



جائزة الشيخ زايد للكتاب  
Sheikh Zayed Book Award

SHEIKH ZAYED BOOK AWARD

# RIGHTS GUIDE 2020

Literature & Children's Books



[www.zayedaward.ae](http://www.zayedaward.ae)

## INSIDE THIS GUIDE:

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# SHEIKH ZAYED BOOK AWARD 2020

Held under the patronage of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces, the Sheikh Zayed Book Award is one of the Arab world's most prestigious and lucrative literary prizes.

[www.zayedaward.ae](http://www.zayedaward.ae)





## **Chairman of the Department of Culture and Tourism – Abu Dhabi, HE Mohamed Khalifa Al Mubarak:**

“It is our great honour to support and nurture an inspiring intellectual and cultural environment, for people of all ages and backgrounds, here in our country. In doing this, the UAE has established its position as a destination for culture and literature regionally and globally, following the approach of our founding father who appreciated the written word as one of the main pillars of his vision for the future. Today we celebrate this outstanding group of creative individuals - writers, poets and researchers - who truly deserve this prominent prize that holds the name of one of the leading contributors to the enrichment of Arab intellectualism and culture.”

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## **HE Dr. Ali bin Tamim, Secretary General of the Sheikh Zayed Book Award:**

“Despite the challenging times we are currently weathering, the Sheikh Zayed Book Award continues its practice of honouring the innovators and pioneers of the Arab world’s intellectual, cultural, literary, and social spheres,” said HE Dr. Ali bin Tamim, Secretary General of the Sheikh Zayed Book Award. “We are gratified to see the commitment of our nation and the wider global community to culture and literature, demonstrated by the high number of viewers who engaged with our virtual ceremony.

“The Award is a vital continuation of the vision established by the founding father of our nation, who emphasised the vital role of books and literature in strengthening the foundation of our country, and building its future. We are proud to highlight the outstanding work of the 2020 winners, representing various facets of Arab culture across the categories of the Award. It is our hope that this recognition opens further opportunities to them, and we look forward to seeing what these brilliant talents contribute to our intellectual and cultural scene next. I am sure they will serve as inspirations for future generations of intellectuals, creators, publishers, and young talents here in the UAE, in the wider region, and across the world.”







جائزة الشيخ زايد للكتاب  
Sheikh Zayed Book Award



# ABOUT THE AWARD

The Sheikh Zayed Book Award honours the outstanding achievements of innovators and thinkers in literature, the arts and humanities in Arabic and other languages. It commemorates the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, Founding President of the UAE and Ruler of Abu Dhabi, and his pioneering role in promoting national unity and development.

Launched in 2007 and covering nine categories, the award promotes creativity, advances Arabic literature and culture, and provides new opportunities for Arabic-language writers.

The Sheikh Zayed Book award is an independent cultural initiative administered by Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi.

Each prize consists of a gold medal bearing the Sheikh Zayed Book Award logo, a certificate of merit, and a cash reward, comprising a total prize value of seven million UAE Dirhams (US \$1.9m) annually.

The Cultural Personality of the Year receives a prize of one million UAE Dirhams, while the winners of the other categories receive 750,000 UAE Dirhams each.

## Key Dates:

- **May to October 2020:** Submissions are open
- **October 2020:** Evaluation of submissions
- **November 2020:** Announcement of longlists
- **November 2020 to January 2021:** Panel of judges evaluate longlist titles
- **February 2021:** Scientific Committee reviews judges' evaluation reports
- **March 2021:** Announcement of shortlists
- **March to April 2021:** Board of Trustees evaluates Scientific Committee recommendations and approves winners
- **March to April 2021:** Announcement of winners
- **April 2021:** Winners ceremony

# 2020 WINNERS

## **Moncef Ouhaibi – Literature award**

“This prestigious award represents a turning point not only in my career, but also in my personal appreciation of Tunisian poetry and Maghreb poetry, especially as it restores respect for the poetic arts, for many reasons, most importantly that the Arabic language owes a debt to poetry since ancient times.”

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## **Ibtisam Barakat – Children’s Literature award**

“I want to share this joy with every child of the world, especially those who are deprived of it, with the hope that they are able to replenish their lives and tell their stories to the world.”

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## **Hayder Qasim – Young Author award**

“I hope this award will open up wide future horizons in the development and advancement of my progress in studies in Islamic thought and orientalism, and to motivate Arab researchers to participate and compete within this award.”

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## **Mohamed Ait Mihoub – Translation award**

“This award, which brings together all the specialists, is one of the most prominent and non-biased Arab and international awards, most objective and fair in its application of modern decision-making.”

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## **Richard van Leeuwen – Arabic Culture in Other Languages award**

“I’m very much honoured by the award especially because it is a token of appreciation of the book by my Arabic colleagues. I hope that the award will enable the book to reach Arab readers to become part of the process of the cultural exchange.”

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## **Margaret Obank, Publisher of Banipal Magazine in London – Publishing & Technology Award**

“Receiving this award is hugely important for us, as we are passionate about our projects in translating Arabic literature to English and through the English to wider audiences around the world. This award will greatly help the project.”

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## **Dr. Salma Khadra Jayyusi – Cultural Personality of the Year award**

“Nothing in a writer’s world is more wonderful than these moments that bless their work and push the owner to encourage more writing. My joy is infinite that there are pioneering cultural institutions such as the Sheikh Zayed Book Foundation.”

# TRANSLATION GRANT

Launched in 2018, the aim of the Sheikh Zayed Book Award's translation fund is to help increase the number of Arabic books that are available in translation for readers around the world.

Translation grants are available for **all literary and children's titles** that have won the Sheikh Zayed Book Award.

## Deadline:

Applications are accepted all year round. Notification is made after 2-3 months of application date.

## Formal Requirements:

- The applicant must be a publisher in a country other than the Middle East
- The signed contract between the publisher and rights holder for the Arabic edition, and between the publisher and translator must be included.
- Funding will prioritize three languages: French, English and German.
- The translation shall normally be carried out directly from Arabic. An exception can be made in the event of special circumstances, such as a lack of qualified translators from Arabic or that the book is already translated to English. SZBA may in some cases review the quality of the translation before the translation fund is paid.
- The quality of the book must be of an acceptable calibre and a quality assessment will be carried out by SZBA Scientific committee.
- The applicant must submit a promotional plan to the translated work.

## Support Materials:

- Brief profile of your press and publishing mandate
- Budget
- Promotional plan
- An up-to-date biography of the translator(s), including relevant translations and publications
- Upon completion, deliver 20 free copies of the translated published book to the award's office

## Grant Amount:

- A maximum of approximately US\$19,000 per title; plus a supplement, if applicable, to cover specific promotion and production costs:
- Translation-related costs, up to a maximum of US\$10,000 per title.
- For translations of literary works, the cost of promoting the translated book, up to a maximum of US\$5,000 per translated title
- For translations of illustrated books containing at least 50% photos and/or illustrations (e.g. children's books, graphic novels, illustrated books etc.), production costs per translated title of up to US\$4,000 and promotion costs per translated title of up to US\$4,000

## Payments:

- If your application is approved, you will then need to register as a supplier with the Department of Finance, Abu Dhabi (instructions will be provided to you).
- Payment will be provided upon the completion and submission of a final copy of the translated work to the Award's Officer.

