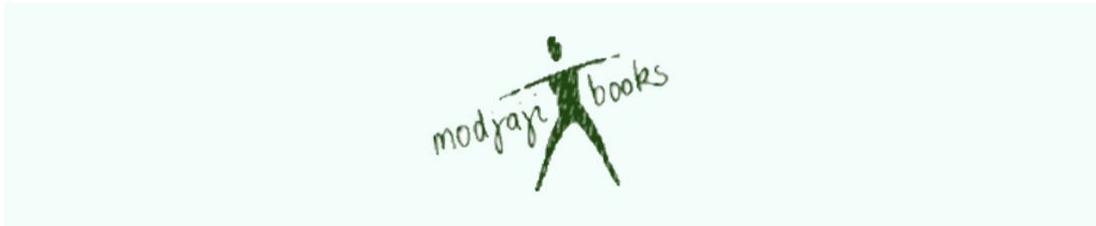


Leoni Benghiat

From: Modjaji Books <modjajibooks@substack.com>
Sent: Wednesday, 28 January 2026 10:36
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Newsflash

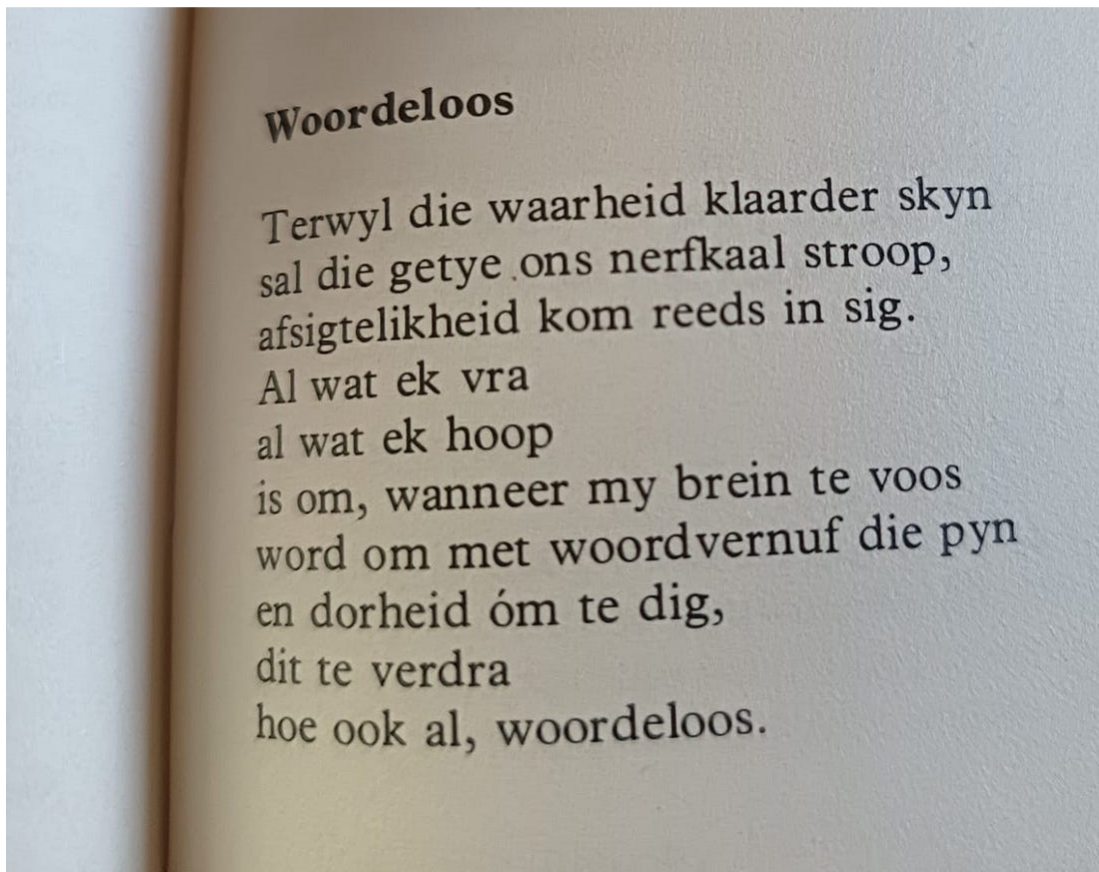
Modjaji Books launches a call for our Woordeloos anthology celebrating southern African women poets

JAN 28



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Modjaji Books announces *Woordeloos*, a new anthology featuring 19 poems by women poets from across southern Africa. Funded by a generous donation from Liliana Risi and inspired by Elisabeth Eybers' poem, "Woordeloos" the anthology celebrates the voices, craft, and courage of poets.



“Woordeloos” by Elisabeth Eybers from Groot Verseboek by D.J Opperman, Tafelberg, 1983 negende uitgawe, first published in 1951

“We’re marking Modjaji’s 19th birthday by publishing 19 exceptional poems from a new generation,” says Colleen Higgs, publisher at Modjaji Books. “*Woordeloos* is an invitation: astonish us, give us language where language falters, and help us see South Africa and the world we live in anew.”

“Supporting this project is about affirming women writers, shining a light on their writing,” said Liliana Risi. “Every poet needs someone to say: your voice matters, your work belongs in the world right now.”

Poets will receive a R1000 honorarium if they have a poem selected for the anthology plus two free contributor copies.

The call

- **Eligibility:** Women poets who reside in southern Africa. (Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa, as well as Zimbabwe and Mozambique.)
- **What we're seeking:** Poems that astonish, that offer words where words are hard to find.
- **Length:** Maximum 25 lines (title not counted). One poem per poet.
- **Languages:** Submit in any language commonly used in southern Africa. Poems in languages other than English must include an accompanying English translation; both original and translation will be published with appropriate credit.
- **Rights:** Contributors retain copyright. Modjaji Books requests first publication rights and non-exclusive print/digital anthology rights.
- **Simultaneous submissions to other publications and journals:** Allowed. Please withdraw promptly if your poem is accepted elsewhere.
- **We will consider poems that have previously been published;** however, we will require full details of publication and permissions.
- **Submission window:** February 1 to March 31, 2026 (closes 23:59 SAST). Submit via the portal: [Submission portal Woordeloos](#) The link to the portal will also be on the Modjaji Books website.

Selection and timeline

- **Judging:** Editorial panel from Modjaji Books with guest poets.
- **Criteria:** Originality, craft, voice, and impact.
- **Notifications:** May 2026. Publication: mid-2026, with a launch event (details to follow)

Ethics and accessibility:

- Plagiarism and AI policy: Submitted poems must be the poet's original work; AI-generated or AI-assisted poems are not eligible.
- Accessibility: Please submit as a Word document.

Keep an eye on our social media, website and sign up for the newsletter in order to hear more about the Woordeloos project in the next weeks and months.

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