

New Books from Israel • Fall 2011



THE INSTITUTE FOR THE TRANSLATION OF HEBREW LITERATURE





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NEW BOOKS FROM ISRAEL

FALL 2011

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Eshkol Nevo

NO. 1 BESTSELLER!!!
50,000 COPIES SOLD IN A MONTH!!!

Neuland

a novel

Tel Aviv, Zmora-Bitan, 2011. 547 pp.



Eshkol Nevo was born in Jerusalem in 1971. He studied copywriting at the Tirza Granot School and psychology at Tel Aviv University. Nevo teaches creative writing and thinking at the Sam Spiegel Film & Television School, Tel Aviv University, Sapir College and the Open University. He has published a collection of short stories, a nonfiction book and three novels, all of which have been top bestsellers.

Nevo, whose novels are very successful abroad, has received the Book Publishers Association's Gold and Platinum Prizes (2005; 2008), the FFI-Raymond Wallier Prize (Paris, 2008) and the ADEI-WIZO Prize (Italy, 2011).

Homesick was a finalist for the prestigious Independent Foreign Fiction Prize (UK, 2009); *World Cup Wishes* was shortlisted for the Kritikerpreis der Jury der Jungen Kritiker (Austria, 2011).

Neuland is forthcoming in Italian (**Neri Pozza**) and German (**dtv**).

In his most ambitious novel to date, Eshkol Nevo merges a compelling love story with a tale of wandering Jews: those who come to the Promised Land, and those, now Israeli, who leave again.

On the cusp of World War II, young Lily flees Warsaw and reaches Mandatory Palestine, where she marries her fiancé and builds a life. But she can never forget Fima, the musician she fell in love with on the ship, and in her old age her mind returns to the love she never lived.

At the age of 60, her son Meni suddenly closes his business in Jerusalem and decides to go backpacking in South America, only to disappear after he arrives. Extremely worried, his son Dori flies out to search for him, leaving his wife and son behind.

In the meantime, Inbar, an adventurous young Israeli woman, visits her mother who now lives in Berlin. But as Inbar is about to board her flight home, she suddenly changes her mind and flies instead to the other side of the world, where she meets Dori. There, the two fall for each other. Yet they dare not consummate their love. Not even as the novel reaches its climax and they find “Neuland”—New Land—, an improved mini-version of the State of Israel that Meni has established. And indeed, this new utopia attracts Israelis as well as other nationals in search of a new beginning.

Will Dori and Inbar, whose lives are in crisis, get a chance to start again? Spanning continents and more than half a century, Nevo skilfully maps the life of dreams. And however briefly, each character is given the chance to glimpse another life—the life that could have been theirs.

● [CLICK HERE FOR A COMPLETE LIST OF NEVO'S BOOKS & TRANSLATIONS ON THE ITHL WEBSITE](#)



PHOTO © MOTI KIKAYON

A significant breakthrough both for Nevo and for mainstream Israeli literature, where he can now rightly occupy center stage.

Haaretz

In *Neuland*, Nevo attains maturity and becomes one of the best writers we have in Hebrew.

Yedioth Ahronoth


Eshkol Nevo has fulfilled his promise and goes beyond expectation.


Walla


Etgar Keret

Yours Insincerely

short pieces

 I just got here an hour ago, all excited, with my wife about to give birth. And now I'm sitting in the hallway feeling glum. Everyone has gone to treat the people injured in the terrorist attack. My wife's contractions have slowed down, too. Probably even the baby feels this whole getting-born thing isn't that urgent anymore.

 I had a nightmare in which Ahmadinejad came over to me on the street, hugged me, kissed me on both cheeks and said in fluent Yiddish, "*Ich bub dir lieb*," "Brother, I love you."

 "What are you hungry for?" I asked a demonstrator standing opposite me.

"For a country that is a little less heartless," he said, and gave his baby, who had just woken up, a bottle. "Being a Jew isn't just being a settler, you know. It also means having compassion. You don't believe me? Go home and Google it."

Keret's collection of wacky-serious essays, published in *Tablet* magazine, the *New York Times*, *le Monde*, *Die Zeit* and *Corriere della Sera* among others, deals with social and political issues from a very personal perspective. His checkpoint-watching wife, his Holocaust-survivor parents, ultra-orthodox sister, marijuana-legalizing brother, and inquisitive little son—all provide an Israeli microcosm through which he explores major issues. This is unique Keret at his best!

AVAILABLE IN ENGLISH

[CLICK HERE FOR A COMPLETE LIST OF KERET'S BOOKS & TRANSLATIONS ON THE ITHL WEBSITE](#)



PHOTO © DAN FORGES



Born in Tel Aviv in 1967, **Etgar Keret** has received international acclaim. He has been published in the *New York Times*, *le Monde*, the *Guardian*, the *Paris Review*, among others. At present, Keret lectures at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev. Among his prizes: the Israel Cultural Excellence Award (2006), the Jewish Quarterly Wingate Prize (UK, 2008), the St. Petersburg Public Library's Foreign Favorite (2010), the Cannes Film Festival's "Camera d'Or", with Shira Gefen, for their movie *Jellyfish*. And in 2010, Keret was awarded the prestigious French Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres. His books have been published abroad in 30 languages in 35 countries.

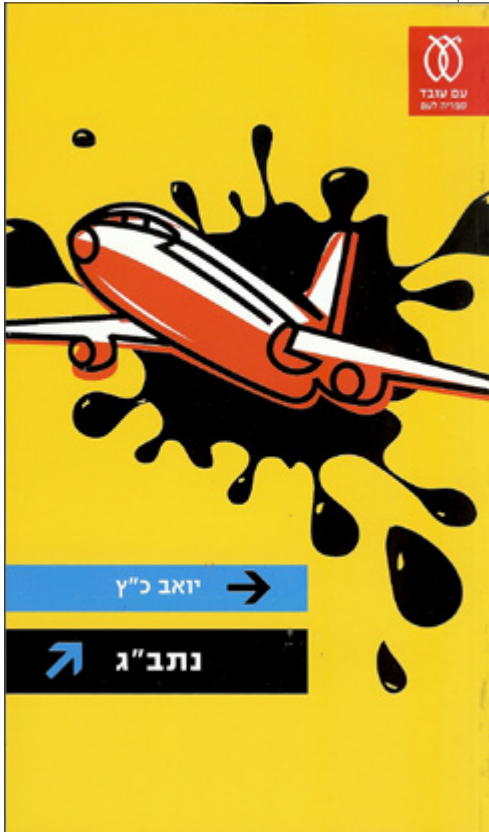
Yours Insincerely is forthcoming in Russian (**Text**).

Yoav Katz

Home Run at Ben-Gurion Airport

a novel

Tel Aviv, Am Oved, 2011. 314 pp.



