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Born in Tel Aviv in 1967, Etgar Keret is the most popular writer among Israel’s young generation and his short-short stories, which have received international acclaim, have been published in 36 languages and 39 countries. Keret’s delightful children’s books have also been international successes. Among his many awards: the Ministry of Culture Cinema Prize, the Cannes Film Festival’s “Camera d’Or” Award and Best Director Award for Jellyfish, with Shira Gefen (France, 2007), the Jewish Quarterly Wingate Prize (UK, 2008), the St Petersburg Public Library’s Foreign Favorite Award (2010) and the French Chevalier de l’Ordre des Arts et des Lettres (2010).

A Moonless Night, with Shira Gefen, has been published in Spanish (Mexico, Fondo de Cultura), French (Ed. de la Balle), German (Fischer) and Polish (WAB). Forthcoming in Spanish (Chile, Fondo de Cultura).

Long Haired Cat-Boy Cub has been published in French (Actes Sud) and Spanish (Mexico, Alfaguara). Forthcoming in Polish (WAB), Bulgarian (Janet 45), Korean (Awesome World), Portuguese (Brazil, SM) and Italian (Terre di Mezzo).

I think Keret is a brilliant writer, entirely different from any other I know. He is the voice of the next generation.

Salman Rushdie

“One of the most important writers alive... enchantingly witty stories.”

Clive James

Etgar Keret is a genius... A powerful and unsettling voice.

New York Times

A great short story writer... To complain about Keret being Keret is like complaining about Chekhov being Chekhov.

The Guardian (UK)
Amalia Rosenblum was born in New York in 1974 and grew up in Tel Aviv. She spent the 1990s in New York. A writer, journalist and screenwriter, she has an MA in philosophy and an MA in anthropology from New School University, New York. She is currently completing her PhD in psychology. At present, Rosenblum teaches at the Tel Aviv College of Management. She also writes regularly for the Israeli press, in particular literary reviews for Haaretz; she also writes for women’s and parenting magazines. Her screenplays for Holy for Me and Runhave won awards at the Chicago, Mannheim and Jerusalem festivals. Where the Village Road Ends won the Ze’ev Prize for Children’s Literature (2007).

Where the Village Road Ends has been published in German (Beltz & Gelberg), Italian (Salani; La Scuola) and Chinese (Jiangsu Phoenix Juvenile and Children).

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Amalia Rosenblum

The Sheep with a Black Spot

a novel (crossover)

Lily is a gifted child from a good home. Her mother is an artist, her father manages a bakery, and both are busy searching for themselves. Lily is gifted at solving math problems, she’s interested in astronomy, loves literature and art, and is in love with her teacher. But one day, her parents tell her that they are separating, and her life turns upside down. In a moment of distress, she adopts an old sheep with a black spot on its forehead and starts believing that it has supernatural powers. It is intelligent, understands what she says and gives her advice. With its help, Lily hopes to get her parents back together and also to impress her teacher. But looking after her mysterious guest gets complicated, and Lily seeks help from Zohar, a good-looking but shifty street kid, a tattoo artist with secrets of his own. The two become friends, but Lily’s life continues on its downward path. She gets caught up in secrets and lies, and her parents are too busy with themselves to see what is happening. How far will Lily go with her cover-ups and fantasies before those around her notice that something has gone wrong?

A brilliant book, moving and full of humor, that boldly tackles the difficulties of adolescence and the problem of feeling an outsider.

PARTIAL ENGLISH TRANSLATION IN PROGRESS

Streams along so that you can’t put it down or part from the girl…Tumultuous, overwhelming dialogues.

Haaretz

A courageous book…Very impressive…written with skill and originality.

Marmelada

A convincing coming-of-age book that any outsider, or even a classroom queen, can connect to.

Israel Hayom

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NEW BOOKS FROM ISRAEL • 2015

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Dorit Orgad was born in Germany in 1936, and came to pre-state Israel as a young child. She has a PhD in Jewish philosophy from Bar Ilan University. Orgad has taught at various schools and academic institutions. She now writes for the press and tutors writing groups. Orgad has published three adult books and 70 books for children and youth. Her many awards include the Ze’ev Prize (1987), the Bernstein Prize (1987), the Hadassah Prize (2000), an Honor Citation from the WZO for her books about children from Ethiopia (2005), and the Verghereto Award (Italy, 2006). Her y/a book Kalkidan was nominated Favorite Youth Novel by Israel’s Ministry of Education (2007), and received the Ministry of Culture Prize (2007). Orgad’s books have been published in 11 languages.

