

GLORIA D. GONSALVES BIOGRAPHY

13 BOOKS

Jai The Albino Cow: Jai Ng'ombe Zeruzeru (2018)

This story was inspired by a calf who licked my face during a holiday in Austria. The idea was further fueled while visiting Tanzania where I watched cows grazing in the alpine hills of the Usambara Mountains. I wanted to write a story with a character who looks different but earns respect from others regardless of appearance. The book features both English and Swahili text. I opted for a bilingual story with hope that the message will have a great impact and reach many more, especially in the parts of the world where albinos are outcasted.

Lamellia. The Wicked Queen (2018)

Lamellia: The Wicked Queen is a sequel story to Lamellia: The Kingdom of Mushrooms. Reviews of the previous book speculated about a possible continuation of the story. I had not planned for one. My brain was still rationalising that I had just written a book about mushrooms taking care of a human baby. Never underestimate the power of imagination. One day without a plan or story plot, I sat down to write. Days went by and forest visits granted me more ideas for a follow up story. I am grateful to the mushrooms and other forest dwellers for the inspiration.

Chini Ya Mwembe (2017)

For a long time, I harboured a deep wish to write a book in my mother tongue Swahili. I procrastinated for reasons such as I am not literally good at Swahili language. Then I got acquainted to the co-author and together we embarked on a journey to write a poetry anthology. The title of the book translates to "Under The Mango Tree". The idea is when humans are in need of reflection, the mind seek a place to keep quiet and meditate carefully. One of such places is under a mango tree. A mango tree does not choose who sits under it. Instead, it freely gifts a shade, a fruit and a place for thinking. The book is a collection of different poems that affect human life and we hope that after reading the poems, you will be touched to find your own mango tree.

Let's Go Dancing In The Light (2017)

Between 2014 and 2016, I was a contributing poet of 'When Women Waken' (a journal of poetry, prose & images by women) and 'Sibyl Magazine' (publishing original written works of women from around the world). Those contributed pieces plus others form the collection in this book. I never considered myself a spiritual person. However, the pieces I wrote indicated otherwise. During this time, something was happening to me. Sometimes, I didn't recognise myself in what I was writing. It was as if someone else was at the keyboard. Looking back, I realise that my higher self was gently tapping on the shoulder to remind me of who I am. To get there, I needed to lay bare my heart and soul. Thus, I wrote down what I was afraid of feeling and saying aloud.

Because sometimes, we write to redeem ourselves. I wrote this book to redeem myself. While writing, I was transforming. I recognised the transcendent importance of spirit. This collection of poetry and prose may not be a wondrous to everyone. However, I hope you as a reader will find the wondrous in yourself after reading a poem or a story in this book. I did when writing and now it is yours as a tool of self-transcendence. Namaste.

Lamellia: The Kingdom of Mushrooms (2016)

In 2013, I saw a big and ugly brown mushroom during a walk in the forest of the Siebengebirge in Germany. Thereafter I began paying attention to mushrooms, especially during autumn. One day I thought why not write a story involving mushrooms. I continued observing mushrooms while walking in the Usambara Mountains, Tanzania. During a holiday in Austria, I photographed mushrooms and visited a mushroom museum for further inspiration. Written for children, the book serves as an avenue to connect with nature and encourages discussion with adults. The story also aims at fostering kindness, tolerance and acceptance in children by highlighting nature's selfless gifts. Reviews of this book have speculated and advised of a sequel. I can only say that nature is still speaking and I am a keen listener of it.

Mists of Sense Require Fierce Poesy (2014)

This poetry book takes readers into miracles of embracing oneself as divine being; adulthood and its dilemmas, troubles and heartaches; and national identity, broken homelands with violence and destruction of land and human spirit. However, the human spirit is resilient. I hope at the end readers will celebrate with me the winning attitudes with triumphs over trials. Summed up in a sentence: the book dares you to emerge with a kind heart: despite the thickness of the mist, the pride you will have displayed, the tears you will have shed, the rants you will have made, the fierce poems you will have written and winning attitudes you will have dared.

Danloria (2013)

I became a nature admirer in recent years, thanks to my husband's passion for plants. This interest began with forest walks in the Siebengebirge Nature Reserve in Germany. There I learned about different wild plant species, how to arrange a bouquet from wild flowers and to enjoy being out in nature. This book is about a little boy who is led into forest adventures by a fern. All the plant characters and scenes were inspired by Siebengebirge forests, and illustrations are by children of friends and colleagues. The name Danloria is a combination of two first names, my husband's and mine. My intention with this book is to motivate children to get outdoors and learn from the beautiful nature. That way they will be inspired to want to conserve it.

The Wisdom Huntress (2012)

I wrote this book with culture and open-mindedness in mind. My intention was to take the reader along a ride through cultural familiarities as experienced by the narrator Savannah, all the while passing by liminal experiences that illustrate the importance of being receptive and open-minded in an ever-shrinking world. The book also provides an opportunity to introduce the African proverbs and Kanga sayings, to those not acquainted with them. Meanwhile, the proverbs and sayings are meant to help one connect them to the stories told. The book is presented in a very non-linear progressive manner, opening and closing chapters with a new theme and lesson in

mind. Each chapter has its own unique story and purpose, but they all aim together toward the same goal – the acquisition and distribution of wisdom. After experiencing joyous love and heartaches, insecurities and swelling pride, abuses and tender reinforcements, the narrator comes out of the callous jungle of life on top, roaring her victorious cries over the plains of Africa.

