



New Books from Israel • Fall 2010

תט THE INSTITUTE FOR THE TRANSLATION OF HEBREW LITERATURE

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For backlist books available in translation, see individual author pages on our website.

Zeruya Shalev

Shards of Life

a novel
Jerusalem, Keter, forthcoming

PHOTO © DAN PORGES

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Zeruya Shalev was born at Kibbutz Kinneret. She has an MA in Biblical studies and is a literary editor at Keter Publishing House. Shalev has written five novels, a book of poetry and a children's book. *Love Life*, *Husband and Wife* and *Late Family (Terra)* have been bestsellers in several countries. *Love Life* is included in *Der Spiegel's* prestigious list of "20 Best Novels in World Literature" over the last 40 years, together with Saul Bellow, J. M. Coetzee and Philip Roth. *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)

SYNOPSIS

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, unable to live up to the demands of her stern pioneer father; her loveless marriage to an equally rigid Holocaust survivor, and her two children, one of whom she couldn't love, the other 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 with a beautiful woman he sees there; 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 never received from her own mother. But as Nitzan withdraws from her, she slides into despair, and is overcome by a longing 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 to satisfy it.

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

PRESS BYTES

No reviews yet available

For *LOVE LIFE*

A runaway success.

New York Times

Zeruya Shalev will outlast literary trends.

Die Welt

An extraordinary novel...don't miss it.

La Repubblica

For *HUSBAND AND WIFE*

Magic. In this book there is immeasurable magic.

Marcel Reich-Ranicki

Shalev's language is hauntingly, painfully lyrical.

Publishers Weekly

Shalev is, quite rightly, celebrated as a narrator of elemental powers.

Die Welt

A novel so deep and shrewd that you cannot stop reading.

Przekroj (Poland)

For *LATE FAMILY (TERRA)*

Shalev is an archeologist of the soul, unequalled in her ability.

Le Monde des Livres

A breathtaking book...The sentences follow like a flawless string of pearls, right up to the last page that leaves you dazzled by the power of the author's fictional world.

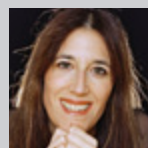
Sonntags Zeitung

A magnificent novel.

Les Inrockuptibles

She is the first-born baby on the kibbutz and they crowd into the dining hall to watch her take her first steps. It seems that all the longing for younger siblings left behind in Europe, and for their own childhoods cut short by stringent ideology, and for the parents they have not seen since they set out for this new life, whether in anger or with a broken heart, have all congregated there in the dining hall that has only just been built. With glistening eyes they regard her, wheedling her to walk, for them, for their aged parents, for their siblings who have in the meantime grown up and will, within a few years, be annihilated, and she, scared but wishing to please, stands planted on tiny legs, holding her father's hand—do his beautiful fingers already reek of fish, or will that only happen later, when they move to the new kibbutz, the one near the lake and the swamps, the kibbutz established for the purpose of draining the lake and the swamps—and she thrusts one shaky leg forward at the very moment her father lets go of her hand, and the crowd roars, cheering her on in a terrifying din, and she falls on her back and bursts into tears under the sky-blue and stubborn eyes of her father, who coaxes her to stand up and try again, to show them all she can triumph: just one more small step. But she lies sprawled on her back knowing this is a gift she cannot give him, knowing he will never forgive her.

IN HER OWN WORDS



For the first time, in this novel, I chose to move between three centers of consciousness instead of immersing myself in one. For the first time, I move from story to story, from one period to another, from place to place. Like in my previous novels, I try to build a house, but its architecture is entirely different. More people live in it and more windows look out onto this country—onto the earliest days of the kibbutz, at highly charged human rights issues, and in the center, most highly charged of all: the relationship between parents and children, of children to their parents, from infancy to old age. Having said this, I think that the reader most surprised at this book is myself.



CLICK HERE FOR A COMPLETE LIST OF SHALEV'S **BOOKS IN TRANSLATION** ON THE ITHL WEBSITE

Etgar Keret

Suddenly, a Knock on the Door

short stories

Tel Aviv, Zmora-Bitan, 2010. 179 pp.

70,000 copies sold in the first 3 months!!!**ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Born in Tel Aviv in 1967, **Etgar Keret** has received international acclaim. His writing has been published in the *New York Times*, *le Monde*, the *Guardian*, the *Paris Review* and *Zoetrope*. At present, Keret lectures at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev. He has received numerous awards, including the Israel Ministry of Culture Cinema Prize, the Israel Cultural Excellence Foundation Award (2006), the Jewish Quarterly Wingate Prize (UK, 2008), the St. Petersburg Public Library's Foreign Favorite (2010). In 2007, Keret and Shira Gefen won the Cannes Film Festival's "Camera d'Or" Award for their movie *Jellyfish*. Other successful movies include *Wristcutters: A Love Story* (2007) and *\$9.99* (2009). Most recently, Keret was awarded the prestigious Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres (France, 2010). His books have been published abroad in 29 languages in 34 countries.

SYNOPSIS

In his new collection of stories, Etgar Keret once again proves his endless ingenuity. In fact, these are some of the finest and most mature he has written. In "Suddenly a Knock on the Door," a man barges into the writer's house and demands that he tell him a story, because the real world is exasperating and he needs something different. The familiar humdrum and the exciting "different" reappear in many of the stories: the imagination takes over and an absurd, surreal world is created. Another story is about a pathological liar who discovers one day that all his lies are true, and a third tells about a young woman who finds a miniature zipper in her partner's mouth. When she unzips it, her partner opens up—literally—and inside she discovers Jurgen who, if we can believe his penis, is not even Jewish. The stories are funny but also dark and menacing. The boy from Keret's earlier stories has grown older and become a naïve, defeatist Woody Allen-like figure who forges an alliance of the weak with his young son. Together, the two become a winning team that battles a violent, evil and depressing world. As always, however, Keret also gives us wonderful moments of grace and strives to reach the human spark in a dark world.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION AVAILABLE





Robbie was seven when he told his first lie. His mother had given him a wrinkled old 10-lira bill, and asked him to go buy her a pack of king-size Kents at the grocery store. Robbie bought an ice cream cone instead. He took the change and hid the coins under a white rock in the backyard of their apartment building, and when Mother asked him what had happened he told her that a giant redheaded kid with a front tooth missing tackled him in the street, slapped him and took the money. Mother believed him. And ever since then Robbie hadn't stopped lying. When he was in high school he spent almost an entire week vegging out on the beach in Eilat, after selling the student counselor a story about his aunt from Beer Sheba who'd discovered she had cancer. When he was in the army, this imaginary aunt turned blind and helped Robbie get out of a screw-up, big time, for being AWOL... There were lots of lies along the way in Robbie Algrabli's life. Lies without arms and lies that were ill, lies that do harm and lies that could kill. Lies with legs, lies on wheels, lies in tuxedos, lies that steal. Lies he made up in a flash without any thought of ever coming across them again.

PRESS BYTES

This is Keret's greatest. These stories are the most funny, dark and poignant I've read in a long time. It's tempting to say they are his most Kafkaesque, but in fact they are his most Keretesque

Author Jonathan Safran Foer

Etgar Keret's newest collection is fantastic and moving and—as always with Keret—surprisingly and endearingly weird. It's a special Keret book.

Author Nathan Englander

Another manifestation of Keret's magic—but more mature and more interesting.

Haaretz

Outstanding... Some of the stories are close to perfection.

NRG Maariv

IN HIS OWN WORDS



This book comes after a long period when I only wrote sporadically. Before that, writing was a bridge to my unconscious impulses; then something snapped, something almost vital for preserving my sanity. The gap between my new 'bourgeois' family life and the wild world of my stories widened until I felt that my characters were no longer connected to me. During that time, I worked mainly in cinema—an exciting place to be but, for me at least, clearly second best. And so, eight years after I went into Movieland exile, I found my way back to writing. Luckily, although my new characters have finer apartments, better jobs and stock portfolios, their lives have not become any easier. So I could still find myself new heartbreaking, funny and disturbing stories to tell.



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



PHOTO © DAN FORGES

Yoram Kaniuk

1948

autobiographical novel

Tel Aviv, Yedioth Ahronoth, 2010. 190 pp.

Over 4 months on the Bestseller List!!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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 prizes: 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 Kugel Prize for Lifetime Achievement (2008) and the France-Israel Foundation Award (2010). A feature film based on his novel, *Adam Resurrected*, directed by Paul Schrader, was released to critical acclaim in 2008. Kaniuk's books have been published abroad in 20 languages.

1948 is forthcoming in Italian (Giuntina).

SYNOPSIS

Before Yoram Kaniuk became a writer he was a soldier who, at the age of seventeen, fought in Israel's War of Independence. Written sixty years later, this book recounts his experiences in his own unique way. "I'm not sure what I actually remember," he admits, "because memory does play tricks on you and there is no one single truth." But factual accuracy is not the main thing. The beauty and importance of this novel lies in Kaniuk's remarkable ability to tell a story and convey his singular perspective of events. He was a young man from a good home, "a Mama's boy," but he took part in the fiercest battles over Jerusalem, was wounded and almost lost his leg. He and his friends fought side by side by day and buried the dead by night, knowing that the next night it might be their turn.

1948 is thus a painful, shocking book that avoids self-righteousness and includes plenty of self-criticism. But it is also a humorous book because Kaniuk, from the distance of time and age, is also well aware that wars are senseless. "We really thought it would be glorious to die," he comments ironically. "We may have been handsome and bold, but not very wise. Wise people do not choose to die when they are only seventeen or eighteen. We were children," he explains. And we find ourselves captivated by his love for the children that he and his friends used to be.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION AVAILABLE



It hurt badly, I couldn't move. The other soldiers didn't see me fall, and ran on. There may have been another two wounded men with me, but the sunlight blinded me. When I opened my eyes, I saw a man wearing an Arab Legionnaire's red kaffiyeh aiming his rifle at me, or maybe it was a submachine gun. The light became less dazzling. I saw one of his eyes fixed on me. The other eye was apparently watching me through sights of the rifle or submachine gun that he was aiming at me. I was wearing my British sailor's whites, and I realized—I don't know how—that the man was English, so he had to be an officer.

He didn't shout. He didn't say a word. We were about twenty meters apart and I knew this was the end. He fired to kill, but missed, and now he would correct his aim. That's what a soldier does. A soldier kills. I concentrated, or I think I did, on the gaping hole of the muzzle. I remember that it looked bigger than it could possibly have been. I waited. That's all I could do. The blood was still oozing from my leg. When a young man is waiting for death, it's nothing like when you are old.

PRESS BYTES

A very powerful experience. It is amazing to see the exceptional, pungent prose this man still produces.

NRG Maariv

Kaniuk conveys the spirit of the time in a truly unique way.

Ynet

The best book I've read this year... Kaniuk's voice is bold, clear, loving, pained.

Haaretz

One of the finest and most important books to be published this year. I read it with bated breath.

Achbar Ha'ir

IN HIS OWN WORDS



I started writing the book in 1949 after I was wounded, while I was working as a sailor on a ship. I called the book "Benny's Friends." I've been trying to write it since then, on and off. I wanted to write about how a soldier who fought in that war actually felt. No one said anything about the soldiers. Only the commanders are mentioned in the history books of the Palmach. A third of our generation was killed, and no one spoke up for them. There are two or three battles that no one wrote about but me, and over fifty people were killed in them. I remember the soldiers walking around Tel Aviv with this look in their eyes after the war was over. No one knew about post-traumatic stress in those days, and there weren't any mental health officers. You survived one battle and got sent on to the next battle, day after day.



