

Short Writings from Bulawayo

reviewed by Betha Madhomu

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Young and upcoming writers have always decried the problems they face when they want to have their works published. Well, they may have to say thanks to 'amaBooks, a publishing company that has somewhat brought an answer to the problem.

As the publishers come in as a new player in the publishing industry, it is hoped that they will deal with the hiccups that have been hampering the dreams of the country's future writers.

The company has already published a book. In an interview with *Trends*, the editor of the company's recently published book of short stories and poems, *Short Writings from Bulawayo*, Jane Morris said the aim of the book was to celebrate the wealth of talent in the country.

'The book celebrates the talent that we have in this country, particularly in Bulawayo. Thus, you will find that most of the writings are set in the homes, streets and bars of present day Bulawayo and surrounding rural areas. The majority of the writers in this book are people from Bulawayo and those that have a connection with the people of the City of Kings', said Jane.

She said the major aim of this particular publication was to give people a platform to display their writing skills.

'For most writers in this book it is their first time to have their works published and this stands out as an encouragement for them to continue writing. We hope to do other short writings very soon', she said.

Some of the 23 contributors, however, are known writers who include John Eppel, Pathisa Nyathi and Terence Ranger.

The pieces were chosen for their good writing, but also reflect and celebrate the diversity of life in Zimbabwe.

The inspiration for the book was to give a voice to new writers who might otherwise be unheard and through their writings, to bring together the different communities that make up Bulawayo.

For instance, one would want to pick a few examples of the stories in the book to justify the previous statement.

The first story, *Shadows*, by Godfrey Sibanda, written in simple English, clearly brings out today's life where young people in the rural areas have a desire to join others in urban centres. It is sad that they usually leave their parents wondering whether they will be able to resist the pressure that comes with life in the city.

Thus, Luba's grandmother in the story does not hesitate to advise her accordingly as she finds her way to Bulawayo.

'If your uncle cannot send you to school, get a job and go to night school. Education is life, child of my child. Do not rush to get married, do you hear? Men are no good to anyone. They were no good to me, they were useless to your mother, they are not even good to themselves. Education, child of my child and your Bible – that is all you need', said the grandmother who had already lost some of her grandchildren through death. They had left home for South Africa.

Another story, *Evil That Fathers Do*, by Matthew Chokuwenga written in a most skilful manner underlines the immorality of some fathers who find pleasure in raping their minor children.