

2011 Kurt Schork Memorial Awards winners are named

Brave reporting from Libya, Afghanistan and Zimbabwe stood out for judges assessing entries for this year's Kurt Schork Memorial Awards in International Journalism, the results of which are announced today (*Friday, 14 October, 2011*).

Naming British journalist Jerome Starkey as the 2011 winner of the category for freelance journalist covering foreign news, the judges said he had clearly taken high risks to get his stories in Afghanistan and Libya. This year's winner in the local reporter category is Gertrude Fadziso Pswarayi who wrote about raped and exploited women in Zimbabwe, a country with "zero tolerance for the journalism of revelation", the judges noted.

Almost 90 journalists from around the world submitted entries for the 2011 Kurt Schork Memorial Awards which are the only ones that specifically honour the contributions of freelance journalists covering foreign news and reporters living and working in the developing world and countries in transition. Each entrant can provide up to three articles for consideration and the winner of each category receives a US \$5,000 monetary award, presented at a ceremony in London. This year's ceremony will be held on November 17, hosted by Thomson Reuters Foundation at Canary Wharf.

Jerome Starkey's winning entries were two reports from Afghanistan and one from Libya. A story from Helmand province published in *The Times* (UK) in October last year described being present during a mine blast that claimed a British soldier's life; another published in *The Scotsman* in March this year told of the aftermath of a Taliban roadside bombing. Starkey's third entry, published in *The Times* last May, recorded his experiences aboard a small boat ferrying supplies to rebels in Misrata, Libya, and what he found on arrival.

The judges' full citation reads: "In his reports from Afghanistan and Libya, Jerome Starkey has shown a tremendous amount of enterprise. Writing very well and very vividly, he tells you what you want to know about the experiences of those caught up in conflicts – and has clearly taken high risks to get his stories".

Gertrude Pswarayi lives in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, where she is co-founder and director of the Creative Centre for Communication and Development, a non-governmental organisation that works to give marginalised groups a voice. She writes regularly for *World Pulse* and for the Global Press Institute (GPI), published online, and submitted three entries for the awards, including one on the denial of basic rights to Zimbabwean sex workers and another on the damaging impact of corruption on her country's education system. It was, however, a powerful piece about political rape survivors coming forward to tell their stories ahead of next

elections, published by GPI in December last year, that captured the judges' attention.

The full citation reads: "We applaud her bravery and daring in telling the disturbing stories of raped and exploited women in Zimbabwe, a country with zero tolerance for the journalism of revelation. Just when you feel that you can neither read, nor watch/listen to anything more about Mugabe's Zimbabwe, you must come to terms with what Gertrude has told us".

Eight entrants were shortlisted in each category and, after selecting the winners, the judges made honourable mentions of several of the others:

Local reporter category

- Humberto Padgett (Mexico) for risky research and well-told stories about the consequences of drug-fuelled criminality and gang violence in Mexico
- Vinod Jose(India) for first-class journalism, with well-planned and written stories about a bungled Indo-US espionage mission and an aging patriarch clinging to power
- Ayodeji Adeyemi (Nigeria) for a "powerful" and "impressive" study on the dehumanising impact of oil exploration on the people of the Niger Delta, involving risky and difficult reporting.

Freelance journalist category

- Jean Friedman-Rudovsky (USA), reporting in Mexico and Bolivia, for "wonderful story-telling, fluid writing, painstaking research, value-added context, and a passionate attitude about alerting the world to these injustices"
- Tristan McConnell (UK/South Africa) for an enterprising and well-written and structured story about a Hell's Angel on a mission to save Africa's forgotten children.

This is the 10th year of the awards which are made annually in memory of American freelance journalist Kurt Schork who died in 2000 while reporting in Sierra Leone for the Reuters news agency. They are financed by the Kurt Schork Memorial Fund (www.ksmfund.org) which was established in 2001 and is supported by family, colleagues, friends and admirers of Kurt. Thomson Reuters Foundation (TRF, www.trust.org/trustmedia/) and the Institute for War & Peace Reporting (IWPR, <http://iwpr.net>) are partners with KSMF in promoting and administering the awards.

Notes for editors:

More about Jerome Starkey –



Starkey is aged 30 and left City University, London, in 2004 with a post-graduate diploma in newspaper journalism. He worked for The Sun (UK) until 2006 when he began freelancing in Afghanistan, becoming The Times' stringer there in 2009. He has also covered Iraq for The Sun and Libya for The Times and The Scotsman.

Links to his entries for the 2011 Kurt Schork awards:

Article: Final, fatal step of 'a really brilliant bloke'.

http://ksa.iwpr.net/sites/default/files/webform/ksa11/101021_Final%20Fatal.pdf

Article: Living in the aftermath of a Taleban roadside bombing.

http://ksa.iwpr.net/sites/default/files/webform/ksa11/110305_Moore_Sct.pdf

Article: Overloaded, underpowered – but buoyed by self-belief.

http://ksa.iwpr.net/sites/default/files/webform/ksa11/110516_Assameda.pdf

More about Gertrude Fadziso Pswarayi –



Pswarayi is 29 years old and has a Bachelor of Science Honours Degree in Journalism and Media Studies. She began writing business news as an intern at the Sunday Mail in Harare, Zimbabwe in 2003, later moving into media/public relations and communications for local NGOs, including Bulawayo's Sexual Rights Centre.

She has been a citizen journalist, online, for World Pulse since February 2009 and is a senior reporter on the Zimbabwe desk of the Global Press Institute, as well as a director of the NGO Creative Centre for Communication and Development, Bulawayo.

Links to her entries for the 2011 Kurt Schork awards:

Article: Political rape survivors come forward in advance of election.

http://ksa.iwpr.net/sites/default/files/webform/ksa11/SchorkAwards_Gertrude_PoliticalRape.docx

Article: Sex workers denied basic rights

<http://www.globalpressinstitute.org/global-news/africa/zimbabwe/basic-rights-denied-sex-workers>

Article: Zimbabwe's education system on verge of collapse, corruption blamed.

<http://www.globalpressinstitute.org/global-news/africa/zimbabwe/zimbabwe%E2%80%99s-education-system-verge-collapse-corruption-blamed>