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

Gail Hareven

Lies, First Person

a novel

Tel Aviv, Achuzat Bayit, 2008. 394 pp.

PHOTO © DAN PORGES

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Gail Hareven was born in Jerusalem in 1959. She studied behavioral sciences as well as Talmud and Jewish philosophy. Hareven has been a columnist for *Maariv*, *Hadashot*, the *Jerusalem Report* and *Lady Globes*. She also teaches feminist theory, gives writing workshops and has written widely on politics and feminist issues. In 2006, she was visiting professor at the University of Illinois. Hareven has published seven novels, short stories, non-fiction, children's books and four plays, all of which have been staged. For her novel, *The Confessions of Noa Weber*, Hareven received the prestigious Sapir Prize (2002) and the Best Translated Novel Award (USA, 2010).

SYNOPSIS

Elisheva and Eleanor grew up in a small family hotel that their parents managed in Jerusalem. One day, an uncle from America, a well-known historian, comes to the hotel to write a book about Hitler. When it is published, the book creates a scandal—it is written as an autobiography narrated by the infamous *Führer* himself. What no one knows, however, is that while writing it, the uncle raped Elisheva, then in high school, and sadistically abused her. This, under the pretext of experiencing evil for the sake of his work. Following this trauma, Elisheva has a breakdown and tries to kill herself, but is saved by a young American Evangelist who falls in love with her and marries her. After converting to Christianity, Elisheva returns with her husband to the U.S., finds her place in his community and is able to forgive her uncle.

At the time, her sister Eleanor repressed the incident and put it out of her mind. Now, many years later, when she is happily married and writing for a local Jerusalem newspaper, her uncle tries to contact her. He is coming to Jerusalem again. The awful memories resurface and she decides to take revenge for her sister. But will that free her and give her the peace she seeks? In this wise book, Hareven examines the need for revenge as opposed to the need to forgive, and explores the question of human evil.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION IN PROGRESS



He was a sadist, a bully, and a pornographer, that's what he was. A rat in a filthy cloak of intellectual pretension. He was some kind of a thing that I cannot call human. A rodent. A rat. A deformed rat that decided it had the power to gnaw its way into Hitler's black box and to decipher its contents from the inside. Before he left, he gave my sister an orchid in a pot. Elisheva put it on the reception counter, and that's where the gift stood until it withered. I have no idea why I am mentioning this now. I mention it because I remember it. It was this detail about the white orchid that I, for some reason or other, told Oded at the beginning, but he didn't get very excited. He just remarked that giving flowers seemed to be part of the deception. And I knew, but I didn't explain, that the purpose of the orchid was something completely different, and that in this parting act too, that non-person was mocking her. Just as he had done when he met me and kissed my hand.

PRESS BYTES

Brilliant, and as surprising as a hand grenade—complex and full of contradictions. Hareven joins writers like Nabokov, Orwell and Dostoyevsky in her exploration of evil, forgiveness and punishment.

Ynet

You will not be able to put this book down for more than a few hours.

Time Out

A wonderful and horrifying opening... Only at the end do you understand the plot that has unraveled—a painful and brilliant deception.

Notes

BOOKS PUBLISHED

BOOKS PUBLISHED IN HEBREW

A Modern Legend (children), Am Oved, 1986
Hope If We Insist (non-fiction), Am Oved, 1992
Lunch With Mother (stories), Zmora Bitan, 1993
The True Story (novel), Zmora Bitan, 1994
Muse (novel), Keter, 1995
This Morning I Killed a Man (stories), Keter, 1997
The Land of the Cloth-Gobblers (children), Keter, 1997
The Road to Paradise (stories), Keter, 1999
The Confessions of Noa Weber (My True Love), (novel), Keter, 2000
Life of an Angel (novel), Keshet, 2003
The Right Man (novel), Keshet, 2005

Written on the Wall (non-fiction), Gail Hareven & Aliza Olmert, Yedioth Ahronoth, 2007
Lies, First Person (novel), Achuzat Bayit, 2008
Waking Heart (novel), Achuzat Bayit, 2010

BOOKS IN TRANSLATION

The Confessions of Noa Weber (My True Love)
 English: New Jersey, Melville, 2009
 Italian: Florence, Giuntina, forthcoming

Sami Berdugo

That Is to Say

a novel

Tel Aviv, Hakibbutz Hameuchad/Siman Kriah/Kinneret, Zmora-Bitan, 2010. 322 pp.

PHOTO © SHLOMO AMITAY



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Sami Berdugo was born in 1970. He studied comparative literature and history at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. At present, he teaches creative writing at Tel Aviv University and Bezalel Academy of Art and Design. He also holds writing workshops for youth. Berdugo has published two novels, a collection of short stories and two novellas. In 1998, he won the *Haaretz* Short Story Competition. He has also been awarded the Yaakov Shabtai Prize (2002), the Peter Schweifert Prize (2003), the Bernstein Prize (2003), the Prime Minister's Prize (2005) and the Newman Prize (2007). He is the first Israeli to be awarded a Sanskriti Foundation Residency (New Delhi, 2007).

SYNOPSIS

A librarian takes time out from work and fetches his illiterate, Moroccan-born mother from the seniors' home where she lives. He locks her up in the derelict house where he spent his childhood in order, finally, to teach her to read and write in Hebrew after all these years in Israel. The week is also supposed to give the son some time to think—he is going through a sexual identity crisis and feels an outsider to society.

However, things do not work out as planned, because the old woman surprises her son with the tale of a young girl who was abandoned by her mother, shunted between relatives in Morocco and Algeria, and deprived of an education. The mother's dramatic tale—her own, in fact—is told in broken but vibrant language, and the narrator is slowly captivated by the stubborn girl who managed to create a sense of self against all odds.

This is an ambitious and moving novel on the conflict between an immigrant mother, widowed young, and her educated son. In the end, the mother's story wins. She is revealed as a gifted storyteller and a strong, wise woman. The conflicted son, who sought to educate his dying mother, gets a chance to grow closer to her and learns a lesson that he will never forget.



Though she is still alive, I am awaiting her death. She stops before the stairs leading to the house, in need of a rest. I stand behind her and prepare for what lies ahead. She senses me beside her, places her foot on the first step and climbs slowly, holding onto the green handrail. The metal swerves towards her but doesn't make a sound, and I watch from the bottom of the stairs as she moves towards the locked door. She hasn't lived in this house for seven years; I have a key and she doesn't. She can no longer refuse, not here. I took her from the old people's home. An eight day vacation, that's what they gave me. "Why not longer?" I asked the head nurse, and she referred me to the doctor. "We don't recommend that she remain unsupervised for longer," he replied. "But she feels all right, doesn't she?" I asked, "She's not that old, and she's healthy." He only nodded.

I understood long ago that she had been taken from me, but now at last we have come to the place where we can work. Even a week will do. It will be difficult; my stomach is tense. I have retreated from my daily environment and left my city in the north—my mission has brought me here.

PRESS BYTES

Berdugo's voice comes across loud and clear. A wonderful book.

Haaretz

The mother's story has an *Arabian Nights* quality to it—utterly fascinating.

Calcalist

A powerful drama. The mother's inarticulate style has extraordinary linguistic sensuality... Against the backdrop of the Jewish community's life in Morocco, Berdugo tells a shrewd Dickensian story about orphanhood, wandering and loneliness.

NRG Maariv

A fascinating novel... Opens a door into a magical world.

Ynet

BOOKS PUBLISHED

BOOKS PUBLISHED IN HEBREW

Black Girl (stories), Babel, 1999

And Say to the Wind (novel), Hakibbutz Hameuchad/Siman Kriah, 2002

Orphans (2 novellas), Hakibbutz Hameuchad/Siman Kriah, 2006

That Is to Say (novel), Hakibbutz Hameuchad/Siman Kriah/Kinneret, Zmora-Bitan, 2010



PHOTO © DAN PORGES

Eyal Megged

How to Live

a novel

Tel Aviv, Yedioth Ahronoth, 2010. 122 pp.

How to Live is written in blood and reads like a prayer – Yoel Hoffmann

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Eyal Megged was born in New York in 1948, and grew up in Tel Aviv. He studied philosophy and art history at Tel Aviv University. A poet and novelist, Megged has served as editor of a weekly *Voice of Israel* radio program and has written regular columns for Israel's leading newspapers on a wide range of subjects, including literature, culture and sports. At present he teaches creative writing. Megged has been awarded the Macmillan Prize (1993), the *Yedioth Ahronoth* Prize for his short story, "Cup Final," the Book Publishers Association's Gold and Platinum Book Prizes (1999, 2001) and the Prime Minister's Prize twice (1990, 2005).

SYNOPSIS

This is the story of a not-very-young Israeli man who travels with his wife to Siberia to adopt an orphaned boy that the couple plans to raise in Israel. However, the main focus of *How to Live* is not the adoption process, intriguing as it may be, but the search for meaning. The book, written in a contemplative-lyrical style, takes the form of a diary in which the writer recounts the sense of emptiness that he experiences: his work with words does not satisfy him. He knows that the answer lies within him, but he needs a revelation in order to fully realize it. He has this revelation when he and his wife decide to go through with the adoption.

Megged depicts the experience as a sort of rebirth. Back in Israel, the new father takes the child, who has come from white, snowy Siberia, for a day on the sunny beaches of Jaffa. It is a primal moment: the child playing in the waves is like "the first man," opening his eyes to the world for the very first time. Through this experience, the man is reborn along with his adopted son. He reconnects to the past, to the child within himself and senses the true meaning of life.

PARTIAL ENGLISH TRANSLATION AVAILABLE



When we returned from our little trip he refused to remove his woolen hat or coat and join the other children in their despondency as they sat in the scrub in their valley of tears. He burst into bitter tears of his own and pressed himself against us—he had already become my child, and yet I could not help him. A mountain of strict rules came between us.

For a brief, stolen moment light shone upon him: the woman raised his soul from hell, then she left and, once more, darkness reigned. That is the true face of the world: darkness and light. Destiny is a mantle that envelops the soul. Destiny is beyond the realm of my free choice. It is the choice of God. A great thing had come over me: for a rare moment I was his age, wrapped in his coat. It was I who cried out for redemption but could not be redeemed. Through him time ceased to turn on its axis and I was able to do that which can barely be believed: to alter the course of two destinies. When I left him, I left two children behind in one fell swoop—him and me. It was a brutal, beautiful moment.

PRESS BYTES

The more you read this finely distilled book the more you become aware that this is a theological book. What Hebrew philosophy has not managed to produce since Martin Buber is offered by this Jerusalem author in 109 short chapters of courageous, profound and sublime spiritual exposure.

Haaretz

A fascinating and subversive book... Megged takes us to a higher, more existential sphere in the heart of man, a bare, primordial and thought provoking place.

Ynet

The confessional tone, as well as the book's frantic rhythm make it a splendid diary, a Russian fairytale that invites you to walk among the paths of soul and body.

Israel Hayom

BOOKS PUBLISHED

BOOKS PUBLISHED IN HEBREW

Poetry

- Eden Park*, Ekked, 1972
Edge, Sifriat Poalim, 1975
End of Memory, Massada, 1976
Yards, Dvir, 1979
Three Years, Sifriat Poalim, 1983
Under the Blue Carpet, Kinneret, 1985
Esther's Storm, Zmora Bitan, 1986
Back to Happiness, Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 1989
Crappagh, Zmora Bitan, 1990

Fiction

- Cup Final* (stories), Kinneret, 1988
Barbarossa (novel), Keter, 1993
The Kamikaze's Woman (novel), Zmora Bitan, 1995
Secrets of Mongolia (novel), Zmora Bitan, 1997; Yedioth Ahronoth, 2003
Saving Grace (novel), Yedioth Ahronoth, 1999
Everlasting Life (novel), Yedioth Ahronoth, 2001
The Black Light (novel), Yedioth Ahronoth, 2002

Woman Country (novel), Yedioth Ahronoth, 2006

A Couple (novel), Yedioth Ahronoth, 2008

How to Live (novel), Yedioth Ahronoth, 2010

BOOKS IN TRANSLATION

Saving Grace
 German: Berlin, Berlin Verlag, 2005; pback: Berlin, Berliner Taschenbuch, 2006

Gadi Taub

Allenby Street

a novel

Tel Aviv, Yedioth Ahronoth, 2009. 526 pp.

