

Clive Sinclair

has great pleasure in inviting you  
to a reception

to mark the first presentation of the annual  
'Sinclair Prize for Fiction',  
at the Berkeley Hotel, Crystal Room,  
Wilton Place, Knightsbridge, London SW1  
on Thursday, November 25th, 1982  
from 6.15-8.15pm.

The Presentation will take place at 7.00pm.

On arrival please use  
the Ballroom entrance  
at the side of the hotel where  
parking facilities are available.

R.S.V.P.  
Bill Nichols,  
Sinclair Research Ltd,  
23 Motcomb Street,  
London SW1. 01-235 9649

**THE**  
**sinclair**  
**PRIZE FOR FICTION**  
**1982**

Designed to encourage high-quality writing with contemporary social and political relevance

**JUDGES 1982:**

Frank Kermode (chairman)  
David Caute  
Simon Hoggart  
Mervyn Jones  
Polly Toynbee

Presented by Clive Sinclair  
at the Berkeley Hotel, London,  
on Thursday 25 November 1982

# THE sinclair PRIZE FOR FICTION

To be presented for the first time in 1982, the £5,000 Sinclair Prize for Fiction is sponsored by Sinclair Research of Cambridge, leaders in the consumer electronics field, and forms part of the company's general programme of arts sponsorship.

Offered for a previously unpublished novel, the prize was first announced in June 1981 at the inauguration of the Sinclair Browne publishing house.

The prize embodies a central concern of the founders, Clive Sinclair and Patrick Browne, – to encourage the production of new writing which combines high literary quality with contemporary social and political relevance. Both felt that a major new literary prize could achieve this.

The criteria of the prize have been completely fulfilled by the winning novel for 1982, 'Death is Part of the Process' by Hilda Bernstein. The novel is set in South Africa in the 1960s, and is a story of opponents of apartheid involved in sabotage attempts.

Because of the high-quality of entries, the sponsors have agreed, at the judges' recommendation, to provide for this year only, a second prize worth £2,000 and two third prizes worth £500 each.

The second prize goes to Gill Edmonds for 'The Common', and two third prizes to Aviott John for 'Chasing Cursors' and Philip Latham for 'Sarah Singing'.

Sinclair Research is delighted at the response to the prize which, in its inaugural year, attracted a worldwide entry of more than 150 submissions of a very high standard.

It is confident that the prize, as a major new contribution in a neglected area of literary sponsorship, will come to act as a focal point for new writing which addresses itself to contemporary issues.

The Sinclair Prize has been administered by the National Book League which is now taking entries for the 1983 award. Further details are available from Barbara Buckley, National Book League, Book House, 45 East Hill, Wandsworth, London SW18 2QZ. Tel: 01-870 9055.

THE  
sinclair  
PRIZE FOR FICTION  
1982

Awarded to  
Hilda Bernstein  
for

DEATH IS PART OF THE PROCESS



'Death is Part of the Process' is based in South Africa where Hilda Bernstein lived between 1933–1974, and where she was very actively involved with radical political organisations campaigning for black and women's rights.

Born in London, she moved to South Africa in 1933, where she soon became associated with the liberation movement.

She was a member of Johannesburg City Council from 1943 and while still a councillor was charged in 1946 with sedition arising from her support of a black miners' strike.

During the late 1940s and 1950s she worked as a copywriter and journalist,

and also began publishing poetry and short stories. She helped establish the South African Peace Council and the multi-racial Federation of South African Women.

In 1953 she was banned from attendance at any gathering and prohibited from membership of 26 organisations. The order was renewed in 1958 and prohibited any work related to writing and publishing.

Detained during the 1960 Sharpeville emergency, she continued to campaign clandestinely until 1964 when she left South Africa illegally, again under threat of arrest.

Her husband, who was charged with African National Congress leader, Nelson Mandela, at the famous 1963 'Rivonia' trial, escaped with her. Found not guilty, he had been rearrested on other charges and temporarily released on bail.

Mrs Bernstein now lives in London working partly as a freelance journalist and principally as an artist. She has exhibited widely and shown at the Royal Academy and Holland's Van Gogh Museum.

Her previous publications include: 'The World That Was Ours' (1967), autobiography; 'The Terrorism of Torture' (1977), an analysis of political trials and the use of torture in South Africa; 'For Their Triumphs and for Their Tears' (1978), a study of the lives of women under apartheid in South Africa, and 'Steve Biko' (1978).

## DEATH IS PART OF THE PROCESS

by Hilda Bernstein

*(to be published by Sinclair Browne Ltd in April 1983)*

This gripping and realistic novel tells a story of people involved in early sabotage attempts in South Africa. The decision to embark on sabotage is taken after all peaceful avenues of protest against apartheid appear to have been closed. The characters include South Africans of all races who are united in their desire to make South Africa a truly multi-racial society and others who are opposed to change. On a University campus a photographic exhibition is held to illustrate the effects of relocation on African families; it is brutally disrupted with the connivance of the police. Frustrated by the way all their efforts at peaceful protest are blocked, there are those who, in full knowledge of the risks they run, decide to attempt the sabotage of symbols of state power such as government offices, railway lines, the electric power grid.