## Decision Process:

The Scientific Committee of the Sheikh Zayed Book Award reviews all grant applications and makes the final decision about which applications to approve.

[Click to download the application](#)



## SZBA-Winning Titles Eligible for Translation Grants

### Literature:

- *The Penultimate Cup* (Belkas ma Qabl Al Akheera) by Moncef Ouhaibi (Tunisia)
- *The Self - Between Existence and Creation* by Bensalem Himmich (Morocco)
- *Remorse Test* (Ikhtibar al-nadam) by Khalil Sweileh (Syria)
- *Summer Rains* (Amtar Sayfiyyah) by Ahmad Al Qarmalawi (Egypt)
- *The Autumn of Innocence* (Khareef al Bara'a) by Abbas Beydoun (Lebanon)
- *Beyond Writing* (Ma Wara'a al-Kitaba) by Ibrahim Abdelmeguid (Egypt)
- *The Madmen of Bethlehem* (Majaneen bait lahem) by Osama Alaysa (Palestine)
- *After Coffee* (Ba'd Al Qahwah) by Abdel Rasheed Mahmoudi (Egypt)
- *Developed Concepts of a Poetic Theory: Language, Music and Movement* (Mafaheem Muwasa'a Li Nazaryah Shi'ryah) by Mohammad Miftah (Morocco)
- *Call of What Was Far* by Ibrahim al Kouni (Libya)
- *The Prince and the Passage of the Iron Doors* (Kitab al-Amir: masalik abwab al-hadid) by Wacini Laredj (Algeria)

### Children's / YA Literature:

- *The Lilac Girl* (Al-Fatat Al-Laylakeyya) by Ibtisam Barakat (Palenstine / USA)
- *I Dream of Being a Concrete Mixer* by Hussain Al Mutawaa (Kuwait)
- *The Dinoraf* (al-dinoraf) by Hessa Al Muhairi (UAE)
- *Hatless* (Bila qubba'a) by Lateefa Buti (Kuwait)
- *The Boy Who Saw the Color of Air* (Al-Fata al-ladhi Absara Lawna al-Hawa') by Abdo Wazen (Lebanon)
- *Gold Ring* (Siwari Al-Dhahab) by Qais Sedki (UAE)
- *The Journey of Birds to Qaf Mountain* by Huda Al-Shawwa Qadoumi (Kuwait)
- *A Journey on Paper* by Mohammed Ali Ahmad (Egypt)

## How to Apply

- Download and complete the application form
- Email the form and all the support materials required to [info@zayedaward.ae](mailto:info@zayedaward.ae) with the subject line "Translation Funding"
- For further information on the fund, contact us at [info@zayedaward.ae](mailto:info@zayedaward.ae)



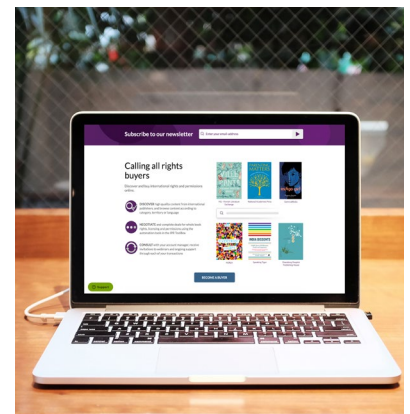


# CONNECT WITH SZBA

## On Social Media: @zayedbookaward

Click on the icons below to join us on our social media channels and participate in our international community focused on writing and literature from the Arab world:

- Get to know our winners and their titles
- Tune in to our online events
- Find out about the award's latest activities and news
- Connect with our Arabic literature community



## View and Buy Rights on IPR

The Sheikh Zayed Book Award is working with IPR to facilitate smoother rights transactions for these award-winning titles.

Using the IPR online rights platform, interested rights buyers can contact rights holders and request further information.

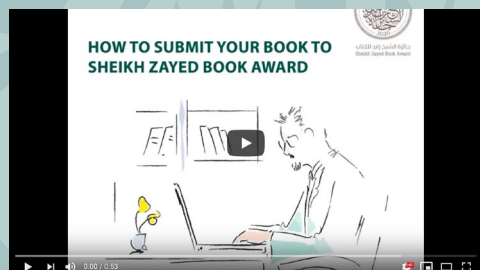
[View SZBA titles on IPR](#)

[Register as a Rights Buyer](#)





# SUBMISSIONS OPEN



**WATCH: How to submit**

"During this current global crisis, we have been reminded that no matter what happens, culture adapts to the most difficult of circumstances, and endures. As the rich cultural life of the Arab world continues to flourish, I urge writers, publishers and scholars around the world to bring the fruits of their labour to the judges' attention. We look forward to appraising the submissions for what is sure to be another fresh and exciting edition of the Sheikh Zayed Book Award."

—**Dr. Ali bin Tamim**, Secretary General of the Sheikh Zayed Book Award and Chairman of the Abu Dhabi Arabic Language Authority

**Click to begin submission**

## Submit Titles for 2021 Award

**Who can submit?** Authors, publishers, translators and organisations of any nationality can make submissions, which are welcomed from all countries in Arabic and other languages.

**Deadline:** 1 October 2020

**Categories:** The Sheikh Zayed Book Award consists of nine categories, representing the range and breadth of Arab culture:

- Literature (including fiction and poetry)
- Young Author (under the age of 40)
- Children's Literature
- Cultural Personality of the Year
- Publishing and Technology
- Arabic Culture in Other Languages
- Translation (either into or from Arabic)
- Literary and Art Criticism
- Contribution to the Development of Nations

## How to Submit Titles

### 1. Register online

Visit [register.zayedaward.ae](https://register.zayedaward.ae) to create an account and start the online submission process.

### 2. Review category qualifications

On the registration portal, read the requirements for the category of your submission to make sure your title qualifies.

### 3. Submit your book

Fill in the required information about your book on the submission portal, and send 5 copies of the book to:  
Department of Culture & Tourism – Abu Dhabi  
Sheikh Zayed Book Award  
Corniche Street, Nation Towers, Block B  
P.O. Box 2380  
Abu Dhabi, UAE

### 4. Receive Confirmation

SZBA will send a confirmation email following a successful online submission



جائزة الشيخ زايد للكتاب  
Sheikh Zayed Book Award

# LITERATURE WINNERS



جائزة الشيخ زايد للكتاب  
Sheikh Zayed Book Award

THE  
SHEIKH ZAYED  
BOOK AWARD

2020  
LITERATURE  
WINNER



**WATCH ONLINE:** Video interview with Moncef Ouhaibi

## Winner of the 2020 Sheikh Zayed Book Award for Literature

### STATEMENT FROM THE JURY:

Marking the first time that the award has been given to a work of poetry, Ouhaibi explores the position Tunisia occupies within the Mediterranean, between the Arab and Western symbolist tradition. A "poetry of experience", the collection unfolds the realities of love and of death, including poems dedicated to his parents and to the Syrian tragedy.

