# IPAF statistics 2008 ff.

compiled by Stephan GUTH

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based on IPAF press releases and texts found at the IPAF website (www.arabicfiction.org), authored mostly by Fleur MONTANARO

| no. | year | title | author | m/f | born | age * | from | Features / plot |
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| | ↓ L,S,W = on **L**onglist, **S**hortlist, or **W**inner | | | | | ↓ in the year of short-/longlisting | | |
| | **2008** | | | | | | | |
| **1** | 2008[S] | *Arḍ al-yambūs* ("The Land of Purgatory")<br>▪ Beirut & Jordan: al-Muʾassasa al-ʿArabiyya, 2007 | Ilyās Farkūḥ (Elias Farkouh)<br>❖ BA in Philosophy and Psychology from the Arab University of Beirut | m | 1948 | 60 | JOR | fuses an autobiography of an individual with the story of an exiled man in general. |
| **2** | 2008[S] | *Maṭar ḥuzayrān* ("June Rain")<br>▪ Beirut: al-Nahār, 2006 | Ǧabbūr Duwayhī (Jabbour Douaihy)<br>❖ PhD Comparative Literature (Sorbonne)<br>❖ works as Professor of French Literature at the University of Lebanon | m | 1949 | 59 | LEB | evokes the horrors of internal division in Lebanon through his observation of village daily life where revenge is the prevailing system of justice. |
| **3** | 2008[S] | *Madīḥ al-karāhiya* ("In Praise of Hatred")<br>▪ ……. 2006 | Ḫālid Ḫalīfa (Khaled Khalifa)<br>❖ BA in Law from Aleppo University<br>❖ author of screenplays for TV series, as well as for the cinema; regular contributor to a number of Arabic newspapers | m | 1964 | 44 | SYR | narrates the experience of oppression under fundamentalist organisations in a Syrian society devoid of democracy. |
| **4** | 2008[S] | *Antaʿil al-ġubār waʾamšī* ("Walking in the Dust")<br>▪ Beirut: Riyāḍ al-Rayyis, 2006 | Mayy Minassà (May Menassa)<br>❖ diploma in French Literature<br>❖ began as broadcast journalist, worked as a critic for Al-Nahār since 1969.<br>❖ many translations (Fr > Ar) | f | 1939 | 69 | LEB | celebrates a memory scarred by the tragedies of ward and loss in today's world. |
| **5** | 2008[S] | *Taġrīdat al-bağʿa* ("Swan Song")<br>▪ Cairo: al-Dār, 2007 | Makkāwī Saʿīd (Mekkawi Said) | m | 1955 | 53 | EG | describes an unstable, ever-changing social reality, lamenting a lyrical time now past, while fashioning a potential future of irresolvable questions |
| **6** | 2008[W] | *Wāḥat al-ġurūb* ("Sunset Oasis")<br>▪ a | Bahāʾ Ṭāhir (Bahaa Taher) | m | 1935 | 73 | EG | The desert is a space in which people discover themselves,' says the author Bahaa Taher, and the desert is where his novel *Sunset Oasis* is set, in the last years of the 19th century.<br>It depicts the life of a middle-aged government official, Mahmoud Abd el Zahir, who is sent by his British superiors to govern the oasis of Siwa as a punishment for his involvement in the failed Urabi revolt in 1882.<br>Frustrated by the failure of the revolution and experiencing a gradual draining of his intimate feelings for his wife, Mahmoud decides to accept the mission, away from both scenes: the scene of his failed revolution and that of his failing intimate life. Except that his wife decides to accompany him, on a mission of her own, to follow the footsteps of Alexander the Great. His desperate attempts to discourage |

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| | | | | | | | | her fail, and he ends up followed by the shadow of his troubled emotions on a journey he originally wanted to use 'to discover himself', as the author puts it.<br>In Siwa Mahmoud faces yet another betrayal and a defeat on two levels: professional and emotional. He discovers that his deputy has been regularly sending reports to his supervisors about his failure to handle the locals, who revolt against him.<br>On the emotional level his marriage hits the rocks, his feelings for his wife become more uncertain than ever, and he doesn't even make serious attempts to hide this, though the issue is never explicit.<br>Amidst this gloomy scene the author plants some bright elements that promise hope, some positive characters that seem to shift the course of events in a less tragic direction.<br>In *Sunset Oasis* we meet Sheikh Yehya, with his reconciliatory attitude and healing skills; his beautiful niece Maleeka, the free spirit, and Catherine's sister, Fiona, who comes to the oasis in hope of a cure for her tuberculosis and 'can talk with the troops and the Siwan women and the Bedouin women and their children'. Yet by the end the destructive elements have prepared a tragic scene, and the hope proves to be 'mirage in the oasis'. |
| | **2009** | | | | | | | |
| **7** | 2009[L] | *Ġurfat al-ʿināya al-murakkaza* ("Intensive Care")<br>▪ Cairo: Dār Šarqiyyāt, 2008 | ʿIzz al-Dīn Fušayr (Ezzedine Choukri Fishere)<br>❖ writer, academic, diplomat, born in Kuwait, grown up in EG, 1987 BA in Political Science from Cairo Univ, then universities in FR and CAN, International Diploma in Administration from The National School of Administration, Paris (1992); M.A. in International Relations from Ottawa Univ (1995), PhD in Political Science from Montreal Univ (1998); currently teaching political science at AUC, + lectures at other universities; writes also political articles | m | 1966 | 43 | EG (*KU) | An explosion that brings down the Egyptian consulate in Khartoum; two men known to each other since their university days, one a journalist, the other a secret service officer, both now living in Sudan; a respectable lady working as an advocate for the Muslim Brotherhood; an adolescent boy of Egyptian origin living in the US and on a visit in Sudan, who carries explosives in his suitcase…. These are some of the elements of the Egyptian author Izzedin Shukri's novel, a novel that not only describes the network of terrorism or that of secret services but also the entanglement of individuals therein. |
| **8** | 2009[L] | *Katībat al-ḫarāb* ("Platoon of Ruin")<br>▪ Beirut: al-Markaz al-ṯaqāfī al-ʿarabī, 2008 | ʿAbd al-Karīm Ğuwayṭī (Abdul-Kareem Jouaity)<br>❖ currently director of Ministry of Culture for Tadla-Azilal province | m | 1962 | 47 | MOR | When a Danish lady offers to a Moroccan municipality a small tree to be planted somewhere in the town – as an expression of gratefulness for moments of bliss that she and her late husband had the good luck to experience in this town decades ago, this was bound to create problems. In this novel the Moroccan author Abdel-Kareem Jouaitly tells us about the sinuous and mysterious paths of bureaucracy and power and the fate of the individual under them. This is a narrative at once funny and painful. |
| **9** | 2009[L] | *Ṭaʿm aswad, rāʾiḥa sawdāʾ* ("Black Taste, Black Odour")<br>▪ Beirut: Dār al-Sāqī, 2008 | ʿAlī al-Muqrī (http://www.arabicfiction.org/book/38.html Ali al-Muqri)<br>❖ has worked in cultural journalism since 1985; novel The Handsome Jew on LoL IPAF2011 | m | 1966 | 43 | YEM | transports his readers into the city slums where poverty, filth, cruelty and injustice run rife. Basing his novel on historical research, al-Muqri explores the atrocious conditions in which the Akhdam class (the outcasts of Yemeni society) live. |