The pace of the action increases; there are arrests, interrogations, torture, death. The strongly delineated characters react differently in this critical period, and at the end all of their lives have been radically altered; some form new relationships or sever old ones, some discover new strengths in themselves, some have their characters permanently altered by long periods of solitary confinement, severe interrogation and brutality from the police.

There are many episodes which, because of their descriptive accuracy and economy of style, linger in the memory. Always present in the background is the scenery of Africa, its landscapes and townscapes, and over it all and over the lives of the characters looms the power of the state.

The novel closes as a first batch of specially recruited Africans set off in a van in an attempt to cross the border on the beginning of a long journey north to places where they will receive guerilla training . . .



**DEATH**  
IS PART OF THE  
**PROCESS**

**HILDA BERNSTEIN**

## EXTRACT FROM THE WINNING NOVEL

*Two of the main characters, Indres, an Indian, and Sipho (pronounced Seepo), an African, set off on an act of sabotage which does not go quite according to plan . . .*

. . . Indres went by train down the South Coast to the small resort where he and Sipho had arranged to meet.

In an air-travel bag, he had six sticks of dynamite, a long strip of cordex, a detonator and fuse, and a torch.

He observed Sipho boarding the train at Durban; they travelled in different compartments.

About three quarters of an hour later they reached their destination. Indres walked in front, carrying his bag, Sipho followed.

The small town with its sprinkling of shops lay directly ahead. Indres walked down the single main street to a brightly-lit shop selling fish and chips. It was full of whites from a nearby camping ground: big, red-faced young men in tight and very short shorts, blonde hair close-cropped, children with long brown legs and straight hair bleached almost white.

He put the bag down casually and stood close to the counter protecting it with his feet. He waited unobtrusively until the assistant had finished with all the white customers. He should not have entered the cafe, but sometimes he was gripped by the urge to be foolhardy; he felt now a sense of superiority at possessing a power of which they were totally unaware, and for once waiting was almost a pleasure.

When he emerged clutching the fish and chips, he saw Sipho gazing into a shop window a little further down the street.

They turned right onto a road that ran alongside the railway line, away from the town, still walking apart. In a little while the tarred road became a sandy track winding through fields of sugar cane. The tall canes stood on either side. Ahead was a bridge over a river, about half a mile from the sea.

Now the cane fields lay behind them. On one side of the road was the dense South Coast bush, a sub-tropical cave of lush dark leaves, twining vines, bushes and undergrowth so congested that to penetrate it you had to hack a path. Once in that bush, only a few yards off the track, there was complete concealment.

They did not want to start too early. There was plenty of time, there

were plenty of trains. They could hear a train passing along the track, invisible below them.

In the thick bush, with the lights of the resort behind them, they ate bread and fish and chips, talking in whispers. They were possessed once again as they had been before by the tension and exhilaration, the adrenalin pumping through them; they were animals, all ears and listening, watchful, cautious, aware.

Unexpectedly, the rain started.

It was not like the driving downpouring rain of the high veld. It was a fine South Coast drizzle, soft as a mist, but persistent. The moistness enveloped everything for it was this crowded wet air that made the sugar cane and the bush grow so lushly and plentifully. But the rain for them was a nuisance.

They left the bush and entered a small wood from which they could watch the railway line now some distance below them. There was a chemical plant a little further down the line – they could see the lights in the distance just beyond the bend in the track – and guessed there would be a number of trains coming through.

They worked together in the dark and the wet. At least the soft curtain of rain would help conceal them. They went down to the track and quickly dug a small hole under the rail where they inserted the six sticks of dynamite. The end of the long pice of cordex that had been wound around the sticks was now trailed along the ground and up into the wood. Indres removed a detonator and a short piece of fuse from his pocket and he inserted the safety fuse into the detonator, using his own private crimping tool to make sure it was well hugged inside – his strong white teeth. He knew a moment of added excitement – if he bit too low the detonator would explode in his mouth.

He attached the detonator to the end of the cordex, binding the two together with insulation tape. The fuse was quick-burning, it needed only about ten seconds to activate the detonator and the shock would be transmitted almost instantaneously along the cordex to the charge under the rails. It would have been so much simpler to have left the detonator under the rails themselves to be set off by the wheels of the train; but if they did that, it meant they could not select their train, and they risked blowing up a train full of passengers instead of just goods. Siphon went a little further down the line to where he was visible to Indres, to signal to him when a goods train was approaching.

The fuse needed a sharp flare to ignite it. Indres had found after



experimenting that if he reversed the process of match-striking, holding the match steady and striking the box against its head, the flare was more effective. So he stood with the head of the match placed against the exposed part of the fuse and the matchbox ready, waiting for the signal from Siphó, when he would pull the box sharply and run. He crouched over to protect the fuse and the matches from the unremitting rain that fell against him in gentle grey waves. Coat, body, hands, were cupped protectively around the fuse.