### TITLE INFORMATION:

Publisher:  
**Meskeliani Publishing and Distribution**  
(Tunisia)

Original Title: Belkas ma Qabl Al Akheera  
Original language: Arabic  
Publication Date: 2019  
ISBN: 9789938240757  
425 Pages

# The Penultimate Cup

*Full of imagery and references to artists past and present, Moncef Ouhaibi's poetry collection fuses modernity with Arab intellectual tradition.*

Rich in artistic, philosophical, literacy and historic values, Ouhaibi's poems offer readers rich experiences, not just poetically but with the imparting of crucial knowledge, too, as his writing is steeped in his own extensive personal experiences.

*The Penultimate Cup* begins with an autobiographical piece entitled "The Family", in which the poet chronicles his ancestral home and gives an account of his family life and childhood before poetry. "The Family" becomes a venue where his family members—those who influenced him the most—arrive in succession: his father, the village chief; his grandfather, the astrologer; his uncle, the chess player; his mother and the rest. The places where he lived fashion the corners of the poem like furniture.

Ouhaibi's poetry combines several art genres, with few of the poems relying on narratives to merge reality with fiction. Poetic imagery is in abundance, his words transform into virtual art, music and philosophical ideas. "The Scream" poem for example, relates not to the sound of a person in pain but his image, which reminds the reader of the famous painting by Norwegian artist Edvard Munch. "Oh Youssef," writes Ouhaibi, "take my hand, while I scream like Munch in the wilderness".

"*The Penultimate Cup* includes sixty poems of various lengths, some of them quite lengthy. They are varied in subject matter and themes. They have aspects that range from the philosophical, the historical, the metaphysical, the aesthetic, the linguistic and the rhythmic. The poems are as open to life and the real world as they are to the past and to tradition. ... As a whole the poems in the collection create a space with multiple identities, eastern and western, Arab and international, a space where cultures have cross-fertilised throughout history and continue to do so."

[VIEW TITLE ON IPR LICENSE](#)

## Moncef Ouhaibi (Tunisia)

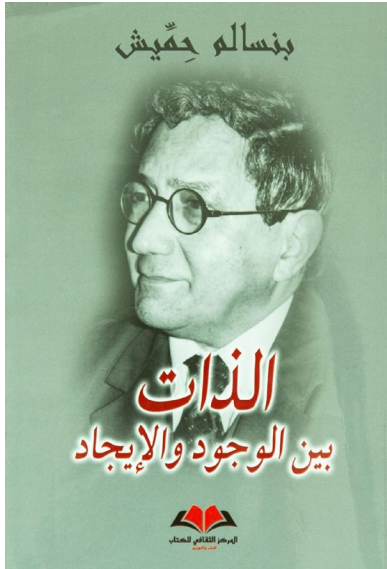
Moncef Ouhaibi, born in 1949 in Tunisia, is Professor of Arabic Literature at the Universities of Kairouan and Sousse and a permanent member of the Tunisian Academy of Sciences, Letters and Arts.

He has published numerous poetry books in both Arabic and French, as well as writing short films and documentaries, notably *En attendant Averroès* (Waiting for Averroès), *Paul Klee à Hammamet* (Paul Klee in Hammamet), *Devant les portes de Kairouan* (Before the gates of Kairouan), and *Pays qui me ressemble* (Country that looks like me), which has been translated into



several languages. He has been nominated for several prizes including the Comar d'Or literary prize, the Okaz Poet award for Arab poetry, and the Nikos Gatsos literary prize.





## Winner of the 2019 Sheikh Zayed Book Award for Literature

### STATEMENT FROM THE JURY:

Himmich's autobiography asserts the close connection between "existence", a term impacted by philosophy, and "creation", which is the path taken by oneself in struggles against various cultural and existential matters. This book brings together creative dimensions fed by an author's technical expertise and the debating nature acquired by a critical academic. The book carries a depth of knowledge and culture that commands several readings and interaction with its content.

### TITLE INFORMATION:

Publisher:  
Centre Culturel Du Livre  
(Casablanca, Morocco)

Original Title: Al Dhat  
Original language: Arabic  
Publication Date: 2018  
ISBN: 9789954705391  
239 Pages

# The Self: Between Existence and Creation

*Far more than a straightforward autobiography, celebrated Moroccan writer and former minister of culture Bensalem Himmich diffuses life with literary and intellectual dimensions.*

Himmich opens his book with a discussion on autobiographical writing, followed by chapters on the author's early life, starting with his childhood in Meknes.

The heroic figures of his "rebellious youth" are Marx and Sartre, and the challenges of these and other radical thinkers, in both Arabic and European languages, find their way into his doctoral thesis, *Ideological Patterns in Islam: Ijtihad and History* (in Arabic, 1990).

Subsequent chapters move into the domain of creation, with four categories reflecting the author's literary, intellectual, linguistic, and cultural interests. Starting with an epigraph of Italo Calvino, the "literary" chapter focuses on the novel, its history, and its complexities.

The chapter on the "intellectual" dimension turns on the author's lifelong interest in the two pillars of philosophy and history. For Himmich, philosophical thought is "the creative and innovative force through which truths and meanings are sought."

The two-part "linguistic" chapter opens with a discussion of identity as "a constantly developing entity". In the second part he expresses disapproval of the worldwide prevalence of "Anglo-American English" and the weakening effects that a lack of language authority has on the sense of national identity.

The "cultural" chapter includes Himmich's observations from his career, including the poor state of public education and a decline in reading in Morocco. He also considers his time as the Moroccan Minister of Culture and the

inevitable complexities of the political system within which he had to operate.

The penultimate chapter entitled "My Polemics" offers four of his own polemical stands: on fundamentalist trends—specifically Islam and "Islamism"; on the prevalence in Moroccan publications of the Latin alphabet; and specific issues with the well-known littérateurs Adonis and Youssef Ziedan.

The work closes with the author's reflection on the emergence of a new and negative cultural "hegemony", the awareness of which he attributes to Edward Said and the latter's interpretation of the work of Franz Fanon.

### ADDITIONAL RECOGNITION AND AWARDS FOR BESALEM HIMMICH:

- Books translated into English include *The Polymath* and *The Theocrat*
- Short- and longlisted for the International Prize for Arabic Fiction
- Two-time winner of the Naguib Mahfouz Medal for Literature
- Winner of the Grand Atlas Award awarded by the Embassy of France in Morocco
- Winner of the Sharjah-UNESCO Prize for Arab Culture

[VIEW TITLE ON IPR LICENSE](#)

## Bensalem Himmich (Morocco)

Himmich is an intellectual and author, and the former Minister of Culture for Morocco. He attained his PhD in Philosophy from the University of Paris. Writing in both Arabic and French, several of his novels have been translated into other languages.

