

**Maria Sonia Cristoff** (novelist, nonfiction writer; Argentina) teaches creative writing and Patagonian literature. Her literary pieces and criticism have been published in newspapers and magazines such as *La Nación*, *Clarín*, *Página 12*, *Perfil* and *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, *Noticias*, *Latido*, *TXT*, *Siwa*, *Letras Libres* and *Otra Parte*. Cristoff is the author of the travelogue *Falsa Cama* [Deceptive Calm] (2005), the novella *Desubicados* [Misfits] (2006) and the novel *Bajo influencia* [Under the Influence] (2010), and the editor of three story and essay collections *Patagonia* (2005), *Idea crónica* [Chronical Idea] (2006) and *Pasaje a Oriente* [Passage to the Orient] (2009).

**Pilar Quintana** (novelist, fiction writer; Colombia) has published four novels, *Cosquillas en la lengua* (Planeta, 2003), *Coleccionistas de polvos raros* (Norma, 2007), *Conspiración iguana* (Norma, 2009), *La perra* (Literatura Random House, 2017), and a short story collection, *Caperucita se come al lobo* (Cuneta, 2012). In 2007 she was selected by Hay Festival and Bogotá World Book Capital as one of the 39 most important Latin American writers under the age of 39. In 2010 she won in Spain the literary award Premio de Novela La Mar de Letras for *Coleccionistas de polvos raros*. In 2011 she attended the International Writing Program of the University of Iowa as a writer-in-residence, and in 2012 the International Writers Workshop of the Baptist University of Hong Kong as a visiting writer. Her screenplay *Lavaperros*, written with Antonio García Ángel, has won two grants by Fondo para el Desarrollo Cinematográfico, Proimágenes, and it will be shot in 2018. In 2016 she received a grant of the Ministry of Culture for her project *La isla cuenta*, a series of creative writing workshops in the Island of Old Providence. Her short stories are translated into several languages and have appeared in magazines and anthologies in Latin America, Spain, Italy, Germany, the United States of America and China. In 2018 *La perra* won the literary award Premio Biblioteca de Narrativa Colombiana and was shortlisted for Premio Nacional de Novela.

**Karen Villeda** (poet, translator, fiction writer; Mexico) has published two children's books, *Pelambres* (Pearson, 2016) and *Cuadrado de Cabeza. El mejor detective del mundo o eso cree él* (Edebé, 2015); four collections of poetry: *Dodo* (Conaculta, 2013), *Constantinopla* (Posdata Ediciones, 2013), *Babia* (UNAM, 2011) and *Tesouro* (Conaculta, 2010), and one book of essays *Tres* (Cuadrivio Ediciones, 2016). She participated in the International Writing Program at the University of Iowa during 2015. Villeda has been awarded with grants from the Open Society Foundations, Ragdale Foundation and Young Creators Program of the National Fund for Culture and Arts (FONCA). Villeda has won, among other literary awards, the Fine Arts Prize for Literary Essay 2017, "Clemencia Isaura" National Award of Poetry in 2016, Youth Prize of Mexico City 2014, Fine Arts Prize for Children's Fiction 2014, "Elías Nandino" National Award of Youth Poetry in 2013, First Prize of Poetry "Punto de Partida" of the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) in 2008 and IV National Award of Poetry for Children "Narciso Mendoza" in 2005. In her web [POETRONICA \(www.poetronica.net\)](http://www.poetronica.net), Villeda explores poetry and multimedia. Her interest in poetry and its relation with various technological resources began with LABO: laboratory of cyberpoetry ([www.labo.com.mx](http://www.labo.com.mx)). Part of her digital work is in the third volume of *Electronic Literature Collection* of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Her poems have been translated into

Arabic, French, English and Portuguese. She has also published her poems in Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Spain, United States, Guatemala and Venezuela. She has translated John Keats' *Lamia* to Spanish. Her next book, *Visegrado*, will be published by Almadía Ediciones and the National Institute of Fine Arts. Nowadays is a writer in residence at Vermont Studio Center.