In the distance he heard the sound of an approaching train and watched for Siphó's signal. It came – a goods train – he struck the box swiftly against the match head, but it did not ignite. He tried again, trembling with impatience, and the match broke. The train rumbled slowly past as he fumbled ineffectively for more matches. The water dripped off his hands and he tried to dry them. It was too late. The train had gone.

Siphó came pushing through the dark. – What happened?

– It's too wet. The match wouldn't strike.

– Was it the match or the box? Siphó felt in his pocket.

– I've a dry one, he said. – Look, let me dry your hands and then keep them out of the rain.

– There's a plastic bag there, Indres told him; Siphó took this from the travel bag and tore it open. He arranged it over Indres' hands to protect them, the box and the matches.

They examined the matchbox carefully to find an area that was completely dry, using the torch and shrouding it with their jackets, even though visibility was so reduced by the veil of rain. Water dripped thickly from the accumulation on the leaves. All around them was the dripping, whispering, sibilant darkness.

– Are you ready?

– Ready. This time must be it.

Siphó again went down the line to signal when the next train approached.

At last there came the sound of a train. Indres kept his eyes on Siphó, but there was no signal. A passenger train came round the bend, passed beneath him and trailed down the coast out of sight.

Indres stayed crouched down, hands stiff and trembling, afraid to change his position in the slightest because of the pervading rain. The air itself breathed moisture into him. Water dripped from his hair, his nose, down his neck.

After a long wait there was another train; again it was a passenger train. As it went past Siphso appeared beside Indres again. – We should have done it, he said fiercely – we should have blown that one. I nearly signalled to you.

– But it was a passenger.

– Yes, and we should have done it. We must do the next one, whatever it is.

– You're crazy, Indres told him, – we can't blow a passenger train. We'd kill a whole lot of people.

He had never seen Siphso so agitated, so seething with impatience.

– OK, he whispered angrily, crouched in the dark to be close to Indres, – what do you think's going to happen, sooner or later? When we're doing things like this? It's dangerous, man, for them and for us. It's not a child's game.

– Sure, I know that. Accidents can happen. *But we are not murderers, we don't kill people deliberately!* It's against our policy.

– It's rubbish, said Siphso between clenched teeth, his lower lip protruding, – all right, we adopt a policy, we all agree – but can't you see it's nonsense? What did the Israelis do in Palestine? The way I understand it – so I'm not great on theory, but I try to understand – they made it work by that very thing – terrorism. So we blow up a transformer box! Who knows about it except the police and they keep quiet? But we kill a couple of white bastards – the whole country will be on fire! Not so? they won't keep *that* out of the papers! I tell you, it's got to be done.

– Well, maybe it will come to that at a later date, later on, but –

– And another thing, Siphso continued, – why do we worry so about human life? Look at *them* – look at *them* man, do they care? Sharpeville, man! Langa, man! B-b-b-b-b-bb-

He swung around as though firing a machine gun.

– Run, you bastards, we prefer shooting you in the back. Easy, isn't it, great sport, standing on top of a Saracen. Like shooting dassies. There – there's a kaffir girl with a baby on her back – look at how she waddles, can't run so fast, watch this, two in one go. *Yirra* man, did you see that? How she leapt in the air before she fell – look, the baby's still alive, it's yelling, we'll –

– Siphso, stop it, stop it!

Their hoarse whispers were as violent as if they were shouting. They both stopped and looked at each other, Siphso with anger and contempt,

Indres with pain and confusion.

– Get back down the track, Indres whispered at last. – The next one's just about due. It's bound to be a goods train. But I trust you, man, you understand? One person can't decide –

There was still quite a long wait before they heard the sound of another train. He saw Siphos signal and struck the box sharply against the match head. The match flared, the fuse caught and flared up – and died down. Desperately he blew at it to try and ignite the fading spark while the long goods train snaked slowly past beneath him, van after van, in a moment it would be gone. He saw the guard's van in the rear and as he saw it, the explosion took place; he could hear metal whizzing through the trees and clonking down. But the train continued undisturbed down the track, as though it did not care, and disappeared round the bend.

– It wouldn't catch, he told Siphos, – the fucking fuse wouldn't take.

– Well, it was better than nothing, said Siphos grudgingly.

– At least we cut the rail.

They worked hastily, picking up all the things and putting them into the travel bag. Then they took out plastic bags filled with curry powder and red pepper, slit them open, and scattered the contents over their tracks as they left the bush.

They ran back to the bush once more, then left it again in a different direction that was diagonally opposite to the way they had entered, and they pushed their way through the thick tangle of bush and vines down to the beach. Firm white sands lay between the bush and the sea. They entered the sea and walked some way along the beach in the water. Further on they left it again to walk on dry sand.

When they reached the shore Indres was overcome with a sudden wave of panic. – Siphos, the torch, he said, – have you got the torch?

– You have it, said Siphos.