The Writers' Union of Egypt chose Himmich's novel *The Theocrat* (*Majnoun Al Hukm*) as one of the 100 best novels of the 20th century. His novel *Mu'athibati* was shortlisted for the Arab Booker International Award. Himmich has spoken at several Arab, European, and American forums, and received the grand award of the French Academy of Toulouse in 2011.



## Winner of the 2018 Sheikh Zayed Book Award for Literature

### STATEMENT FROM THE JURY:

The novel portrays an inward view of the Syrian Civil War tragedy; the author takes the reader on a trip around Damascus, trudging down the memory lanes and presenting the psychological conflicts amid the shattered reality of place and society – marking an important addition to the Syrian Literature, with a unique use of narrative tools and vocabulary construction.

### TITLE INFORMATION:

Publisher:  
**Hachette Antoine / Naufal**  
(Beirut, Lebanon)

Original Title: Ikhtibar al-nadam  
Original language: Arabic  
Publication Date: 2017  
ISBN: 9786144386712  
244 Pages

# Remorse Test

*In this semi-autobiographical novel, a writer takes us through the streets of Damascus and offers a first-hand look at life and loss during the Syrian civil war.*

The novel offers an intimate view of the Syrian civil war tragedy and takes the reader on a trip through Damascus and down memory lane. Drawing on his experience as a journalist, poet and novelist, Sweileh writes about the psychological conflicts amid the shattered reality of place and society using language that is full of imagery.

The protagonist is a brilliant writer who is navigating a new, war-torn reality. While reminiscing about his past, he shows us what everyday life is like in Damascus—at once brutal and boring—and laments the missed opportunities and destruction the conflict has caused in his country.

This work is an important addition to the Syrian literature, both for its subject matter and a unique use of narrative tools and vocabulary.

It's written in a reversed biographical manner, shedding light on specific historical periods from the current age of its author to

his childhood years. The novel presents descriptions of the narrator, and the names of his friends, the places he used to visit in an extraordinary descriptive style.

### IN THE PRESS:

"straightforward and powerful affair, with a plot based in war-torn Syria"

—*The National*

### RIGHTS SOLD:

Ukrainian - Nora-Druk Publishers

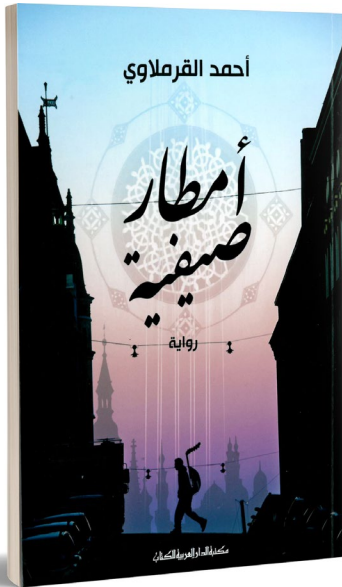
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## Khalil Sweileh (Syria)

Khalil Sweileh was born in 1959, in the city of Hasaka, Syria. In addition to writing, he is renowned journalist. Sweileh's portfolio includes multiple works in poetry including *Prefaces*, *That Was the Scene*, and *Tracing the Marks*. He has also written numerous novels including *Stationer of Love*, *Express Mail*, *The Gazelle Will Come to You*, and *The Barbarians' Paradise*.

Sweileh has won a number of literary and journalism awards, including The Naguib Mahfouz Medal for Literature for his novel *Writing Love* (2009)—which was translated into English and published by the American University in Cairo Press—and the Arab Journalism Award (2010).





## Summer Rains

*Using music as a thread that connects the past to the present, his novel explores what happens when traditional and cultural heritage clash with modernity.*

The novel addresses the current Arab youth crisis, in which young people find themselves torn between fundamentalism and modernity.

Author Ahmad Al Qarmalawi infuses his latest book with music, both traditional and new. The characters in his novel must choose between the pursuit of materialism versus spiritual balance. They face the impact of modernization on heritage and arts versus the need to protect and preserve their traditional culture.

Giving readers a true sense of Islamic culture, Qarmalawi writes about the history of music from Sufism to the present era of electronic musical arts and modern technologies.

The story offers the choice between traditions and modern sciences, material consumption and spiritual elevation. The novel highlights the interrelations between the music and the soul, and the sublimity of the spirit versus covetousness. Al Qarmalawi displays an extensive knowledge in music that creates a tangible setting in which to explore the paradoxes of modern life.

[VIEW TITLE ON IPR LICENSE](#)

### Winner of the 2018 Sheikh Zayed Book Award for Young Author

#### STATEMENT FROM THE JURY:

The novel tackles the interrelations between the music and the soul, and the sublimity of the spirit versus covetousness. The work showed an extensive knowledge in music that creates a tangible setting of melodic notes transcending to that of the Sufism station (Maqaam).

#### TITLE INFORMATION:

Publisher:  
Dar Al Masriah Al Lubnaniah  
(Cairo, Egypt)

Original Title: Amtar Sayfiyyah  
Original language: Arabic  
Publication Date: 2016  
ISBN: 9789772937370  
220 Pages

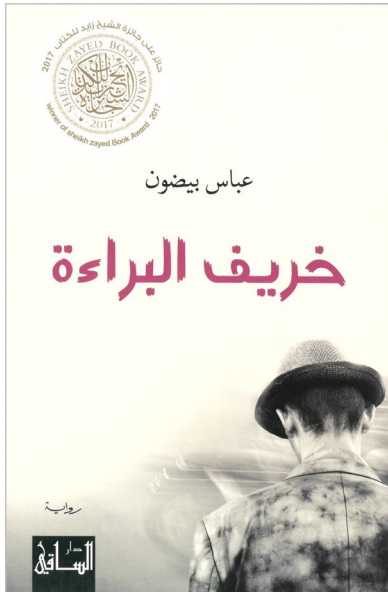
### Ahmad Al Qarmalawi (Egypt)

Ahmad Al Qarmalawi was born in Cairo in 1978 and moved with his family to Kuwait in his early childhood, where he received his elementary and secondary education. He graduated from the International American School in 1996, then moved back to Egypt to study Architecture at the American University in Cairo, and later continued his post-graduate studies in University of Edinburgh, Scotland.

He has been active in creative writing since 2012, when he published his first work, a collection of short stories called *The First of Abbas*. He followed it with his first novel, *The Last Post*, published in 2014 by Al Dar Al Masriah Al Lubnaniah. Al Qarmalawi published two more novels to date: *Destiny* in 2015 and *Summer Rains* in 2017, which won him the Sheikh Zayed Book Award. Besides writing, he is an avid painter and a musician. He is married and has three sons.







## Winner of the 2017 Sheikh Zayed Book Award for Literature

### STATEMENT FROM THE JURY:

The novel deals with the conflict between a tyrannical father who terrorizes a certain village and his son, who looks for a life of love and enjoyment. ... The novel utilizes excellent narrative techniques such as its shifting use of pronouns. Its symbolic structure is also distinguished, for the village stands for the majority of the Arab countries. The symbolic use of names in the novel contributes to its wealth. It embodies the conflict between those who stand for love and freedom and those who stand for tyranny and terror.

