

MEDIA RELEASE

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UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA HOSTS A FOUR-DAY BOOK FESTIVAL

Books, books and more books will be the buzzword for four consecutive days from 5 to 8 March 2008 when the University of Pretoria will host the first “**BookJol**”.

The purpose of the event is to celebrate reading and the writing of books as a way of life in the academic environment. It is also the opportunity to host the first SA eBook Fair which will introduce visitors to the new dimension of electronic and digital books. It is also aimed at fostering a culture of reading and wishes to illustrate the slogan, “**Leading minds read**”.

According to Ujala Satgoor, Deputy Director at the University’s Department of Library Services, the BookJol is a platform where the following will be showcased:

- current trends and developments in academic publishing
- a hundred years of publishing at the University of Pretoria
- South African writers and authors (some of whom are the University’s alumni).

The festival is targeted at students, staff, alumni of all tertiary institutions; learners and teachers of schools; libraries, bookshops, publishers; book clubs, reading and literacy clubs/organisations; tourism and cultural organisations; government departments and the diplomatic community; community-based organisations and non-governmental organisations; business organisations and the media – in short any bookworm!

A website has been created for the BookJol: www.bookjol.up.ac.za.

A range of activities has been lined up for the festival:

- Mathews Phosa, politician and also an Afrikaans poet, will be the guest speaker at the official opening. His speech is expected to address the use of language as a tool for reconciliation.

- High-profile writers will also participate in the festival. Among them are well-known journalist Fred Khumalo; Shimmer Chinodya (winner of the 2007 Noma Award for African writing); Sindiwe Magona (author of *Living, Loving and Lying Awake at Night*, which was voted one of Africa's 100 best books); Michiel Heyns, co-winner of last year's Sunday Times Fiction Prize; poets Ingrid de Kok; Peter Horn, Sally-Ann Murray and Chris van Wyk. Please visit www.bookjol.up.ac.za/writers.htm for the profiles of the authors.
- The first SA eBook Fair – major international publishers will introduce their latest eBook collections and present a virtual exhibition of eBooks.
- The eBook Phenomenon: A New Chapter. A symposium will be held on Friday 7 March 2008, which addresses the emerging electronic book environment and its impact on print media and publishing, knowledge, sharing and creation. Mark Carden of MyiLibrary will be the keynote speaker.
- A seminar on women's writing and reading. This seminar is an initiative of the University of Pretoria's Institute for Women's and Gender Studies. Please visit www.bookjol.up.ac.za/gender.htm for more details..
- Programme for children titled "Future Leaders at Play". It is designed specifically for children and young adults in order to expose young minds to the possibilities of reading, education and higher learning. "We see it as an opportunity to plant the seed for future aspirations," said Ms Satgoor.

The "Future Leaders at Play" programme includes:

- interaction with writers and illustrators of children's books
- The Tshwane Community Library and Information Services as a partner to promote reading and libraries
- participation by six schools from disadvantaged areas
- puppet shows, storytelling, painting and art demonstrations.

This is the first time that the University of Pretoria is staging this event.

NB. Please see the attached programme for a list of activities during the BookJol.

ENDS

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