On the Bestseller List for over 3 months!!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

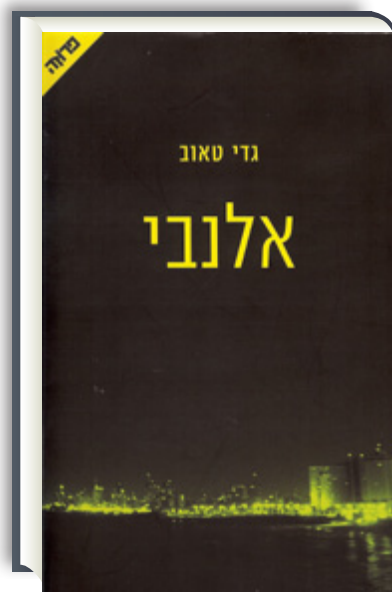
Born in Jerusalem in 1965, **Gadi Taub** holds a Ph.D. in American History from Rutgers University, and teaches at the School of Public Policy and the Department of Communications at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. He also writes an op-ed column for Israel's largest daily, *Yedioth Ahronoth*, appears regularly on Channel 10's political talk show, and is a frequent contributor to American and European newspapers. Taub has published a novel, short stories, non-fiction and a number of children's books. His book, *The Settlers and the Struggle Over the Meaning of Zionism* was published by Yale University Press in 2010. *Allenby Street*, his debut novel, is currently being adapted for a major TV drama. Taub has received the Ze'ev Prize (2000), and the Publishers Association's Gold Prize (2009).

SYNOPSIS

Three wild love stories unfold around one central fast-paced plot. Beginning with a young woman beaten up in a downtown dance-bar, the novel reveals a whole world that thrives below the radar of bourgeois Tel Aviv life. Arik, a club-owner; Dima, a bouncer—a tough Russian immigrant; his girlfriend Mika, a stripper from an Orthodox Jewish home, the flashpoint of the opening attack, with whom Arik falls obsessively in love; her assumed assailant, later found nearby in a coma.

Innovative and highly realistic, this novel offers a unique look at what has happened to Israel's melting pot since the decline of its welfare state, and exposes the erosion of social solidarity. It views Israel's immigrant society not from a bird's eye point of view, but strictly from below. *Allenby Street* is thus a panoramic portrait of Tel Aviv's underbelly—back streets, strip clubs, after-hours bars—where an assortment of marginal characters dwell: strippers, bouncers, hookers, bar owners, misfit young Orthodox men and women, patrol cops, foreign workers, Ethiopian and Russian immigrants, Arabs, locked together in a world of roiling passions, lies, manipulation, incest and more.

PARTIAL ENGLISH TRANSLATION AVAILABLE



The door of the club swung open and the railing around the entrance filled with girls. Seven, eight, ten. Heels, hands, legs, perfume, skirts, earrings. Shouting. Music from inside. Alex freaked out, held the walkie-talkie over his head. “Yo, out!” he said. He shoved the girls. “You can’t stand here. Out!”

Artium unhooked the exit chain. Artium was a head taller than the girls. Black windbreaker with the security company’s logo: Lock Security. “He said out of here. Get out!” The pack of girls got stuck in the exit. Artium grabbed one by the hand, and pulled. “Get your hands off me, asshole!” she said. Artium didn’t get his hands off her. He pulled harder. Alex shoved from behind. Another Lock guy helped. Tzahi. Then Alex saw it: in the middle, a girl with blood on her chin. Convulsing, eyes shut tight. Crying. Shoulders shaking.

PRESS BYTES

A superb novel, a successful combination of suspense story and journalistic investigation.

Haaretz

One of the most important novels written in this country.

Ynet

The story grips you. It takes you straight in. You want to know what happened, who betrayed who, who stayed loyal.

Yedioth Ahronoth

An extraordinarily powerful reading experience.

Achbar Ha’Ir

Brave and daring... has something new and original.

Author Etgar Keret

BOOKS PUBLISHED

BOOKS PUBLISHED IN HEBREW

What Might Have Happened Had We Forgotten Dov (stories), Hakibbutz Hameuchad/Siman Kriah, 1992

A Dispirited Rebellion – Essays on Contemporary Israeli Culture (non-fiction), Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 1997

The Settlers and the Struggle over the Meaning of Zionism (non-fiction), Yedioth Ahronoth, 2007

Allenby Street (novel), Yedioth Ahronoth, 2009

CHILDREN

Things I Keep to Myself, Keter, 1990

Things I Keep From Yael, Keter, 1992

The Witch of Melchett Street, Keter, 2000

The Giraffe Who Liked to Feel Sorry for Himself, Keter, 2003

The Deer Who Liked Everything Clean, Keter, 2005

The Lion Who Thought He Was a Coward, Yedioth Ahronoth, 2007

BOOKS IN TRANSLATION

The Settlers and the Struggle over the Meaning of Zionism English: Yale Univ. Press, 2010

The Giraffe Who Liked to Feel Sorry for Himself (children) English: Gurgaon, Scholastic, 2006

Hindi: Gurgaon, Scholastic, forthcoming

Kalanit W. Ochayon

Woman on the Edge of the Highway

a novel
Tel Aviv, Babel, 2010. 280 pp.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Kalanit W. Ochayon was born in Israel in 1973. She has a BA in literature and philosophy from Haifa University, and now lives with her husband and two sons in Kibbutz Ayelet Hashachar. *Woman on the Edge of the Highway* is her debut novel. Her series of children's books will be published in 2010. Ochayon is currently working on her second novel.



SYNOPSIS

Naomi's shoes are completely worn out from walking the highways. She doesn't mind it when people offer her money or throw her a sandwich from a passing bus. Day after day, for the past fifteen years, she has been searching the roads for a clue to the tragedy that ruined her life.

Tamar's family fell apart the day her seven-year-old sister went missing on the beach. Thirty years later, Tamar still lives with her parents and works at the local 24/7 store, obeying the strangest compulsions in her unceasing search for the sister she has lost.

Sasha, on the other hand, wouldn't mind seeing the last of her sister: While she struggles to attract her impervious boss and retrieve their flaky father's inheritance, her sister decides to take her first steps in the porn industry along with her moronic Argentinian boyfriend.

Each woman tells her story in her own unique voice—all of them passionate, often hilarious, always intensely moving. Gradually, a breathtaking puzzle of extraordinary humanity emerges.



Amos wiped his face on his sleeve and clutched at the Russian with both hands. Iggy said, “Leave him alone, you idiot! Leave him!” but it seemed some demon had taken hold of him. He gripped the Russian with both hands and hurled him at the scaffolding. Hurling him hard.

The scaffolding shook.

And then, a split second later, it came loose. Collapsed. The Russian fell and crashed along with it on the road.

Suddenly all the streetlights went on and everything was lit up. The Russian was lying face down on the road, an oozing blob of dough. I looked at him and wanted to die. Thinking about the thirteen cigarettes butts I simply wanted to die.

We stood and stared at him for a few more seconds. Stood there looking, stunned. The police station courtyard was deserted. The whole avenue seemed deserted. Not a living soul moved.

We were breathing heavily, all three of us. As if we had just ran a marathon. We looked at each other and began running.

Running away like crazy.

PRESS BYTES

I immediately associated the book with the movie genre of intertwining stories, like Alejandro Iñárritu’s two triptychs, *Love’s a Bitch* and *Babel*, or Paul Haggis’s *Crash*. The book has a strong plot, the characters are wild and fetching... In it, Israeliness is welded into a single, sweaty, dusty entity, struggling for a breath of fresh air. I am sure this will be a favorite with many youngsters.

Haaretz

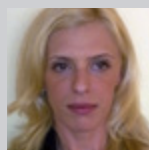
A very emotional novel that touches the nerve... Refreshingly different. In her debut novel, Ochayon lays the foundations for her wise and sensitive writing.

Ynet

Written with pure genius, funny and charming. Its unique language will become the talk of the town.

Channel 2 TV

IN HER OWN WORDS



The first image that came into my mind and impelled me to write was Naomi, a strange old woman trudging the roads in the north of the country, trying desperately to understand the reason for her son’s death. At the time, it didn’t occur to me that she would come to haunt me outside the novel too. But shortly after it was published, a number of readers contacted me to tell me that “Naomi” really existed—there actually was a lonely woman who walked ceaselessly on those roads until her death about ten years ago. Why did she do that? Over time, many myths have tried to answer this question. Astonishingly, one of the versions claims that it started after her only son was killed in a road accident in the area—like in the novel.

BOOKS PUBLISHED

BOOKS PUBLISHED IN HEBREW

Woman on the Edge of the Highway,
Babel, 2010

Mira Magen

Vodka and Bread

a novel

Tel Aviv, Zmora-Bitan, 2010. 271 pp.

Bestseller!!!**ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Mira Magen was born in Kfar Saba, Israel, to an Orthodox family. She studied psychology and sociology before turning to nursing. She worked as a nurse at Hadassah Hospital in Jerusalem. Magen started writing in the early 1990s. She has published a book of short stories and six bestselling novels. She was awarded the Prime Minister's Prize in 2005.

Vodka and Bread is forthcoming in German (dtv).

SYNOPSIS

A husband and wife who have one child leave their high-powered careers and start working in menial jobs instead. Gideon, a brilliant attorney, moves to Eilat and starts working in a fish farm, while Amia, his wife, gives up her respected position as an accountant and decides to manage the village grocery store she inherited from her parents.

Ostensibly, this is a simple story about the disintegration of a bourgeois family unit, but Amia's decision isn't just a break away from the rat race – it is her response to Gideon's abandonment. And as he draws further away, she is torn between needing a husband and father for her son, and wanting to give the person she loves the space he needs.

Beyond Amia's personal problems, life in the village brings her in touch with many people who find themselves on the margins of mainstream society. Among them: an old man who lost his grandson in an accident that ruined his family; Amjad, the Arab helper at the store, who is trying to survive in an impossible political and financial situation; and "the Madonna," also known as "the little Russian slut," a small-time thief and big-time temptress who left her ultra-orthodox religious family. But what Amia doesn't know is that Gideon's progressive estrangement is beyond his control.





Trying in vain to revive his rhetorical skill, Gideon was disappointed with himself, and the more desperate he got the faster he talked, maintaining eye contact with the vase as if it were his psychiatrist.

“What’s the bottom line, Gideon, what are you getting at, where’s the point of this whole story?” I sprung to assist us both and cut him off.

“To find something worth getting up in the morning, okay?”

“A child? A wife? Not good enough reasons?”

“Don’t be mad but no. A rabbit also has a wife and a child.”

The argument filled him with energy. The courtroom spark was ignited, but just as his vocal chords stood to attention and his baritone glory was restored, Nadav’s yell wafted from the bathroom, “That’s it, I’m done, take me out!”

PRESS BYTES

Vodka and Bread has as a complex and convincing feel, an impressive sense of humor... Offers fascinating social and psychological insights into Israeli society,

Haaretz

Magen is like a tightrope walker who dares to juggle while she walks... All her characters come together to create an impressive collage.