### TITLE INFORMATION:

Publisher:  
**Dar Al Saqi**  
(Beirut, Lebanon)

Original Title: Kharif al-Bara'ah  
Original language: Arabic  
Publication Date: 2016  
ISBN: 9786144258811  
192 Pages

# The Autumn of Innocence

*Prominent Lebanese poet and novelist Abbas Beydoun artfully weaves a tragic story of a father-son relationship that unfolds along with the Arab Spring movement and explores religious extremism and cultural constructs of masculinity.*

The novel opens with a letter from Ghassan to his cousin, describing how his father Massoud strangled his mother to death when Ghassan was just three years old. Afterward, Massoud flees the village in southern Lebanon. For 18 years, no one hears from him, and Ghassan grows up stigmatized by his father's violent crime.

In time, Ghassan's aunt Bushra-Massoud's sister makes a confession: She encouraged Massoud to kill his wife, believing that his wife's low socioeconomic status would bring embarrassment to their wealthy family. Bushra also reveals that Massoud was driven to kill his wife because he feared that she would tell someone that he was impotent, undermining his sense of manhood and social status.

Meanwhile, Massoud has moved to southern Syria, where he remarried and had two more sons. During the Arab Spring, the militant groups fighting the Syrian regime transform him into a religious extremist.

In the second half of the novel, Massoud returns to the village in southern Lebanon. He brings with him a group of men. Together they seize control of the village and terrorize its inhabitants. After killing the dogs, they begin murdering the villagers in the name of religion. One of Ghassan's friends is among the victims, and Massoud also threatens his family. Ghassan decides that he must kill his father, avenging the death of his friend and the deaths of

the other villagers. In the end, he fails and is beheaded by Bushra's son, his cousin, who is has joined Massoud's thugs.

Beydoun captures the shifting points of view in a family shattered by the tyranny of normative masculinity and the resulting violence. The victims are women, of course, but also the men like Ghassan who reject these social and cultural expectations. The novel also portrays the rise of religious extremism and the terrorism it can inspire, which wreaks havoc on the lives of ordinary people. Beydoun's engaging language imbues the characters and the places they inhabit with a vibrancy and vitality that transcends the difficult subject matter.

### RIGHTS SOLD:

Ukrainian - Anetta Antonenko Publishers



Ukrainian edition

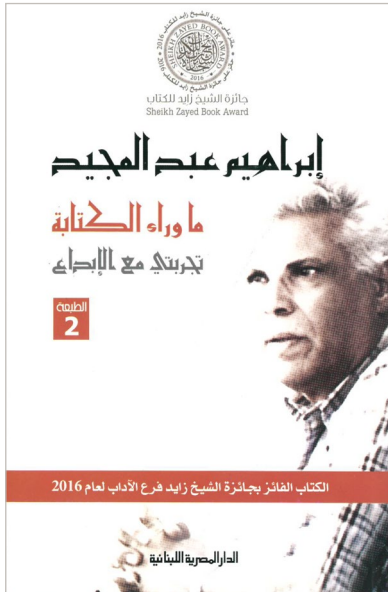
[VIEW TITLE ON IPR LICENSE](#)

## Abbas Beydoun (Lebanon)

Abbas Beydoun is well known in the Arab world as a poet, journalist, and literary critic. He was born in the village of Sur in southern Lebanon in 1945 to a family passionate about literature. He studied Arabic Literature at Beirut Arabic University and received his master's degree in literature in Sorbonne, France.

Beydoun started his writing career as a poet and has published numerous poetry collections, including *Critique of Pain*, *Overdose of Time*, *Glass Graveyards*, *Chambers*, *A Ticket for Two*, and *The Metaphysics of the Fox*.

His poetry has been translated into Italian, German, French, and English. His narrative style blends the volatile reality with a hint of fantasy. In 2002, Beydoun published his first novel, *Blood Test*, which was translated into English and published by Syracuse University Press. His second novel, *The Album of Loss*, was inspired by his own life story.



## Winner of the 2016 Sheikh Zayed Book Award for Literature

### STATEMENT FROM THE JURY:

The novel is a biography of a literary author or what is referred to as the Meta narrative. The author narrates his life, experiences, knowledge and relationships in what seems to be a literary testimony. In his book, the author seeks to expose the political, social and cultural contexts that accompanied his work as a literary writer, coined in the narrative building often dependent on "time", along with celebration of the place, particularly the city of Alexandria his birthplace.

### TITLE INFORMATION:

Publisher:  
Dar Al Masriah Al Lubnaniah  
(Cairo, Egypt)

Original Title: Ma Wara' al-Kitaba  
Original language: Arabic  
Publication Date: 2014  
ISBN: 9789774278884  
334 Pages

# Beyond Writing

*One of Egypt's leading literary voices offers a first-hand look at political, social, cultural events of the last 40 years and how they influenced his writing.*

Ibrahim Abdelmeguid, called "the quintessential writer about Alexandria" by *The National* newspaper, looks back over his decades-long writing career this book, which what he calls a "literary autobiography." In it, he reflects on the social, political, and cultural influences in Egypt and elsewhere that have shaped him as a writer.

He shares his views on major political events, such as the 1967 defeat after the Six-Day War, and explanations of their profound impact on his personal life and works of fiction. Abdelmeguid devotes a portion of his work to discussing the development of his views on Egypt's second president, Gamal Abdel Nasser, over the course of his turbulent tenure in office.

The book is divided into a brief introduction and four chapters. Abdelmeguid guides the reader through his literary career, moving masterfully between the factual and the meditative. He explores how each of his novels and many of his short stories was conceived. He also describes cultural, political, and social contexts in which his writing evolved and was received by literary critics and casual readers.

He spends considerable time describing the creative process behind his Alexandria trilogy—*No One Sleeps in Alexandria*, *Birds of Amber*, and *Clouds Over Alexandria*. The first book, *No One Sleeps in Alexandria*, is set during World War II. Abdelmeguid visited numerous key sites in Alexandria and surrounding areas

and read every newspaper he could get his hands on. The result of his devotion to research is a vibrant portrayal of Alexandria that shines throughout the epic novel. Of particular note is his successful communication of the cultural and religious diversity of the city and the impact of that on the promotion of a culture of tolerance.

*Beyond Writing* is a rare and important addition to the modern Arabic literary map. Few Arab authors are willing to so transparently share their writing process, preferring to highlight the polished final product while concealing the hard work that brought it into existence. Readers are lucky that it is a writer as prominent, thoughtful, and engaging as Abdelmeguid is willing to draw back the curtain.

### IN THE PRESS:

"The book does not fail to enthrall the reader with both Abdel Meguid's capable storytelling and fluidity. It also sheds light on the untold or 'under-told' elements of the creative process."