Under a Dark Shadow

Tel Aviv, Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 2014. 423 pp.
AGE 11 UP

Misha is a talented 14-year-old boy, but he has a dark secret that he must keep from his friends: his father, Vladek, is a violent criminal who has done time in jail, and after failing to find a job, has returned to crime. Misha’s beautiful mother Yana works in a café and Misha himself works after school in the home of an elderly history professor who has become a father figure. After the family moves from Jerusalem to Netanya, the situation deteriorates further: Vladek begins beating Yana, who sinks into depression and is hospitalized. Vladek is involved in a violent robbery and flees to Russia. Yet all these upheavals don’t break Misha’s spirit, and he finds consolation in a classmate, Mika, who is charming but also capricious and spoiled, and doesn’t understand what he is going through. But when Misha’s vigorous grandmother arrives from Russia to help Yana, Misha joins her in Jerusalem and starts working again in the professor’s house. Gradually his mother’s mental condition improves and Misha finds a true soul-mate in Ayellet, a lovely, sensitive girl. Now he can reveal his terrible secret and free himself from the shadow that has been haunting him.

The more one gets into this surprising, moving book, the more one identifies with and admires Misha.
Ruthie Vital Gilad
was born in Israel in 1963, and spent her childhood in the Philippines, England, Australia and Israel. She is a graduate of the Beit Zvi School for the Performing Arts. Gilad has worked as a reporter covering arts and culture for Israeli newspapers and as tourism correspondent for a British travel magazine. She has also translated plays. She writes books for children and youth and leads writing workshops.

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Ruthie Vital Gilad

Feud of Driving in the Fast Lane

Tel Aviv, Keren, 2014. 102 pp.
AGE: 11 up

Michal and Alma, friends at high school, set themselves two goals for the summer vacation: to find boyfriends—a priority—and jobs. Michal finds a boyfriend without really trying, but Michal has neither boyfriend nor job—only arguments with her mom and the letters her father left her. After he died, Mom gave her his computer with all the letters he wrote her while he was ill. But it is only now, two years later, that Alma has dared to read them. And then, after Alma was sure this would be the saddest, least fun vacation ever, things change. She meets an unusual man, who looks like an aging movie star, and he introduces her to an extraordinary woman by the name of Metullah. Metullah owns a café, has shining eyes, sharp senses and she’s good at guessing what her customers want. Alma starts working in the café, and aside from learning how to make a finely chopped vegetable salad, she also learns how to get to know people—for example Miri, an energetic and optimistic woman who for some reason is scared of driving. “If I could, I’d introduce you to my son Yoav,” says Miri, and Alma thinks that perhaps she has found not only work but a boyfriend too.

With sensitivity and humor, Vital Gilad reveals the world of a young girl coping with the loss of her father and then discovering the ability to believe in herself and move ahead without fear.
Orit Uziel

Alone in Shanghai

AGE: 11-16

This historical novel begins in Berlin in November 1938 and continues in Shanghai during the dramatic times of World War II. After the Nazis carry out the Kristallnacht (Night of Crystal) attacks on German Jewry, 17-year-old Erica and her 15-year-older brother Theo flee their home and sail alone to Shanghai, the only place where Jewish refugees could find shelter. They leave behind their mother and grandmother, who hope to join them later. The two reach the Hongkew slum, populated by poor Chinese and penniless refugees, and share an apartment with Gustav and Charlotte, a Jewish couple from Holland who have left their two daughters behind with relatives.

Shanghai in those days was a lively, bustling city full of contrasts. The “international colony” is where European and American expats live, as well as better-off, well-connected refugees. One of these is Max, a handsome young German Jew, and a romance blooms between him and Erica.

Uziel catches the atmosphere of the time and the place superbly, weaving historical events into the plot. She takes her characters through love and disappointment, depicting moments of terror, hardship, the constant anxiety for relatives still in Europe, as well as displays of courage and true friendship. At the end of the war, after Erica and Theo learn that their mother and grandmother have not survived, they and Max decide to leave Shanghai and to build their future in what was then still Palestine.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION AVAILABLE
Nava Semel

The Girl in the Gong

AGE: 8-11

Connie is flying to Beijing with her father, Israel’s next ambassador to China. But China seems so strange and far away, and she’s scared that her friends in Israel will forget her. To distract her, her father gives her a little Chinese gong, and it tells her a magical story inspired by an ancient Chinese folk-tale.