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| **10** | 2009[L] | *Ḥāris al-tibġ* ("The Tobacco Guard")<br>▪ Beirut: al-Markaz al-ʿarabī lil-dirāsāt wa'l-našr, 2008 | ʿAlī Badr (Ali Bader)<br>❖ studied philosophy and FrLit at Baghdad Univ, worked as journalist for a number of newspapers and magazines; author of over 15 books, from travel writing and works of criticism to fiction; Kings of Sands on LoL IPAF2010; currently living in Amman | m | 1964 | 45 | IRQ | This retrospective novel-within-a-novel explores the origins of the current state of Iraq, taking the reader on a journey from the occupied and blood-soaked present day Baghdad back several decades to the 1930s. In this complex story, the author reflects on the country's reign of violence, beginning with the attacks against Baghdad's Jews in 1941 and ending with the recent fall of Saddam Hussein |
| **11** | 2009[L] | *al-Waram* ("The Tumour")<br>▪ Beirut: al-Markaz al-ʿarabī lil-dirāsāt wa'l-našr, 2008 | Ibrāhīm al-Kūnī (Ibrahim al-Koni)<br>❖ grew up in the Tuareg desert, not learning to read or write Arabic until 12; studied CompLit at Gorky Inst Moscow, was journalist in Moscow and Warsaw; has lived in Switzerland since 1993 | m | 1948 | 61 | LIB | is a profound and symbolic philosophical exploration. It dissects the concept of authority - the ruler and the ruled and the balance of power between the two. The author explores the relationship between man and existence, exposing the vulnerability of man in the wilderness of the world. |
| **12** | 2009[L] | *al-Qumqum wa'l-ğinnī* ("The Bottle and the Genie")<br>▪ Beirut: al-Kawkab, 2008 | Muḥammad Abū Maʿtūq (Muhammed Abu Maatouk)<br>❖ BA ArLang from Aleppo Univ (1975); first plays 1978, many plays for children; + novels, SS, scripts for TV soaps. | m | 1950 | 59 | SYR | set in an ordinary neighbourhood in old Aleppo, presents a microcosm of Syrian society during the period of social and political unrest from the 1950 to the1980s. With its effective, if measured, use of magical realism, the story recreates the lives of ordinary people in the neighbourhood, sharing their trials and tribulations during this troubled time in Syrian history. |
| **13** | 2009[L] | *Ṣalāt min aǧl al-ʿāʾila* ("Prayer for the Family")<br>▪ Beirut: al-Markaz al-ṯaqāfī al-ʿarabī, 2008 | Rīnīh al-Ḥāyik (Renée Hayek)<br>❖ from SLeb, studied philosophy at LU, then career in journalism and literary translation; *A Short Life* on LoL IPAF2011 | f | ??? | | LEB | presents a distinctly succinct narrative that intricately portrays the difficulties and deprivation of a Lebanese family in their struggle as they are forced to relocate their lives. The unbalancing effects of the Lebanese Civil War are reflected through the story by the suffering and despair that the family must weather. Hayek employs a narrative style with subdued rhythms to render highly dramatic events. |
| **14** | 2009[L] | *Hāḏā 'l-Andalusī!* ("The Man from Andalusia")<br>▪ Beirut: Dār al-Ādāb, 2008 | Bin Sālim Ḥimmīš (Bensalem Himmich)<br>❖ novelist and scriptwriter, PhD in Philosophy from U Paris; present Minister of Culture in Morocco; *My Tormentor* on LoL IPAF2011 | m | ??? | | MOR | tells the story of renowned Sufi philosopher Ibn Sab'in. Set in Andalusia in the declining years of Arab rule, the story unfolds in a time of civil crisis when intellectual and religious fanaticism prevails. Using Ibn Sab'in's books and letters, Moroccan author Bensalem Himmich examines Ibn Sab'in's tolerant vision towards life and religion at a time of unrest and uses it to throw light on present day issues. |
| **15** | 2009[L] | *Māʾ al-samāʾ* ("Ma' Al Sama'")<br>▪ Amman: Dār al-Šurūq, 2008 | Yaḥyà Yaḫluf (Yahya Yakhlif)<br>❖ has lived as a refugee for most of his life | m | 1944 | 65 | PAL | follows the lives of Palestinian exiles after their expulsion from their homeland. In an emotional account taking in the troubled years between the 1948 Nakba and the defeat of 1967, including the Palestinian revolt emerging from the refugee camps during the 1960s, the story examines the ordeal of the exiles, from the initial depression of exile to the pursuit to recover dignity and regain strength after a defeat that destroyed their world. |
| **16** | 2009[S] | *al-Mutarğim al-ḫāʾin* ("The Unfaithful Translator")<br>▪ Beirut: Riyāḍ al-Rayyis, 2008 | Fawāz Ḥaddād (Fawaz Haddad)<br>❖ full-time writer since 1988 | m | ? | | SYR | tells the story of a translator accused of betrayal due to his non-conformist views on the purpose of translation and the importance of creativity, thought, culture and civilisation. As a result, the translator builds a broad network of literary figures, journalists and critics in a campaign to establish that the art of writing – in its many forms – is essentially human and associated with freedom and life, and therefore rejects submission or subjection to exploitation, negotiation, opportunism or extortion. |

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| **17** | 2009[S] | *Rawāʾiḥ Mārī Klēr* ("The Scents of Marie-Claire")<br>▪ Beirut: Dār al-Ādāb, 2008 | al-Ḥabīb al-Sālimī (Habib Selmi)<br>❖ ??? (nothing provided, except publications) | m | 1951 | 58 | TUN | explores the cultural encounter/clash between East and West. Selmi explores this theme through the relationship between an Arab man and a Western woman, each embodying the value system of their respective cultures. |
| **18** | 2009[S] | *Zaman al-ḫuyūl al-bayḍāʾ* («Time of White Horses»)<br>▪ Beirut & Algiers: Arab Scientific Publishers, 2007 | Ibrāhīm Naṣrallāh (Ibrahim Nasrallah)<br>❖ childhood and youth in the Alwehdat Palestinian Refugee Camp in Amman, began working life as a teacher in Saudi Arabia | m | 1954 | 55 | JOR (*PAL) | charts the history of three generations of a Palestinian family in a small village, Jordanian author Ibrahim Nasrallah's saga is a descendant of a genre introduced in Arabic fiction by Naguib Mahfouz's famousCairo Trilogy. Through the lives of the members of this family, Nasrallah depicts the tragedy of a whole nation under changing historical circumstances: the Ottoman rule, the British Mandate and the Nakba (the catastrophe of the Jewish occupation of Palestinian land in 1948) to the expulsion of the Palestinians and finally the post-Nakba era. |
| **19** | 2009[S] | *al-Ḥafīda al-amrīkiyya* ("The American Granddaughter")<br>▪ Beirut: Dār al-Jadīd, 2008 | Inʿām Kačağī (Inaam Kachachi)<br>❖ studied journalism at Baghdad University, working in Iraqi press and radio before moving to Paris to complete a PhD at the Sorbonne | f | 1952 | 57 | IRQ | depicts the American occupation of Iraq through the eyes of a young American-Iraqi woman, who returns to her country as an interpreter for the US Army. Through the narrator's conflicting emotions, we see the tragedy of a country which, having battled to emerge from dictatorship, then finds itself under foreign occupation |
| **20** | 2009[S] | *Ǧūʿ* ("Hunger")<br>▪ Beirut: Dār al-Ādāb, 2008 | Muḥammad al-Busāṭī (Mohamed El-Bisatie)<br>❖ began his publishing career in 1962, writing for a number of newspapers and magazines | m | 1937 - 2012 | | EG | is a detailed account of the ordinary lives of those at the very bottom of society, sufferers of continuous hunger. Through a detached yet intimate portrait of the day-to-day lives, Egyptian author Mohamed El-Bisatie explores how, despite their sufferings, these neglected people are still able to reflect on human existence and ask questions about their surroundings. |
| **21** | 2009[W] | *ʿAzāzīl* ("Azazel")<br>▪ a | Yūsuf Zaydān (Youssef Ziedan)<br>❖ scholar specialising in Arabic and Islamic studies, director of the Manuscript Centre and Museum affiliated to the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, university professor, public lecturer, columnist and prolific author | m | 1958 | 51 | EG | Set in the fifth century AD in Upper Egypt, Alexandria and northern Syria, Azazeel presents two parallel fights of the new religion (Christianity) and its believers on the one side and the old pagan religions and their believers on the other side. The other parallel fight takes place inside the monk Hiba whose life is a permanent fight between the two elements of his personality: the heavenly and the earthly elements, the pagan and the Christian.<br>Azazeel is another name for Satan, who, in religious mythologies symbolizes man's inclination to do evil things. In art, however, especially in poetry, the Arabic word for the Satan is shaytan. When combined with the word "poetry", it symbolizes the inspiration sources.<br>So Yousef Ziedan's Satan is all but negative, and has nothing to do with any rigid dogmas; it's a symbol of man's inclination to freedom, to dream and create. Ziedan's Azazeel is far more complex than that of the religious mythologies: he tempts Hiba into doing evil things, only to prove through the monk's inner discourse, that this evil is nothing but a human's purest repressed wishes.<br>Azazeel is nothing but the hook on which we hang our taboo desires and our inclination for freedom. It is our inner voice, our pure ego, free of all religious and social rules.<br>The author has set tricky tasks for his two protagonists, Azazeel and Hiba alike: Azazeel's tough challenge was to free a monk of his religious limits, and Hiba's |