Yoav Katz was born in Israel in 1965. He studied theater and playwriting at Tel Aviv University. At present, he teaches screenwriting in the School of Media Studies at the Tel Aviv College of Management. Katz has written many scripts for TV and film, and has translated over 50 books and plays from English. He has twice been awarded the *Haaretz* Short Story Prize and has also received the Mozes Foundation Award for Literature. His play, *From the Kitchen With Love*, won Best Show Award at the International Children's Theater Festival in Haifa (1999). His latest book, *Home Run at Ben-Gurion Airport*, has been a bestseller.

Chief Superintendent Zohar Narkis, chief of police at Ben-Gurion Airport, is sitting on a plane bound for Canada, filling in application forms for political asylum. In his rough and direct style, he recounts the amazing events of the last 24 hours that have led him to flee Israel. What began as an apparent terrorist attack at the most secure airport in the world turned out to be something completely different. To the amazement of the security personnel, people who died years ago began to appear in various parts of the airport. But why are they returning now from the world of the dead? What do two Israeli soldiers who died while serving their country have in common with a criminal slain decades ago, a Beduin murdered in a blood feud, an Arab woman killed during the Second Intifada, two Jewish children from a settlement blown to bits in a terrorist attack, or a man and woman who perished in the Holocaust? As the plot picks up speed, the reasons for these strange resurrections becomes clearer and Narkis discovers that the horrifying repercussions are likely to affect him too, as his son was killed in a road accident two years ago.

Home Run at Ben-Gurion Airport is a fast-paced, humorous novel full of suspense. But it is also an political allegory on the ironies of Israel's complicated reality, which creates troubling moral dilemmas.



PHOTO © NIR DAFROM

Crazy action...An extraordinary plot...An intriguing thriller that is unusual and extremely well crafted. Enjoy it until the final shriek!

Yedioth Aharonoth

A suspense novel that's quick and easy to read [but which also] seizes the sense of our national existence as a burden.

Haaretz

Absolutely original, riveting, with an unforgettable hero. A perfect book for summer nights.

Walla

Shemi Zarhin

Some Day

a novel

Jerusalem, Keter, 2011. 462 pp.



Shemi Zarhin was born in Tiberias in 1961. He graduated in film and TV studies from Tel Aviv University. Now a film director and screenwriter, Zarhin teaches at the Sam Spiegel Film Academy in Jerusalem. His first film, *Passover Fever* (1995) won the Best Script Award at the Montreal Film Festival, and the Ministry of Education Film Award (1996). *Dangerous Acts* (1998) won Israel Film Academy awards in seven categories, including Best Director, and *Bonjour Monsieur Shlomi* (2003) received 21 international prizes and honorable mentions. *Aviva My Love* (2006) won the Best Script Award at the Chicago and Shanghai Film Festivals, Israel Film Academy awards in six categories, the Volgin Prize for Best Screenplay (Israel, 2006), and was the most successful film in Israel in 2006. Zarhin also received the Landau Prize for film directing in 2008. *Some Day* is his first novel.

On the shores of Lake Kinneret, the Sea of Galilee, lies Macondo, the city of Tiberias. A magical place caught between reality and fantasy, where we find budding sexuality and a longing for great love. The air is saturated with smells of cooking and passion that lead to the housing project where seven-year-old Shlomi lives. Shlomi, who has a remarkable talent for cooking, has fallen in love with Ella, the strange girl next door who has suicidal tendencies; his little brother Hilik has an obsession with collecting words. Yet the adult world that swirls around them, earthy, wild, selfish and menacing, robs them of their childhood and forces them prematurely into adulthood. Robert, Shlomi's father, has an affair with Ella's mother, a Holocaust survivor. He also fathers an illegitimate son with his uncle's young wife, and the child looks incredibly like his son Hilik who, later on, will be killed in the Second Lebanon War. Shlomi's mother cannot forgive her wayward husband and throws him out of her bed, but he never stops longing for her and waits for many years. Shlomi also waits, a captive of his love for Ella. Meanwhile, he goes on cooking and his hobby becomes a career, but for him it is still mainly a way of expressing his inner feelings and thoughts.

Zarhin's writing, replete with humor and human emotion, stimulates all the reader's senses. At the same time, it offers an alternative perspective on Israeli reality as it sheds its old social structures.



PHOTO © DOR MALKA

A mature and unique literary talent...Zarhin gives us a tangible make-believe world soaked in smells and tastes...like a rich flavorful stew that keeps brimming over.

Walla

Zarhin has impressive story telling ability.

Haaretz

This is a packed, aromatic, steaming book...that overwhelms the mind and enlarges the spirit.

Yedioth Ahronoth

Forcefully touches on life...with a mixture of steamy vulgarity and intellectual audacity.

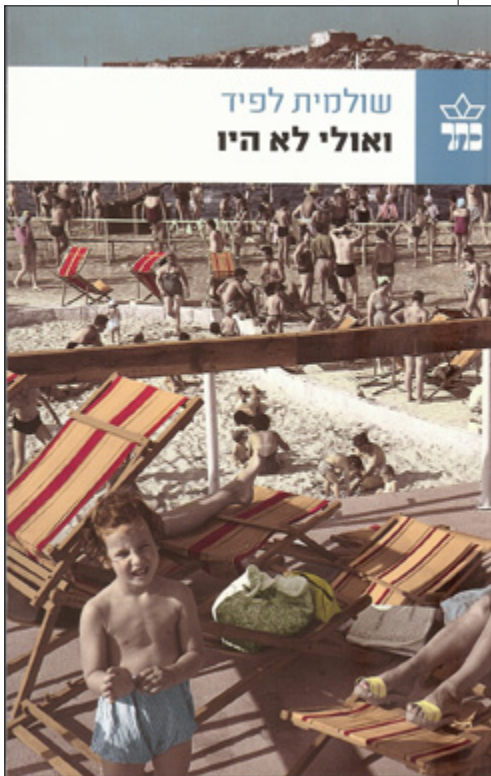
Maariv NRG

Shulamit Lapid

Maybe They Were Not

a novel

Jerusalem, Keter, 2011. 205 pp.



Shulamit Lapid was born in Tel Aviv in 1934. She majored in Middle Eastern studies and English literature at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. A former chairperson of the Hebrew Writers' Association, Lapid is the author of novels, suspense novels, collections of short stories, plays, a book of poetry and books for children and youth. She has received the Prime Minister's Prize for Literature (1987), the International Theater Institute Award (1988), the German Krimipreis (1996), the Newman Prize and the Book Publishers Association's Platinum Prize for *Nunia* (2007).

Her novels and thrillers have been published in 10 languages.