Walla

A winning drama... Entices and captivates the readers with its charm, mesmerizing them with its language and style.

Motkeh

BOOKS PUBLISHED

BOOKS PUBLISHED IN HEBREW

Well Buttoned-Up (stories), Keter, 1994

Do Not Strike the Wall (novel), Hakibbutz Hameuchad/Siman Kriah, 1997

Love, After All (novel), Keter, 2000

Brother and Sister (novella), Keter, 2000

Her Angels Have All Fallen Asleep (prev.title: *Let Me In, My Sister*) (novel), Keter, 2003

The Glass Butterfly (novel), Keter, 2005

Time Will Tell, (novel), Keter, 2008

Vodka and Bread (novel), Zmora-Bitan, 2010

BOOKS IN TRANSLATION

Well Buttoned-Up

German: Frankfurt am Main, S.Fischer, 1997

Do Not Strike the Wall

German: Munich, dtv, 2001

Love After All

German: Munich, dtv, 2004

Chinese: Beijing, Baihua, forthcoming

Her Angels Have All Fallen Asleep

German: Munich, dtv, 2006

The Glass Butterfly

German: Munich, dtv, 2007

French: Paris, Mercure de France, 2008

Time Will Tell

German: Munich, dtv, 2010

French: Paris, Mercure de France, forthcoming

Italian: Rome, Atmosphere Libri, forthcoming

Vodka and Bread

German: Munich, dtv, forthcoming

Orly Castel-Bloom

Winter Life

short stories

Tel Aviv, Hakibbutz Hameuchad/Siman Kriah, forthcoming

PHOTO © MICHA BARON



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Orly Castel-Bloom was born in Tel Aviv in 1960 to parents originally from Egypt. Since the publication of her first book in 1987, she has been a leading voice in Hebrew literature, constantly expanding the boundaries of narrative style. Castel-Bloom has lectured at Harvard University, UCLA, UC Berkeley, New York University, Oxford and Cambridge; at present she teaches creative writing. She has published six collections of stories, six novels and a children's book. Her postmodern classic, *Dolly City*, is one of UNESCO's Representative Works. Castel-Bloom has received the Tel Aviv Foundation Award (1990), the Alterman Prize for Innovation (1993), the Newman Prize (2003), the French WIZO Prize (2005) and the Leah Goldberg Prize (2007). Her books have been published abroad in 11 languages.

SYNOPSIS

A new collection of short stories by one of the most notable writers in contemporary Israeli literature.

“Test” recounts a woman’s nerve-racking experience in a sweaty, all-male garage, in order to get her car through its annual licensing test.

In “Ivan Ilych,” an unsuccessful and penniless writer whose family is pressuring him to open a pizza parlor, avoids this by traveling to a conference on Tolstoy’s famous character. He stays at a local inn and here he cannot avoid becoming involved in the inn owners’ lives, their lies and secrets.

In “Season of the Dead,” death restores intimacy to a fractured family. This death, in turn, becomes associated with the death of a bird, of flowers in the garden, and the death of soldiers in the Second Lebanon War.

“The Writer’s Wife” highlights the complex relationship between a self-absorbed writer and his patient wife.

And finally, the title story, “Winter Life,” recounts a winter the protagonist spent in Boston doing research on Israelis living there. Through her research, which includes types of visas and interviews, she exposes the lives of these expatriates as well as the effect of her own forced exile.

Written in typically minimalistic style, these stories intensify Castel-Bloom’s famously ironic view the world.



As I walked toward the lectern, I heard a woman's voice announce over the loudspeaker, "Here he is!" and then she gives the name of another person altogether, someone with the title of professor, "who will speak to us about Praskóvya Fëdorovna Golovin, the wife of Ivan Ilyich, and their relationship."

I hear loud applause, as befits a Nobel laureate. I face the spotlight, so they'll see very clearly that it's not me, although I too can give a lecture like that, but I am not the professor they are expecting—look! there's been a mistake. I lift up my face so they'll see me also from the balcony, and I glance at the woman who introduced me but she's still clapping enthusiastically, and I know that I'm about to let three hundred people down. Then I decide not to let them down and I read the first paragraph of the novella, in English.

PRESS BYTES

No reviews yet available

For *Dolly City*

Devours the flesh in flames that are impossible to extinguish... Kafka has finally arrived in Tel Aviv.

Le Monde des livres

Obscene, courageous, provocative: an original female voice... goes beyond the surreal.

Corriere della Sera

An irreverent and witty satire, an original and timely tour de force.

Times Literary Supplement

A gem not to be missed. *Dolly City* is a prophecy of rage. One of the most unique novels I have read in a long time.

Svenska Dagbladet

BOOKS PUBLISHED

BOOKS IN TRANSLATION

Where Am I?

Dutch: Amsterdam, Wereldbibliotheek, 1992
French: Arles, Actes Sud, 1995

Dolly City

Dutch: Amsterdam, Wereldbibliotheek, 1993
French: Arles, Actes Sud, 1993; pback: Babel, 2008
German: Reinbeck, Rowohlt, 1995; pback: 1998
English: London, Loki Books, 1997; Champaign, IL, Dalkey Archive, forthcoming
Swedish: Stockholm, Ordfront, 1998

Greek: Athens, Kastaniotis, 2000
Italian: Viterbo, Stampa Alternativa, 2008

The Mina Lisa

French: Arles, Actes Sud, 1998
Chinese: Beijing, China Social Sciences, 1998
German: Munich, Piper, 1998

Free Radicals

French: Arles, Actes Sud, 2003

Human Parts

English: Toronto, Key Porter, 2003, Boston, David R. Godine, 2003
Italian: Rome, edizioni e/o, 2003
Portuguese: Rio de Janeiro, Imago, 2003

French: Arles, Actes Sud, 2004
German: Munich, Piper, 2004
Arabic: Haifa, Kul Shee, 2007

Textile

French: Arles, Actes Sud, 2008
Polish: Izabelin, Swiat Ksatski, forthcoming
Italian: Rome, Atmosphere Libri, forthcoming

Selected Stories

Chinese: Hefei, Anhui Literature & Art Pubs, 2007
French: Arles, Actes Sud, forthcoming

Let's Behave Ourselves (children)

Italian: Milan, Mondadori, 2000

Odeh Bisharat

The Streets of Zatunia

a novel

Tel Aviv, Am Oved, 2010. 255 pp.

PHOTO © IHAB HOSARI



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Odeh Bisharat was born in 1958 to a family originally from Ma'alul, a village destroyed in 1948, and now lives in Yafiah, in the Galilee, with his wife and three children. He has been involved in political and social activity all his life, first as head of National Committee of Arab-Israeli High School Students, later as head of the Arab Students' Organisation at Haifa University. Bisharat has been active in various Jewish-Arab movements, and worked as editor of the youth newspaper *Al-Jad*. In the early 2000s, he was secretary general of the political party Hadash (Democratic Front for Peace and Equality), and is now an op-ed columnist writing for the newspaper *Al-Atikhad*.

The Streets of Zatunia has been published both in Arabic (2007; 2010) and in Hebrew (2010).



SYNOPSIS

Bisharat's novel describes the goings-on in a small Arab-Israeli town during an election campaign for head of the local council. Khaled al-Mosli, a modest schoolteacher, succumbs to a relative's suggestion that he run as a representative of their clan. Led by Ahmed al-Hidak, a local mover and shaker, al-Mosli's improvised campaign staff go about inventing him a past of ridiculous bravery and leadership that will turn the simple, a-political family man into a charismatic political candidate. They also invent him a suitable election platform. And he is soon swept up into a tornado that entwines the town of Zatunia with the political, social and cultural realities of the Arab citizens of Israel.

As the campaign gathers steam and subplots, tensions and conflicts abound in the town—leadership struggles; love stories; political brawls within and between extended families, and with leftwing women's movements; intergenerational struggles seen as progressivism versus conservatism; Arab town and Jewish city; gender struggles—a demand for sexual equality between men and women, revealing hypocrisy and discrimination; quarrels between al-Mosli and his wife, a murder mystery, and more.

PARTIAL ENGLISH TRANSLATION AVAILABLE



“Hey, Rashid, my dear man,” muttered Abu al-Abed. “Please don’t check any pulses! Who asked you to check pulses?” After a brief silence, he added sarcastically: “The winds that are blowing through this family! Where do you think we are? Scandinavia?” Then he assumed a tone of silent sorrow: “Ho, my brother, in these matters it’s impossible for everyone to do whatever he likes. How are we going to persuade that man to change his mind now? He’s gone and bought enough suits to stock three outfitting shops. And his wife, my dear man, has already gotten used to acting like the First Lady.” Then, helplessly and with open rancor, he declared, “Every newborn baby in Zatunia now knows that Khaled al-Mosli, who has lived his entire life between home and school, is a candidate for head of the council. He’s already, like, the leader.”

PRESS BYTES

A true work of art, critical of local politics in Arab communities. A fascinating satire about Arab society that is not tainted by Orientalism.

Haaretz

A charming first novel... extremely funny, flowing, super-realistic with a dash of satire. It becomes the genuine voice of Arab life in Israel.

Yedioth Ahronoth

Excellent portrayal of the unique village atmosphere. Bisharat gives us a brave and sober view of Israeli-Arab culture. Wonderful humor in his satirical, sarcastic writing.

Time Out

IN HIS OWN WORDS



I have always thought about writing—I think everyone does. Everyone has the urge to write, to preserve his life story. Probably because we realize there will come a day when we are no longer there. Apparently this is what keeps a culture going, what preserves it. Naguib Mahfouz, the Egyptian writer and Nobel Laureate, once said, “Were it not for the fear of total annihilation, the ancient Egyptians would not have built the pyramids.”

People in their daily lives interest me. Each one has a story that should be recorded. In fact, each piece of life, from birth to sad death, is an interesting story. For me, writing is an inner conversation with the community. And in this conversation, it is very important for me to hang out the dirty laundry. A healthy society knows to criticize itself—bravely, but with a lot of love.

BOOKS PUBLISHED

BOOKS PUBLISHED IN HEBREW

The Streets of Zatunia (novel),
Am Oved, 2010



Gil Ilutowich

Kapo Marek

(prev. title: *The Coal Eaters*)

a novel

Tel Aviv, Am Oved, 2009. 287 pp.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Gil Ilutowich was born in Bnei-Brak, Israel, in 1965. He holds a BA in philosophy and Jewish studies from Tel Aviv University, and also studied electronics and practical engineering. Ilutowich has spent much of his professional life writing and developing educational games and interactive books for children, which have been translated into over 40 languages. He is involved in projects for immigrant children as well as for children in hospital. *Kapo Marek* is his third novel.



SYNOPSIS

Marek-Mordechai Greenstein was the kind of man who always knew how to get along. In Warsaw before World War II, he was known as “Mottel the Brute” on account of the services he provided to a wealthy Jew. He made a good living and was successful with women until history forced him into the ghetto and the camps.

Arriving in Israel during the War of Independence, Marek becomes a fighter and a war hero. But then a man from his past recognizes him: he was a Kapo in Majdanek and Auschwitz, and badly abused the Jewish prisoners in his care. Arrested and sentenced to prison, he is later released into a life of almost total seclusion.

The book begins when Marek, now a pensioner, travels abroad for the first time, to Indonesia. This group vacation gives him a rare opportunity to experience human contact once again, and he has romantic experiences with Dora and with Nava, the pretty tour guide.

