

Lang Leben John Africa!

6/18/08

Dr. Winfried F. Schoeller  
Ms. Sabine Kebir  
PEN-Zentrum  
Deutschland, Berlin

My Dear Friends and Fellow Scribes,

When I learned that members of PEN-Deutschland actually read from some of my works in mid-April, I could barely believe my ears.

It was, at once, a birthday present, and a *Life* present, one that went straight to the heart.

Several years ago, I couldn't dream that my lonely essays would travel as far as they did, from the narrow, isolated confines of Death Row.

Truly, PEN-Deutschland has shown us all that 'literature knows no frontiers...'

Writing is, by its very definition, a lonely venture. Writing from Death Row is akin to the Buddhist practice of drawing in sand.

As a recent member of PEN-America, I can hardly express the sense of solidarity I've felt from members worldwide.

As an imprisoned writer, I've felt an especial kinship with others who have written from behind the walls--both in the U.S., and beyond.

Your work is a profound expression of opposition to the death penalty and solidarity in the long, hard struggle for human rights.

I thank you all!

*W/NIA*  
Mumia Abu-Jamal  
aus die Todesstrafe  
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