Leah and Mickey came to Tel Aviv in 1934 from a small town in Eastern Europe, a young couple hoping to begin a new life in the Land of Israel. Mickey, an idealist who worked as a journalist in Europe and wants to write a novel, tries to work in agriculture and construction, but then finds his way into the budding Hebrew newspaper industry. Sensible Leah, who knows how to improvise, earns a living any way she can in order to fulfil her petit bourgeois dream of a small apartment, a family and a way of life spiced with Central European manners. She gives birth to their daughter Shoshana, but is still torn by her longing for the extended family she left behind and for the landscapes of her former home.

Maybe They Were Not is first and foremost the love story of Leah and Mickey, as they go through the crises of immigration and integration, and the upheavals of history—World War II and the Holocaust. But the novel is also an expression of love for Tel Aviv, the first Hebrew city. Tel Aviv in the 1930s and 40s was a lively Mediterranean city with cafés, dance clubs, cabarets and theaters, as well as being a haven for the destitute refugees that streamed in from Europe. Although it was bombed during the war, and the news from Europe cast a shadow, its vibrant spirit was never quenched. The people who made Tel Aviv what it is are no longer with us, but their spirit pervades it to this day.

AWARDED THE BOOK PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION'S GOLD PRIZE, 2011

● [CLICK HERE FOR A COMPLETE LIST OF LAPID'S BOOKS & TRANSLATIONS ON THE ITHL WEBSITE](#)



PHOTO © MOTI KIKAYON

Shulamit Lapid is a superb designer of this specific historical period, with its sensitive existential shades. She sweeps the reader into her world.

Haaretz

A living, breathing historical novel by one of the most exciting documenters of the period.

Yedioth Ahronoth

A book that will move you ... Lapid has an amazing ability to weave a tale.

Channel 2 TV

Maayan Ben-Hagai

Sea and Land

a novel

Tel Aviv, Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 2011. 207 pp.



Maayan Ben-Hagai was born in Kibbutz Degania Bet, Israel, in 1970 and grew up in Kibbutz Afiq. She is a graduate of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem with majors in Comparative Literature, History of Art, and Social Work. Over the years she has worked with distressed youth, Ethiopian immigrants and in a used bookstore. She lives in Jerusalem with her partner and their three children. Ben-Hagai has previously published short stories. *Sea and Land* is her first novel.

Anna, an unmarried, introverted woman in her 40s, is mourning her mother Claudia and looking back at her own wasted life in her mother's shadow. The two women are a study in contrasts. Claudia was pretty, coquettish and glamorous while Anna, a sad and lonely little girl, turned into a drab, unfulfilled woman devoting all of her energy to work. Now surrounded by old photos, cheap jewelry and memory-filled objects, she tries to trace the colorful, elusive figure of her mother and analyze their relationship. Claudia was born to Russian parents who escaped the pogroms by migrating to Egypt, where they prospered in business. She grew up as a pampered princess, but the good life couldn't last forever, and after the business failed, the now penniless family moved to Israel. Claudia married a handsome sailor but never got used to life in Israel, and even after her husband's death in an accident she insisted on keeping up a façade of false glamor, flirting with whoever happened along.

Gradually and with great finesse, the relationship between mother and daughter is revealed, each tightly bound to the other although they belonged to different worlds. And like a detective on a case, Anna tries to work out the meaning of painful past events on her way to separation and closure.



PHOTO © Yael Ilan

Maayan Ben-Hagai's book is astonishingly beautiful.

Haaretz

An intriguing novel, with great inner power... An impressive achievement.

Makor Rishon

Sweeps us to the depths of complex relationships, until we lose our sense of time and place.

Maariv

Amnon Dankner

Abel Gagin's Magic Touch

a novel in stories

Tel Aviv, Achuzat Bayit, 2011. 328 pp.



Amnon Dankner was born in Jerusalem in 1946. He graduated in law from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. After holding a senior position in the Jewish Agency, he began a career in journalism at the daily *Haaretz*, where he became a popular columnist. Dankner also anchored a well-known political TV program, "Popolitica," and has served as editor-in-chief of *Maariv*, one of the three mass-circulation dailies in Israel. Dankner has published novels, collections of short stories and several non-fiction books.

This is a book written with a great deal of love for Jerusalem's characters and neighborhoods in the 1950s and 60s. Its colorful cabaret has a cast of unforgettable types who dance non-stop in the author's mind—a buxom waitress, vindictive tax officials, happy bachelors, big-hearted drunks, sly chess players, weeping widows, self-sacrificing mothers, irritable fathers, are all players in this side-splitting comedy.

And the figure of Abel Gagin keeps popping up. He looks like a British intellectual and—unfortunately for those around him—he genuinely believes that he can help lovers on the rocks, or iron out complex family imbroglios and resolve all kinds of other woes.

But each time that Abel tries to fix something, an unexpected twist fouls up his plan and brings disaster to those involved.

Dankner has the ability, in a few lines, to create a complete personality that captures our imagination and makes us read on in eager anticipation. His Jerusalem is a sparkling world of magic realism, with vivid human types that are both touching and entertaining, real and imagined, full of charm and invention.

● [CLICK HERE FOR A COMPLETE LIST OF DANKNER'S BOOKS & TRANSLATIONS ON THE ITHL WEBSITE](#)



PHOTO © DAN FORGES

An entertaining, rich comedy... full of charming, amusing observations on life in Jerusalem. The plot is crafted with dazzling light-handedness.

Ynet

Delightful...full of excellent humor and vivid idiomatic language.

Maariv NRG

Few writers have the inventive skill and wild imagination of Amnon Dankner.

Time Out

Dankner is a born story-teller. His characters are fascinating.

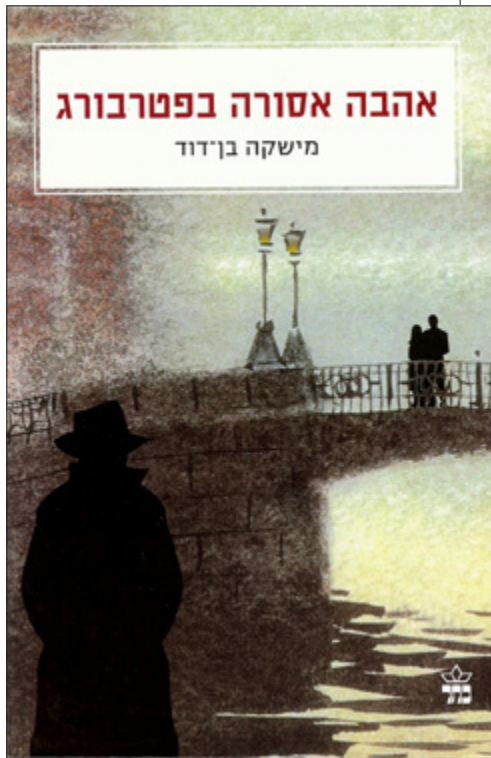
Globes

Mishka Ben-David

Forbidden Love in St. Petersburg

a novel

Jerusalem, Keter, 2008. 414 pp.