– No, I haven't got it. We've left it. It's there. He turned but Siphos grabbed his arm. – You can't go back.

– I must. I must get that torch. It's got our fingerprints all over it.

– Don't be a fool, man. You can't go back. They'll probably be on their way there already.

– I'm going, Siphos.

– No, no. no! He held Indres in his powerful grip. He was not very tall, shorter than Indres, but very strong.

There was a distant sound of a dog barking. They both stood and

listened. Then Indres turned reluctantly and they went on.

But he could not forget the torch lying in the wood where he had carefully placed it, and with his fingerprints on it. Siphos too, probably. They had not bothered about wearing gloves because they had intended to leave nothing behind.

The torch lay on his mind with a foreboding of danger.

To avoid roadblocks that might be set up after the blowing of the train – after the big explosion they had planned – they had decided to return by walking all the way back along the seashore. But they had expected to be on the way back a long time before this. Now it was much later than they had planned, and with the passing of time the tide had turned. Along the great stretch of beach the surf was running, and petering, and spreading, each time reaching a little higher on the sand before it drew back again.

They came to one of the many places where a river ran down from the hills and crossed the beach to join the sea. There had been too much rain, the river was wider and deeper than they had thought it would be, fast-flowing with a strong current. Where the river poured into the sea, the sea spread out into a great rough lake across the beach, with clashing small waves meeting, rearing, forming swirling eddies.

They were carrying guns that Siphos had brought, for these days they preferred to be armed; they wrapped the guns in their socks. Guns, socks and shoes were placed in the bag, which they rolled up as tightly as possible. Indres held the bag on top of his head with both hands while Siphos held on to Indres. In this way they began to wade into the tide-pulling waters of the river.

Air and water alike lay against them, heavy and soft as silk on their skins. Sea and sky and rain and river merged into one, merged into night, became the darkness itself, holding the whole world. The darkness was the sea, the darkness was the lagoon, the spreading river that eliminated the land, the darkness was the surf thundering ceaselessly, proclaiming the power and the indifference of the ocean.

The sea was a bell, sounding along the shore, so insistent, so compelling, so incomprehensible in its spreading force and unknown depths, that consciousness merged with it, dissolved and disappeared in a world undefined by horizons, where their feet lost at last the steadying touch of the eliminated land as they waded step by step into the shift of tide and river and sea.

The sea came rushing in.

The surf rolled towards them. The sand sloped beneath their feet. Water billowed against their bodies. Each knew that alone he would have ceased to resist, for it was as though the river demanded that they relinquish the struggle, join the sea. It was easier to give in and be carried away than to fight against it. It was easier to submit than to resist. It was easier to die. But Sipho's strong hands held and steadied Indres, and the bag on his head to which Indres clung was like a line of life which bound them to their pledges.

Each step was felt first with probing feet. They feared not only the deep centre channel that the river had driven through the sand, but also any holes into which they could disappear. Once their feet were completely off the sand, both felt they would not be able to resist the force of the flowing waters.

Most of all, they feared the unseen presence of the sharks that came up to the swollen river mouths to search for food among the debris brought down by the flooding waters. This was the coast where they attacked swimmers. Dark shapes in dark waters, silent, a mere brush against the legs, – then the thrashing, the blood, the churned up water, a leg or an arm snapped off by a huge triangular-toothed jaw.

*We shall never make it back to the land.*

*You die from the shock. That's how they die, on these beaches.*

Indres felt something brushing against his leg – water? – debris? – or – ?

When the water reached up to their chests they felt the sand beneath their feet shelve sharply down, and they knew this was the channel. Indres steadied himself upright while Sipho released him for a moment to test the width of the deep central cut. It was narrow at this point, as they had hoped. Together they managed to step over it and on to the other side.

The river reluctantly gave them back to the land again.

On the far side of the river, thick bush and trees met the banks of sand. The beach curved on, each curve ending in a cluster of rocks. At low tide the rocks were well out of the water so that the long beaches were joined by firm damp sand on which it was easy to walk. Now the sea had reached the rocks, they became jagged barriers, enemies. The sea swirled up and around them. They had to wait for the receding wave, then wade into the sea to try and skirt the rocks before the next wave engulfed them.

Out of their long silence Sipho voiced suddenly the thought that had

never left him: – We should have blown that train; the first one; the passenger one.

– And killed all those people, black as well as white?

– We're saboteurs, aren't we?

– Yes, not murderers.

– They murder us – and get away with it, said Siphon with angry emphasis. Haven't they killed people you know? Everyone –

Immediately a picture of his uncle Aziz came into Indres' mind; lying on a pavement, kicked to death, 'drowned in his own blood'.

Siphon continued – We're soft, all of us. You're soft. You carry a gun, but you'd be afraid to use it in case you hurt someone. Listen man, haven't you learned *anything*? Don't you know they are simply ruthless, ready to – anything – no matter what – shoot not one, two – hundreds, thousands if they want to. Sharpeville – it was just a little rehearsal. But wasn't it murder? Wasn't it war on the people?