—*The National*

[VIEW TITLE ON IPR LICENSE](#)

## Ibrahim Abdelmeguid (Egypt)

Ibrahim Abdelmeguid was born in Alexandria in 1946. He graduated from the faculty of Arts with a Philosophy degree before relocating to Cairo in 1974 where he began his writing career.

Abdelmaguid has written more than 15 novels, five collections of short stories, and several theatre plays. He wrote numerous novels including *No One Sleeps in Alexandria*, *Birds of Amber*, and *The House of Jasmine*.

Abdelmaguid's works have been well received around the world and have been translated to English, German, Italian, Spanish and French. He has received numerous prizes and accolades including Naguib Mahfouz prize from AUC press in 1996 and the Prize of State in 2007 for his contributions to literature.

His work has also been longlisted for the International Prize for Arabic Fiction.



## Winner of the 2015 Sheikh Zayed Book Award for Literature

### STATEMENT FROM THE JURY:

The novel emerges as a unique literary creation that narrates the history of the place, traces the changes it went through by using the motif of madness in a way that reflects an entire intellectual period in the Arab World. The work finds inspiration in the traditional narrative forms as such as those of the *Arabian Nights* and makes use of the more recent narrative techniques, perceptively linking history and reportage, and mixing realistic presentation with magical realism. The wealth of character types and of subsidiary tales harmonizes beautifully with the main narrative line.

### TITLE INFORMATION:

Publisher:  
**Hachette Antoine / Naufal**  
(Beirut, Lebanon)

Original Title: Majanin Bayt Lahm  
Original language: Arabic  
Publication Date: 2013  
ISBN: 9789953269641  
254 Pages

# The Madmen of Bethlehem

*Adopting the story-within-a-story structure of Arabian Nights, author Osama Alaysa weaves together a collection of interconnected stories portraying centuries of oppression endured by the Palestinian people.*

This remarkable novel eloquently brings together fictional characters alongside real-life historical figures in a complex portrayal of Bethlehem and the Dheisheh Refugee Camp in the West Bank. The common thread connecting each tale is madness, in all its manifestations.

Psychological madness, in the sense of clinical mental illnesses such as schizophrenia, finds expression alongside acts of social and political madness. Together, these accounts of individuals and communities provide a gateway into the histories of the city of Bethlehem and Palestine. They paint a picture of the centuries of political oppression that the Palestinian people have endured, from the days of the Ottoman Empire to the years following the Oslo Accords, and all the way to 2012 (when the novel was written).

The novel is divided into three sections, each containing multiple narratives. The first section, "The Book of a Genesis," describes the physical spaces and origins of Bethlehem and Dheisheh Refugee Camp. These stories span the 19th and 20th centuries, transitioning smoothly from one tale to another to offer an intricate interpretation of the identity of these places.

The second section, "The Book of the People Without a Book," follows parallel narratives of the lives of the patients in a psychiatric hospital in Bethlehem, the mad men and women roaming the streets of the city, and those imprisoned by the Israeli authorities. All suffer abuse, but they also reaffirm their humanity

through the relationships, romantic and otherwise, that they form.

The third and final section, "An Ephemeral Book," follows individuals—Palestinian and non-Palestinian—who are afflicted by madness following the Oslo Accords in 1993. These stories give voice to the perspectives of the long-marginalized Palestinian population, narrating the loss of land and the accompanying loss of sanity in the decades of despair and violence that followed the Nakba, the 1948 eviction of some 700,000 Palestinians from their homes.

The novel's mad characters—politicians, presidents, doctors, intellectuals, ordinary people and, yes, Dheisheh and Bethlehem themselves—burst out of their narrative threads, flowing from one story into the next. Alaysa's crisp, lucid prose and deft storytelling chart a clear path through the chaos with dark humor and wit. The result is an important contribution to fiction on the Palestinian crisis that approaches the Palestinians, madness, and Palestinian spaces with compassion and depth.

### RIGHTS SOLD:

Ukrainian - Anetta Antonenko Publishers  
French - Belleville éditions

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## Osama Alaysa (Palestine)

Osama Alaysa is an author and journalist from Bethlehem, Palestine. He has worked for numerous Arab and regional newspapers. He has published three novels, two collections of short stories, and seven research studies on Palestinian history.

He was imprisoned a number of times in various Israeli prisons in the periods 1978–1982 and 1989–1991, as well as having been prevented from traveling. Although he sees his personal experience as insignificant in comparison to the suffering of many Palestinians, he nonetheless perceives it as having a profound impact upon his life, and this he reflects in many of his short stories and novels."





جائزة الشيخ زايد للكتاب  
Sheikh Zayed Book Award

# CHILDREN'S LITERATURE WINNERS

THE SHEIKH ZAYED BOOK AWARD

2020 CHILDREN'S  
LITERATURE WINNER



جائزة الشيخ زايد للكتاب  
Sheikh Zayed Book Award





**WATCH ONLINE:** Video interview with Ibtisam Barakat

## Winner of the 2020 Sheikh Zayed Book Award for Children's Literature

### STATEMENT FROM THE JURY:

The beautifully illustrated story is about a young Palestinian girl who loves to paint but who has lost her home due to war. Through recreating her house in a rainbow of watercolours, she finds freedom in the world of her imagination and creates beauty from pain.

### TITLE INFORMATION:

Publisher:  
**Tamer Institute for Community Education**  
(Palestine)

Original Title: Al-Fatat Al-Laylakeyyah  
Original language: Arabic  
Publication Date: 2019  
ISBN: 9789950270206  
39 Pages

Age Range: 4–9 years

# The Lilac Girl

*Inspired by the life story of Palestinian artist Tamam Al-Akhal, The Lilac Girl is the sixth book for younger readers by award-winning author, Ibtisam Barakat.*

*The Lilac Girl* is a magical realism children's tale, written as a tribute to the life and work of renowned Palestinian artist Tamam al-Akhal.

Tamam, the narrator, sets out one night, in her imagination, to visit her childhood home in the city of Jaffa, which she and her family were driven out of in 1948. When she knocks on the door, a shudder of recognition courses through the house: the windows, the door, and all things in the house tremble in excitement at seeing Tamam. But a girl answers the door and refuses to let Tamam in. After turning away in despair, Tamam decides to paint a picture of her long-lost home, using her tears that now fall in every colour, only to see that the colours of the house itself have begun running after her, stripping it bare of colour like a tree shorn of its autumn leaves.

The only colour that remains in Jaffa after Tamam's magical departure is a blend of the red of rage, the blue of despair, and the yellow

of defeat, all of which combine into a lilac hue that tints Tamam's house and the city of Jaffa the long night through. (*Banipal Magazine*)

### FROM THE PUBLISHER:

"Far from being the only person to have lost their home and endured tremendous suffering, Tamam's plight is representative of millions of people both then and now, emphasizing the notion that memories of our homeland live with us for eternity, no matter how far we are from them in a physical sense. The yearning to return home never subsides, never lessens with the passing of time but, with artistic expression, it is possible to find freedom and create beauty out of pain."

