this will encourage our writers not only to write more but to write for the consumption of the reading masses and not a select few.

Registration for the 2007 competition is on. All submissions must be received by May 15th and the winners will be announced in December 2007.

Registration forms/eligibility information can be picked up from Presbook in Yaounde, Buea, Limbe, and Bamenda or by emailing eduartinc@yahoo.com

For further information contact: eduartinc@yahoo.com

MUSINGA AWARD FOR DRAMA



Victor Elame Musinga is the pioneer who made drama a household word in English speaking Cameroon. His plays are written and staged for the people. With only a secondary school certificate and no formal training in theater arts, Musinga launched his forty year old career with the humorous and insightful play “*Mr. No Balance Tastes Bribery*, scripted between 1965-1966. Born in Tiko, Cameroon in 1946, Musinga has since written and produced over sixty plays including *Enjema*, *Incredible Madam Etonde*, *Kolofonco*, *Mr. Director*, *The Trials of Ngowo* etc. Founder of the legendary Musinga Drama Group, and recipient of Cameroon’s National Order of Merit for promoting the nation’s culture through drama, Victor Elame Musinga is still forging ahead in his dream to create a veritable Anglophone theater tradition. This award is to celebrate Musinga’s resilient spirit in promoting Cameroon drama/theater and to encourage other playwrights to join him in this quest of writing and producing plays that are not only socially and political relevant to the lives of Cameroonians, but equally accessible to them.

JANE AND RUFUS BLANSHARD AWARD FOR FICTION



Jane and Rufus Blanshard led an exemplary life as a couple, if a look at their multi-racial family including two black children tells any story. Professor Rufus Blanshard was a pioneer in the teaching of African and African-American Literature at the University of Connecticut where he continually fought against racism on campus. Rufus' interest in African/African-American literature led him to a Fulbright professorship in English at the University of Yaounde in 1975-76. While in Yaounde, Prof. Rufus Blanshard, a Harvard graduate, directed a performance of Lorraine Hansberry's A Raisin in the Sun. His wife Jane Blanshard, an accomplished copy-editor who has edited several fictional texts, contributed articles to the daily, *Cameroon Tribune* on women's issues. But of more interest to EduArt Inc, is the fact that this duo decided through out their stay in Cameroon, to take up residence not in the upscale neighborhood of Bastos with the other so called expatriates, but chose to live amongst the people in Mvogmbi above an off-license bar. Here, they interacted with the common man and enjoyed delicacies such as "beignets" bought from the street corner. To his dying day Rufus still cherished "beignets" and welcomed any opportunity to taste them. Jane and Rufus Blanshard also sent their children to public schools in Cameroon instead of the American School in Yaounde. A very practical couple, Jane and Rufus Blanshard, after their stay in Cameroon continued to cherish and celebrate the resilience of the masses in Cameroon whom they encountered from Yaounde to Bamenda through Kumbo to Buea. Prof. Rufus Blanshard died on March 20th 2007. He is survived by his wife for 54 years, Jane Blanshard and their four adult children. It is only befitting therefore to name this premier EduArt award for fiction in honor of those who had the choice and chose to be with the people.

BATE BESONG AWARD FOR POETRY



Bate Besong, the Obasijom warrior, is without doubt Cameroon's most prolific writer dead or alive. Primarily a poet, BB as he was fondly called, received his PhD in English and literary studies from the University of Calabar (Nigeria). He published several collections of poetry, including *Polyphemus Detainee and Other Skulls* (1980), *The Grain of Bobe Ngom Jua* (1985), *Just Above Cameroon* (1988) and *Disgrace: An Autobiographical Narcissus*, which he launched on March 7 2007 a few hours before his death in a ghastly car accident on March 8th 2007. BB also published important plays including *The Most Cruel Death of the Talkative Zombie* (1987), *Beast of No Nation* (1990) and *Change Waka and His Man Sawa Boy* (2001). Concerned with the state of culture and society in postcolonial Africa in general and Cameroon in particular, Besong's works focus on specific social problems of the period after independence, such as injustice, corruption, social, political, and economic instability, as well as the sharp inequalities plaguing Africa and the resulting human suffering. His words appear to be a platform geared toward the denunciation of oppression inflicted by one group on another and the resulting tensions, including violence, and lack of social, economic, and political stability; In addition to teaching drama at the University of Buea in Cameroon, Besong was also an important critic whose essays appeared in various international professional journals. He was the people's writer. This award is to Keep BB's flame burning and to encourage other Cameroon writers to continue his legacy.