– Yes, in a way . . .

– In a way? In *their* way! Machine guns in the backs of a crowd running away from them? And hundreds of Sharpvilles. June 26th, all those – riots – they shoot to make us riot to shoot us –

– But we don't have to have their morals, Siphon; we're better, we're morally different, not just our policy but the way we do things as well, we must not learn to act the way they do . . .

– That's exactly what we must do! Siphon cried triumphantly. – That's it! Until we learn to be like them, as hard as they are, as ruthless, as – as – not thinking of this individual life or that, but thinking of winning a war. OK, so innocent people will get killed, our people through our own action. The time will come, you'll see I'm right. This way is a game. This nonsense – blowing up *symbols*! Playing children's games.

– But Siphon, we're not at war yet. This isn't war. It can't be, we haven't trained, prepared, equipped. When it comes it will be different . . . I suppose it must come if things don't change. But we are still trying to make them change their minds. We just aren't soldiers, we just aren't fighting a war in a military sense, our people don't know yet how to start. That's why it has to be simply something symbolic. We limit ourselves, then later on we assess what's happened and discuss the next steps. Together.

The words pressed against the engulfing night, lonely and absurd.

After a time Siphon spoke again. – We're wrong, he said, and paused. Then he repeated: – We should have blown that train. They walked on

in silence, until Siphó spoke once more. – Time comes when you got to make your own decisions.

– I believe in our collective way, said Indres. – It can only work if we all agree. We can try and change what's being done, but we must all agree.

After a while Siphó said – In the end, it's you yourself that counts, not the group. What you think is right, that's what *is* right. That's how you survive. In the end you find yourself in spots where there aren't any groups. Like us tonight. You're it, you're number one. Survival.

Fifteen miles of shore, of rocks and rivers, of night and air like heavy silk pressing against them, still lay ahead . . .

THE  
**sinclair**  
PRIZE FOR FICTION  
1982

£2,000 second prize awarded to  
**Gill Edmonds**  
for  
**THE COMMON**

'The Common' follows the daily lives of children living near Clapham Common. It presents a heavily pessimistic view of the future and is best described as 'dystopian'. The novel draws on Ms Edmonds' extensive personal experience amongst less able and disadvantaged children. A trained teacher she has taught in several of the poorer districts of London, and her disturbing experience of poverty there has been reinforced by extensive travels most notably to Jamaica, Mexico and Egypt. These conditions colour the descriptions of the children in The Common.

Born in London just before the war, she now lives in Putney.

£500 joint third prize awarded to  
**Aviott John**  
for  
**CHASING CURSORS**

'Chasing Cursors' is set in post-independence India, and follows the life and career of an Anglo-Indian boy deserted at three by his English father after his mother's death. Brought up by his Indian grandmother, the boy faces a series of complex moral dilemmas culminating first in the abandonment of his medical career to raise money to help save his grandmother and later in a final reunion with his father. The novel draws heavily on Mr John's own experience of India where he was born in 1948. He first began writing at the age of 15 but studied chemistry at the University of Madras and subsequently worked in pharmaceuticals until 1974.

He now lives in Vienna where he has worked since 1975 in the library of an international scientific institute.

£500 joint third prize awarded to  
**Philip Latham**  
for  
**SARAH SINGING**

'Sarah Singing', set in wartime, is the story of two schoolboys evacuated to Devon who go to live with Sarah. First is Bobby Prestwood, 13, his parents killed in the war. Later comes Max, 15, a refugee from Germany. Sarah, at 30 with her own past hurt, loves them both and they have intense happiness. But while Bobby loves Sarah as a boy, Max loves her as an adult. Despite herself Sarah, 15 years older than Max, returns his love.





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TWO THINGS:

- 1) Important literary prize, differs frm othrs, first directd to gettng writrs to consider work within social context, to encourage specific type of creative writng.

KERMODE: A hollowness in contemporary writing - a failure of nerve....We are very good at ignoring realities . . . a rift between the world & the book.

If lit hs been sterile, if indeed a rfit, it is bcos publishrs & critics establishd climate in which the artist dare nt hve a message; only t cynical, trivial or personl ws acceptble. ~~Express t hollowness o peoples' lives thru shift in personl relations, bt untouched by pol or soc context:~~

Breakthrough in theatre, must come to literature.

Jst as in SA imp. to write fiction tt ignores ap, so wll bcome imp fr ~~all except romantes & gothic projections~~ to ignore landscape wth 3-4 m permanently unemploy & continuous environmental change & ~~destructio~~ *degradation*

- 2) Express enormous grtitude at being enabled, thru ths bk, to speak to people abt struggle against ap.

~~Up to me,~~ <sup>have been</sup> Most wks o fiction on SA by non-participnts in lib struggle. I wantd to show struggle frm inside. Despite being writtn some time ago, events hve nt outdatd it - rather, updatd by wht is now happeng.