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| | | | | | | | | challenge was to handle a conflict between his human and divine halves.<br>Ziedan's career as a researcher of religious scripts played an important part in reconstructing the world in which his novel is set. His characters move smoothly, both in their dramatic world and in the reality of fifth century Egypt and north Syria. |
| | **2010** | | | | | | | |
| **22** | 2010[L] | *Man yuʾnis al-sayyida?* ("Who Will Cheer up the Lady?")<br>▪ Amman: Dār Fadaat, 2009 | Maḥmūd al-Rīmāwī (Mahmoud al-Rimawy)<br>❖ has worked as journalist for a number of Arab newspapers including *Al Rai* (JOR), editor-in-chief since 2007; currently focusing on his writing | m | 1948 | 62 | PAL | After the last of her children has flown the nest, the widow Umm Zurqa finds herself alone with no one to relieve her solitude except Umm Auni, her neighbour and life-long friend, and a strange tortoise she discovers in the street. The tortoise becomes her singular obsession and a number of questions arise: will people think she has lost her mind? Is it acceptable to keep a tortoise? And what will her children think of this small creature when they come to visit her? *Who Will Cheer up the Lady?* is told through the voices of the narrator, the apprehensive old widow, her neighbour Umm Auni – who witnesses her madness – and lastly the grave voice of the tortoise. |
| **23** | 2010[L] | *al-Wārifa* ("The Leafy Tree")<br>▪ Damascus: Dār al-Madā, 2009 | Umayma al-Ḫamīs (Umaima al-Khamis)<br>❖ BA ArabLit from King Saud U, diploma in Engl from U Washington; currently in Ministry of Education, chairs the Women's Committee at the Ministry of Culture and Information | f | 1966 | 44 | SAU | In *The Leafy Tree*, Umaima Al-Khamis allows her heroine Jawhara to take control of the narrative, as if to compensate for the constraints placed upon the author by society. Jawhara works in a hospital in the centre of Riyadh and it is through her work that she meets Adrienne, a European colleague, who opens up the world to her with his stories. It seems as though she is only able to live through the life of 'the other', even if that other is other is a Jewish doctor she met in Toronto. The narrative cleverly weaves together the details of her private life, such as her relationship with her family at home, with the very different environment of the workplace and, most importantly, the daydreams through which Jawhara often lives a parallel life. |
| **24** | 2010[L] | *Mulūk al-rimāl* ("Kings of the Sands")<br>▪ Abu Dhabi: Kaleem Publishing, 2009 | ʿAlī Badr (Ali Bader)<br>❖ studied Philos and FrLit at U Baghdad, then journalist; authored >15 books, from travel writing and works of criticism to nine works of fiction. *The Tobacco Guard* on LoL IPAF2009; lives in Amman. | m | 1964 | 46 | IRQ | Closer to a detective story than a novel, *Kings of the Sands* tells the story of a soldier lost in the bewitching world of the desert. In this tragic tale, instead of being portrayed as the usual dreadful end to human life, death becomes a commonplace and unremarkable backdrop – perhaps indicative of how cheap life has become in a country which has been preoccupied with war for decades. With its desert setting, *Kings of the Sands* is a new direction for the Iraqi novel, which has tended to focus on urban life. The novel is both entertaining and fast-paced, and reveals the author's notable talent for description. |
| **25** | 2010[L] | *Tamr al-aṣābiʿ* ("Fingers of Dates")<br>▪ Beirut: Arab Scientific Publishers, 2009 | Muḥsin al-Ramlī (Muhsin Al-Ramli)<br>❖ has lived in Madrid since 1995, PhD in Lit and Philos from U Madrid; writes in both Arabic and Spanish; has worked as journalist and cultural editor for Arab, Span and LatAm press, many translations Ar <-> Span. 20+ books (SS, plays, transl, novels); co-founder (in 1997) and co-director of publishing house and philosophical and cultural review *Alwah* in Spain, | m | 1967 | 43 | IRQ | is set in Iraq at the time of Saddam Hussein's rule. A beautiful and moving account of daily Iraqi life, *Fingers of Dates* tells the tale of a man and his relationships with his lover and his family, with a particularly touching look at the father-son relationship. The novel relates the dispersal of Iraqis at this time and how some were forced to forsake their identities in a new life in which they are neither able to function nor successfully integrate. In this profound novel, Muhsin al-Ramli shows he is clearly a master of his craft. |

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| | | | currently at American U in Madrid (St Louis U) | | | | | |
| **26** | 2010[L] | *Šāriʿ al-ʿaṭāyif* ("Street of Affections")<br>▪ Beirut: Dār al-Sāqī, 2009 | ʿAbdallāh Bin Baḫīt (Abdullah Bin Bakheet)<br>❖ graduated from King Saud U, then 1978 journalist for *al-Yamama* magazine and editing the literary section of *al-Riyadh* newspaper; translations, studies on Arabic novel, writing for television; writes column for *al-Riyadh*, active campaigner for women's rights, respect for minorities and the easing of religious tensions. | m | 1952 | 58 | SAU | In *Street of Affections*, Abdullah Bin Bakheet tells the story of three ruined lives from within Saudi Arabia's hidden history. The storyline focuses on: Naser, a teenage boy who is violated by the men of Affections Street and who later, in his madness, murders anybody who married his beloved cousin; on Shanghafa, the disabled slave who in freedom finds himself enslaved by an inner prison and whose quarrelsome, drunken ways ultimately lead to his execution and lastly the story of Sa'd, the son of a poor family, who becomes enamoured of a prostitute on the mysterious Pearl Island. In a language filled with local colour and the experience of deprivation, Abdullah Bin Bakheet gives to the marginalised a voice with which to express their tragedies |
| **27** | 2010[L] | *Miʾa wa-ṭamānūn ġurūb*$^{an}$ ("180 Sunsets")<br>▪ Beirut: Dār al-Sāqī, 2009 | Ḥasan Dāʾūd (Hassan Daoud)<br>❖ novelist and journalist, writing for e.g. *al-Safeer* and *al-Hayat*; currently manages the *Nawafez* supplement of *al-Mustaqbal* newspaper | m | 1950 | 60 | LEB | There are no cemeteries in Zahraniya, as the novel's protagonist discovers one day after 20 years of living there. In *180 Sunsets*, Lebanese author Hassan Daoud takes the Arabic novel in a new direction by focusing on details which are normally overlooked or ignored. Daoud's descriptive and contemplative prose quietly delves into its subject, but the patient reader will soon discover the heated emotions and simmering violence beneath the 'objective' surface. |
| **28** | 2010[L] | *Aṣl wa-faṣl* ("Origin and Branch")<br>▪ Beirut: Dār al-Ādāb, 2009 | Saḥar Ḫalīfa (Sahar Khalifeh)<br>❖ obtained scholarship to study in US, there MA in EnglLit from U of North Carolina, PhD in Women's studies and AmerLit from Iowa U; all her novels deal with the situation of the Palestinians under occupation | f | 1941 | 69 | PAL | In *Origin and Branch*, well-known Palestinian author Sahar Khalifeh continues her narrative journey which attempts to explore the depths of Palestinian society and understand the overlapping discourses which have shaped its identity. Khalifeh uses the stories of individual lives to expose the psychological layers that form the fabric of Palestinian society. The author focuses on the interaction between the Arab self and the 'other', whether the other is Jewish, British or simply from a different cultural background. She also looks at the position of women under the occupation, who have found themselves caught between the hammer of tradition and the anvil of modernisation |
| **29** | 2010[L] | *Yawm rāʾiʿ lil-mawt* ("A Great Day to Die")<br>▪ Algiers: al-Ikhtilāf, 2009 | Samīr Qasīmī (Samir Kacimi)<br>❖ BA in Law, qualified lawyer; also cultural editor; currently copy editor | m | 1974 | 36 | ALG | tells the story of a journalist who plans to commit suicide by throwing himself from the top of a building. This tense novel relates his story through flashbacks to scenes that tell of physical pleasure and the failings of love. All this unfolds within the chaotic world of the lower and marginalised classes of the popular quarters of Algiers. Will the intellectual hero succeed in carrying out his own death, transforming it into a public spectacle that will immortalise his name and his message of despair to the world? |
| **30** | 2010[L] | *Ismuhū 'l-ġarām* ("It's Called Love")<br>▪ ??? | ʿAlawiyya Ṣubḥ (Alawiya Sobh)<br>❖ BA in ArLit and EnglLit from LU, has worked in journalism since the early 1980s; in the 1990s she founded *Snob Al-Hasnaa*, the best-selling women's cultural magazine in the Arab world today, and remains its editor-in-chief. | f | 1955 | 55 | LEB | In *It's Called Love*, Alawiya Sobh resumes her story of Beirut society with a depth of style and vision. The novel follows the fortunes of a number of characters whose experiences reflect the tragedy and destruction of the Lebanese people, from the Civil War to foreign invasion and the events leading up to the July 2006 war. The reader follows the fortunes of the characters, some of whom have the power to shape their own futures and others who cannot escape their destinies. This is a novel that speaks about human suffering and the extreme experiences of love and |