**Yvonne Adhiambo Owuor** is an author, lecturer, and arts curator. Her first novel, *Dust*, was published by Knopf in 2014, and received the 2015 TBC Jomo Kenyatta Literature Award. In 2003, she won the Caine Prize for African Writing for her story "Weight of Whispers," also the title of a 2003 volume. Owuor was an IWP Fall Resident in 2005, and returned in 2017 as the Residency's first Grinnell Fellow.

**Tjawangwa (TJ) Dema** (poet, Botswana) is a Motswana poet, teaching artist and arts administrator. Her poetry collection *Mandible* was published in 2014 by Slapering Hol Press, under the auspices of the African Poetry Book Fund as part of its inaugural boxset series. She earned an MA in Creative Writing from the Lancaster University, where she was awarded an international bursary. Dema was appointed a 2016 Visiting Artist-in-Residence in the Alice Kaplan Institute for the Humanities at Northwestern University where she worked with a range of students, from high school to graduate. She participated in Lancaster University's Crossing Borders literary program, as well as mentored the all female national champions for the British Council's multi-country Power in the Voice initiative.

A 2012 Fall Resident of the University of Iowa's International Writing Program and former chairperson of the Writers Association of Botswana, Dema has given readings and facilitated workshops in countries including India, the USA, Malawi, Brazil, Cambodia, Estonia, Colombia, the UK, and Nigeria. For nearly a decade she ran a live literature organization which orchestrated literary festivals, facilitated book donations to the Gaborone Public Library, coordinated workshops and cultural exchanges as well produced recordings of Botswana poets.

She is a 2016 Mail and Guardian/GabzFM Editor's Choice award recipient, a 2014 St. Louis Top 40 under 40 Catalyst as well as recipient of grants from the Vermont Studio Centre and Denmark's DIVA fellowship. Her collection *The Careless Seamstress* won the 2018 Sillerman First Book Prize for African Poets and is forthcoming from the University of Nebraska Press in 2019.

**Ubah Cristina Ali Farah** (fiction writer, poet, playwright, translator; Italy) was born in Verona, Italy, of a Somali father and an Italian mother. She grew up in Mogadishu but fled at the outbreak of the civil war at the age of eighteen.

She is a poet, novelist, playwright, and oral performer. She has published stories and poems in several anthologies and in 2006 she won the Lingua Madre National Literary Prize. Her novel *Madre piccola* (2007) was awarded the prestigious Vittorini Prize and has been translated into Dutch and English with the title *Little Mother* (2011). Her latest novel *Il comandante del fiume* (*The commander of the river*) has been published in Italy (October, 2014).

She lived in Rome where she taught Somali language and culture at Roma Tre University. She is now based in Brussels.

She holds a Ph.D. in African Studies at the University of Naples- L'Orientale. The dissertation deals with Somali popular culture, especially Somali plays in the period 1955-1990.

She has been invited to present her work in numerous countries such as: UK, USA, Australia, Germany, South Africa, Nigeria, Somalia, Guinea Conakry, Portugal, Spain, France, Belgium, Germany, Romania.

She is an HRA of the Center for Somali Studies at Roma Tre University and a Visiting Honorary Research Associate of The Australasian Centre for Italian Studies.

She participated in the University of Iowa's prestigious International Writing Program in Fall 2017 and to the MEET (Maison des Ecrivains et Traducteurs de Saint-Nazaire) Residency 2018.

Currently, she is writing the libretto taken from found stories in Matera (European Capital of Culture 2019) for a community opera titled Silent City, and she is also working on a rewriting of the Antigone to be performed in Palermo (Italian Capital of Culture 2018).

**Maxine Case** (fiction, journalism; South Africa) is a senior writer for the non-profit Cape Town Partnership. She contributes to a number newspapers and magazines, including *Real Simple*, *Reader's Digest* and *O Magazine*. Her short story "Homing Pigeons" was included in *African Compass: New Writing from Southern Africa 2005*. In 2007, her debut novel *All We Have Left Unsaid* won the Commonwealth Writers' Prize for Best First Book in Africa, and, jointly, the Herman Charles Bosman Award.

**Shenaz Patel** (fiction writer, playwright; Mauritius) has written many novels, plays, and short stories in both French and Mauritian Créole: best known is her 2005 novel *Le silence des Chagos*. As a working journalist, she writes about social and cultural issues; much of her writing seeks to unearth the unsaid and untold.