Kuan-Yu is the most famous gong maker in China. The secret of sound was handed down to him by an ancestor who had saved a nightingale from captivity, and his young daughter Qong-Gey assists him in the workshop. When Kuan-Yu’s fame reaches the Imperial palace, the Empress is terribly jealous and hatches a plot against him. She gets the Emperor to order Kuan-Yu to cast a gong with the most beautiful sound ever heard. If he fails, he will be executed. The gong maker blends copper, silver and gold, but his first two attempts are a failure. So Qong-Gey seeks advice from the Goddess of Fire, and the goddess tells her that the gong will only ring if human blood is added to the mix. As the gong maker prepares to cast the precious metals for his third attempt, Qong-Gey jumps into the blazing furnace and a perfect sound floats out. But Connie can’t accept this sad ending: she intervenes and changes it, bringing Qong-Gey back to life. And so, the little Israeli girl rescues the Chinese girl!

An enchanting and moving story that brings two cultures together.

Illustrations: Zagny Ormut-Durbin

ENGLISH TRANSLATION IN PROGRESS
Lea Goldberg

Miracles and Wonders

AGE: 7-11

Nissim and a little monkey named Wonders are the heroes of this amusing and exciting story by Lea Goldberg that has become an Israeli children’s classic. It takes place in old Tel Aviv and is narrated by “Nobody’s Auntie.” Neighborhood kids call her this because they love her and she has no family of her own. One day, in her yard, she meets Nissim, a 10-year-old boy whose father has died. He is running away from Yihya, a bully who has been picking on him in the hardscrabble neighborhood where he lives with his younger brother. Their mother is sick in the hospital, and Nissim sells shoelaces for a living. He won’t take charity from anyone, but he agrees to move in with the friendly auntie, who finds work for him in a florist’s shop. He makes friends with the neighborhood kids, and a mischievous lost monkey that joins the gang is also adopted by Nobody’s Auntie, who calls him Wonders. Nissim, Wonders and the other children are planning a circus show, but then Wonders is kidnapped by Yihya the bully. After many adventures, Wonders is returned to the gang through Nissim’s resourcefulness, the show goes on and it is a big hit. Everyone comes to see it, including the monkey’s actual owner, who is a music professor. Wonders goes back to him, but all ends well: Nissim, his mother—who has recovered—and his little brother move into the professor’s cozy home. Mom works as the housekeeper, and Nissim learns to play the piano.

Illustrations: Michel Kishka

Lea Goldberg (1911–1970) was born in Konigsberg, East Prussia (now Kaliningrad, Russia), and started writing Hebrew verse as a schoolgirl in Kovno. She received a Ph.D in semitic languages from Bonn University, and immigrated to pre-state Israel in 1935. Goldberg was a renowned poet – a member of the Shlonsky group – as well as a successful children’s author, theater critic, translator, and editor. In 1952, she began teaching literature at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Later, she established the university’s Department of Comparative Literature and remained its chairperson until her death. Goldberg published nine books of poetry during her lifetime, novels, plays, non-fiction, and books for children. She was awarded the Ruppin Prize (1949), the Shlonsky Prize (1956), the Kugel Prize (1960), the Newman Prize (New York, 1968) and the Israel Prize for Literature (1970).

Lea Goldberg’s work has been published in 14 languages.

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Nurit Zarchi

Rosie in Love

Tel Aviv, Am Oved, 2014. 30 pp.
AGE: 4 UP

Rosie Parsley, a little girl-rabbit, is in love with Mr. Lettuce, a boy-rabbit. But does he know about Rosie's feelings? And is he in love with her? Rosie isn't sure. After looking for hints—unsuccessfully—and wondering tearfully if she should write him a note, she decides to cook some tasty dishes to attract him. But although other rabbits come to eat, Mr. Lettuce doesn’t appear. So Rosie tries another way: she puts on lipstick, eye makeup and high-heeled shoes and goes out for a walk. But she trips and falls. Mr Lettuce comes and helps her up, yet when she asks him to be her boyfriend, he walks away. Defeated, Rosie goes home.

How dense boy-rabbits can be! she thinks. That’s it, she’s had enough! And then, as Rosie is getting over her crush, Mr. Lettuce shows up and says, “Shall we start over and take a stroll in the clover?”

A funny-romantic tale for little ones and big ones too.