Mishka Ben-David was born in 1952 in Israel. He holds an MA in comparative literature from the University of Wisconsin and a PhD in Hebrew literature from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Ben-David served for 12 years in the Mossad; he has also been the principal of a Jerusalem high school and director of a community center, as well as lecturing at the Open University. Ben-David has published four bestselling spy thrillers. He has also published novels, short stories, and research studies. An Israeli-German-Canadian co-production led by Bavaria Pictures is now adapting his spy novels for an international TV series. Ben-David has been awarded the Rabinovich Foundation Award (1984), the Book Publishers Association's Gold Prize for each of his thrillers and the Prime Minister's Prize (2002).

One snowy morning, Mossad agent Yogev wakes up next to his Russian lover Anna and decides to give up his job and his country in order to stay with her in Russia. This isn't an easy decision, but Yogev feels that it is his last chance of happiness. From this point on, Yogev recounts his life as a secret agent in a sensitive and unusually candid manner. We learn that his earlier marriage to Orit, his childhood sweetheart, ended in divorce: although he had promised her he would never kill anyone, he didn't keep his promise. And when Orit discovered his involvement in the death of a businessman who supplied weapons to the Syrians and Hezbollah, she decided she couldn't go on living with him or have the child they had finally conceived.

To stir him out of the depression he has fallen into, the Mossad send Yogev to St. Petersburg as a Canadian businessman, and there he meets the beautiful Anna, who adds new meaning to his life. But is Anna's love genuine, or is she actually a spy hunter sent by the FSB (the ex-KGB) to tempt Yogev?

Amid the shadowy manipulations of the secret services, Mishka Ben-David depicts the world of a Mossad agent who chooses, against all odds, to stay with the woman he loves and fight for his right to be with her.



PHOTO © DAN FORGES

A stormy, overwhelming love story... A perfect book for those who like spy novels.

Haaretz

A thrilling novel.

Ynet

Fascinating. It's been a long time since I read an Israeli spy novel that touched me this way.

Channel 2 TV

Yoram Kaniuk

Rockinghorse

a novel

1973; Tel Aviv, Yedioth Ahronoth, 2011.



Yoram Kaniuk was born in Tel Aviv in 1930. After being wounded in Israel's 1948 War of Independence, he moved to New York for 10 years. A novelist, painter and journalist, Kaniuk has published novels, stories, non-fiction and books for children and youth. Among his many literary awards: the Prix des Droits de l'Homme (France, 1997), the President's Prize (1998), the Bialik Prize (1999), the prestigious Prix Méditerranée Étranger (2000), the Newman Prize (2006), the France-Israel Foundation Award (2010) and an Honorary Doctorate from Tel Aviv University (2011). A film of *Adam Resurrected*, directed by Paul Schrader, was released to critical acclaim in 2008. Kaniuk's books have been published abroad in 20 languages.

Rockinghorse has been published in English (**Harper & Row**, 1977), German (**Klett-Cotta**, 1984) and Swedish (**Forum**, 1980)

Aminadav Sussetz (literally: Rockinghorse) is an Israeli painter living in New York in the 1950s. When his father has a stroke, he leaves his family and returns to Tel Aviv. Like no other city, Tel Aviv haunts Aminadav and draws him back to the pathos of a Jewish town, its complaints, its laughter, its constant sense of loss, of being old even as the first buildings are going up. He recalls his father, who loved German culture and exuded the estrangement of the early pioneers, whose dreams always reverted to Europe. And these memories are mixed with an imagined country, the Ukraine, from which his grandparents arrived. But it is Aminadav's mother, with her ranting, crying and badgering, who is the soul of the novel.

The patchwork reality of the country to which he has returned drives Aminadav crazy, and his mood shifts from self-pity to murderous self-awareness and scornful laughter. Rocking to and fro on the hobby horse of his own craziness, he does not revive a nation, but a holy land of memories that have spilled out of its settlers' suitcases, and ghosts from distant countries that inhabit the streets.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION AVAILABLE

● [CLICK HERE FOR A COMPLETE LIST OF KANIUK'S BOOKS & TRANSLATIONS ON THE ITHL WEBSITE](#)



PHOTO © DAN FORGES

I find it to be one of the half-dozen most vivid, funny, tragic, most extraordinary novels written in the past decade.

New York Times

It is the constant tension in... the pathos which bursts suddenly into comedy, which gives *Rockinghorse* its wonderful and rare antique Jewish melody.

Washington Post

Artful and fascinating.

Chicago Tribune

An intense, powerful work of great intellectual sophistication and artistic stature.

Saturday Review

Iris Eliya-Cohen

Maktub

a novel

Tel Aviv, Hakibbutz Hameuchad/ Siman Kriah, 2010. 332 pp.



Iris Eliya-Cohen was born in 1969 in the Upper Galilee to parents from Cochin, India. She graduated in occupational therapy from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and also studied the plastic arts – sculpture, drawing and pottery. At the same time, Eliya-Cohen established an independent children's theater, writing, directing and producing its shows. She wrote *Maktub*, her first novel, in 2007, during her maternity leave for her youngest son. It was published to critical and popular acclaim and has been awarded the Ministry of Culture Prize (2011).

A sweeping, sensuous novel about love and betrayal. Irit, a woman in her 30s, grew up in a poor Mizrahi family in Haifa. As a child, she was ashamed of her dark skin and distanced herself from the language and culture of her Syrian-born father. Later, at university, she fell in love with Arik, an architecture student and the son of Ashkenazi Holocaust survivors, and married him. But years later, their family life is disrupted when Irit meets Ahsan, an attractive Arab man, and falls in love with him. The Arabic that he speaks restores her repressed cultural identity. Unfortunately, when the second Palestinian Intifada starts in 2000, her love affair with him comes to a painful end.

Eliya-Cohen's book portrays the tensions and the vivid human colors of contemporary Israel. Through the lives of its heroine and her two loves, she examines the meeting of cultures and the issues of ethnicity, nationality and class that have preoccupied Israelis since the 1970s. The personal and social stories dovetail, their outcome unpredictable. Or as Ahsan puts it: "What has to happen happens. Everything is *maktub* [written]."



PHOTO © LILACH HABERMAN

A unique voice, and a great deal of daring and honesty.

Haaretz

Eliya-Cohen makes love roughly, bluntly, violently with both Hebrew and Arabic, and her characters are a flaming, bubbling crucible.

Ynet

Gives us living, pulsating slices of life that make the reader forget all else.

Maariv

Maktub has a strange, captivating sensuality.

Yedioth Ahronoth

Ben Vered

How I Prepared Myself for War

a novel

Tel Aviv, Babel, 2011. 218 pp.