Said wrote some time ago. Publishers turnd down original form - praised, couldnt make enough money. Nw want to express my sincere thanks to those publishrs.

To recognise our own world, & thru that recognition, change it - tt seems to me to underly Sinclair Aw. Both fr my individual success, & fr its future influence - Clive S, judges, my deepest thanks.

1#% ¥ \$ £ \_ ° ø!%|/%÷%

A hollowness in contemporary writing - a failure of nerve.  
'This country is increasingly provincial, self-centred and dull'

Rift between the world and the book.

We are very good indeed at ignoring realities.

Space between work ~~XXXX~~ & sleep is now filled with marketing.

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2 THINGS wnt to say abt Sinclair Award.

~~XXXX~~ IMPORTANT LITERARY PRIZE~~KK~~ because 1st that has directed itself towards getting writers ~~to write about~~ to consider their work within a social context. It is not n award fr bks already published, bt to encourage a specific type of creative writing.

If literature hs been sterile, if there is indeed a rfit between the world & the book, ~~it~~ is because publishers & critics ~~have~~ established a climate in which only the cynical, the trivial or the personal was acceptable. Like painting, you dared nt have a message. So many novels that expressed the hollowness of peoples' lives cld do it only thru the shifts in personal relations, without reference to the political & social contexts.

A breakthrough, a change, hs first become noticeable in the theatre. Plays wth a strong political & social message are now appearng more frequently & reviewed seriously, & must come in literature as a whole.

Just as in SA it is impossible to write novel tt ignores apartheid (Gordimer, Brink, Coetzee) so it will become impossible for all except the romantics & ~~xxx~~ gothic projections to ignore a landscape in which there are per cent permanently unemployed, & continuous environmental change & destruction.

Second thing is enormous gratitude at being enabled to speak to people thru t publication of ths bk - abt strtuggle ag apartheid.

Up to nw most bks abt SA situation h ve been writtn by non-participants in the libertion struggle - outsiders. I wantd to show struggle from inside. Despite the fact tt writtn some time ago, events hve nt outdated it - rather it is updated by what is happening now, which is based on wht I hve written.

Finally, I said I wrote it some time ago. A numbr of publishers turned it down in its original form - most of thm saying they thought it shld be publishd, bt felt they couldnt make enough money out of it.

I now want to express my deep thanks to those publishers. A good turn.

To recognise our own wrld, & thru tt recognition, change it - tt seems to me to underly the Sinclair Award. Both for my individual success & fr its future influence - Clive Sinclair, ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ judges, my deepest thanks.

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# Sinclair

SB2

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LIZ WALKER

29 October 1982

Dear Hilda

It was a truly great pleasure to meet with you last week, and to discuss with you the forthcoming presentation of the 1982 'Sinclair Prize for Fiction'.

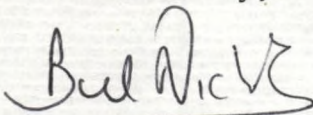
As promised I enclose a complete schedule for the event and will keep you informed of developments related to publicity and organisation.

I would be grateful if you would forward to me by return a shortlist of those you would like personally to invite to the event, and also if you would ask your son to contact me directly in regard to photography.

Congratulations once again,

Best wishes.

Yours sincerely,



Bill Nichols

Enc

Replied 31/10/82 with  
attached list  
Opa added 57"

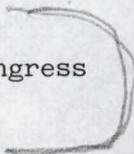
Toni & Ivan Strasburg  
3/38 Canfield Gardens  
London, NW6

1

Patrick & Yvonne Bernstein  
26 North View Rd,  
Tadley, Hants

2

Ruth Mompoti  
African National Congress  
27 Penton Street,  
London, N. 1.



Frances Bernstein  
443 Lower Broughton Rd  
Salford, M 79 FX

1

Keith Bernstein  
5 Rothwell St  
London, NW1 8YH

1

Dr Rae Sherwood,  
40 Lyndale Avenue  
NW2 2QA (London)

1

Vera Moggans,  
93 Cowper Road,  
Hemel Hempstead,  
Herts.

3

SINCLAIR PRIZE - SCHEDULE

ACTION

REQD

DATE

25 November 1982, from 6.15 - 8.15  
with presentation at 7.00.

LOCATION

Crystal Room, Berkely Hotel, Wilton Place,  
Knightsbridge, SW1.

FORMAT

- 6.15 Guests arriving - wine, soft drinks, and  
buffet immediately available.
- 7.00 Presentation to winners.  
Introduction by Martin Gough, NBL.  
Short speech and presentation to winner,  
Clive Sinclair  
Acceptance speech, Hilda Bernstein  
Presentations to runners-up, Clive Sinclair
- 7.15 General reception - private areas available  
for press interviews (with CS/PB/HB and  
Frank Kermode).
- 8.15 Move to closedown.

