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The cultural economy of the book in Africa

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Three laureates share the Prince Claus principal award

INCE its establishment in 1997, the Prince Claus Awards have been presented annually to individuals and organisations whose exceptional contributions in the field of culture and development within the non-West-

ern world have been noted. The awards form a part of wider activities in which the Fund, named after Prince Claus of the Netherlands, established three years ago by an endowment from the government in the Prince's honour on the occasion of his seventieth birthday, is engaged in.

Ten recipients, among which are writers, architects, film makers, scholars and visual artists from countries of Africa, Asia, Latin-America and the Caribbean, were conferred with awards on the 8th of December, 1999 while three laureates shared the principal award worth USD100.000 presented during an afternoon ceremony at the Royal palace in Amsterdam.

The principal award recipients are the organisations - Vitral, a Cuban cultural magazine and Al-Jazeera a satellite television channel based in Doha in Qatar. The third is the Paris-based Algerian comedian Mohamed Fellag, formerly a director of the Theatre Regional in Bougie, Algeria, who since his relocation to France in 1995 has been staging live performances before Algerian/French audiences and to local Algerians who continue to access his work through tapes in Kabyle, Arabic and French.

The magazine Vitral, founded in 1994 and based in Pinar del Rio. Cuba is the private initiative of a group of independent intellectuals who make use of the relative protection of the Roman Catholic church to create space for free debate while Allazeera broadcasting from 1996 is acknowledged as representing a revolution in the media of the Arab world.

The ten laureates presented with the main awards worth USD20, 000 each include Patrick Chamoiseau of Fort de France. >>

Professor Hountondji on the stone steps of Baalbeck, near Beirut, Lebanon, February 2000