Illustrations: Hilla Havkin

Nurit Zarchi

was born in Jerusalem in 1941 and grew up at Kibbutz Geva. She studied psychology at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and later literature and philosophy at Tel Aviv University. Zarchi has worked as a journalist and holds creative writing workshops for children and adults. Zarchi has published novels, short stories, poetry, a collection of essays and over 100 books for children. She has received every major Israeli award for children and youth literature as well as for her poetry, including the Prime Minister’s Prize twice (1980; 1991), the Ze’ev Prize (five times), four IBBY Honor Citations (1980; 1984; 1998; 2004), the Bialik Prize (1999), the Education Minister’s Prize for Lifetime Achievement (2005) the Amichai Prize (2007), the Ramat Gan Prize (2010), the Lea Goldberg Prize (2011), the Landau Prize for Poetry (2013) and the Devorah Omer Prize for Lifetime Achievement (2014). Her books have been published abroad in 10 languages.

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Nurit Zarchi

There is No Lion There

AGE: 3-6

This is a tale about coping with fear. Fears arise when kids leave their home and go to the park to play in the sandpit, swing on the swings and run around the paths. In the park, there are tall trees and low bushes and dark corners, and also strange folks, one of whom is walking a big dog. There are intriguing sounds, and at one end is a public bomb shelter that is scary dark inside, and stairs going down but you can’t see where they end. But there is no lion there! Even the birds that put their chicks to sleep at sundown know there’s no lion nearby to threaten them. And if there’s no lion in the park, what is there to fear?

In her amusing and clever way, Zarchi tells an enchanting story about what children are scared of, and shows how we can overcome fear.

Illustrations: Nessa Ryan

ENGLISH TRANSLATION AVAILABLE
Daniella Carmi was born in Tel Aviv. She studied philosophy and communications at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and writes drama, screenplays and books for adults, children and youth. Her y/a book, *Samir and Yonatan*, received an Honorable Mention from UNESCO for Children and Young People’s Literature in the Service of Tolerance (1997), the Berlin Prize for Best Children’s Book in Translation (1997), the Silver Quill Award (Germany, 1997), the Batchelder Award for Best Translated Book (2001), and the Italian WIZO Prize (2003). Carmi has also received first prize at the Acre Festival (1998), the Prime Minister’s Prize twice (1999; 2010) and the ACUM Prize (2002). In 2007, her story *A Lady Hippopotamus on the Roof* was performed at the Haifa Children’s Theater Festival. Carmi has also been nominated for the Astrid Lindgren Prize. Her books have been translated into 15 languages.

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**Where do Grandpas Fly?**

Tel Aviv; Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 2014. 22 pp.

AGE 3-6

Liora and her Granddad go for a walk in a field of wild daisies. They blow on the silvery clusters and the seeds fly in all directions. Granddad says that when it rains the seeds will sprout and new daisies will grow. Liora asks, “Can we fly too?” and Granddad laughs. The next day, after he picks Liora up from preschool, they both jump gleefully into puddles and splash water everywhere.

Just before summer, Granddad gets sick and lies in bed for a long time. At night, Liora dreams that she’s flying and sees Granddad in bed in the middle of the desert, the sun blazing above him. In the morning, she wakes up crying. But in the autumn, Granddad gets better, and the two walk again in the wild daisy field. Granddad walks very slowly, leaning on his cane. Liora asks, “Granddad, where would you like to fly to?” Granddad thinks hard and answers, “To a flower bed in your preschool, to sprout there. And if you can, you will come and water me.”

Illustrations: Hilla Havkin
Sarit Yishai-Levi, a journalist and author, was born in Jerusalem in 1947 to a Sephardic family that has lived in the city for seven generations. She studied at the Nissan Nativ Acting Studio and later at Tel Aviv University. Before turning to journalism, Yishai-Levi acted in theater and film for several years. Later, she was a correspondent for various Israeli newspapers and magazines, including At, Monitir, HaOlam HaZeh and Hadashot; she also hosted Hebrew TV and radio programs in Los Angeles. At present, she is a senior correspondent for Olam Ha’Isha magazine and hosts TV shows on tourism and lifestyle. Yishai-Levi has published four non-fiction books. Her first novel, The Beauty Queen of Jerusalem, an exceptional bestseller in Israel, received the Publishers Association’s Gold and Platinum Prizes (2014) and the Steimatzky Prize for best-selling book of the year (2014).

The Beauty Queen of Jerusalem is forthcoming in English (St. Martin’s Press), German (Afuab), Turkish (Koton) and Italian (Sonzogno).

Little Mouse Macaroni and Baloney the Pony

Tel Aviv, Modan, 2014. 27 pp.
AGE: 3-6

Little Mouse Macaroni, an inquisitive and mischievous mouse, lives with his family on a horse ranch. He runs around the ranch all day, but his favorite place is the stables. That’s where Amadeus, the big aristocratic stallion lives and Macaroni is dying to make friends with him. But Amadeus ignores him. One day, he nearly treads on Macaroni and the little mouse cries.