But his horrific memories do not subside. On the contrary, the exotic scenery enhances their sharpness. And these flashbacks, intertwined with his holiday experiences, force both him and the readers to confront questions of justice, morality, forgiveness and compassion.



His shoulders shuddered in the pre-dawn chill. Naah, this isn't real cold, he thought. In a little while a strong sun would rise and spill blazing yellow light over everything. But in the camps, at night, the cold knifed through one's flesh and in the mornings the only sun that rose was a dismal gray. It couldn't even prevail over the icicles hanging from the barrack roofs or the filthy snow piled up on the parade ground. Some people wore only tattered shirts, others had managed to pad their bodies with a layer of paper and rags – but the names of both groups ended up in the registry of the dead.

Often, Marek wondered what had kept him alive. Was it only a matter of luck, or something within himself that made him different from the others? If only the righteous had gone to their deaths, he could perhaps have understood why he survived. But he had seen with his own eyes how pimps, prostitutes and pickpockets tramped shoulder to shoulder with the great rabbis and their delicate young disciples toward the smokestacks. How could one extract a method from this that would explain why he, of all people... ?

PRESS BYTES

Despite Marek's past and his difficult personality, it is hard not to like him, and this is the author's greatest achievement.

Maariv

The moral dilemmas and the inconceivable yet very realistic depictions remain with the reader long after he has finished the book.

Channel 7 TV

Shows us the moral split in a man's heart which threatens to overpower him.

Haaretz

IN HIS OWN WORDS



*I was born into the home of Holocaust survivors, and the shadow of their childhood experiences lay heavily in the silences, the facial expressions, the absences. In **Kapó Marek** I tried to understand the other side—the evil that made apparently normal people get up and commit those atrocities. But I couldn't write about a Nazi: I couldn't sit down with him at breakfast, taste the sausage he was eating, laugh at a joke he had heard. I needed a character who played music that I knew in his room, and then I could try to understand what made him take a club and swing it at the heads of other Jews. When I first met him, he was a scoundrel; later, he became far more complex—the monster we call the Holocaust produced human dilemmas that it will still take us years to understand.*

But my book is not about the Holocaust; it is about late-blooming love, about a desire to get back to sanity, to normalcy, to life.

BOOKS PUBLISHED

BOOKS PUBLISHED IN HEBREW

Is There Someone Here (novel), Yedioth Ahronoth, 2004

Wedding Pictures (novel), Am Oved, 2006.

Kapó Marek (prev. title: *The Coal Eaters*) (novel), Am Oved, 2009.

Emmanuel Pinto

Tinnitus

a novel

Tel Aviv, Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 2009, 176 pp.

PHOTO © YAIR RON

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Emmanuel Pinto was born in 1962 to an observant family from Algeria. He studied history and international relations at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and acting at the Nissan-Nativ Acting Studio. In 1994 he moved to Paris and established a theater group, Ama. Since returning to Israel in 2008, Pinto has taught theater and writing in various frameworks. He is also a script-writer and translator from French to Hebrew. His first book, *Daniel*, was published in 2000 and was awarded the Ministry of Culture Award for Debut Novel. *Tinnitus* is his second novel.

Tinnitus is forthcoming in French (*Actes Sud*)



SYNOPSIS

Pini, who fought in the First Lebanon War as a young soldier and witnessed the massacre at Sabra and Shatila, lives in present-day Paris, confused and lost. His memory of the war refuses to subside and remains with him as an indistinct sensation, like tinnitus. But instead of a ringing sound or whistle, he has been hearing the cries of the boy he killed for the past twenty years.

Interspersed with these memories are the letters his mother wrote him during the war and the experiences of old, sick French playwright Jean Genet, who was in Beirut in 1982. Pinto's Genet is drawn to the Palestinians for political and humanitarian reasons, and through his writerly need for a subject. He calls the Palestinians 'Revolutionary Poets' and draws his inspiration from them. His homosexuality (which he and Pini have in common) also plays a part in the appeal of the conflict.

The relationship between Genet and Pini, established through a few dramatic encounters, culminates in Pini's madness after the massacre, a crazed state filled with death, desire, fantasy and smoke. The novel fuses Pini's personal, nightmarish experience with the moral and political implications of the event in an extraordinary and challenging literary performance.



Beirut is empty, emptied, has been emptied. Has it? Jean Genet asks himself. Only a moment ago, while he was standing on the balcony, his legs trembling in anticipation, he noticed a mass of soldiers filling the city to the seams, yet now it is deserted. He rushes. Reminding himself that he is old, warning himself that even if his passion has kept its vigor and can easily cover many miles, his step is heavy and slow. At every street corner he has to make a fateful decision: right or left, straight on or perhaps back. The Israelis play hide and seek with him. He came here to write about his beloved Palestinians, and these blonde men are leading him astray. In his mind, all Israelis are blonde, blonde refugees. After being pulverized in Europe, they now release the fumes of their revenge on foreign soil.

PRESS BYTES

Profound and fascinating.

Haaretz

Pinto [shows] a palpable talent that draws on great creative wealth... His language is beautiful and tainted, aware of itself and precise.

Yedioth Ahronoth

Wonderful and terrible. I cannot think of another book that so communicates the memory of war as something that never ends in the protagonist's life. The writing is hypnotic.

e-mago

IN HIS OWN WORDS



Is it possible for a writer, Israeli or Palestinian, in fact any writer who has been through war, not to write about it? The subject is forced upon you, not only because it is the material of your life—after all you took part in it—but because it is connected to, and resonates within your other, more personal struggles. I did not want to tell “my truth” about the conflict, perhaps because I never had such a thing, or perhaps it was not sufficiently formed. So the character that I chose hardly ever focuses on himself or the war he has been through. And because he lacks his own war memories, he has no choice but to go out and acquire some, telling the war stories of others.

BOOKS PUBLISHED

BOOKS PUBLISHED IN HEBREW

Daniel (novel), Schocken, 2000

Tinnitus (novel), Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 2009

BOOKS IN TRANSLATION

Tinnitus

French: Arles, Actes Sud, forthcoming

Nava Semel

Head on Backwards

a novel

Tel Aviv, Kinneret, Zmora-Bitan, forthcoming

PHOTO © DAN PORGES



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Nava Semel was born in Tel Aviv in 1954 and has an MA in art history. She has worked as a journalist, art critic, TV and radio producer. She is a member of the Massua Institute of Holocaust Studies and is on the board of governors of Yad Vashem. Semel has published novels, short stories, poetry, plays, TV scripts and children's books. Her fiction has been adapted for screen, stage and radio in Israel, Europe and the USA. Most recently, her novel *And the Rat Laughed* has been made into a successful opera. Semel has received the American National Jewish Book Award for Children's Literature (1990), the Women Writers of the Mediterranean Award (1996), the Austrian Best Radio Drama Award (1996), the Rosenblum Prize for Stage Art (2005) and Tel Aviv's "Literary Woman of the Year" (2006).

SYNOPSIS

A farm house in a small Italian village during the Nazi occupation. Madelene, a promising young opera singer, and her handicapped mother Dominica, struggle to survive after adopting a young orphan boy, Tomaso. One day, Tomaso senses a foreign presence in the house. But his questions are violently rejected and the two women he loves so much humiliate him publicly, claiming that he has his "head on backwards." To cope with the emotional blow, Tomaso retreats into his imagination. Convinced that a mysterious princess is trapped in the attic, he sends her gifts and letters up the chimney, in secret.

When a German soldier falls in love with Madelene their lives become even more unsettled. Will the soldier's protection shield the family, or will his arrival reveal the preciously guarded secret?

This story, written during the Nazi occupation, ends up in the hands of a nurse in a Tel Aviv hospital who then tells it to a patient in a coma, in an attempt to awaken him.

This moving novel raises the difficult question: What price will people pay to maintain their humanity in dire circumstances, and how far are we willing to go to save a single soul?



There is one unforgettable moment, the kind you obsessively relive so that you will not overlook even the tiniest gesture by mistake. You must protect the memory of it, right to the end, so that it does not drain away.

It is that unforgettable moment of Tomaso's, that flash of wild joy within the desolation of his childhood – the day after he checked the rope end at the bottom of the chimney and found nothing there. What he sent her up the shaft had actually been taken. The discovery that he'd told the truth and the world around him lied, struck him like one more slap. But unlike the others, this blow filled him with sweet rapture. The princess was really there above him, she was not an invention of Fra Diabolo's, but an unquestionable reality.

PRESS BYTES

No reviews yet available

For *And the Rat Laughed*

Brilliant and utterly original... Poetic in the deepest, most elusive sense of the word, and infinitely disturbing. Semel is an exquisite writer.

Playwright *Martin Sherman*

An exquisitely wrought meditation. Literary critics have acknowledged Semel's considerable talent.

Forward (USA)

A powerful and deeply arresting novel.

Australia Jewish News

BOOKS PUBLISHED

BOOKS IN TRANSLATION

And the Rat Laughed

German: Mannheim, Persona, 2007
English: Victoria, Austr., Hybrid, 2008

Becoming Gershona (youth)

English: New York, Viking Penguin, 1990; pback: New York, Puffin (Penguin), 1992

Italian: Florence, La Casa Usher, 1990; pback: Verona, Mondadori, 1999

German: Frankfurt, Alibaba, 1993; pback: Frankfurt, Fischer, 1995; 2004; 2005

Romanian: Bucharest, Fiat Lux, 1995

Dutch: Baarn, Fontein, 2000

Flying Lessons (Flying Away) (youth)

English: New York, Simon & Schuster, 1995

German: Berlin, Elefanten, 1995; pback: Weinheim, Beltz & Gelberg, 2000

Italian: Verona, Mondadori, 1997

Czech: Prague, Albatros, 1998

Spanish: Madrid, Loguez, 1998

Dutch: Baarn, Fontein, 1999

Serbian: Belgrade, Book & Marso, 2008

Bride on Paper

German: Weinheim, Beltz & Gelberg, 2003; pback: 2005

Romanian: Bucharest, Pandora, 2000

Hat of Glass

Italian: Naples, Guida, 2002

German: Frankfurt, Dr. Orgler, 2000

Romanian: Bucharest, Hasefer, 2003

Love for Beginners (children)

Italian: Casale Monferrato, Sonda, 2007

Czech: Prague, Albatros, 2009

German: Berlin, Jacoby & Stuart, 2010

Who Stole the Show? (children)

Italian: Verona, Mondadori, 2003

English & Romanian: Bucharest, Hasefer, 2007

Agur Schiff

In the Sand

a novel

Tel Aviv, Am Oved, 2010. 287 pp.

PHOTO © LIRI SCHIFF



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Agur Schiff was born in Tel Aviv in 1955. He is a graduate of St. Martin's School of Art in London and of the Rijks Art Academy in Amsterdam. He won critical acclaim as a filmmaker before turning to writing. He received the Silver Dragon Award at the Cracow Film Festival, and, for his film *Gentila*, a prize at the Haifa Film Festival (1997). Schiff started publishing fiction in the early 1990s and has published two collections of stories and three novels. He is a senior lecturer at the Bezalel Academy of Art & Design in Jerusalem where he teaches creative writing, scriptwriting and cinematic concepts. Schiff has been awarded the Prime Minister's Prize (2010).



SYNOPSIS

In 1973, a few months before the Yom Kippur War, the naked body of a girl is discovered in the sands of Caesarea. Superintendent Ram Dinur, a highly regarded police detective, joins the investigation team, but the search for the murderer quickly takes an introspective turn. Eventually it leads to the Sinai Desert during the first days of the war.

Dinur, who was born in Poland and lost his mother in the Holocaust, came to Israel as a child and created a new Israeli identity for himself. His estrangement from his father—a charming Tel Aviv poet who abandoned him as a child—never bothered him especially, until that fateful summer of 1973 when self-confident Israel had to overcome a crisis that changed it forever.