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| | | | | | | | | fear in a world constantly overshadowed by violence. |
| **31** | **2010[L]** | *Ḥurrās al-hawāʾ* ("The Guards of the Air")<br>▪ Beirut: al-Kawkab, 2009 | Rūzā Yāsīn Ḥasan (Rosa Yaseen Hasan)<br>❖ studied Architectural Engineering, then wrote for various Syr and Ar periodicals (cultural journalism); has also documentary novel in Cairo (*A Negative of Political Arrests*, 2008); selected for the *Beirut39* as one of the 39 best Arab authors below 40 | f | 1974 | 36 | SYR | tells the story of a political prisoner who suffers torture at the hands of the Syrian regime. By focusing on the breakdown of the relationship between the prisoner and his lover, the novel demonstrates how imprisonment, distance and daily anxiety can extinguish the flame of love and the dignity of the individual. The narrator, a woman who works with political asylum seekers in a foreign embassy, reflects on the sufferings of so many young Arab men who have experienced violence at the hands of Arab regimes through their social and political allegiances. |
| **32** | 2010[S] | *al-Sayyida min Tall Abīb* ("The Lady from Tel Aviv")<br>▪ Beirut: al-Markaz al-ʿarabī lil-dirāsāt waʾl-našr, 2009 | Rabʿī al-Madhūn (Rabai alMadhoun)<br>❖ born in al-Majdal/Ashkelon (S-Pal, IL), 1948 Nakba exodus with family > Khan Younis (Gaza strip); studied at Cairo and Alexandria Universities, but expelled from EG in 1970 before graduating, because of his political activities; worked at the Palestinian Centre for Research Studies and as journalist and editor for many newspapers and magazines, currently editor for Al-Sharq Al-Awsat (London)<br>❖ 2nd novel Destinies: Concerto of the Holocaust and the Nakba (2015) | m | 1945 | 65 | PAL | tackles the Arab/Palestinian-Israeli issue, focusing on a pivotal time of anxiety and suspicion, with tensions on the point of boiling over. The novel's protagonists are Palestinian exile Walid Dahman, who is returning home to Gaza after many years in Europe, and Israeli Dana Ahuva, who happens to be sitting next to him on their flight into Tel Aviv's Ben-Gurion Airport. Their dialogue takes the reader into the far realms of memory, history and the self. The Lady from Tel Aviv is a novel that, in its complexity, intricacy and ambiguity, avoids the dogma of ready-made ideology. |
| **33** | 2010[S] | *Warāʾa ʾl-firdaws* ("Beyond Paradise")<br>▪ Egypt: al-ʿAyn Publishing, 2009 | Manṣūra ʿIzz al-Dīn (Mansoura Ez Eldin)<br>❖ studied journalism at the Faculty of Media, Cairo University and has published short stories in various newspapers and magazines (2001ff.) | f | 1976 | 34 | EG | engages with Egypt's rural middle class through the character of Salma. The editor of a literary magazine, Salma is trying to dispose of her negative self-image by liberating herself from a past loaded with painful memories. The process encourages her to write a novel in which she tells her family history: a history of love, a history of the body, a history of movement across the social classes within her village, a history of madness, and a history of writing. Through this process Salma's identity is split into two. On the one hand she observes and narrates in the present, whilst on the other she delves frantically into the hidden depths of her memory. |
| **34** | 2010[S] | *Amīrikā* ("America")<br>▪ Morocco & Lebanon: al-Markaz al-ṯaqāfī al-ʿarabī, 2009 | Rabīʿ Ǧābir (Rabee Jaber)<br>❖ has been editor of Afaq (the weekly cultural supplement of Al-Hayat newspaper, since 2001) | m | 1972 | 38 | LEB | evokes the story of the Syrians who left their homeland in the early twentieth century to try their luck in the young America. Spurred on by a sense of adventure and the desire to escape poverty, they made the epic journey. Leaving their homeland with only a few belongings, their journey takes in everything from their travels across mountains and plains, to their gradual integration into American society, later becoming citizens of America and fighting its wars. In particular, the novel focuses on the character of Marta, who travels alone to New York in search of her husband, with whom she has lost contact. America is a tribute to those who left Syria in search of a new life from those who remained behind. |
| **35** | 2010[S] | *Yawm ġāʾim fī ʾl-barr al-ġarbī* ("A Cloudy Day on the West Side")<br>▪ Cairo: Dār al-Šurūq, 2009 | Muḥammad al-Mansī Qindīl (Mohamed Mansi Qandil)<br>❖ born in al-Mahalla al-Kubra, graduated from medical school in Mansoura (1975), but gave up medicine, devoting himself instead to writing, and going on to win the State Incentive | m | 1949 | 61 | EG | evokes the period of great archeological discovery and nationalist struggle in Egypt. The novel tells the story of a young girl taken from home by her mother when she is forced to flee her abusive husband. After changing her name and fastening a crucifix around her tiny arm, the mother leaves her daughter at a village in Asyut. |

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| | | | Prize (1988), fascinated with history | | | | | The fate of the girl, who grows up to become a translator, intersects with that of a number of historical figures from the period, including Howard Carter, Lord Cromer and Abdulrahman al-Rifa'i. This thrilling tale is brought to life by the author's detailed and vivid descriptions of real historical events and places. |
| **36** | 2010[S] | *ʿIndamā tašīḫu ʾl-ḏiʾāb* ("When the Wolves Grow Old")<br>▪ Amman: Ministry of Culture Publications, 2009 | Ǧamāl Nāǧī (Jamal Naji)<br>❖ born in the 'Aqbat Jaber refugee camp, Jericho (Ariha); began writing in 1975; was president of the Jordanian Writers Association (2001-03); currently head of the Intelligentsia Centre for Research and Survey in Amman | m | 1954 | 56 | JOR (*PAL) | reveals the secret lives of the social climbers who have travelled from Amman's poor quarters to positions of wealth and power, providing an insight into the world of the city's preachers, politicians and charitable institutions. The book is told by a succession of characters who narrate incidents and scenes that repeat, conflict and develop from one character to the next. However the protagonist, 'Azmi al-Wajih, remains silent and shrouded in mystery throughout the novel: is he the only one of these wolves that does not grow old? When the Wolves Grow Old is a story of human frailty and the complex interaction between sex, religion and politics. |
| **37** | 2010[W] | *Tarmī bi-šarar…* («Throwing Sparks»)<br>▪ Baghdad & Beirut: Al-Jamal Publications, …. | ʿAbduh Ḫāl (Abdo Khal)<br>❖ studied political science at King Abdel Al Aziz University in Jeddah before starting writing in 1980; member of the board of directors of the Jeddah Literary Club and the editor-in-chief of the Ukaz newspaper, for which he writes a daily column. | m | 1962 | 48 | SAU | a deeply dark novel which follows the confessions of a hit man, employed by a mysterious rich businessman in the Saudi city of Jeddah.<br>The service the protagonist renders to the rich man (the owner of a mysterious palace) is unusual: he punishes his employer's enemies, his male business opponents, by sexually assaulting them, and capturing it all on video camera.<br>The palace in question is a stage that witnesses scenes of human disintegration, corruption and evil. Its dwellers are corrupt businessmen, prostitutes and people with distorted souls, entrusted with filthy tasks by the palace owner.<br>The ugliness of the scenes in the novel would suggest that they are metaphoric, were it not for the fact that the author, Abdo Khal, has been quick to declare that he does not believe in alien metaphors and symbols being forced on a non-existing reality. The novel, he adds, is based on an existing reality, one resembling a nightmare in its horrors. It is like a laboratory in which human evil is tested, and stretched to unimaginable limits.<br>The author lifts the luxury carpet in the palace to show all kinds of rotten dirt swept under it, in high contrast with the elegant decoration of the rooms and the expensive perfumes worn by its dwellers and visitors.<br>… explores the corrupting impact of power, making a statement by placing the marginalized and the powerless in the limelight. The novel is dominated by characters who would never get attention in the real world: miserable, insignificant, wretched people, in sharp contrast with what we would expect to find in a society known for its extreme wealth.<br>In *Throwing Sparks*, the author throws light on the dark spots of the human soul, exposing what is hidden and leaving the reader with a shocking, generalizing assertion: "the human soul is nothing but a repository of dirt." |
| | **2011** | | | | | | | |
| **38** | 2011[L] | *Fitnat Ǧidda* ("Turmoil in Jeddah") | Maqbūl Mūsà al-ʿAlawī (Maqbul Moussa Al-Alawi)<br>❖ stories and articles previously published in local newspapers; | m | 1969 | 42 | SAU | Set towards the end of 19th century, Turmoil in Jeddah is a story of Ottoman nationalism played out in the Arabian Gulf. When an Arab naval captain pulls down |