Ben Vered was born in Azur, Israel, in 1978. He studied law at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and is at present doing his legal internship at the Rishon le Zion Court. Vered was also the editor of the Hebrew University students' magazine. He won First Prize in the IDF Literary Competition (1999) during his military service, and *Makor Rishon's* Short Story Competition (2005). *How I Prepared Myself for War* is his second novel.

A complete English translation of Vered's previous novel *Summer Dogs* is available for publishers.

One morning, 15-year-old Noni goes with his older friend Michael to do some target practice on the sand dunes by the beach, outside Ashkelon. Michael, a coolheaded, hardhearted soldier who serves as a sniper on the border with the nearby Gaza Strip, teaches Noni to shoot with his sniper's rifle. Suddenly they come across a boat from Gaza that has been washed ashore, with an exhausted Palestinian boy lying in it. His name is Ra'ad and he is wearing a pearl earring.

This is the beginning of an intriguing coming-of-age novel. Noni is a sensitive and troubled boy, searching for his place in the world. His mother has died; his father, a truck driver, is away from home for many long hours at a time. His classmates are at-risk boys and girls, and it is no wonder that he wants to be close to Michael who serves as a model and big brother to him. But the encounter with Ra'ad creates a new feeling of empathy in Noni. In his imagination, he begins to build the Palestinian boy's life story and finds that in many ways it is similar to his own—Ra'ad has also been left on his own, looking for a mother, maltreated and exploited by people who are stronger than him.

Through the stories of Noni and Ra'ad, Ben Vered sketches two separate worlds, whose physical proximity is a source of violence, but also of understanding and compassion.



PHOTO © DAN FORGES

Alluring and daring.
Haaretz

Always maintains a delicate balance between intense plot and restrained writing.

Achbar Ha'ir

An important book in terms of Israeli political discourse...A courageous novel.

Haaretz

Almog Behar

Rachel and Ezekiel

a novel

Jerusalem, Keter, 2010. 260 pp.



Almog Behar was born in Netanya in 1978 and lives in Jerusalem. He studied philosophy and Hebrew literature and holds an MA in Hebrew literature from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. He is now completing his PhD in literature at Tel Aviv University. Behar teaches philosophy in high school, writes literary reviews, and gives Jewish liturgy workshops. He has published two books of poetry, a collection of short stories and one novel.

In 2005, he won the *Haaretz* Short Story Competition for “Ana Min Al-Yahoud” (“I am one of the Jews”), which was published in the well-known Cairo journal *Al-Hilal* and generated considerable interest in Egypt and the Arab world. Behar has received the Bernstein Prize for Poetry (2010) and the Prime Minister’s Prize (2010).

Rachel and Ezekiel are young Jerusalem newlyweds, but their marriage, arranged by matchmakers, has already run into trouble. When Ezekiel loses his job, their financial situation becomes critical and each withdraws into his own separate world. Ezekiel, an Oriental Jew who became devout after his marriage, begins to write poetry and is torn between religion and secularity. Just as the lack of communication between the couple deepens, Rachel falls pregnant. Rabbi Ovadia and his wife Mazal, who were responsible for the match, come to their help, but they too are on the verge of a personal crisis.

The novel moves toward the upcoming birth and toward a Passover *seder* that Ezekiel hopes will heal the spiritual and emotional rifts that are plaguing him. He also wants to get closer to his two brothers, one of whom, an illegitimate son born to his father by an Arab woman, lives in East Jerusalem.

Almog Behar describes a young couple not often found in Israeli literature. Yet his novel depicts a highly contemporary reality and he handles the tensions between Jews and Arabs, religious and secular, Oriental and Ashkenazi, young and old with great courage and sensitivity.



PHOTO © DAN FORGES

Vibrant, colorful slices of contemporary reality... A rich cornucopia of images, ideas and echoes.

Haaretz

An enormous and magnificent store of folklore.

Yedioth Ahronoth

A powerful, colorful and dynamic book... An enriching experience.

Ynet

Eli Amir

What's Left

a novel

Tel Aviv, Am Oved, 2010. 389 pp.



Eli Amir was born in Baghdad, Iraq, in 1937, and arrived in Israel in 1950. Amir has served as adviser on Arab affairs to the Prime Minister and as envoy for the Ministry of Absorption to the USA. Since 1984, he has been director-general of the youth immigration department at the Jewish Agency. He is also well-known in Israel for his activity in Palestinian-Jewish relations. Amir has published five bestselling novels and a novella. He has been awarded Youth Immigration's Jubilee Prize (1983), the Jewish Literature Prize (Mexico, 1985), the Ahi Award (1994), Am Oved's Jubilee Prize (1994), the Yigal Alon Prize for Outstanding Service to Society (1997), the Book Publishers Association's Platinum Prize (1998) and the Prime Minister's Prize (2002). He received an Honorary Doctorate from Tel Aviv University in 2008.

Daniel Drori, a successful businessman, has kept up the routine of his work and marriage for years, until a heart attack stops him in his tracks. Lying in hospital, he looks back at the path he has taken—at the distressed neighborhood where he grew up, at the good things he has done, the mistakes he has made over the last thirty years. His life is comfortable but the love he once felt for his wife has faded, and he is now overcome by the memory of a deep and passionate love that he experienced in his youth.

When he gets out of hospital, Daniel cannot go on living as before. Suddenly a stranger in his home and in his city, Jerusalem, whose population has changed, he will search out his old love, determined not to let her slip through his fingers again. Will he succeed? What have the years done to him, and to his old love?

In this powerful and sensitive novel, by turn sober and stormy, Eli Amir carries his readers along with his hero, a man who is captivating in his longing, in his weaknesses, and in the great love that he will not give up.

● [CLICK HERE FOR A COMPLETE LIST OF AMIR'S BOOKS & TRANSLATIONS ON THE ITHL WEBSITE](#)

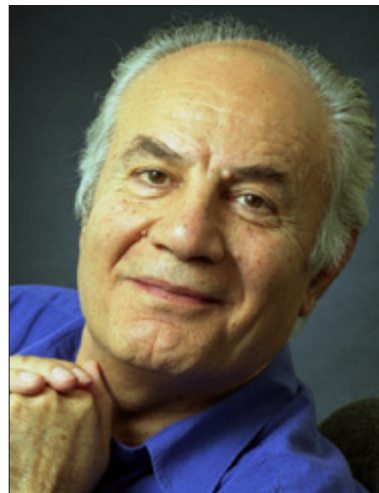


PHOTO © DAN FORGES

A love story that is so strong, so full of passion and so wounding in its honesty, that it is difficult not to be swept away by it.

Walla

A great pleasure to read.

Moznayim

It is hard to withstand a passionate love story that takes place against the background of Jerusalem's beloved landscapes.