Through his investigation, Dinur is drawn into the culture of hippies and flower-children to which the dead girl belonged, together with the boy who was with her before her death. It breaks open Dinur's restricted world, and after he discovers his relationship to the young boy, his repressed past finally surfaces.

In the Sand is a brilliant, moving detective novel. Schiff uses the genre's traditional structure to explore and ironize on the breaking point of Israeli society.



So, we finally meet.
But look at us, look how pitiful this meeting is. I'm lying on the sand and you are bent over me, blocking my view of the illuminated night sky, putting your ear to my mouth and hearing nothing. Not even a whisper.

I have no idea how long we have been stuck in this ridiculous situation, but I imagine we shall have to part very soon. Actually, I'm quite sure of it. Yes, this meeting, our first, our last, will not last much longer. It's a shame really. I would have liked to tell you everything, even if you can't actually hear my murmurs.

Let's go back to where it all started.

Back to that insanely hot day at the beginning of summer.

Back to the phone that rang at exactly seven fifteen. To the shaving foam smeared all over the black tube. To the voice that told me they had found another body and asked me to get there right away.

PRESS BYTES

Agur Schiff is one of the most interesting writers in Israel today.

Ynet

A fascinating allegory of Israeli society

Israel Hayom

Written with great talent, this is more than an "Israeli book." On the other hand, there is no book more Israeli than this.

Globes

A powerful novelist, with a significant personal style. Schiff writes a complex and alienated realism, but his writing is full of humor.

Prime Minister's Prize 2010

IN HIS OWN WORDS



I set out to portray Israeli society just before the great upheaval of the Yom Kippur War, using a life that represents an entire generation. The idea of a detective story sprang from my desire to give this historic trauma the same shocking abruptness with which violent criminal acts occur. The hero's search, and the way that his self-created identity unravels, play off against a society about to plunge into an identity crisis of its own.

*I called it **In the Sand** both because it begins and ends with a body lying in the sand, and also because sand is the symbolic enemy threatening the stability, and the very existence, of the Israeli experience.*

BOOKS PUBLISHED

BOOKS PUBLISHED IN HEBREW

Dying Animals and Bad Weather (stories), Keter, 1995.

Stories for Short Trips (stories), Hakibbutz Hameuchad/Siman Kriah, 2000.

Bad Habits (novel), Zmora-Bitan, 2004.

What You Wished For (novel), Zmora-Bitan, 2007.

In the Sand (novel), Am Oved, 2010.

Miron C. Izakson

Aliza with Child

a novel

Tel Aviv, Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 2009. 269 pp.

PHOTO © DAN PORGES



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Miron C. Izakson was born in 1956 to a family which was among the first orange growers in pre-state Israel. He studied law and Jewish philosophy at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and Tel Aviv University. At present, he lectures at Bar-Ilan University and is a member of its board. He is chairman for literature at the Israel Culture and Arts Council, and also serves as Honorary Consul for Luxembourg in Israel. Izakson has published eight books of poetry and four novels, to widespread literary acclaim, and has written a weekly column on biblical subjects for *Haaretz*. Four collections of his poems have been set to music by various musicians and released as CDs. Izakson was awarded the President's Prize in 2001.

SYNOPSIS

Aliza, the owner of a bag shop in Tel Aviv has felt her biological clock ticking away for years. By now, she despairs of finding her one-and-only in the singles' world of Tel Aviv, and decides to get pregnant on her own. She goes through with her plan, but then the unthinkable happens: she meets Rami, a geeky history lecturer who teaches at a minor college, and falls in love with him.

In the meantime, Rami, whose wife has just left him, becomes entangled in a legal dispute. Letting his kindness get him into trouble, he agrees to act as arbitrator between an acquaintance of his ex-wife's and a law firm that is demanding payment. Rami's excessive kindness leads him to embezzlement and gets him into trouble with the law.

The complex relationship that develops between Aliza and Rami is supplemented by the bond Rami establishes with Aliza's elderly parents, who live in a home and see in him their last chance to marry off their single daughter. A wonderful novel of life in Tel Aviv today.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION AVAILABLE



Aliza's pregnancy isn't surprising, but it seems strange that it wasn't Rami who got her pregnant, perhaps even insulting. You see, Rami was in and out of Aliza's shop more than any other man, and presumably he got as close to her body as he did to her wares. For this reason her pregnancy bewilders him. But his failure with Aliza isn't the only thing upsetting him recently. Something else important happened some twenty weeks earlier, when Rami was asked, to his surprise, to arbitrate in a business dispute. Not the kind of thing a history teacher is called on to do every day.

PRESS BYTES

Izakson's novel is light, saucy and a little gossipy, just what people like and helps them read on. The leading character is well-rounded and portrayed with humor... A triumph.

Maariv

There is in this novel a humane grace reminiscent of Hanoch Levin.

Haaretz

This book should be called *From the Depths*. There is something pure in its attitude to people, towards objects, feelings and words.

Moznayim

BOOKS PUBLISHED

BOOKS PUBLISHED IN HEBREW

Poems, Shiri, 1976

Poems, Traklin, 1978

Time to Ask (poetry), Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 1989

Family Life (novel), Sifriat Maariv, 1995

The Attraction of the Edge (poetry), Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 1994

Sounds of Home (poetry), Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 1998

Nathan and His Wives (novel), Hakibbutz Hameuchad / Yedioth Ahronoth, 1998

Poems, Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 2001

Banning Her Caress (poetry), Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 2003

The Flat on King Solomon Street (novel), Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 2004

Selected and New Poems (poetry), Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 2007

Aliza with Child (novel), Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 2009

BOOKS IN TRANSLATION

Nathan and His Wives

French: Paris, Stavit, 2001

English: Syracuse, USA, Syracuse Univ. Press, 2003

Selected Poems

Norwegian: Oslo, Solum Forlag, 2004

French: Paris, Éd. Caractères, 2008

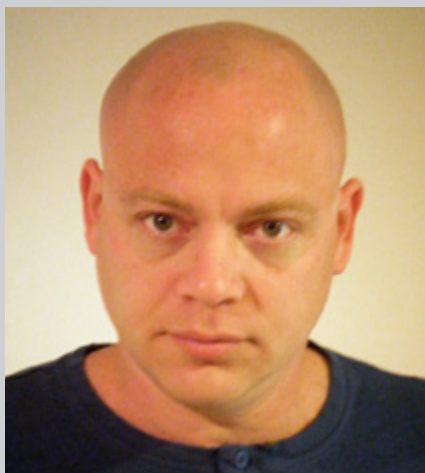
English: New York & London, Toby Press, forthcoming

Selected Poems, Miron Izakson & Naim Araidy

French: Paris, Stavit, 2003

The Flat on King Solomon Street

French: Paris, Stavit/Mangeclous, 2009



Amichai Shalev

The Mentals

a novel

Tel Aviv, Yedioth Ahronoth, 2010. 221 pp.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Amichai Shalev was born in Israel. A writer, editor, lecturer and poet, he studied history and literature at Tel Aviv University, and scriptwriting at the Camera Obscura School of Art. In recent years, he has worked as editor and project director for the internet edition of the daily *Yedioth Ahronoth* (Ynet). He also gave creative writing workshops, was a columnist for the culture section of *Maariv*, and wrote book reviews for the Hebrew press. At present he is editor for literature and art on *Ynet*. *The Mentals* is his second novel. His first novel, *Days of Pop* (2004), has recently been republished to critical acclaim.



SYNOPSIS

Uri Kravitz, an unstable army recruit, tells us of the time he spent at an army base near Jenin, where he went through basic training with other soldiers of “low level medical fitness” due to mental problems.

Edgy Uri takes in all the insanity around him without being able to block anything out: two recruits turn a third into their sex slave, one recruit commits suicide, another goes insane and a fifth keeps shooting at supposedly suspicious characters he sees around. In the midst of all this, Uri tries to distinguish himself from the others, while also dealing with the demons that haunt him.

Stranded in the muddy, foggy base, while he and his fellow soldiers slowly lose their minds, Uri mulls over his past. He thinks about his mother, who died by accident or committed suicide; about his cold, distant relationship with his father; about Keren, a girl he met at the Arad Music Festival who is no less ‘mental’ than him, and about the Israeli indie-rock band he worships, whose imminent break-up is threatening his sanity no less than his surroundings.

The Mentals isn’t a book about the IDF or about recruit training, it is a book about a young man who has to force his injured soul and sleepless body to perform a task that is more than he can handle.

PARTIAL ENGLISH TRANSLATION AVAILABLE



“**T**his platoon is a bunch of guys they didn’t know what to do with, so they stuck them all together,” he told me. Perhaps he was trying to calm himself down too. “But why did they enlist him at all?” I asked. Motti didn’t answer and turned his head away.

I now believe that they enlisted him for the death statistics, because they need a few of these guys to get killed, and Sefi the Tiger was a suitable candidate. Just to think of a rifle in his hand makes me shiver. I don’t understand why they issued guns to all of us, some people are just not cut out for it. Bennie feels important with his gun. It’s like that with Turjeman too, it’s natural for him. For me, the rifle is a burden, uncomfortable on my shoulder, like a hump, and it doesn’t concern me that it can kill.

PRESS BYTES

A rare literary talent.

Haaretz

One of the more powerful voices among the young generation.

Author Yoram Kaniuk

Shalev has the rare talent to create a palpable, associative narrative flow... striking insights and the exceptional sensuality that is the soul of fiction writing.

Maariv

Shalev captures stressful situations and flawed norms. [Yet] he creates a magical world of writing in the midst of the rain, snow and smelly socks... *The Mentals* threw me way back, to the Yom Kippur War.

Post

IN HIS OWN WORDS



For me, this book is a special achievement, because it came out just like I wanted. I made no compromises, though there were some voices along the way that urged me to make it more mainstream, consoling. It started off six years ago as a novella. I finished it and put it aside, but went back to it once in a while and played around with it a little, mostly in the beginning. It took four years for a second layer to form—the book kept echoing in my head and wouldn’t let me be. The inspiration for the plot came from some characters I met along the years, some during my military service. But as far as I’m concerned, this isn’t a story about the army, it is a journey into the soul of the absolute outsider, to the dark, neglected, gloomiest place in a person’s soul. I think that the outcome may even have scared me a little, but in a positive way. It was a constructive fear, that gave me a lot of confidence.

BOOKS PUBLISHED

BOOKS PUBLISHED IN HEBREW

Days of Pop, Yedioth Ahronoth, 2004; 2010

The Mentals, Yedioth Ahronoth, 2010

Ilan Sheinfeld

A Tale of a Ring

a novel
Jerusalem, Keter, 2007, 460 pp.



PHOTO © ADI NESS

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ilan Sheinfeld was born in Israel in 1960. He has an MA in Hebrew and English literature from Tel Aviv University, where he teaches and is working towards his Ph.D. in Gay Studies. Sheinfeld has worked as a newspaper editor, literary critic and has written on cultural topics. He was also the founding editor of an Israeli journal on literature and theory, led various writing workshops and was spokesman for the Cameri Theater. He now owns a public relations office and a publishing house specializing in gay literature. Sheinfeld was awarded the Liv-Goldenberg Foundation Award in 2001.