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| | | ▪ ….: Al-Kawkab, …. | this is his first novel<br>❖ BA in Artistic Education from Univ College of Mecca (1992); has worked as a teacher and instructor in the use of artistic materials and forms | | | | | the British flag on his ship and raises the Ottoman flag in its place, he provokes outrage from the British Consul, the ship's protector, and events spiral out of control, culminating in bloodshed and a popular uprising against the British. |
| **39** | 2011[L] | *Ǧunūd Allāh* ("God's Soldiers")<br>▪ London & Beirut: Riyāḍ al-Rayyis Books, …. | Fawāz Ḥaddād (Fawaz Haddad)<br>❖ full-time writer, has published several novels and a collection of short stories; was shortlisted for IPAF 2009 for *The Unfaithful Translator* | m | 19?? | | SYR | In an action-packed story set in modern-day Iraq, a father goes in search of his son who has joined Al-Qaeda, hoping to take him back to Syria. Despite the protection of the American and Syrian Secret Services, the father is kidnapped by his adversaries and, along the way, finds himself in an audience with the real-life character Abu Muses al-Zarqawi, once Iraq's most notorious insurgent. |
| **40** | 2011[L] | *Ḥabl sirrī* ("Secret Rope")<br>▪ ….: Al-Kawkab, …. | Mahà Ḥasan (Maha Hassan)<br>❖ Syrian/Kurdish novelist and short-story writer; B.A. in Law from University of Aleppo; journalist living in France; published her work in a number of Arabic newspapers and online; author of two novels, banned from publishing in Syria since 2000; in 2008 she lived for a year in the former, renovated apartment of Anne Frank and her family at the Amsterdam Merwedeplein, at the invitation of Amsterdam Vluchtstad | f | 1966 | 45 | SYR | contrasts life in Syria and France through the story of a mother and daughter. After her marriage in Syria, the daughter finds she must return to France to pursue a life of freedom that she cannot achieve in her homeland. |
| **41** | 2011[L] | *Ḥayāt qaṣīra* ("A Short Life")<br>▪ ….: al-Markaz al-ṯaqāfī al-ʿarabī, …. | Rīnīh al-Ḥāyik (Renée Hayek)<br>❖ born in SLeb, studied philosophy at LU, before embarking on a career in journalism and literary translation; author of a collection of short stories (*Portraits for Forgetfulness*, 1994); novel *Prayer for the Family* was longlisted IPAF 2009 | f | 19?? | | LEB | A Short Life gives an eye witness account from a woman living in Lebanon during the long years of Civil War. Writing in the present tense, the reader is given an insight into daily life in wartime, from the difficulties and dangers of travelling across the country to the war's effect on social life, from family to relationships with friends who have remained and those who have sought a new life abroad. |
| **42** | 2011[L] | *al-Bayt al-andalusī* ("The Andalusian House")<br>▪ ….: Jamal Publications, …. | Wasīnī al-Aʿraǧ (Waciny Laredj)<br>❖ prolific Algerian author, published in Ar and Fr, has won a number of prizes | m | 19?? | | ALG | relays the history of a house in Granada through the stories of the people who live there over the centuries. Amongst its many residents are two famous, real-life characters: the first, Dali Mami, a sixteenth-century pirate who fought for the Turks and was responsible, amongst other things, for Miguel de Cervantes's period of captivity in Algeria and the second Emperor Napoleon III, whose wife Eugenie was born in Granada |
| **43** | 2011[L] | *Nisāʾ al-rīḥ* ("Women of Wind")<br>▪ ….: al-Ṯaqāfa lil-Našr (Cultural Publications), …. | Razān Naʿīm al-Maġribī (Razan Naim Al-Maghrabi)<br>❖ five collections of short stories and a novel called *'Ala Madar Al-Hamal* | f | 19?? | | LIB | is a moving story of female friendship and the secret lives of women. It tells the story of a Moroccan servant girl who requests the help of the women in her life to help raise enough money secure a passage on a smugglers' ship. Before the heroine embarks on her harrowing voyage, the narrative weaves together the stories of the different women who help her, from the Iraqi woman who acts as a go-between between the heroine and the smugglers, to a female novelist and a little girl whose mother has abandoned her. |
| **44** | 2011[L] | *al-Yahūdī al-ḥalī* ("The Handsome Jew")<br>▪ London & Beirut Dār al- | ʿAlī al-Muqrī (Ali Al-Muqri)<br>❖ poet, journalist, novelist born; started writing at 18; became cultural editor for various publications after reunification of | m | 19?? | | YEM | This historical novel tells the story of two teenagers from opposing religious backgrounds who meet and fall in love against a backdrop of Yemeni culture. The story begins in a local village when the daughter of the Imam teaches a local Jewish |

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| | | Sāqī, .... | Yemen (1990); since 1997 editor of *Al-Hikma*, a literary publication of the Yemeni Writer's Association; heads a literary journal called *Ghaiman* (2007-); novel *The Man from Andalusia* was longlisted for IPAF 2009 | | | | | boy to read and write Arabic. When they decide to run away to the capital in order to be together, neither foresees the long-lasting consequences of their decision. |
| **45** | 2011[L] | *al-Ḫaṭāyā al-šāʾiʿa* ("Common Sins")<br>▪ Beirut: Dār al-Nahār, .... | Fātin al-Murr (Fatin Al-Murr)<br>❖ teacher of French literature at the Lebanese University; has published a novel and a short story collection | f | 1969 | 42 | LEB | A story of love and resistance set in Lebanon. Told from the perspective of a female narrator, *Common Sins* moves between southern Lebanon, Beirut and London and gives a perceptive view of the resistance in southern Lebanon. |
| **46** | 2011[L] | *Isṭāsiyya* ("Istasia")<br>▪ Cairo: Dār al-Šurūq, .... | Ḫayrī Šalabī (Khairy Shalaby)<br>❖ born in Kafr al-Shaykh/Delta in 1938; has written over 70 books (novels, short stories, historical tales, critical studies); several prizes | m | 1938 | 73 | EG | Istasia is a Coptic widow living in the Egyptian Delta, who becomes a local legend when she dedicates her life to revenging the death her son through prayer. Assistance comes in the unlikely form of the son of the village's leading Muslim family, notorious for their ruthlessness and cruelty, a lawyer who decides to investigate the case and bring Istasia's son's unknown murderers to justice. The moral of the story is that not every Muslim is good or Christian evil and that, no matter the religion, God will answer the prayers of anyone who has been wronged. |
| **47** | 2011[L] | *ʿAyn al-šams* ("The Eye of the Sun")<br>▪ Arab Scientific Publishers | Ibtisām Ibrāhīm Tirīsà (Ibtisam Ibrahim Teresa)<br>❖ graduate from Aleppo Univ. in Arabic Language, has published four novels and two short story collections | f | 1959 | 52 | SYR | In *The Eye of the Sun*, protagonist Nasma returns to Syria after years in exile in Sweden and is forced to confront painful memories. Her story reveals a past filled with conflict: from domestic turmoil under a cruel and manipulative father, to political upheaval affecting both her family and the entire population of Aleppo. As well as relating the events that shaped her life up until the present, the novel explores the relationships she has with the men in her life, from her father and brother to her lovers, the man who tortures her and the man to whom she is now married. |
| **48** | 2011[S] | *Raqṣa šarqiyya* ("An Oriental Dance")<br>▪ al-ʿAyn Publishing | Ḫālid al-Birrī (Khalid Al-Bari)<br>❖ degree in Medicine from Cairo University; has lived in London since 1999; has published two books, one of which is a biography | m | 1972 | 39 | EG | tells the story of a young Egyptian who, on marrying an older British woman, moves to England. Through his eyes, the reader is given a vivid account of the struggles and relationships of the Arab expatriate community living in the UK. |
| **49** | 2011[S] | *Muʿaḏḏibatī* ("My Tormentor")<br>▪ ....: Dār al-Šurūq, .... | Bin Sālim Ḥimmīš (Bensalem Himmich)<br>❖ novelist, poet, script-writer, PhD in philosophy; current Minister of Culture; has published 26 books, both literary and scientific works, in Ar and Fr, won numerous prizes; novel *Black Taste, Black Odour* was longlisted for IPAF 2009 | m | 19?? | | MOR | In a gripping novel, whose narrative style is a blend of Kafka and *One Thousand and One Nights*, Himmich imagines an innocent man's experience of extraordinary rendition in an American prison. During his captivity, the protagonist is subjected to interrogation and torture by both Arabs and foreigners and yet, against all odds, the author manages to find some hope in an otherwise desperate situation. |
| **50** | 2011[S] | *Ṣāʾid al-yaraqāt* ("The Hunter of the Chrysalises (or The Head Hunter) ")<br>▪ ....: al-Ṭaqāfa lil-Našr (Cultural Publications), .... | Amīr Tāǧ al-Sirr (Amir Taj Al-Sir)<br>❖ studied medicine in EG UK; has published 16 books, including 9 novels, 2 biographies and poetry | m | 1960 | 51 | SUD | *The Hunter of the Chrysalises* is the story of a former secret service agent who, having been forced to retire due to an accident, decide to write a novel about his experiences. He starts to visit a café frequented by intellectuals, only to find himself the subject of police scrutiny. |
| **51** | 2011[S] | *Brūklīn Hāyts* ("Brooklyn Heights")<br>▪ Cairo: Dār Merit, .... | Mīrāl al-Ṭaḥāwī (Miral Al-Tahawy)<br>❖ currently living in New York<br>❖ assistant professor of Arabic literature in the Univ of N | f | 19?? | | EG | tells the story of the New York's Arab immigrants and those who live among them through the eyes of the female narrator. By contrasting her experiences in her chosen home, America, and her homeland Egypt, she reveals the problematic |