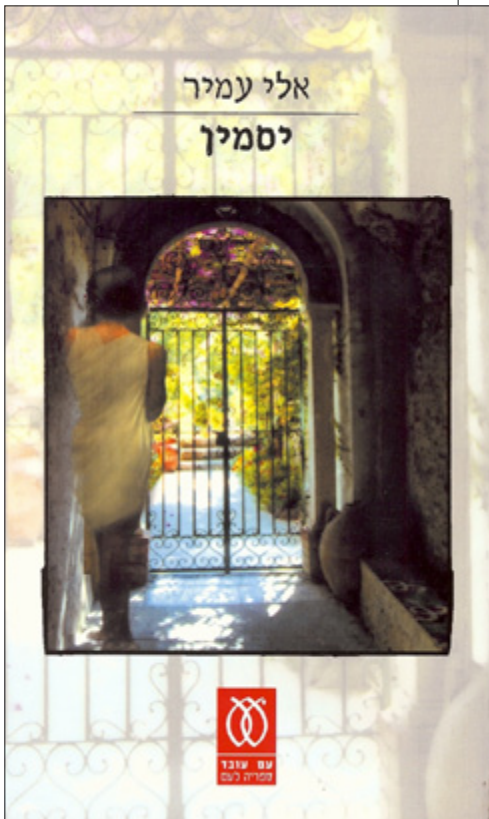
Makor Rishon

Eli Amir

Jasmine

a novel

Tel Aviv, Am Oved, 2005. 411 pp.



Eli Amir was born in Baghdad, Iraq, in 1937, and arrived in Israel in 1950. Amir has served as adviser on Arab affairs to the Prime Minister and as envoy for the Ministry of Absorption to the USA. Since 1984, he has been director-general of the youth immigration department at the Jewish Agency. He is also well-known in Israel for his activity in Palestinian-Jewish relations. Amir has published five bestselling novels and a novella. Among his many awards: the Jewish Literature Prize (Mexico, 1985), the Ahi Award (1994), Am Oved's Jubilee Prize (1994), the Yigal Alon Prize for Outstanding Service to Society (1997), the Book Publishers Association's Platinum Prize (1998) and the Prime Minister's Prize (2002). In 2008, he received an Honorary Doctorate from Tel Aviv University.

Jasmine has been published in French (**Libella-Maren Sell**), German (**Bertelsmann**), Italian (**Einaudi**), Arabic (**Mantsura**, Egypt) and Turkish (**GOA Basim Yayin**). Forthcoming in Spanish (**Ediciones B**, Mexico)

A moving story of the love between Nuri and Jasmine, two young people struggling with self-doubt and divided loyalty, lies at the core of this beautiful novel. But *Jasmine* is also a social and political novel, one of the outstanding pieces of Hebrew literature that deal with the conflict between the Jewish and Palestinian peoples. Nuri is an Israeli Jew, born in Iraq, now an adviser on Arab affairs to the government; Jasmine is a Christian Palestinian Arab, beautiful and educated, who returns from her studies in Paris to her father's home in conquered East Jerusalem.

The novel starts with the outbreak of the Six Day War in June 1967 and includes many colorful characters from both sides of the divide. The victorious Israelis are overcome by a euphoria that distorts their judgment, while the Palestinians are smitten with the shock of defeat. Nuri, an Oriental Jew, understands the outlook of other side. He is knowledgeable about Arab culture but also admires Western culture. Jasmine, a proud nationalist, at first sees in Nuri only one of the conquerors. But she learns to appreciate him as a human being, and gradually the two are drawn together.

Will love triumph? Can a meeting between two nations fighting over the same scrap of land work, or will hatred and mutual intolerance win out?

ENGLISH TRANSLATION AVAILABLE

● [CLICK HERE FOR A COMPLETE LIST OF AMIR'S BOOKS & TRANSLATIONS ON THE ITHL WEBSITE](#)



PHOTO © DAN FORGES

Beyond the political, *Jasmine* is a wonderful story about great love.

Literarische Welt

Rarely has the drama of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict been depicted in such a human and poignant way.

Handelsblatt und Weltwoche

A moving and illuminating novel.
Amos Oz

Ron Barkai

Tel Aviv Under Ground

a novel

Tel Aviv, Xargol, 2010. 251 pp.



Ron Barkai was born in Jerusalem in 1943 and now lives in Tel Aviv. He studied Middle Eastern history at Tel Aviv University and received his PhD from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Barkai is a professor of medieval history at Tel Aviv University. He has published three novels as well as a number of books on Jewish-Muslim-Christian relations in medieval Spain. His work has been translated into French, Italian, Spanish and English.

Meir Holtzman, a noted Tel Aviv archaeologist, is about to become a father for the first time and is also on the verge of an important discovery. But his nights are torn by a troubling nightmare: He has completed his book about a Crusader fortress buried between a Palestinian village and an Israeli settlement, and he takes the underground in Tel Aviv in order to deliver it to the publisher. But he soon realizes that the train he is on is speeding toward catastrophe. He manages to escape, but he loses the manuscript while chasing after a mysterious beauty in a red coat.

This is a psychological and political novel with comic qualities, built like a detective story and centering on a hero gripped by fear and lust. The need to decipher his nightmare leads Meir to dig into his past and search his soul. The deprived neighborhood where he grew up, his Holocaust-survivor parents and the colorful characters of his childhood, including a little girl in a red coat, float to the surface of his memory. Is there a link between the little girl and the woman in his dream? Does she represent his mother's traumatic past? Or is she a symbol of the moral and ideological crisis that both Meir and Israeli society have to confront?

● [CLICK HERE FOR A COMPLETE LIST OF BARKAI'S BOOKS & TRANSLATIONS ON THE ITHL WEBSITE](#)



PHOTO © GADI DAGON

Barkai's language is painterly and elegant ... A commendable book.

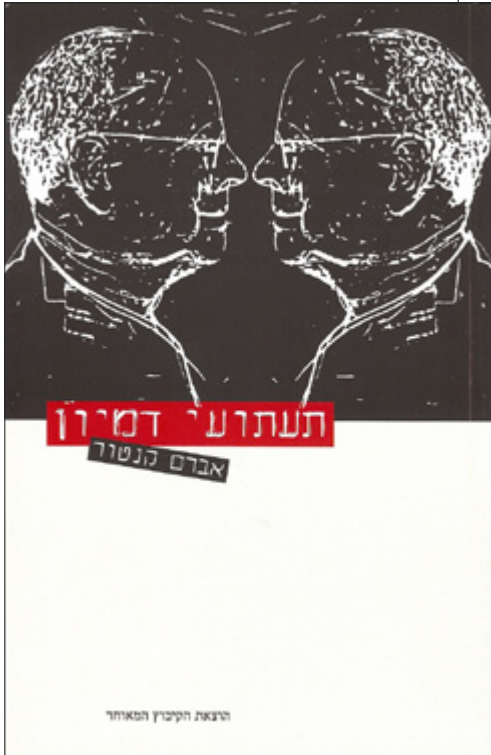
Haaretz

Barkai builds a world that is passionate, vivid, acerbic, entertaining and touching

Maariv

Barkai is a brilliant inventor... his street talk is spicy, prickly, and marvelously funny.