HOTEL ARRANGEMENTS

All details

BN/LW

PRESENTATION KIT

For all guests, and to include:-

1. Two-colour leaflet on the winning book  
incorporating the final jacket design,  
extracts and photographs.  
Costs - SBL BN/VC
2. Biographical notes on four winners,  
together with outlines of winning novels. BN/VC/BB
3. Background sheet on the prize, SBL and SRL. BN
4. Event timetable. BN

MEDIA KIT

As above but adding:-

- |    |   |    |
|----|---|----|
| 5. | News release on the winner and the prize (SRL). | BN |
| 6. | Photograph of winner.                           | BN |

Note

Additional background on Sinclair, together with further pictures of the winner and runners-up will be available on request but not included in the kit.

INVITATIONS

Will be issued in two stages, October 25 and November 4. BN/LW

- |    |   |               |       |
|----|---|---------------|-------|
| 1. | Winners and Partners, Judges - personalised letter plus card, 25/10 | . . . say 15  |       |
| 2. | Literary organisations, inc. NBL, card 4/11<br>*List required       | . . . say 40  | BB    |
| 3. | Literary press, trade and national, card 4/11<br>*List required     | . . . say 40  | BB/VC |
| 4. | National and General press card 4/11 with covering letter           | . . . say 50  | BN    |
| 5. | SRL and SBL personnel and Partners                                  | . . . say 15  | CS/PB |
|    | Making a total of   | . . . say 160 |       |

Of which:

Expect a final attendance of . . . 75 - 100

BUILD-UP

To generate interest in the event we will issue a press release with the press invitations on November 4, which will report a final short-list of four. It is vital that the actual decision is not released prior to the presentation.

\* \* \* \* \*



# Sinclair Browne Ltd



10 Archway Close London N19 3TD Telephone 01-263 3438

22.6.82

Dear Hilda,

I enjoyed our meeting yesterday immensely, and am looking forward to a happy and successful co-operation on the books.

I enclose 2 copies of a contract which, if you agree the terms, you should sign and return both copies to us. Please fill in your full name and address at the top, but leave the date blank. On receipt of this, we will return one copy to you together with a cheque for the first part of the advance.

I also enclose our current catalogue - fairly diminutive, but we have quite a few more coming next year.

Don't forget to think about the jacket!

Yours ever  
Patrick



*The Sinclair Prize for Fiction 1983*

MEMORANDUM

TO: Hilda Bernstein

FR: Mary Reinman

RE: Book Publicity

Following is a list of the last series of pitches to be made regarding 'Death is Part of the Process' from our end.

- Radio Four, 'A Good Read'
- Radio Forth, 'Between the Covers'
- BBC Radio Scotland, 'Off the Shelf'
- BBC Radio Ulster, 'Bookshelf'
- Radio Four, 'World at One'/'World Tonight'
- BBC 2, 'The Book Programme'
- The Scotsman
- Belfast Telegraph
- Irish Times
- Thames TV, 'A-Plus'

Wondering if you know the status of the following:

- Spare Rib
- Liberation
- Anti-Apartheid News
- BBC World Service

Other ideas:

- Lecture circuit
- School use



*Please reply to the National Book League Book House, 45 East Hill, London SW18 2QZ. Telephone 01 870 9055.*

*Sinclair Research Limited, 23 Motcomb Street, London SW1X 8LB. Telephone 01 235 9649.*

41, WESTCROFT SQUARE  
LONDON W6 0TA

01-741 2626

Martyn Goff Esq  
National Book League  
Book House  
45 East Hill  
London SW18 2QZ

15 December 1982

Dear Martyn,

The Sinclair Prize for Fiction

We were surprised and disappointed that the Chairman of the judges, Frank Kermode, was not invited to speak during the presentation ceremony at the Berkeley Hotel. He was surely the appropriate person to discuss the qualities of the prize-winning novels and of the first year's entries in general. As a result the occasion was less stimulating than it could have been. Too streamlined a ceremony can only defeat the object of the prize, which is to encourage and promote fiction with a strong social dimension. We hope that in future the NLB will ensure that the Chairman of the judges is invited to present a full report.

Yours sincerely,



for Richard Hoggart, Mervyn Jones, Polly Toynbee, David Caute

# New Book Advance Information

## from SINCLAIR BROWNE LTD

WINNER OF THE SINCLAIR PRIZE FOR FICTION 1982

<b>title</b>	DEATH IS PART OF THE PROCESS	<b>date</b>	9.12.82
<b>subtitle</b>		<b>format</b>	Demy 8vo
		<b>prov. extent</b>	256pp
<b>author</b>	Hilda Bernstein	<b>illustrations</b>	
<b>series</b>		<b>binding/cover</b>	hardback
<b>ISBN</b>	86300 028 2	<b>classification</b>	Fiction
<b>prob. price</b>	£7.95 net	<b>territory</b>	World
<b>prov. pub date</b>	April 1983	<b>origination</b>	UK

**description** This gripping thriller, set in the early 1960s, tells the story of a group of South Africans of all races involved in early sabotage attempts. United in their determination to overthrow *apartheid* and thwarted in their search for peaceful change, they begin blowing up power-lines, railways, government offices - symbols of the state.