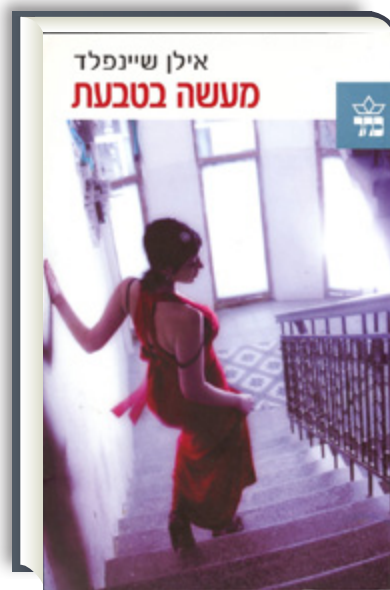
SYNOPSIS

The ills of the world, Jewish magic, torments of body and soul, and physical pleasure in various sexual identities are all woven into this novel. It is based on the scandal of “Zvi Mandel,” an organization that traded in women between 1870 and 1930 and, at its height, garnered enormous political and economic power.

In old-world Europe, between Shedlitz and Danzig, the mother of Rayna-Chaya, an epileptic girl, has consulted with healers and rabbis and, with their blessing, has made a gold ring that has healing qualities. As a result, others wish to seize the ring from its rightful owners, and it changes hands many times, leaving a trail of energy—and calamity—in its wake.

The ring travels from Europe to Argentina with Esther, a young girl sent there to work in the homes of Jews. However, during her journey, a new profession is forced on her—prostitution. This will also be the fate of her daughter, Esperanza, whose name—meaning ‘hope’ in Spanish—cannot change the course of her life. And it is Esperanza who, years later, in Israel, reveals to her daughter the secret of the terrible dynasty she was born into.

ENGLISH & SPANISH TRANSLATIONS IN PROGRESS



The girls went on board ship as unwed virgins. They did not know that they would be bedded and wed, by way of counterfeit papers, before they ever disembarked. They also did not know that the man they had married at sea was already married to several other women, who were settled in a single house, groaning under the bodies of strangers. They certainly did not imagine that the man they thought of as their savior came to each one separately, a guardian angel in her hour of need, convincing her that only he could protect her, finally penetrating and appropriating her for good. It was he who brought this calamity upon Esther to begin with.

PRESS BYTES

A dramatic and complex story. The author turns this dark affair into a fascinating and thought-provoking book.

Haaretz

A special book with... plenty of mysticism and idiosyncrasies along with a real and fascinating history. A beautifully written book, which takes you to faraway eras and countries.

Yedioth Ahronoth

Sheinfeld's depictions carry you away and create a profound emotional experience... *A Tale of a Ring* is a masterpiece of Hebrew.

Time Out

BOOKS PUBLISHED

BOOKS PUBLISHED IN HEBREW

Poetry

Enchanted Lizard, Martef 29/Eked, 1981
Making Love with the Tongue, Dvir, 1984
Lines to a Friend in Parting, Aleph, 1987
It Begins With Love, Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 1989
Temporary, Tammuz/Writers Association, 1992
Taschlich, Tag, 1994
Karet, Shufra, 1997
The Tourist Guide, Shufra, 2003

Fiction

Shedletse (novel), Shufra, 1999

Only You (novel), Shufra, 2000

A Tale of a Ring (novel), Keter, 2007

Children

From the Heart of Tel Aviv, Dvir, 1984

Peace, Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 1989

Margolis' Strange Book, Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 1991

There is no Such Bird: Kortsipa, Shufra, 1999

A Kingdom Named Collision, Shufra, 2007

Danny Caspi

Four Shades of Love

a novel

Tel Aviv, Kinneret, Zmora-Bitan, 2009. 237 pp.

PHOTO © ODED CASPI



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Danny Caspi was born in 1946 in Jerusalem and grew up in Rishon LeZion. He graduated medicine in Italy, and specialized in Israel and London. Caspi now heads the department of rheumatology at the Tel Aviv Medical Center and is a professor at Tel Aviv University. In addition to a novel, Caspi has published a collection of poetry and a book of short stories. He is also the literary editor of the annual *Verses of Science*. Caspi was awarded the Ministry of Education Prize for Debut Fiction in 2005.



SYNOPSIS

Paris in the 1930s, Palestine under the British Mandate, and Israel from its early days to the 1990s are the backdrop of this skillfully narrated novel.

Betty comes to Paris from her native Poland in the early 1930s to join her brother. And there, she falls in love with Yakir Cordovero, a young man without ambition, the son of a wealthy family in Mandatory Palestine. After an unwanted pregnancy and an abortion, they move to Israel, where both marry and set up separate families while continuing their relationship.

Significantly, Betty becomes more fulfilled than the two men in her life: her husband Jacob works as a school teacher and Yakir turns into a frustrated, unpublished author. Betty, on the other hand, drives her own private car and builds an impressive career as one of the first social workers in Israel. But even her life is not entirely happy, overshadowed by news of the Jews' annihilation in Europe, and by the continual proximity of her former sweetheart.

Narrated through the voices of Betty, Yakir, Jacob, and finally Rafi, the son who delves into his parents' past, the novel creates a knot of emotions, secrets and loyalties.



Her voice rang so near me I could sense the whisper of her breath on my ear separating the words. Then it went silent, but the warmth of her breathing persisted. And from some faraway place—tapping on the keys of the Hermes, I know it sounds like cheap melodrama, but this was how it happened—the image of my mother suddenly flickered in my mind, reappearing after it was expunged, how long ago? Many years. And then I felt her fingers again, this time moving from my neck to my cheeks, to my eyelids, gently pulling them open. I saw her face close to mine, gazing intently into my eyes, her fingers continuing softly up towards my eyebrows and forehead, lingering and then parting with me when it reached my hair. I can feel, almost hear the hair on my arms stand on end. I close my eyes again, simply let my eyelids shut, and for the first time in my adult life, for the first time since I came to Paris, the first time in someone else's presence, since mother, I feel a little tear slide down my cheek like a raindrop, without pain, without crying either, in fact. I hear the light movement of a chair and wait a little for it to pass. Only then do I open my eyes and discover that she is gone.

PRESS BYTES

Caspi's original perspective, and his ability to distinguish his protagonists from one other through language mark this as a book of high quality.

Haaretz

This book is probably well-known to the elite of Hebrew literature because it is truly exceptional.

Radio Le-lo Hafsaka

For *A Sudden Break*

Written with grace and freshness... leaves a distinct taste for more.

Ynet

IN HIS OWN WORDS



To find out, all of a sudden, about your mother's secret, lifelong love affair—not easy. At first, I didn't know whether to recreate it all [in my book], or to ignore what I had discovered; to be hurt after all these years, or to accept with compassion what went on, even when I was a child. And maybe to fill in, through invention, what my memory could not supply, so that those I loved—including the boy I used to be—could be reborn on these pages. So I created a story with four narrators: a special woman who fled from Poland to Paris and then pre-state Israel; her lover, a translator; her husband, a Bible scholar; and her son Rafi, a carpenter who writes in secret. I felt like I was living in a bomb shelter, living each one of these lives, writing each one in the first person, weaving their love, and my love for them.

BOOKS PUBLISHED

BOOKS PUBLISHED IN HEBREW

Internal Medicine (poetry), Yahdav, 1991

A Sudden Break (stories), Zmora-Bitan, 2004

Four Shades of Love (novel), Kinneret, Zmora-Bitan, 2009



Leah Goldberg

Losses

a novel

Tel Aviv, Sifriat Poalim, 2010. 380 pp.

A Leah Goldberg classic, now published for the first time!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Leah Goldberg (1911-1970) was born in Königsberg, 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 theater critic, translator, and editor. In 1952, she established the Department of Comparative Literature at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and remained its chairwoman until her death. Goldberg published nine books of poetry, as well as novels, plays, non-fiction and books for children. She was awarded many prizes, including the Israel Prize for Literature in 1970.

SYNOPSIS

Leah Goldberg wrote this wide-ranging novel in the second half of the 1930s. A few chapters appeared in magazines and newspapers, but she eventually decided not to publish the whole novel, which was found among her belongings after her death.

Elhanan Karon, a Hebrew poet from Palestine, comes to Berlin in 1932-33 to complete his research on the affinity between Jewish and Arab mysticism. But an unexpected encounter with Antonia, a young Christian German student, and the loss of his finest manuscript change his plans. Both the growing relationship between the two young people and Elhanan's search for the manuscript are inevitably influenced by the historical events of that period.

The conversations between Elhanan and his friends—Russian immigrants, Eastern-European Jews, German scientists, and more—reveal the various cultural choices that stand before him: to preserve his Jewish identity, adopt socialism and communism, or opt for assimilation. Ultimately, however, history chooses for him. The mounting power of the Nazis slowly becomes a dominant element in the book, and the ongoing tension between the original motherland and the adopted one, familiar to readers of Goldberg's poetry, takes center stage.



Antonia! He was happy about her name. It was as if he had guessed it beforehand, had known it, smelled it. Yes, of course, he knew its smell. Just a few moments ago he'd remembered those hard, smooth apples, Anton apples. Antonia—the name suited her.

She pressed her cheek against the cold, black train window.

“Sometimes... there is a kind of madness... times like this, as if it were not possible anymore,” she said. “If, say, there was an Eiffel Tower in this city to jump off, or an ocean... but go drown yourself in the Spree—let’s say, by the bridge, where the big boat *The Giant Whale* is moored. The next day they’ll pull your body out, and the police will look at you like at the Whale. Or let’s say, by the museum, and the statue of that stupid Fredrick would stand there looking at you all night long. It’s very foolish. Especially when there isn’t even a good reason to kill yourself. On nights like this, you travel to Grinau, to an aunt who never lived there, or... you begin talking to a stranger—it’s all the same.

PRESS BYTES

There are beautiful things in *Losses*. The novel is like amber that has trapped the air and atmosphere of another era in it.

Haaretz

Never before has Goldberg touched so explicitly on politics, Jewish identity, religion and sexuality.

Yedioth Ahronoth

Losses shows how much the creation and loss of ideological identity preoccupied Goldberg.... Exquisite depictions of Berlin in the 1930s.

Time Out

BOOKS PUBLISHED

BOOKS IN TRANSLATION (Selected)

Lady of the Castle (play)

English: Tel Aviv, Inst. for the Trans. Hebrew Lit., 1974; incl. in *Sel. Poetry & Drama*, New York/London, Toby Press, 2005

French: Tel Aviv, Inst. for the Trans. Hebrew Lit., 1983

Light on the Rim of a Cloud (poetry)

English: San Francisco, Didymus, 1972

Letters from an Imaginary Journey (novel)

German: Frankfurt, Suhrkamp Jüdischer Verlag, 2003
Spanish: Valencia, Pre-Textos, 2006

There Comes the Light (novel)

English: New York/London, Toby Press, forthcoming

Selected Poems

English: London/San Francisco, Menard/Panjandrum, 1976

Polish: London, Oficyna Poetow i Malarzy, 1971

Russian: Tel Aviv, Sifriat Poalim, 1989

Spanish: Granada, Univ. de Granada, 1994 (2 vols.)

Selected Poetry and Drama

English: New York/London, Toby Press, 2005

This Night (poetry)

Spanish: Granada, Univ. de Granada, 1994

Of Bloom (poetry)

English: New York, Garland, 1992

Books for children – published in Catalan, Chinese, English, French, Korean, Gujarati, Russian, Tamil, Telugu, and forthcoming in other Indian languages



PHOTO © DANIEL MIRAN

Reuven Miran

Anna and the Hunters

novella

Tel Aviv, Nahar Books, 2009, 80 pp.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Reuven Miran was born in 1944 and grew up in the Jezreel Valley. He received his MA in philosophy from the Sorbonne and has written novels, stories and film scripts. He is also a translator of French literature. Miran has received the Prime Minister's Prize, the BBC World Service Prize, the ACUM Prize for Literary Achievement (1995), and the French Ministry of Culture Award for promoting French culture in Israel. In 2003, Miran founded Nahar Books, a new Israeli publishing house devoted to classic humanistic texts on freedom and human dignity.