Yekum Tarbut



Deceptive Image

a novel

Tel Aviv, Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 2010.171 pp.

Gavri, a married man with two adult children, has a shock while waiting at the eye clinic. He is not rattled by the results of his checkup but by an encounter with a man who looks very like him, just a little younger. This prompts Gavri to start searching for the identity of his mysterious double, Raphael, and it also encourages him to explore his own identity.

He follows Raphael in his car, finds out where he lives and then discusses the matter with his mother, who gives him his late father's journals, written in German. There, Gavri discovers that Raphael's parents and his own were good friends and that Bruria, Raphael's mother, worked with his father for many years.

Was there some sort of love affair between the two of them, Gavri wonders, and is his younger double the result of that affair? As he comes closer to solving the mystery, his questions about his own family threaten to alter his worldview. But the truth, revealed bit by bit, is fickle. It misleads the protagonist and the readers time and again, and just when everything seems to fall into place another surprising fact surfaces.

Avram Kantor was born in 1950 in Haifa and grew up on Kibbutz Mizra, of which he is still a member. He studied Hebrew and general literature at Haifa University, then German at the University of Konstanz, Germany, where he also completed advanced studies in publishing. After a number of years as editor of fiction at Sifriat Poalim Pubs, he became its editor-in-chief and CEO. Since its merger with Hakibbutz Hameuchad Publishers, he has been deputy-CEO. He is also a translator from English and German to Hebrew.

Kantor has published novels and novellas, collections of stories and books for children, one of which has been adapted and staged. Kantor was awarded the Ze'ev Prize in 1995.



PHOTO © DAN FORGES

An inspired writer ... You'll do well to read this.

Magazine Hamoshavot

Yitzhak Laor

As Much As You Give Me

novellas & short stories

Tel Aviv, Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 2006. 231 pp.



Yitzhak Laor, poet, novelist, essayist and playwright, was born in Pardes Hannah, Israel, in 1948. He received his PhD in theater and literature from Tel Aviv University, and writes editorials and literary reviews for the daily *Haaretz*.

In 1972, Laor was jailed for refusing to serve in the Occupied Territories, and his leftist opinions, expressed in his work, have continually nettled Israel's mainstream establishment. In 2005, Laor founded and became editor of *Mita'am*, a *Review of Literature and Radical Thought*, which has since become a major arena for intellectual debate.

Laor has published nine books of poetry, as well as novels, short stories, essays, and one play. Among his literary awards: the Prime Minister's Prize, twice (1991; 2001), the Bernstein Prize for Poetry (1992), the Hebrew Literature Award (1994), the Moses Award (1998) and the Amichai Poetry Prize (2007).

When his love for Vered, a young girl soldier, proves hopeless, a senior Israel Defense Forces officer commits suicide by crashing his helicopter into the sea. He was a leading candidate to become commander of the Air Force, and the media has a field day with the story. Vered and the officer are the heroes of the central novella in the first part of this book, and they also appear in some of the short stories, most of which are laced with irony and social-political criticism.

This is an original, unconventional book about men and women, sex and obsessive love, longing and frustration, about life between wars, and also parents' love for their children. The protagonists, especially the men, are depicted as ludicrous and pathetic, driven by self-destructive impulses. Laor takes the power hubs of Israeli society to account, especially the military and security establishments. Top officers are depicted not as tough, powerful men but as sentimental types who fall in love with treacherous women. Their emotional vulnerability and their liking for classical music, literature and philosophy stand out in stark contrast to the acts that they are responsible for in the military. As one officer sums up the dichotomy: "Our lives are built upon the screams of others."

PARTIAL ENGLISH AND GERMAN TRANSLATIONS
AVAILABLE

● [CLICK HERE FOR A COMPLETE LIST OF LAOR'S BOOKS & TRANSLATIONS ON THE ITHL WEBSITE](#)



PHOTO © ALINA KORN

Laor's narrator is both thought provoking and ridiculous, generous and niggardly, classical yet crass contemporary Israeli, both petty and elevated.

Haaretz

A tangled, intriguing and very beautiful collection of stories.

Globes

The main novella truly sweeps one away.

Iton 77

Haviva Pedaya

The Eye of the Cat

a novel in stories

Tel Aviv, Am Oved, 2008. 367 pp.



Haviva Pedaya, poet, author and cultural critic was born in Jerusalem in 1965 to a family of rabbis and kabbalists, and now lives in Beersheba. She studied at the Hebrew University and the School of Visual Arts in Jerusalem. Pedaya is at present professor of Jewish history at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, and head of the Elyachar Center for Sephardi Heritage. She has published articles on religion, sociology, art, history, and mysticism as well as three full-length studies and three volumes of poetry. She is also involved in musical and artistic projects, and founded the Yonah Ensemble which has succeeded in revitalizing liturgical and mystical music of the Near East. Pedaya has won many awards, among them the Harry Harshon Award, the Warburg Prize, the Bernstein Prize for poetry (1997) and the President's Prize for Poetry (2004). *The Eye of the Cat* is her first novel.

An environmentally sensitive narrative, set in the desert city of Beersheva.

On the edge of the Turkish-era old city, Haviva Pedaya lives in a house surrounded by feral cats, the heroes of her innovative book. And next to them, human beings who live on the margins of society – eccentric animal lovers, homeless people, drug addicts, illegal migrants, lunatics and others. Pedaya scrutinizes both groups with compassion as they move together in the urban space looking for food. And through them, she offers a critique of urbanism and grieves over the erasure of nature in modern times. For these cats, the representatives of untamed nature, are hounded by the city which makes them outsiders in their own habitat.

Pedaya moves seamlessly between various styles, from fiction to the language of reference books, and from philosophy to Kabbala and Jewish thought, to express her desire to break away from history and give precedence to myth. Alongside wonderful realistic descriptions of the city, its homeless, and the feral cats roaming the streets, she spins a mystical web about the meaning of exile and the other mission of the Jews in the world.



PHOTO © VERED NISSIM

One of the cleverest books written in the past few years. And it is local in the most complex sense.

Haaretz

A highly surprising and original book. A profound indictment of modernity

Maariv-NRG

One of the most beautiful books I have read in recent years.

Yedioth Ahronoth

Dror Burstein

Netanya

a novel

Jerusalem, Keter, 2010. 225 pp.