Their campaign of violence brings little success. Repression is all around them in rigid social conventions and the licensed brutality of the state. Press silence about their efforts is followed by betrayal and arrest. Interrogation, solitary confinement and torture, described in horrifying detail, break some of the group. Others find new strength to resist, even to the point of death.

Always present in the background is the scenery of Africa, its landscapes and townscapes; over everything looms the inescapable power of the state.

As the novel closes, another group is crossing the border to begin a long journey north to camps where they will receive guerilla training....

### notes on

**author/artist/  
editor** Hilda Bernstein was involved in clandestine politics in South Africa until she fled illegally in 1964. Her previous publications include an autobiography, The World that was Ours (1967) The Terrorism of Torture (1977) and Steve Biko (1978).

and 'For Their Triumphs and For Their Tears - Women in South Africa' (1975. Revised edition 1978)

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see  
Fict  
P.  
Bill.

David  
Cante:

H B has written a deeply absorbing novel. Her S African characters are completely authentic whether chilling Afrikaner interrogators, bird-brained suburban hsewifes, or the small band of

Sinclair Browne Ltd., 10 Archway Close, London N19 3TD. Telephone 01-263 3438

despairing rebels, ~~to~~ black, white & coloured, who embark

on a heroic but doomed campaign of  
sabotage in protest against apartheid.

~~11/11~~



Winner of the first Sinclair prize for fiction

Death is part of the process

Hilda Bernstein

This gripping novel, set in the early 1960s, is a thriller which deals with a group of South Africans of all races. They are united in their determination to overthrow apartheid. Thwarted in their search for peaceful change, they begin blowing-up <sup>power</sup> lines, railways, government offices - symbols of the state.

Their campaign of violence brings little success. Repression is all around them in rigid social conventions and the licensed brutality of the state. Press silence about their efforts is followed by betrayal and arrest. Interrogation, solitary confinement and torture, described in horrifying detail, break some characters. Others find new strength to resist, even to the point of death. As the novel closes, another group is crossing the border to begin their journey north to camps where they will receive guerilla training.

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Spring 1983

256 pages

ISBN

£7.95



**PRESS  
INFORMATION**

**sinclair**

25 November 1982

**'DEATH IS PART OF THE PROCESS' WINS FIRST SINCLAIR PRIZE**

Hilda Bernstein, the South African womens' and black rights' campaigner, has won the first annual £5000 Sinclair Prize for Fiction for her novel, 'Death is Part of the Process'.

Making the awards at an evening reception in London, today, November 25, Clive Sinclair, head of sponsors, Sinclair Research, also presented a £2000 second prize to London-based teacher, Gill Edmonds for 'The Common'.

At the recommendation of the judges, Frank Kermode, David Caute, Richard Hoggart, Mervyn Jones and Polly Toynbee, joint £500 third prizes went to Philip Latham for 'Sarah Singing' and Aviott John for 'Chasing Cursors'.

'We are delighted to make these three additional awards in the prize's inaugural year' explained Clive Sinclair, 'because authors responded so well to our purpose of encouraging new writing on critical issues.'

'In particular Hilda Bernstein's winning novel completely fulfilled the prize's criteria for high literary merit combined with contemporary social and political relevance.'

To be published in the New Year by Sinclair Browne, 'Death is Part of the Process' is based on Ms. Bernstein's own experience of political conflict in South Africa. An inside view of people and organisations that plan and carry out acts of sabotage, it deals with the tensions of actual events and the complex moral dilemmas they provoke.

Contact: Bill Nichols

From:  
Sinclair Research Limited, Public Relations Department,  
23 Motcomb Street, London SW1X 8LB. Tel: 01-235 9649

Part of Sinclair Research's programme of arts sponsorship, the Sinclair Prize was designed to fulfill a major unmet need amongst existing prizes.

Based on the first year's success both the company and the Prize's administrators, the National Book League, are confident that it will become a major feature of the literary scene.

Further information on the Sinclair Prize and the winning authors is contained in the accompanying leaflet. Additional photographs of the winners are available on request.

-ends-

#### NOTE TO EDITORS

Sinclair Research was founded by Clive Sinclair, 42, in July 1979, to conceive, develop and market new products principally in the consumer electronics field. It is currently working on personal computers, computer peripherals, flat screen TV's and 'state-of-the-art' solid state technology and also progressing research on electric vehicles.

In the personal computer market where it is probably best-known for the Sinclair ZX81, the company is established as a world-leader. Its production volume now considerably exceeds that of any other personal computer manufacturer worldwide, and it has achieved cumulative sales of more than 800,000 units.

The Sinclair Browne publishing house was founded by Clive Sinclair and Patrick Browne in June 1981. With the same central concerns as the Sinclair Prize, it is providing an outlet for new fiction and non-fiction with a fresh and radical approach to the problems of modern society.

**Collection Number: A3299**

**Collection Name: Hilda and Rusty BERNSTEIN Papers, 1931-2006**

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