SYNOPSIS

Anna, a 13-year-old girl, lives—or rather hides—in a basement in Tel Aviv. She lives in fear of being thrown out of the country even though she was born in Israel, and Hebrew is her mother tongue. But because her parents came from far away, she is considered a “migrant worker,” a foreigner.

Her father has already been deported: arrested on the street, imprisoned and then put on a plane leaving the country. So Anna does not go out and tries to make as little noise as possible. Her mother leaves for work early each morning under cover of darkness, despite her fear of the “hunters”—the deportation police. And Anna stays alone, with just a radio and a little night light that cannot be seen from the street.

So as not to feel too lonely, she climbs up on the bed and peeks out through a little skylight. She sees the legs of passersby and tries to imagine what the people look like.

Anna thinks about her situation and in her innocent way raises difficult moral questions about Israel's policy towards foreign workers. As the author puts it, this book is intended for “every reader who seeks to live in a better, more just society.”

ENGLISH TRANSLATION AVAILABLE



They were really nice to us when they let us say good bye to Dad at the airport, right before they put him on the plane. “If you want to stay together,” said one of the hunters who escorted him, “it’s fine with us.” He winked to his friend and continued: “Please, join him and go back home. The ticket’s on us.” He said, “your home” and didn’t even try to hide his smile. Then he offered me a bottle of water, but I said no, no favors. What does it mean, return to your home? In order to return home I don’t need a plane. The most I need is a bus. My home is here, in Tel Aviv, the city where I was born. In Ichilov Hospital if you must know.

PRESS BYTES

This is not a book – it is a great cry to the sky, that maybe on her way to heaven Anna will find a sympathetic ear.

Haaretz

A short and moving novella that one reads with bated breath.

Israel Hayom

An example of committed and political literature that is a must in every library.

Achbar Ha’Ir

I got *Anna and the Hunters* an hour ago. I read it and was extremely moved. Regarding the poets, please tell Anna that some of us actually thought poems might change something.

Poet **Ronny Someck**

BOOKS PUBLISHED

BOOKS PUBLISHED IN HEBREW

The Western Hills (stories), Writers Association/Massada, 1970

The Lead Bird (stories), Hakibbutz Hameuchad/Siman Kriah, 1978

The Planet of Yairi (children), Hakibbutz Hameuchad/Siman Kriah, 1980

The Scarecrow of Dr. Givoli (children), Hakibbutz Hameuchad/Siman Kriah, 1980

In the Mountains, Inland (stories), Tarmil, 1980

Night Over the City (novella), Tarmil, 1987

And Twice the Parrot Held its Tongue (novel), Zmora Bitan, 1987

South of Antarctica (stories), Keter, 1990

Turtle Soup for Breakfast (stories), Keter, 1995

The Last Dwarfs in Givatayim (children), Keter, 1995

Memories of a Dead Season (stories), Yedioth Ahronoth, 1996; Nahar, 2006

Three Cigarettes in an Ashtray (novel), Yedioth Ahronoth, 2001

Kingfishers (stories), Hakibbutz Hameuchad/Siman Kriah, 2006

Anna and the Hunters (novella), Nahar, 2009



PHOTO © DAN PORGES

Avirama Golan

The Broken Stem of the Vine – Open Letter to a Palestinian-Israeli Sister

Essay
Forthcoming, ca. 50 pp.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Avirama Golan was born in Israel in 1950. She studied literature at Tel Aviv University and later studied French literature in Paris. She has worked as both correspondent and editor for the daily *Davar*. In 1991, she moved to *Haaretz*, where she is now senior correspondent on social and cultural affairs and a member of the editorial board. Since 1999, she has also hosted a weekly literary magazine on Channel 2 TV. Golan has published two novels, a book of non-fiction and four children's books. She has also translated many children's classics and written screenplays for children's TV. Both her novels were bestsellers in Israel. Golan received the Book Publishers Association's Gold Book Prize in 2005.

The Broken Stem of the Vine is forthcoming in French (Galaade).

SYNOPSIS

Avirama Golan's fascinating essay discusses the troubled relations between the Jewish people and the Palestinian Arabs living in Israel, struggling over the same piece of land. This is also a personal essay written as an open letter to Golan's Palestinian friend, Nidal. Nidal, whom Golan has not seen for many years, left Israel to study in the U.S. never to return to her country. However, 33 years ago the two women had a joint cause and fought together for co-existence, believing that a Palestinian state would soon be established alongside Israel. Golan writes out of present distress: the dream has faded and the chasm between the two peoples—political, social and cultural—has only deepened.

Golan emphasizes that establishing the State of Israel was a legitimate and moral act, but at the same time she understands the Palestinian *Nakba*—literally: catastrophe—and tries to unravel the narrative through the eyes of her friend. Golan refuses to despair and believes it is still possible to return to the path of sanity and hope, leading to a situation in which two democratic states will exist side by side. The broken stem of the vine, the symbol of co-existence between the two peoples, must be mended so that the vine can again blossom and bear fruit.

PRESS BYTES

No reviews yet available

For ***The Ravens***

Golan's language is extraordinarily powerful and sensitive.

Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung

Golan's novel presents a major ethical issue in exciting language.

Literaturkritik.de

For ***Vital Signs***

Vital Signs monitors our awakening from the social coma into which we have forced ourselves... A courageous novel written by a mature writer.

Haaretz

A flowing, intelligent novel, full of humane sensitivity and contagious joy.

Maariv

BOOKS PUBLISHED

BOOKS PUBLISHED IN HEBREW

Sadwarf (children), Idanim, 1979; Yedioth Ahronoth, 2005

Woman on Themselves: Israel 1987 (non-fiction), Am Oved, 1988

Girl and Colors (children), Dvir, 1990

The Ravens (novel), Hakibbutz Hameuchad/Siman Kriah, 2004

Gali's Soap Bubbles (children), Kinneret, Zmora-Bitan, Dvir, 2006

Vital Signs (novel), Hakibbutz Hameuchad/Siman Kriah, 2008

The Cat That Dafna Wants (children), Kinneret, Zmora-Bitan, Dvir, 2008

BOOKS IN TRANSLATION

The Ravens
German: Frankfurt, Suhrkamp, 2007

Italian: Florence, Giuntina, 2007

French: Paris, Galaade, forthcoming

Vital Signs

French: Paris, Galaade, forthcoming

The Broken Stem of the Vine – Open Letter to a Palestinian-Israeli Sister

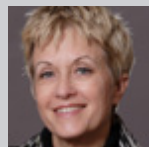
French: Paris, Galaade, forthcoming

My dear Nidal,

As time goes by, I think about you more and more. Summer is slowly dying, and the grapevine in the yard is turning rust-colored. Is your hair also getting full of gray strands? Do you miss the scorching scent of the sea in the alleys of Acre? Do you also, there in far-off America, dream angel wings?

Thirty-three years have gone by since our first meeting. I wrote then that you were my mirror. And you said we were sisters. Daughters of Adam, human beings. Were we speaking the truth, or were we perhaps telling each other, and ourselves, what we wanted to believe? Either way, my soul was tied to your soul. Either way, we both went back to doing our own thing. Events and place have distanced us from each other, and the hour of grace that lasted a few days while we laughed in wonder and wept in sorrow, in anger, in sweet sisterhood, has long since sunk to the bottom of the sea. There are moments in the evening when it all surfaces in my memory, clear and beautiful. What are you up to these days?

IN HER OWN WORDS



I wrote this as a letter to a real friend, a woman whom I love and appreciate very much and whose absence (she left Israel long ago) impelled me to it. By writing to her, which was easy because it came straight from my heart, I tried to express both my empathy for the Arab citizens of Israel and the future that I wish for my country.

In order to do this, I had to tell at least part of the complicated story of the two communities (Jewish and Arab). And for this reason, I chose two life stories—that of Nimer Murcus, a teacher from the Galilee, and the other of my father, a printer who came to Palestine in 1925. Their stories are also the story of this beloved but still wounded country. Wounded like the broken stem of our shared vine which—I hope—can still be mended by us all.

Amnon Jackont

The Mystery of My Death

a literary thriller
Jerusalem, Keter, 2009. 356 pp.

PHOTO © AMIT NIV



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Amnon Jackont was born in Israel in 1948, and lives in Tel Aviv. He holds a Ph.D. in history from Tel Aviv University. Jackont works as an editor at a leading publishing house. He is a lecturer in history, teaches creative writing, and contributes a bi-weekly column to *Haaretz*, one of Israel's major newspapers. He has published seven novels, of which six were best-sellers. One—*Borrowed Time*—was published in England by Hamish Hamilton.

SYNOPSIS

In 588 BC, Gedalyahu Ben Achikam, appointed by the Babylonians to be the governor of Judea, became the first Jewish leader to be murdered by another Jew for political reasons. There has been much speculation surrounding this murder, but the mystery remains unsolved to this day. It is on this mystery that Jackont, a trained historian, builds his gripping plot.

Gideon Luria, a widowed professor raising his teenage daughter alone, receives an ancient parchment written by Gedalyahu, who had foreseen his own murder. Gedalyahu buried the breastplate worn by the High Priest of the Temple in a secret place in Jerusalem, to be discovered only by a man who could lead his people. For this reason, Gedalyahu wrote a riddle that only a person with unique skills could understand. To crack it, Gideon recruits a few doctoral students, among them a beautiful and sensual lawyer, a sensitive Arab student and a brilliant female student who is also a drug addict. With their help, he finally unravels the mystery: he deciphers a cursed code, confronts faceless enemies and even experiences a new, bitter-sweet love.

However, the greatest trial awaits him at the end of his search, when he finds the breastplate that has been buried in a cave for 2600 years. Then he must make a decision that will change his life, and history.



Gideon read the contract from start to finish, pressed it against the wall and signed at the bottom. Then he said: “It’s not the parchment that I’m worried about, it’s the High Priest’s breastplate. It’s more than just a religious relic—it’s a tool for governing people. According to the Bible, the people determined whether God permitted a war to start or not, by deciphering the light thrown by the precious stones on this breastplate. Can you imagine the power of a man who gets hold of it? He’ll be able to declare that God told him to send airplanes to bomb Teheran, or to conquer Lebanon or take over Gaza again. And that parchment is the only way of reaching the breastplate.”

“And where is that parchment now?”

“Here, with me. I was afraid to leave it at home.” He shifted his weight from one foot to the other.

PRESS BYTES

Jackont weaves the story of Gedalia into a thrilling historical plot.

Haaretz

It is a rare privilege to pick up a book that teaches you so much about biblical events from a really interesting and different perspective. A moving novel... A fascinating new book.

Channel 7

Well-written and very enjoyable... Jackont is one of Israel’s top suspense writers.

Time Out

BOOKS PUBLISHED

BOOKS PUBLISHED IN HEBREW

Borrowed Time (novel), Am Oved, 1982

The Rainy Day Man (novel), Am Oved, 1987

The Last of the Wise Lovers (novel), Keter, 1991

Honey Trap (novel), Keter, 1994

Ready for Life (stories), Keter, 2000

Introduction to Love (novel), Keter, 2001

L for Lies (novel), with Varda Rasiel-Jackont, Keshet, 2004

Resurgence (non-fiction), Yedioth Ahronoth, 2009

The Mystery of My Death (novel), Keter, 2009

BOOKS IN TRANSLATION

Borrowed Time

English: London, Hamish Hamilton, 1986