

ACP Prize for Women and Youth: The ACP Secretariat focuses on creativity and entrepreneurship at the Paris Book Fair

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The objective of the "African Literatures Pavilion" is to ensure the visibility of African literature at major international events. After the Pavilion's success, following its launch at the Paris Book Fair in 2017, this initiative by the *Agence Culturelle Africaine* (African Cultural Agency) or ACA, has snowballed and increased its promotional spaces in Europe, and soon, in Africa.

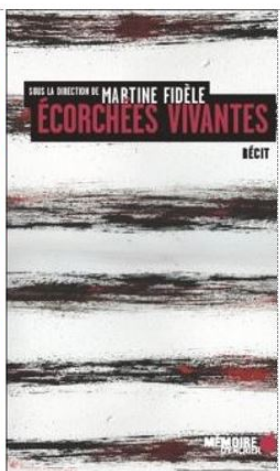
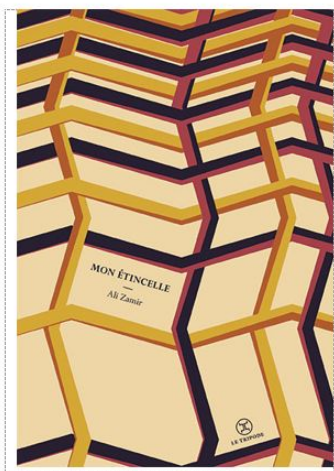
The ACP Secretariat, which is firmly committed to developing South-South Cooperation and facilitating the movement of goods, services, and persons in ACP countries, is supporting this initiative by encouraging its founder, Mrs. Aminata Diop Johnson, to extend it even further, to Caribbean and Pacific authors and publishers.

On Sunday, 18 March, Mr. Léonard-Emile Ognimba, Assistant Secretary-General of the ACP Group of States, awarded the 2018 ACP Prize to the following three laureates:

Africa: **Ali Zamir** (Comoros) for his 2nd novel "*Mon étincelle*" ^[1]

The Caribbean: **Martine Fidèle** (Haiti) and her co-contributors, for "*Ecorchées vivantes*" ^[2] *vivantes* ^[2]

The Pacific: **Lani Wendt Young** (Samoa) for the « Telesa Series » and her blog « *Sleepless in Samoa* » ^[3]



AFRICA

Ali Zamir – “*Mon étincelle*” (Comoros)

The creativity of this novel, published by the publishing house, *Le Tripode*, is undeniable. Ali Zamir was born on the island of Anjouan in 1987. According to the French saying, talent does not depend upon age. Ali Zamir had already proven himself with “*Anguille sous roche*,” a social protest novel, in which the author gives voice to a young female migrant embarked on a tragic crossing, in the middle of the Indian Ocean - a novel that was unanimously acclaimed by critics.

In his second novel, the protagonist, Etincelle, is once again female, and has an urgent need to speak. Trapped in a plane that is about to crash between two islands of the Comoros Archipelago, Etincelle takes us on a narrative journey between life and death, between fiction and reality, between herself, her mother, and love, which is a powerful bond.

We are swept up in the words of Ali Zamir, in his inventive and mixed outpouring. Etincelle, Douceur, Douleur, Efferalgan, Dafalgan, Vitamine, and Calcium are the colourful characters who open the doors for us, to a world that is insular, magical, and tragic, all at once.

CARIBBEAN

Martine Fidèle (Haiti) and her co-contributors - “*Ecorchées vivantes*”

Unity is strength. This has been proven yet again by this group of women who are being awarded today. This is a crushing blow, dealt to us, all the way from the Caribbean, by the co-contributors of “*Ecorchées vivantes*.” A blow that the magnificent and relevant *Mémoire d'encrier* publishing house, run by Rodney Saint Eloi, is forcefully passing on. The sting of this uppercut jars us to the core, because it is so strong, so courageous, so true, and so new as well. These nine women wrote under the direction of the talented comedienne and author, Martine Fidèle.

Martine Fidèle was born in Haiti. At only 28 years old, she is already widely known for her freedom of tone and her three publications, including “*Double Corps*.” She coordinated this collection of short stories that upset, disturb, fascinate, and, through violence, spread messages that, once spoken, or rather screamed or spat, will certainly end up sowing seeds of understanding and healing. Martine Fidèle writes in her preface that these women want to awaken consciences - since they have already endured so much, they are not afraid of addressing any taboos, such as rape, incest, prostitution, or insanity. They are shaking up and asserting their creativity, their dignity, their freedom. Our collective freedom is being reclaimed, since they are hoping for a “new sun.”

Yannick Lahens, who wrote the preface for this collection, was not mistaken: this is a “militant aesthetic.” And it was this new “skinned” but “living” strength that the ACP Group of States wished to highlight.

PACIFIC

Lani Wendt Young, “*Sleepless in Samoa*”

Lani Wendt Young is a young multi-talented woman, who is an author, journalist, and blogger, all in one. Through her, we wished to salute courage: this young journalist who writes for Samoa Planet, in fact openly denounces the vacillation of the major powers-that-be, which have been so slow to adopt urgent measures to tackle climate change.

Through her, we wished to commend the inventiveness of young people, who are capable of exploring the possibilities offered by the Internet to make themselves known, get published, communicate, exchange, change outlooks, and rattle positions. Using her blog “*Sleepless in Samoa*” and other online media, Lani Wendt Young shares all her experiences and adventures in self-publishing, with wholesome freshness, while encouraging young writers to take the plunge.

Through her, we wished to commend the young female author of popular series, who is making reading attractive to a young audience, to whom she demonstrates that internationally known romance plots can be perfectly portrayed using Pacific references. In her collection of short stories “*Afakasi Women*,” Lani Wendt Young explores the different facets of Samoan culture, the importance of the extended family, and the role of the neighbourhood, while highlighting the similarities to “snakes,” which, in all societies and around the world, wrap individuals, and women in particular, in smothering roles and invasive social structures. But Lani is like one of her heroines, the “twin sister,” the one who survives and breaks the silence. She is the one capable of killing the snake, the one who instils confidence and hope in us.

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Links:

- [1] <https://www.amazon.fr/Mon-étincelle-Ali-Zamir/dp/2370551364>
- [2] <https://livre.fnac.com/a11003767/Martine-Fidèle-Ecorchées-vivantes>
- [3] <https://laniwendtyoung.wordpress.com/tag/samoa-blog-2/>
- [4] <http://acp.int/category/story-type/news-articles>