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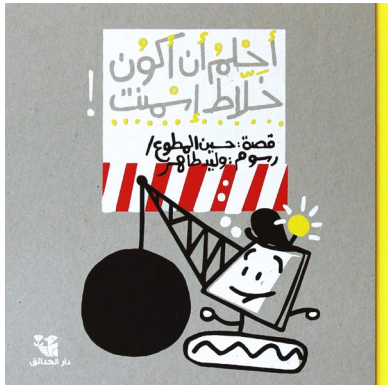


## Ibtisam Barakat (Palestine / USA)

Ibtisam Barakat is a bilingual Palestinian-American poet, artist, translator, educator and the author of the critically acclaimed memoirs, *Tasting the Sky*, a Palestinian Childhood (FSG/2007) and *Balcony on the Moon, Coming of Age in Palestine* (FSG/Macmillan 2016). The two memoirs combined won more than thirty awards and honors, including the International Reading Association's best book award; the Middle East Council's best book award, and the Arab-American Museum's best book award. Her Arabic language books include *The Letter Ta' Escapes*, which won the Euro-Mediterranean Anna

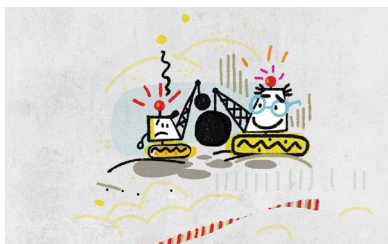


Lindh Foundation's best book award for children's books in Arabic. Her most recent books include *The Jar that became a Galaxy*, which was the title for Palestine's national reading campaign in 2019, and *The Lilac Girl*.



# I Dream of Being a Concrete Mixer

*An uplifting tale about the power of friendship, finding your place in the world, and realising your dreams while remaining true to who you are.*



## Winner of the 2019 Sheikh Zayed Book Award for Children's Literature

### STATEMENT FROM THE JURY:

Hussain Almutawaa's story is a clever narrative that delves into questions of destruction and rebuilding, through the story of Haddam, who hopes to become a cement mixer. Between wishes and reality, stories, paradoxes and transformations, this book is beautifully written, with many twists and turns.

### TITLE INFORMATION:

Publisher:  
**Al-Hadaek Group**  
(Kuwait)

Original language: Arabic  
Publication Date: 2018  
ISBN: 9786144391457  
40 Pages

Age Range: 4–8 years

Tumbledown is a little demolition truck growing up in a loving family. His parents go to work every day demolishing buildings with their big wrecking balls. But soft-hearted Tumbledown doesn't like to destroy. He'd rather build things. He dreams of being a cement mixer.

When Tumbledown cries, his wrecking ball swings out and destroys everything it touches. When Tumbledown laughs, his wrecking ball swings out and destroys everything it touches. His soft heart can't skip a beat without leaving a trail of destruction.

At school other students laugh at him, but still he won't let go of his dream.

When Tumbledown makes friends with a feisty troop of metal springs, they hatch a plan to save him from himself. They fan out over his wrecking ball and every time it swings they do their best to absorb the shock.

The day comes when the worn-out springs turn to the Wise Old Crane for help.

Tumbledown can never be a cement mixer, but maybe there are other ways, better suited to his nature. After some search, the Wise Old Crane finds a new job for Tumbledown at a construction site using his wrecking ball to smooth out the cement on the ground. It's hard

work but Tumbledown is finally happy, and he grows stronger and more skillful with every passing day.

### RIGHTS SOLD:

German - Sujet Verlag  
English, French - Bookland Press



German edition

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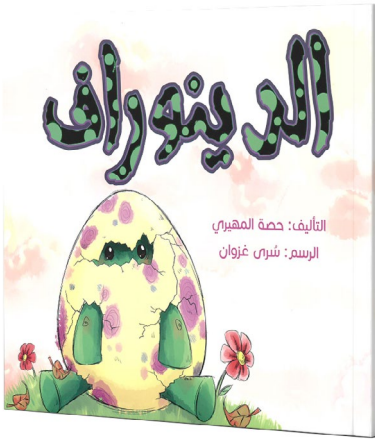
## Hussain Al Mutawaa (Kuwait)

Al Kuwaiti writer and photographer born in 1989, Almutawaa attained a Bachelor's degree in Literature and Criticism from the College of Arabic Language at the University of Kuwait, minoring in Philosophy. He started his literary career as a poet in 2009, and has participated in many poetry events and festivals. In 2015, he began writing short stories and won first place in the "University Poet and Story Teller" category at the Uni-



versity of Kuwait. Almutawaa then moved on to novels, publishing his first, *Turab*, at the end of 2017, and his children's novel, *I Dream of Being A Concrete Mixer*, in 2018.





## Winner of the 2018 Sheikh Zayed Book Award for Children's Literature

### STATEMENT FROM THE JURY:

The story is set in the Animal Kingdom, where a dinosaur is out on a mission to find his parallel among the rest of animals. Throughout his journey, he gets to know the differences between the animals, which finally lead him to find his connection with the giraffe, hence becoming the "Dinoraf", in a unique portrayal of the contemporary case of peaceful coexistence and mutual tolerance of cultural differences within the global society. The story is written in an aesthetic language that is beautiful, artistic and carefully crafted.

### TITLE INFORMATION:

Publisher:  
**Al Hudhud Publishing and Distribution**  
(UAE)

Original Title: al-dinoraf  
Original language: Arabic  
Publication Date: 2017  
ISBN: 9789948232728  
32 Pages

Age Range: 6-9 years

# The Dinoraf

*A dinosaur looking for his family searches the animal kingdom for someone who looks like him and settles on the giraffe. This picture book explores identity, belonging, and acceptance.*

An egg has hatched, and what comes out of it? A chicken? No. A turtle? No. It's a dinosaur. But where is his family?

In this picture book by educator and author Hessa Al Muhairi, with illustrations by Sura Ghazwan, a dinosaur sets out in search of animals like him. He finds plenty of animals, but none that look the same ... until he meets the giraffe. This story teaches children about

accepting differences using carefully crafted language.

### RIGHTS SOLD:

English, French, Italian - Marcos y Marcos

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## Hessa Al Muhairi, author (UAE)

Hessa Al Muhairi holds a bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Education and two master's degrees from Deakin University in Australia, one in Science in Education Management and the other in Policy. She has been working as a nursery teacher since her graduation. Al Muhairi participated in numerous children's literature workshops and managed a number of training programs. She has two published books for children: *Whose Footprints are These?* and *The Dinoraf*.

## Sura Ghazwan, illustrator (Iraq)

Iraqi children's stories writer and illustrator Sura Ghazwan holds a bachelor's degree in English Translation. She was born in 1989 and has been working as a professional book illustrator and comic artist for several years. She specializes in children's book illustrations, cartoon and games drawings, and works as a freelancer for a number of magazines, institutions, publications and companies in UAE, Iraq, Jordan and Saudi Arabia. Her work has been recognised in several exhibitions and awards.