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| | | | Carolina | | | | | relationship between East and West. It is a story of fundamentalism and tolerance, loss and hope in love. Simple yet full of rich detail, the novel evokes the atmosphere of America over the last decade. |
| **52** | 2011[W] | *al-Qaws wa'l-farrāša* ("The Arch and the Butterfly")<br>▪ ….. : al-Markaz al-ṯaqāfī al-ʿarabī, ….. | Muḥammad al-Aškʿarī (Mohammed Achaari)<br>❖ studied Law and Administration; worked in political and cultural journalism; was editor of a number of newspapers and cultural supplements; head of the Union of Moroccan Writers, Minister of Culture from 1998 to 2007; full-timer writer | m | 1951 | 60 | MOR | (LoL text) Tackling the themes of Islamic extremism and terrorism from a new angle, *The Arch and the Butterfly* explores the effect of terrorism on family life. It tells the story of a left-wing father who one day receives a letter from Al-Qaeda informing him that his son, who he believes is studying in Paris, has died a martyr in Afghanistan. The novel looks at the impact of this shocking news on the life of its hero and consequently on his relationship with his wife.<br>(Win text) is a journey in the life of a left wing Moroccan writer, Yousef, whose past life, political beliefs and faith in his own principles are shaken by a letter he receives one day. His young son, Yassin, raised in a secular family on principles of open-mindedness and free thinking, and who was sent to a prestigious Paris academy to study architecture, has chosen an opposite route to that which he was prepared for. The anonymous letter tells his father that the son "died as a martyr in Afghanistan".<br>It takes a shock of this calibre to set a self-confident leftist to question values, convictions and ways which he has followed without thinking for decades. But mere thinking, which tends to take a static, linear route, seems incapable of pushing human beings to re-assess their deeply-rooted beliefs yet tragedy has done the job, shaking him to the very core.<br>Pain is not the only element of the formula; losing a son is not what sets our protagonist on his journey of doubt. It is rather his sudden discovery that his son, Yassin, made a shocking statement with the way he died. It was as though he was telling his father "dad, think again" and the father gets the message. No longer sure of anything, he calls his son to mind as if wanting to debate and argue his beliefs with him. The direction of the teaching process seems to be reversed, the son now teaching the father, who now realises that he had not listened enough, merely lecturing all the time with his strongly-held beliefs. His son's death makes him want to listen and he does it gladly.<br>In following the protagonist Yousef's steps along the route of re-assessment of his past life, Mohammed Al Achaari explores the story of a generation of Arab left-wing activists who all faced the same dilemmas and spent years of their youth behind bars and long hours in passionate debates, building a dream of a better life, only to end up in frustration and bitterness.<br>Yousef, like many Arab veteran leftists, finds his own compromise: he manages to narrow down his dream of saving the world to building a kind of fragile balance in his relationship with his close environment: family and friends. He even reluctantly makes peace with the political system, at least on the surface.<br>Then comes the sudden death of his son to shuffle all the cards. His sense of failure overturns this delicate life balance, and among other things he loses his sense of smell, in a metaphoric expression of his indifference to what is going on |

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| | | | | | | | | around him.<br>In the months that follow Yassin's death, Yousef tries to build a new life based on reconciliation with almost everything: love, family, and society. He even regains his sense of smell in the process! |
| **53** | 2011[W] | *Ṭawq al-ḥamām* ("The Doves' Necklace")<br>▪ …: al-Markaz al-ṯaqāfī al-ʿarabī, … | Raǧāʾ ʿĀlam (Raja Alem)<br>❖ began publishing her work in the cultural supplement of the *Riyadh* newspaper, also experimental plays for the theatre; won many prizes two works written in collaboration with American novelist and cinematographer Tom McDonough, published in English (*Fatma: A Novel of Arabia*, 2002; *My Thousand and One Nights*, 2007); lives in Mecca | f | 19**??** | | SAU | (LoL text) defends the old town of Mecca which is threatened with destruction in the name of modernisation<br>The sordid underbelly of the holy city of Mecca is revealed in this astonishing story. The world painted by heroine Aisha embraces everything from prostitution and religious extremism to the exploitation of foreign workers under a mafia of building contractors, who are destroying the historic areas of the city. This bleak scene is contrasted with the beauty of Aisha's love letters to her German boyfriend.<br>(Win text) is not set in Mecca, as the reader might first think. Rather, its characters are desperate to break the walls confining them to the Meccan space and are eager to open windows to the world, both material and spiritual. Raja, the author, is continually hovering in the Meccan space. For her, Mecca is a very rich world, extending from the past and the present, to the future, a world unfamiliar to those who see things in black and white and ignore what lies beneath the surface of things.<br>Raja's Mecca is a place of many things and their opposites: sincerity and deception, wealth and poverty, architectural beauty and ugliness, whispers of the past and the assault of the future. Reality in this novel is an organic mixture of history, present day reality and fantasy. Some characters are flesh and blood and others are the product of dreams. The main narrator is neither Raja, nor one of her human characters. It is a neighbourhood in Mecca, 'Abu Alroos' ('the Many-Headed'), where most of her characters dwell. When human characters begin telling the story, it becomes revelation rather than narration.<br>The neighbourhood's eyes are wide open when others, including the police, go to sleep; hence it sees more of what takes place in its narrow alleyways. The police officer is incapable of finding the killer of the young woman whom he discovers lying naked in one of its streets and around whom the novel's plot is built, but does Abu Alroos know? Even if it does, it will not give the secret away. It just keeps giving hints, while the reader desperately tries to follow the threads, without arriving at a specific point. The author is playing a trick on us, by pretending she too is looking for the killer, only to lead us away from the crime scene each time we think we know the killer's identity.<br>The crime is complex and the killer has several heads, so whoever wants to be safe should try unconventional methods to escape. Confrontation is not in the characters' interests: the prison is narrow and dark, in Aisha's room there isn't a single window and the only light which trickles in is from her memory (a trip to Germany and a love story there), or from cyberspace (emails sent to her German lover) or through worlds opened up by imagination (D.H. Lawrence's novels). To |

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| | | | | | | | | this we can add history, the escape route which Youssef the history graduate takes to a rich spiritual world.<br>*The Dove's Necklace* is a spiritual journey across time and space, an attempt to break material barriers by creating virtual or spiritual spaces, and sometimes intellectual ones.<br>Characters are surrounded by walls and their lives are dominated by legends, harsh societal restrictions and the economic system and its powers. Some of the characters choose to stay where fate has placed them, others decide to break free. They refuse to remain hostages to the limits of their bodies and the coercive laws of nature and society and resort to unlimited spiritual powers, freeing themselves from the dimensions of time and space.<br>This novel is a journey towards the freedom of the soul and its unlimited creative powers. |
| | **2012** | | | | | | | |
| **54** | 2012[L] | *Sarmada* ("Sarmada")<br>▪ | Fādī ʿAzzām (Fadi Azzam)<br>❖ graduated from the Faculty of Arts in Damascus (1998), has written for Arabic newspapers, as well as publishing a number of stories in Arabic magazines; was a cultural and arts correspondent for Al Quds al-Arabi between 2007 and 2009; currently producer of documentary films and three-dimensional cartoons in Dubai. Sarmada is his first novel | m | 1983 | 29 | SYR | Documentary producer Rafi Azmi meets a strange woman in Paris - a Professor of Physics at the Sorbonne - who informs him that she has lived a previous life in his village of Sarmada, in southern Syria. It is turns out that she was murdered by her brothers in an honour killing. Affected by her story, Rafi returns to his hometown, to discover an entire world previously hidden from him. The woman's story leads him to delve into the depths of the place and uncover its secrets, desires, beauty and the co-existence of its people of different religions. |
| **55** | 2012[L] | *Tablīṭ al-baḥr* ("Paving the Sea")<br>▪ 2011 | Rašīd al-Ḍaʿīf (Rashid al-Daif)<br>❖ prof. of Arabic Lit. at the Univ of Lebanon | m | 1945 | 67 | LEB | The second half of the nineteenth century saw Syrians fighting to build a new Syrian state and Faris Mansour Hashem is one of the movement's most fervent activists alongside his friend, the influential writer Georgy Zeidan. However his plans are thwarted as, whilst he is studying medicine at the newly-founded American University in Beirut, student strikes force him to emigrate to the United States. Following in the footsteps of his father and thousands of his fellow countrymen, he begins a new life in America, joining the American army and going to fight in the Spanish-American war in Cuba. It is after he marries that he decides to fulfil his dream of returning to Beirut. But the question is: can he achieve his dream? |
| **56** | 2012[L] | *Ḥaqāʾib al-ḏākira* ("Suitcases of Memory")<br>▪ | Šarbil Qaṭṭān (Charbel Kattan)<br>❖ born in SLeb, moved to South Africa in 1990, there cont. higher education => degree in Information Technology; currently living and working in Johannesburg; *Suitcases of Memory* is his first novel. | m | 1970 | 42 | SAfr(*LEB) | There are 'lost' bags in Beirut airport. A search is made for their owners and they either come to collect them or the bags remain forgotten in the storage room. There are also 'orphan' bags, whose owners cannot be identified... that is, until Ehab Alem arrives in the customs department. As a child, he lost his father in mysterious circumstances at the beginning of the Lebanese war, and he has dedicated his life to searching for him. So Ehab decides to solve the riddle of the five 'orphans' of the airport. Inside each bag is a story, told by its contents to those who are good listeners. As the owner of each bag is found, a different story linked |