Swahili Folklore (2011)

Sometimes old memories come flooding back into one's mind with nostalgic effect. One day my brain felt like a giant elephant as I hummed old songs and rhymes that dated as far back as my days in nursery school. My native country Tanzania was intensively on my mind. I felt I had to share these memories or else they will go to waste when I am no more. It was time to show my gratitude to all my teachers who made my school days a joy to remember and also to share the gift of memory with all the children in this universe.

I am Tausi (2009)

This book was my attempt to write another form other than poetry. So, it became a novelette and a testimonial of exposure to cultural diversity through the narrator Tausi. Tausi means a peacock in the Swahili language. Her varied exposure to the cultural practices, both in her homeland and abroad made her to question what was right or wrong. During her inquisitive quest, she blossoms with cultural diversity awareness as colourful plumage of a peacock. The book is also spirited by smiling at our adult selves when acquainted with diverse ways of life and a multitude of acts that may seem not a norm to one's eyes.

Diamonds Forever (2008)

Writing a children's book was an idea after I read an article about diamond poems. As a children's book, it would be plain with just poetry. I decided to incorporate drawings to it. This is how I began writing for children as well as involving them in drawing for my books.

"MAHABA" Prints In My Heart (2007)

This anthology of poetry about facets of good love – desire, friendship, fantasy, naughtiness, passion, patience, purity, sultriness, temptation and other unnamed, was written during a difficulty time. Whilst undergoing a divorce, I published a book of love poetry. Thankfully, the book helped me to not abandon the idea of falling in love again. It was a sort of therapy after an ending of a love relationship. The book aided me with courage to see the love I have had to that point of my life. Some of the poems were featured in "The Sound of Poetry" CD collection. And in case you don't know 'Mahaba' is the Swahili word for love.

Emotional Turmoil (2006, out of circulation)

This was my first published book with errors that would upset the veterans and readers alike. The book was a mess: from editorial to the layout. As an independent author, I was learning by doing. Respectfully, it was my saviour from self-destruction. The title speaks for itself. My inner turmoil, ranging from love to sadness, became a book.

WOCHIPODA INITIATIVE

A photo by Paulo Coelho from one of his Saturday walks had a caption “Nature teaches more than philosophical books”. That is what exactly happened during a walk I took in the Fairy Tale Forest of Altenberg, Germany. It was Sunday, 25 May 2014. Imagine while walking, an idea strikes you. First, you consider it a poem prompt; however, the mysterious, tall, green trees hung with moss won’t settle for a prompt. After two hours of walking, you are haunted by World Children’s Poetry Day (WoChiPoDa).

Later that night, I sat down to write a proposal and sent it to a lady I got virtually acquainted in the business of book trailers. My request was, “Would you like to do a logo and trailer for this idea?” She agreed. For the entire month of June, I marvelled over how she transformed my proposal into a visual reality.

World Children's Poetry Day (WoChiPoDa)", is a non-profit initiative aimed at instilling the love of poetry in young people. Celebrated on the first Saturday of October, it is a day dedicated to children's poetry written by themselves. Such a day of entirety to children's poetry is important for children to learn and experience poetry in a fun way other than school curriculum or what is written for them by adults. Additionally, poetry as one of the literature genres has the potential to contribute towards the Sustainable Development Goal 4: Quality Education. Poetry can contribute to relevant skills of reading and writing. WoChiPoDa as an initiative is one potential tool to contribute towards this global goal. Because poetry can be a valuable tool in enhancing speaking, listening and communication.

This one-day based initiative has potential for replication to reach children at community, national, regional, and global levels. Through WoChiPoDa, the organisers have an opportunity to integrate this event with other children education activities that they are actively involved and be identified as a pioneer of child education in their community/state/country.

For more information about the initiative visit www.wochipoda.com

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

2017 John E Weaver Excellent Reads Book Award

[Danloria: The Secret Forest of Germania](#) is named a winner in the John E Weaver Excellent Reads Book Award in the Children’s: Adventure category.

The Igby Prize for Nonfiction by The Kalahari Review

[Kamba Wa Nazi](#): The winning essay for nonfiction on food.

Sonne Women of Excellence Icons 2017

Woman of Excellence in Literature.

Readers' Favorite Five Stars

[Jai the Albino Cow: Jai Ng'ombe Zeruzeru](#), [Lamellia The Wicked Queen](#), [Let's Go Dancing in the Light](#), [Lamellia: The Kingdom of Mushrooms](#), [Danloria: The Secret Forest of Germania](#), [Swahili Folklore: A Compilation of Animal Facts, Folktales, Nursery Rhymes and Songs](#) and [Diamonds Forever](#) received the honour of Five Stars from Readers' Favorite.

Sonne Magazine's List of 20 Women of Excellence

[Featured on Sonne Magazine's list of 2016](#)

WILDsound Festival 2015 poetry contest

[Best Poetry of 2015 Runner Up](#)

Tanzania Diaspora Achievement Awards 2013

Awarded in the category Economic Development and Poverty Relief as one of the individuals exemplifying the concept of the 'Servant Leader'.

AuthorHouse Author Challenge

[Winner of the March 2013 AuthorHouse Author Challenge](#) (100 words fictional story/drabble)

poetry.com and the International Library of Poetry

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