# Hatless

*Kuwaiti children's book author Lateefa Buti's well-crafted and beautifully illustrated children's book, **Hatless**, encourages children (ages 6-9) to think independently and challenge rigid traditions and fixed rituals with innovation and creativity.*

The main character is a young girl named Hatless who lives in the City of Hats. Here, all of the people are born with hats that cover their heads and faces. The world inside of their hats is dark, silent, and odorless.

Hatless feels trapped underneath her own hat. She wants to take it off, but she is afraid, until she realizes that frightening things in the world around her are there whether or not she takes off her hat to see them.

So Hatless removes her hat. As Hatless takes in the beauty of her surroundings, she cannot help but talk about what she sees, hears, and smells. The other inhabitants of the city ostracize her because she has become different from them. It is not long before they ask her to leave the City of Hats.

Rather than giving up or getting angry, Hatless feels sad for her friends and neighbors who are afraid to experience the world outside of their hats. She comes up with an ingenious solution: if given another chance, she will wear a hat as long as it is one she makes herself. The people of the City of Hats agree, so Hatless weaves a hat that covers her head but does not prevent her from seeing the outside world. She offers to loan the hat to the other inhabitants of the city.

One by one, they try it on and are enchanted by the beautiful world around them. Since

then, no child has been born wearing a hat. The people celebrate by tossing their old hats in the air.

By bravely embracing these values, Hatless improves her own life and the lives of her fellow citizens.

Buti's language is eloquent and clear. She strikes a skilled narrative balance between revealing Hatless's inner thoughts and letting the story unfold through her interactions with other characters. Careful descriptions are accompanied by beautiful illustrations that reward multiple readings of the book.

## ADDITIONAL AWARDS:

Shortlisted for the 2015 Etisalat Award for Arabic Children's Literature

## RIGHTS SOLD:

English - Darf Publishers  
French - Bookland Press

## Winner of the 2017 Sheikh Zayed Book Award for Children's Literature

### STATEMENT FROM THE JURY:

The book has an imaginative and inspiring story line. It adopts higher values of mutual coexistence and acceptance of differences, with both other humans and the surrounding natural setting, in a way that unleashes the children's thought process and ignites their creativity.

### TITLE INFORMATION:

Publisher:  
**Seedan Media**  
(Kuwait)

Original Title: Bila Qubba'ah  
Original language: Arabic  
Publication Date: 2015  
ISBN: 9789996653186  
32 Pages

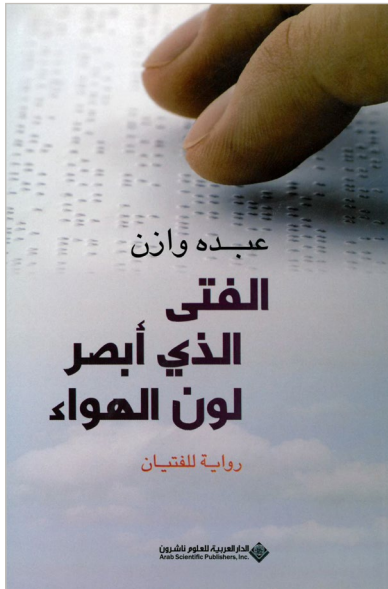
Age Range: 6–9 years

## Lateefa Buti (Kuwait)

Lateefa Buti is a Kuwaiti author specialized in children's literature. Her portfolio includes from stand-alone novels, theatrical works, publications in magazines and periodicals, as well as works in radio and television. She has several independently published works including *The Mermaid and My Country* and *Ininkayo*, in addition to theatrical acts such as *Juha's Gate* and *Salma the Princess of the Sea*.

Buti is also a regular contributor to the well-known magazine *Al Arabi Al Sagheer* and worked on a number of radio-based programs and series targeting adolescents. He works in television were mainly with Al Jazeera Children Channel and Al Baraem Channel, focusing on the cultural heritage and folklore of the Arab region.

[VIEW TITLE ON IPR LICENSE](#)



## Winner of the 2012 Sheikh Zayed Book Award for Children's Literature

### STATEMENT FROM THE JURY:

The novel describes in a beautiful narrative language the life of people with special needs often neglected in young adult literature. The topic promotes fundamental ethical values amongst young readers and portrays strong will as a human value for Basem, the novel's main character to achieve his goals. The author masterfully manages to construct the text in a smooth read for the younger readers.

### TITLE INFORMATION:

Publisher:  
Arab Scientific Publishers, Inc  
(Beirut, Lebanon)

Original Title: Al-Fata al-ladhi  
Absara Lawna al-Hawa'  
Original language: Arabic  
Publication Date: 2011  
ISBN: 9786140103412  
119 Pages

Age Range: Teen

# The Boy Who Saw the Color of Air

*In his first YA novel, cultural journalist and author Abdo Wazen writes about a blind teenager in Lebanon who finds strength and friendship among an unlikely group.*

Growing up in a small Lebanese village, Bassim's blindness limits his engagement with the materials taught in his schools. Despite his family's love and support, his opportunities seem limited.

So at thirteen years old, Bassim leaves his village to join the Institute for the Blind in a Beirut suburb. There, he comes alive. He learns Braille and discovers talents he didn't know he had. Bassim is empowered by his newfound abilities to read and write.

Thanks to his newly developed self-confidence, Bassim decides to take a risk and submit a short story to a competition sponsored by the Ministry of Education. After winning the competition, he is hired to work at the Institute for the Blind.

At the Institute, Bassim, a Sunni Muslim, forms a strong friendship with George, a Christian. Cooperation and collective support are central to the success of each student at the Institute, a principle that overcomes religious differences. In the book, the Institute comes to

symbolize the positive changes that tolerance can bring to the country and society at large.

*The Boy Who Saw the Color of Air* is also a book about Lebanon and its treatment of people with disabilities. It offers insight into the vital role of strong family support in individual success, the internal functioning of institutions like the Institute, as well as the unique religious and cultural environment of Beirut.

Wazen's lucid language and the linear structure he employs result in a coherent and easy-to-read narrative. *The Boy Who Saw the Color of Air* is an important contribution to a literature in which people with disabilities are underrepresented. In addition to offering a story of empowerment and friendship, this book also aims to educate readers about people with disabilities and shed light on the indispensable roles played by institutions like the Institute.

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## Abdo Wazen (Lebanon)

Abdo Wazen was born in Beirut, Lebanon in 1957. In addition to writing poetry and novels, he's a French-to-Arabic translator and the well-known culture editor of *Al-Hayat* newspaper.

His first collection of poems, *The Locked Forest*, was published in 1982. Since then, Wazen has published a number of other poetry collections, and a memoir, *An Open Heart*, after he had major heart surgery in 2010. The Lebanese Ministry of Interior seized copies of his 1993 book, *The Garden of Sensation* on accusations of licentiousness. He's translated the poetry of Jacques Prevert and Nadia Twueni into Arabic. In 2005, he received the Culture Journalism Award from the Dubai Press Club.





## جائزة الشيخ زايد للكتاب Sheikh Zayed Book Award