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| | | | | | | | | to a part of the Lebanese war is told. In his quest to find each owner, Ehab starts to find himself by recalling his childhood. He begins to realise the meaning of life, revives his own hopes and falls in love, in turn bringing his own story to completion. |
| **57** | 2012[L] | *Taḥt samāʾ Kūbinhāġin* ("Under the Copenhagen Sky")<br>▪ | Ḥawrāʾ al-Nadāwī (Hawra al-Nadawi)<br>❖ lives in London; left IRQ with six together with family (political reasons) to DK; grown up there, learning Arabic at home; *Under the Copenhagen Sky* = her 1st novel | f | 19?? | | IRQ | tells the love story of Huda, a teenage girl born in Copenhagen to Iraqi parents, and Rafid, an older man forced to emigrate to Denmark by the political situation in Iraq. It begins when Rafid receives a letter from Huda, who he has never met before, asking him to translate her novel from Danish into Arabic. As their relationship grows, Huda begins to reveal what she knows about him. This novel weaves together chapters from Huda's manuscript with Rafid's own account of the romance that is developing between them through their email exchanges. |
| **58** | 2012[L] | *Kāʾināt al-ḥuzn al-layliyya* ("Nocturnal Creatures of Sadness")<br>▪ | Muḥammad al-Rifāʿī (Mohamed al-Refai)<br>❖ cultural critic based in Cairo; has written *Ṣabāh al-Ḫayr* since 1980, won for Journalism for his weekly column (2000); author of books on theatre, incl *Palestine in EG theatre* and *Experiments in Arab Theatre*; radio screenplays, 3 series for TV (based on Gogol', Y Idrīs, etc.), screenplays for 2 films | m | 19?? | | EG | follows the life of hero Yahya. It opens with some bizarre events from his childhood, from the story of Ali ibn al-Aashara, who disappears from the town of Mahala al-Wasaaya, to the beautiful Saffiya who sets fire to herself and Ibrahim who loses his leg. We then follow Yahya as a young man, as he volunteers to fight for Egyptian President Gamal Abd al-Nasser. However, the grim reality of the 1967 war means that his illusions quickly fade. |
| **59** | 2012[L] | *Riḥlat Ḫayr al-Dīn b. Zard al-ʿağība* ("The Amazing Journey of Khair al-Din ibn Zard")<br>▪ | Ibrāhīm Zaʿrūr (Ibrahim Zaarur)<br>❖ Ibrahim Zaarur was born in Palestine in 1939. He is a short story writer, novelist and journalist who has eight published novels. He currently lives in Amman, Jordan. | m | 1939 | 73 | JOR(*PAL) | This is a darkly comic and fast-paced stream of consciousness novel in which a lorry driver inherits 25 million dollars. Whilst he cannot believe that he will be rich, he soon gains a sense of himself and of his own importance and rich relatives acknowledge him after years of ignoring him. However, a surprise awaits him when he goes to collect the inheritance... |
| **60** | 2012[L] | *al-Nabaṭī* ("The Nabatean")<br>▪ | Yūsuf Zaydān (Youssef Ziedan)<br>❖ Dir Ms Centre and Museum at Bibliotheca Alexandrina; scholar in Ar & Isl studies, univ prof, public lecturer, columnist, prolific author. *Azazeel,*= Win IPAF2009; consultant on Arabic heritage, preservation and conservation for UNESCO, ESCWA and Arab League; projects aimed at the delimitation and preservation of Ar manuscripts; devotes much time to cataloguing, editing, publishing historic texts | m | 1958 | 54 | EG | *The Nabatean* deals with the fables surrounding the Arab conquest of Egypt in 640AD and the arrival of 'Amr ibn al-'As as well as throwing light on forgotten aspects of history such as the Persian occupation of Egypt. Youssef Ziedan draws in the reader by skilfully portraying the eloquence of the Arabs and the secrets of the Nabatean culture. |
| **61** | 2012[S] | *Šarīd al-manāzil* ("The Vagrant")<br>▪ ??????? | Ğabbūr al-Duwayhī (Jabbour al-Douaihy)<br>❖ PhD in Comparative Literature from Sorbonne, works as Prof of French Lit at the Univ of Lebanon. *June Rain* was shortlisted for IPAF2008 | m | 1949 | 63 | LEB | tells the tale of a young man born in Tripoli, northern Lebanon. His family spends their summers in Mount Lebanon and it is there he is taken in by a local Christian family. During his time there, he finds himself missing the lively life of the capital, Beirut, and when the Lebanese war begins he is removed from the action. He ends up making friends with revolutionaries of all generations as well as wild, passionate young girls. But finally it seems there is an appointment he cannot avoid… |
| **62** | 2012[S] | *ʿInāq ʿinda Ğisr Brūklīn* ("Embrace on Brooklyn Bridge") | ʿIzz al-Dīn Šukrī **Fušayr** (Ezzedine Choukri Fishere<br>❖ writer and diplomat; born in KUW, grown up in EG; graduated from Cairo University in 1987 with a BA in Political | m | 1966 | 46 | EG (*KU) | follows protagonist Salma on the day of her 21st birthday, as she travels from Washington to New York to celebrate with her grandfather and family. As they celebrate Salma's coming of age, we travel back in time to see the different paths |

