



*The*  
**ANDRÉE BLOUIN**  
*Prize*



inkani





## The Andrée Blouin Prize

Andrée Blouin (1921–1986) was a political activist and writer from the Central African Republic (CAR) who became integral to the fight for independence in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Despite her achievements, Blouin never gained widespread recognition at the time of her death. This erasure remains today in the limited retellings of African independence movements. As Jessica Horn [writes](#), ‘so much of the story of African resistance has been told in the masculine.’ This prize has been established in Blouin’s honour and is an attempt to rectify this error, bring Blouin to a larger audience, and continue her legacy of women’s political thought and activism.

The Andrée Blouin Prize supports African women (both cis and transgender) who write about history, politics, or current affairs from a left perspective. The prize foregrounds voices of colour but is open to all women living on the African continent. The winner of the Andrée Blouin Prize will receive an advance of \$2000 and a publishing contract with Inkani Books.

The Andrée Blouin Prize is run by [Inkani Books](#), a people’s movement-driven publishing house in Johannesburg, South Africa. We publish accessible books that intervene in the Battle of Ideas, and discussions around the contemporary dilemmas of humanity, with a focus on pan-African themes, Marxism, and struggles in the Global South. Some of our most recent titles include [Decolonising the Palestinian Mind](#) by Haidar Eid, [Izimpabanga Zomhlaba](#) (the first isiZulu translation of *The Wretched of the Earth* by Frantz Fanon), and [The Revolutionary Thoughts of Kwame Nkrumah](#). Inkani Books is a project of Tricontinental Pan-Africa.

Blouin’s political fervour derived from her life experiences. At age three, she was separated from her family and placed in a convent in Congo-Brazzaville, where she suffered cruel treatment. Regrettably, the [practice](#) of systematic abduction of ‘mixed race’ children was all too common in French and Belgian colonies at the time. Of this experience, she wrote: ‘The orphanage served as a kind of waste bin for the waste products of this black-and-white society: the children of mixed blood who fit nowhere.’ Blouin developed a rebellious streak early, running away from the nuns who were trying to force her into an arranged marriage, and daring to go to white-only cinemas despite staff preventing her entry.

Generational cycles of prejudice and discrimination repeated when she was a young mother living in Bangui, in the Central African Republic (then Ubangi-Shari). In 1946, her two-year-old son René died from malaria when he was denied treatment on the basis of his blackness. This tragic event catalysed her career. She moved to Guinea and became a political advisor and loyal friend to many key figures in the African liberation struggle including Kwame Nkrumah (Ghana), Ahmed Ben Bella (Algeria) and Félix Houphouët-Boigny (Ivory Coast).

In the 1950s, Blouin, joined Sékou Touré and the Democratic Party of Guinea, and revealed herself to be a brilliant organiser of women. In 1960 in the DRC, Antoine Gizenga and Patrice Lumumba [sent](#) Blouin on the campaign trail to mobilise women, and, within a month, she had signed 45,000 members up for the Feminine Movement for African Solidarity. In the same year, Blouin became Lumumba's speechwriter, his chief of protocol, and a diplomatic liaison with European governments. During these years, she also helped build a base in the DRC for Angola independence militia who had fled Portuguese colonial forces. Her reflections on her work, her colleagues, and the mood across the African continent remain some of the most wry, impassioned, and insightful perspectives from that era. The bulk of her writing and intellectual thought can be found in *My Country, Africa: Autobiography of the Black Pasionaria*.

Once described as 'the most dangerous woman in Africa' by a Belgian official, threats on Blouin's life caused her to go into exile. She and her family went to exile in Switzerland for a short period of time then Algeria, where President Ahmed Ben Bella gave them shelter. Blouin continued her activism from afar, writing extensively and continuing to advise liberation movements in Africa. In Paris, she welcomed African revolutionaries on their travels who needed a home away from home. Blouin passed away in Paris on 9 April 1986 at the age of 64.

It is in this fierce spirit of resistance that we welcome applications on our [website](#).

Contact Efemia Chela at [info@inkanibooks.co.za](mailto:info@inkanibooks.co.za) for any queries.

## About Inkani Books

Inkani Books is a people's movement-driven publishing house in Johannesburg, South Africa. It publishes accessible books that intervene in the Battle of Ideas, and discussions around the contemporary dilemmas of humanity, with a focus on pan-African themes, Marxism, and struggles in the Global South. Inkani Books is a project of Tricontinental Pan-Africa.

Our books are available at [The Commune](#) (Johannesburg), [1804 Books](#) (New York City), [May Day Bookstore](#) (New Delhi) and Takealot.

   @inkanibooks

[www.inkanibooks.co.za](http://www.inkanibooks.co.za)

For press, events and direct sales, please contact:  
Efemia Chela, [info@inkanibooks.co.za](mailto:info@inkanibooks.co.za)