

**BIOGRAPHY OF
MONGANE WALLY SEROTE**



In the 18 years of exile, Mongane Wally Serote participated on various levels of the ANC structures in the mobilisation, planning, negotiations and leading in the struggle for the Liberation of South Africa in the Political, armed struggle and cultural sectors.



He was the head of the regional underground structure in Botswana, Head of the Department of Arts and Culture; member of the Regional Political Military committee in Botswana and in Britain. He was the cultural attache of the ANC , in Britain and Europe. From 1990, he was head of Arts and Culture of the ANC in South Africa. He spearheaded the organization and mobilisation of the cultural workers through major festivals, symposiums , conferences in Botswana (1982), Amsterdam (1987) London (1990), Johannesburg (1993) which resulted in the formation of National organizations of writers, musicians, Theatre, Dance, Photographers, filmmakers. He participated in the negotiations for the transformation of the international cultural and other forms of boycotts of the Apartheid system into structures of democracy in the new dispensation in South Africa.

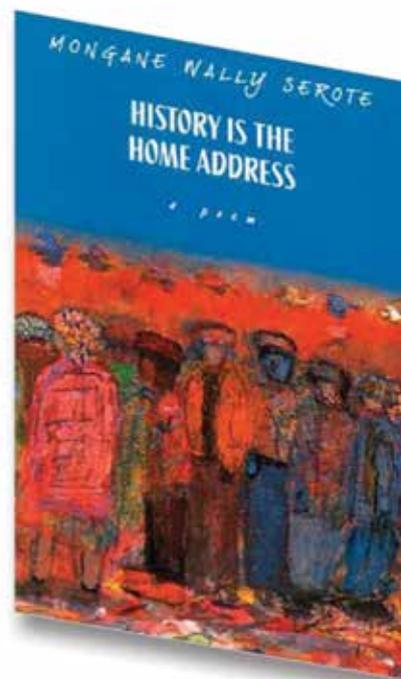
He is a writer of a number of Novels, poetry collections, essays and plays, and has been awarded national and international awards in this regard, including the Inkamanga in Silver, by President Thabo Mbeki, the Pablo Neruda ward, by the Chilean President, the Ingrid Jonker award for poetry, the Noma award for writing in Africa, the English medal for contributing in writing in Southern Africa, the Presidential award by the Black Management forum, the BBQ statesman award, the Department of

Arts and Culture life time achievement award, the International Golden Wreath for poetry in Strugga, the Alexandra icon award and the Pan South African Language Board for contributing to the development and promotion of African languages in South Africa.

He became a member of Parliament and chairperson of Arts and Culture, languages, science and Technology portfolio committee of Parliament. He initiated, spearheaded and facilitated the research, discussions and debate at National level and organized and put on the national agenda, through negotiations with the Universities , science Councils, various indigenous organizations e.g. Dikgosi, Dingaka, different government departments, various communities nationally for Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) to be accepted as a tool for the social and economic upliftment, nationally. And he lead a team which organized the first IKS conference in 1998.

He participated in the Arts, Culture, heritage sectors of the national negotiations at Codesa. He has a Master of fine Arts with Columbia University in New York as a Fulbright student.

He was CEO of the





National Heritage and Memorial – Freedom Park, and received a long service award.

He is the CEO of iARi. He chairs various boards of organizations e.g. The Johannesburg Theatres, the Indigenous Knowledge system Trust of South Africa, (iIkssa). He is also the founder and chairperson of the South African Music Trust, SAMET and iARikssa based at the University of South Africa- Unisa.

He has been awarded honorary doctorates, by the Universities of Natal, and the Transkei, and an honorary Professorship by Unisa. He is a member of the Advisory Council of the Thabo Mbeki Foundation; and the magazine, The Thinker. He is the director of Seolo Sa Serote Pty Ltd.

He was initiated as a Ngaka in 1999. He has initiated and spearheaded discussions at a National level for

the creation of the medicinal plant gardens in the 9 provinces of South Africa, and spearheaded the cleansing, healing, and return of spirits rituals and ceremonies, in Southern Africa and the US before the building of Freedom Park and at Vlakplaas, a farm which was the killing fields of the apartheid security forces which were attended by over a thousand Dingaka.

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He participated in the opening event of the International Women's Forum Global stage 2015-Legacy and Inheritance Journey to the Future: What makes us South Africans. He has lectured on various platforms, and in different universities abroad and in South

Africa on political, Arts, Culture, IKS built environment and heritage.

He is in the process of setting up the Mongane Wally Serote Foundation.