A horse can’t be friends with a mouse, his brother tells him, because they can’t play together or run races. This makes Macaroni even sadder. But he refuses to play with Miki the cat who’s always sucking up to him, or with Terry the stuck up poodle.

No, Macaroni just wants to be friends with Amadeus. So early the next morning, he rushes to the stable. But while he’s waiting for Amadeus to wake up, he falls asleep. All of a sudden, something tickles his ear and when he opens his eyes, he sees the most beautiful horse, with the kindest eyes. It is Baloney, a friendly pony who has just come to the ranch. Baloney loves children and gives them rides on his back. So at last, Little Mouse Macaroni has found a true friend, and he isn’t sad anymore.

Illustrations: Galia Armeland
Naama Benziman

Emilia

AGE: 3-6

Emilia isn’t a tiny tot anymore, and today is her first day at preschool. She wants to go in by herself. She says “bye to Mom, takes her Bunny and climbs up the three steps to the door. But there’s a scary broomstick standing there, and it looks like a lion. Emilia faces it bravely, declares that she’s not frightened—and hop! she jumps onto its back. Emilia, Bunny and the lion gallop off to a multicolored, magic land under the ground where they meet wondrous creatures. “Here we are,” Emilia announces. “It’s time to eat.” After they finish the tasty dishes that she serves up, Emilia puts Bunny and the lion to sleep. She stays awake, but there’s no one for her to play with. So it’s time to end the adventure and enter the preschool. Emilia opens the door and goes inside, alone. Her friend Dana runs up to her, hugs her and invites her to play families. “You can be Mommy and I’ll be the tiny tot,” Emilia says to her. But tomorrow she’ll go back to being the big girl, who’s not afraid to go into preschool by herself.

A magical book, full of imagination and psychological depth, that deals with overcoming fears.

Illustrations: Naama Benziman

Naama Benziman was born in Jerusalem in 1968. She graduated from Bezalel Art and Design Academy in 1992 and is now completing graduate studies in Visual Literacy. She works as a freelance artist, editor, curator, illustrator and author, and as a lecturer at Israel’s top visual arts academies. In 1998-1999 she wrote and illustrated a feminist column for the mass circulation daily Yedioth Ahronoth. Benziman’s artwork has been featured throughout Europe, North and South America, and Asia. Her posters for the right to education and the universal right to housing won the international poster competition by Poster For Tomorrow (2011 & 2013). Five illustrations in Emilia won an Honorable Mention in the Picture Book Illustration competition awarded by 3x3, The Magazine of Contemporary Illustration (2014). Benziman lives in Tel Aviv with her partner, Dori Oryan, and their two children.

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Shlomit Cohen-Assif was born in 1949 in Iraq and came to Israel in 1951 with her family. She grew up in Holon, where she still lives today, and studied at Tel Aviv University. She began publishing poetry for adults and for children during her military service. Cohen-Assif is one of the most prominent Hebrew children’s poets. Her works have been adapted for the stage and radio; they have also been the subject of dance and set to music. Cohen-Assif has written many children’s stories, and her poems have been included in numerous schoolbooks and anthologies, both in Israel and abroad. Cohen-Assif has been awarded many prizes, including the ACUM Prize three times (1979; 1980; 1982), the Ze’ev Prize twice (1981; 1990), the Prime Minister’s Prize twice (1984; 2001), the ACUM Prize for Lifetime Achievement (1995), the Fania Bergstein Prize (2003) and the Bialik Prize (2010).
Jonathan Yavin

Pumpkin the Kitten

AGE: 3-6

The sun, the moon, the fish and stars
The flowers, trees, the birds and cars,
The sea, the rain, even the sand—
I like almost everything—
It’s cats I can’t stand!
Why?
Because one second they’re nice,
And the next they bite
(Well, Mom said they might)—
Mom said that hating is silly and bad.
“It will only make you bitter and sad
And though you do not have to love every kitten,
You should not hold a grudge because once you got bitten”—

A few days later, Dad came home with this box,
That was rattling and rambling and didn’t have locks.
And when I opened the lid—guess what I saw…
I was so excited, my heart quickly beating…

Of course:
It was a wee baby itsy-bitsy teeny-tiny kitten!—
“Let’s name it,” Dad said, “before Mommy gets back!”
And I shouted out: “Pumpkin, ‘cause it’s orange and black!”

Illustrations: Gilad Soffer

ENGLISH TRANSLATION AVAILABLE