Dror Burstein was born in 1970 in Netanya, Israel, and lives in Tel Aviv. He first became a fully qualified lawyer, then he left the legal field and started studying literature. He received a PhD in Hebrew literature from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem in 2001 and now teaches there as well as at Tel Aviv University. He also edits programs for Israel Radio's music station and writes literary and art reviews. Burstein has been awarded the Jerusalem Prize for Literature (1997), the Ministry of Science and Culture Prize for Poetry (2002), the Bernstein Prize for his novel, *Avner Brenner* (2005) and the Prime Minister's Prize (2006).

Burstein's previous novel, *Kin*, has been published in French (**Actes Sud**); forthcoming in English (**Dalkey Archive**, U.S.), Italian (**Riuniti**), and German (**Wallstein**).

Dror Burstein himself is the hero of this novel. Lying on a bench in Tel Aviv and looking up at the starry sky with awe, he conjures up episodes from his childhood in the coastal town of Netanya. He tells us about his beloved grandfather, who came to pre-state Israel from Europe in the 1930s after seeing Hitler give a speech at a mass gathering; about a Netanya hotel that used to belong to the family but over time became dilapidated; about the astronomy class he attended as a child; his uncle who died in the Yom Kippur War; a painter who lived next door and abducted a child he held for ransom; and a classmate who was actually a comet but never told anyone about it, and would ride his bicycle to school every morning still asleep.

Burstein blends his personal memories with stories from science books that focus on the creation of the universe and its predicted destruction. The result is a fascinating monologue that seeks to convey not only his personal story but the bigger picture—the story of life on earth and of the stars that are light years away from us. *Netanya* is an unusual piece of work in the landscape of Israeli literature, as it transforms human history into an almost intimate family story and makes the universe we live in into a home.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION IN PROGRESS



PHOTO © DAN FORGES

An enthralling work of literature, accessible and exciting

Haaretz

Netanya is the most profound, beautiful, multi-layered book of Burstein's to date.

Yedioth Ahronoth

Dror Burstein is one of the most gifted writers in Israel.

Time Out

Zeruya Shalev

Shards of Life

a novel

Jerusalem, Keter, 2011. 336 pp.



Zeruya Shalev was born at Kibbutz Kinneret. She has an MA in Biblical studies and works as a literary editor. Shalev has written five novels, poetry, and a children's book. *Love Life, Husband and Wife and Late Family (Thera)* have been bestsellers in several countries. *Love Life* is included in Der Spiegel's prestigious list of 20 Best Novels in World Literature in the last 40 years. *Husband and Wife* is included in the French Fnac list of the 200 Best Books of the Decade. Shalev has received the Book Publishers Association's Gold and Platinum Prizes, the Corine Prize (Germany, 2001), the Amphi Award (France, 2003), the ACUM Award (1997, 2003, 2005), and the French Wizo Prize (2007). Her books have been published abroad in 25 languages.

Shards of Life is forthcoming in German (**Berlin Verlag**), French (**Gallimard**), English (**Bloomsbury**), Italian (**Feltrinelli**) and Polish (**WAB**).

In her radiant new novel, Shalev's insight, intensity and unique style come together to explore the conflicts between parents and children.

Elderly Hemda Horovitz lies in bed in Jerusalem, barely conscious, and bitterly examines her life: her youth on the kibbutz; her inability to fulfil the demands of her stern pioneer father; her loveless marriage to a rigid Holocaust survivor; and her two children, one of whom she couldn't love while the other she loved too much.

Avner, her beloved son, has grown up to become a heavy, anguished man, frustrated in his work and tortured by a marriage filled with contempt and resentment. At the hospital with his mother, he becomes obsessed by a beautiful woman that he sees there, and after her husband's death, a strange and delicate relationship develops between them.

Dina, Hemda's daughter, has married a taciturn photographer and put aside her professional dreams in order to give her teenage daughter, Nitzan, the warmth she herself never received from her mother. But as Nitzan withdraws from her, she slides into despair and longs to adopt an abandoned child. In the face of family opposition, Dina finds herself at a dead end: she cannot give up the child she longs for, but may have to give up the family she has in order to fulfil her dream.

An awe-inspiring portrayal of parents and children, of the anger, resentment, disappointment, yearning, insult, and love that bind and separate them.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION IN PROGRESS

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PHOTO © DAN FORGES

I am hypnotized by Zeruya Shalev's new book
President Shimon Peres

I read *Shards* with an enormous sense of excitement... and feel that she describes exactly my own thoughts.

Haaretz

A pure dive into the soul and mind... Zeruya Shalev gives us back the taste for reading at its most profound.

Maariv

One of the most marvelous books I've read recently.

Yedioth Ahronoth

Tuvia Ruebner

Selected Poems



Tuvia Ruebner was born in Bratislava, Slovakia, in 1924 and came to pre-state Israel in 1941. Since 1972, he has been professor of comparative literature at Haifa University. He is now Professor Emeritus. Ruebner is a member of the German Language and Literature Academy and of the Mainz Academy of Science and Literature. He has published many books of poetry, as well as academic studies and literary translations to German and Hebrew. Among Ruebner's many awards: the Jerusalem Prize, the D. Steinberg Prize (Zurich, 1981), the Christian Wagner Prize (Germany, 1994), the Jeannette Schocken Prize (Germany, 1999), the Paul Celan Translation Prize (1999), the Israel Prize (2008), the Jan Smrek Prize (Slovakia, 2008) and the Theodore Kramer Prize (2008). His poems have been translated into 14 languages.

Tuvia Ruebner is one of the leading Israeli poets of the generation that began writing in the 1950s. His poetry addresses the great subjects of modern Jewish history—World War II and the destruction of European Jewry. The experience of family loss gives his poems a very personal perspective and insights that are also universal. The reality that is implied, chaotic and disjointed as it may be, is reassembled and restored in his poems by the hand of a craftsman, with restraint, economy and polish.

Ruebner's poetry has two main roots—Europe and Israel, and one of the salient elements of his work is memory, which brings the past into the present. He thus also deals with the varied aspects of time, out of a sharp awareness of its transience. However, the presence of death does not cancel out his passion for beauty, his search for it and his acknowledgement of its existence even in a world that is too cruel to bear.

Ruebner's poetry is polished and intellectual, influenced by the ancient layers of Hebrew culture as well as by the European culture that he imbibed in his childhood and youth. This is enthralling poetry, and the changes that it has undergone attest to its strength and its ongoing vitality.

(From the Judges' Decision, Israel Prize, 2008)

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PHOTO © DAN FORGES

An extraordinary book.

Die Presse

Ruebner's German now has an unusual lightness... which reflects above all great linguistic mastery.

Suddeutsche Zeitung

What, in Ruebner's poetry, becomes language is simultaneously beyond language or its refutation.

Frankfurter Rundschau

Fate did not spare Tuvia Ruebner. But he has survived, he writes, he defies death.

Die Welt