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| | | ▪ ????????? | Science => studied in France and Canada, attained International Diploma in Administration from The National School of Administration, Paris (1990-92); + MA in International Relations from Ottawa University (1992-95), PhD in Political Science from Montreal University (1993-98); currently teacher of political science at AUC, lectures at a number of other universities; writes also political articles for several Arabic, English and French periodicals and newspapers | | | | | each member of her family has taken, many of them left frustrated and unfulfilled by the cards life has dealt them. *Embrace on Brooklyn Bridge* is not merely a novel about the complicated encounters between East and West; it is first and foremost a book about the struggles of life. |
| **63** | 2012[S] | *al-ʿĀṭil* ("The Unemployed») <br>▪ ?????????? | Nāṣir ʿIrāq (Nasser Abelfatah Ibrahim Iraq) <br>❖ graduated from the Faculty of Fine Arts (CU, 1984); has worked in cultural journalism in EG and co-founded the Dubai *Al-Thaqafiya* magazine (managing editor since 2004); works currently as Cultural and Media Co-ordinator for the Foundation of Culture and Science Symposium in Dubai | m | ???? | | EG | tells the story of a young, educated Egyptian man from a middle-class family who, like so many others, is forced to look for work in Dubai due to the lack of opportunity in Cairo. In Dubai, he discovers an astonishing world filled with people of all nationalities and he experiences mixed treatment from his friends, relations and acquaintances. And then, just as he falls in love with an Egyptian girl, he finds himself imprisoned for the murder of a Russian prostitute… |
| **64** | 2012[S] | *Dumyat al-nār* ("Toy of Fire") <br>▪ ??????? | Bašīr Muftī (Bachir Mefti) <br>❖ writer and journalist, often writes articles in the Arabic press and works in Algerian TV as assistant producer of the cultural programme *Maqāmāt*. | m | 1969 | 43 | ALG | is the story of a meeting between the novelist, Bashir Mufti, and a mysterious character called Rada Shawish, who presents Mufti with a manuscript containing his autobiography. Shawish's goal in life is not to be like his father, who ran an underground cell in the seventies and committed suicide in the eighties. However, circumstances drive him to follow in his father's footsteps, resulting in him becoming a leading member of a secret group of his own. |
| **65** | 2012[S] | *Nisāʾ al-Basātīn* ("The Women of Al-Basatin") <br>▪ ??????? | al-Ḥabīb al-Sālimī (Habib Selmi) <br>❖ has lived in Paris since 1985; *The Scents of Marie-Claire* was shortlisted for IPAF 2009 | m | 1951 | 61 | TUN | is an intimate portrayal of the daily lives of a modest family living in the Al-Basatin district of Tunis in Tunisia. Moving between this small matriarchal world and a wider, richer and more complicated space the novel reveals the contradictions of the Tunisian and Arab self. In turn, it also exposes the cracks in the façade of Tunisian society, a society in flux between burdensome religious traditions and a troubled modernity. |
| **66** | 2012[W] | *Durūz Bilġrād* ("The Druze of Belgrade") <br>▪ ??????????? | Rabīʿ Jābir (Rabee Jaber) <br>❖ Lebanese novelist and journalist; has been editor of *Afaq*, the weekly cultural supplement of *Al-Hayat* newspaper, since 2001. *America* was shortlisted for IPAF2010. | m | 1972 | 40 | LEB | After the 1860 civil war in Mount Lebanon, a number of fighters from the religious Druze community are forced into exile, travelling by sea to the fortress of Belgrade on the boundary of the Ottoman Empire. In exchange for the freedom of a fellow fighter, they take with them a Christian man from Beirut called Hana Yaaqub; an unfortunate egg seller who happens to be sitting at the port. *The Druze of Belgrade* follows their adventures in the Balkans, as they struggle to stay alive, planning their escape and return to their homes. |
| | **2013** | | | | | | | |
| **67** | 2013[L] | *Malakūt hāḏihī 'l-arḍ* ("The Kingdom of this Earth") <br>▪ Dār al-Ādāb | Hudà Barakāt (Hoda Barakat) <br>❖ has worked in teaching and journalism, currently living in France | f | 1952 | 61 | LEB | The novel begins in the 1920s and ends on the brink of the Lebanese civil war in the 1970s. The Al-Mazuqiya family live on the heights of northern Lebanon surrounded by magical legends and the popular history of their region, where the Maronites fortify themselves against their many enemies. Wars have passed |

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| | | | | | | | | through this region, shaking the whole country during the twentieth century. Despite great changes in their daily lives, the members of this family have lived on the margins of society and have been unaffected by the sufferings around them. *The Kingdom of this Earth* is not a historical novel and its characters' lives are not representative ones. Through their simple pleasures and rugged existence, their moments of fun and their many illusions, they reflect the innocence of the ignorant, that which will not remain as it is. |
| **68** | 2013[L] | *Ṭuyūr al-Hūlīdāy Inn* ("The Birds of the Holiday Inn")<br>▪ Dār al-Tanwīr | Rabīʿ Ǧābir (Rabee Jaber)<br>❖ novelist and journalist, has been editor of *Afaq* (weekly cultural suppl. of *Al-Hayat*) since 2001; novel *America* in ShL IPAF2010; *The Druze of Belgrade* = Win IPAF2012 | m | 1972 | 41 | LEB | The events of the novel take place at the beginning of the Lebanese civil war (1975-76), when the war began to dominate the daily lives of people and large numbers were forced to leave their homes. Beirut was split into West and East. The fiercest battles were fought downtown, where the largest and most famous hotel in the city stood, the Holiday Inn. Most Christians were expelled from West Beirut and the majority of Muslims from the East, while the militias of the Lebanese Forces, the Tigers Militia and the Guardians of the Cedars took over the mainly Palestinian refugee camp of Tel Zaatar, where a terrible massacre took place.<br>The heroes of the novel all live in the 'Abd' building in Ashrafieh (East Beirut) and through their stories we are given a glimpse of Lebanese life at the time, and the experiences of isolation, fear, chaos caused by armed groups and kidnappings on the basis of religious identity. The book portrays the sufferings of everyday life and the tragedy of families searching for their loved ones who have "departed and not returned". Memories of those who disappeared are still alive today, along with the hope that one day those lost will return. |
| **69** | 2013[L] | *Yāfā tuʿidd qahwat al-ṣabāḥ* ("Jaffa Prepares Morning Coffee")<br>▪ al-Muʾassasa al-ʿarabiyya lil-dirāsāt wa'l-našr | Anwar Ḥāmid (Anwar Hamed)<br>❖ novelist, critic, poet, began writing early, published from beginning of 1970s; M.A. in literary theory, many articles of literary criticism; has lived and worked in London since 2004, member of Bush Writers (society of writers who have worked for the BBC since it was established) | m | 1957 | 56 | PAL | The events of the novel take place in the Palestinian city of Jaffa and the nearby village of Bait Dajan in the 1940s. Unlike many other novels set in this period, *Jaffa Prepares Morning Coffee* does not describe the flight of exiles and refugee camps but markets, Turkish baths, family outings to the shore of Lake Tiberias and late night socialising. Preparations for war and the sound of bullets flying do not dominate the atmosphere. Rather, the focus is on ordinary details and customs of daily life in the city and the country: staying up late during Ramadan, social visits paid at Christmas and wedding traditions. The characters are feudal lords and peasants, illiterate people and graduates of the best universities, Muslims, Christians and Jews. The reader meets both intellectuals and thugs, women whose life is spent in the kitchen and girls wanting to fly high. It portrays a lifestyle, long forgotten but revived from memories cherished by old men and women interviewed by the author. The sleeping Jaffa has just woken up and prepared morning coffee. |
| **70** | 2013[L] | *Sīnālkūl* ("Sinalkul")<br>▪ Dār al-Ādāb | Ilyās Ḫūrī (Elias Khoury)<br>❖ worked as ass. editor on the *Palestinian Affairs* magazine (1975-97), editor of cultural section of *Al-Safir* (1981-91) and *Al-Karmel* (1981-83); director of Beirut Theatre 1992-98, editor of literary suppl of *Al-Nahar* 1992-2008; currently | m | 1948 | 65 | LEB | *Sinalkul* is a transparent portrayal of Lebanese society, expressing the loss of individuality and values at the time of the civil war. At the centre of the novel is the family of a pharmacist, Nasri Shamas and his two sons Kerim and Naseem. The story follows the aspirations of the characters, including our hero Kerim, which end in failure. Even escaping to France cannot erase the memory of society with all its |

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| | | | editor of *Palestinian Studies* magazine, since 2001 visiting prof NYU | | | | | tragedies. |
| **71** | 2013[L] | *Ḥadāʾiq al-raʾīs* ("The President's Gardens")<br>▪ Ṯaqāfa lil-našr | Muḥsin al-Ramlī (Muhsin al-Ramly)<br>❖ writer, poet academic, translator; has lived in Madrid since 1995; PhD in literature and philosophy from Madrid Univ; first publication 1985; writes in Ar and Span; has worked as journalist and cultural editor for Arab, Span and LatAm press, translated lit works Ar <-> Span. *Fingers of Dates* on LoL IPAF2010; co-founder (in 1997) and co-director of publishing house and philosophical and cultural review *Alwāḥ* in Spain; currently working at American University in Madrid | m | 1967 | 46 | IRQ | Set during the last fifty years of Iraqi history, this novel tells the story of three friends, exploring how ordinary people have been affected by historic events such as wars, the blockade of Iraq and the invasion of Kuwait. It examines the gap between the lifestyle of those in power and ordinary citizens. During the chaos of occupation, one of them loses his life, like so many caught between loyalists of the old and new regimes. *The President's Gardens* helps the reader understand the complexities of the successive tragedies besetting the 'land between two rivers'. The gripping story is told with humanity, and life is somehow the victor despite all the obstacles. |
| **72** | 2013[L] | *Hādī al-tuyūs* ("The Goatherd")<br>▪ Manšūrāt al-Iḫtilāf | Amīn al-Zāwī (Amin Zaoui)<br>❖ writes in Ar and Fr, prof of CompLit and Contemp Thought at Central Algerian University, previously taught in Womens' Studies Department at Univ of Paris; returned to Algeria in 1999 to take up the post of director of the National Library | m | ???? | | ALG | The events of the novel take place beneath the dome of a mosque, which is given different names by the Arab and Amazigh Berber inhabitants of the city. It follows the lives of three beautiful French Catholic women who decide to embrace Islam, each with a particular motivation: the first sexual, the second cultural and the last to spy on the Muslim community. Their decision to embrace the religion provokes conflict among the men, from the Imam presiding over their conversion ceremony who woos them one by one, to the journalist who comes to the city on another assignment but ends up interviewing the three lovely converts, hoping to be lucky with one of them. Another suitor is a young man claiming he is the great grandson of Napoleon the Third, who visited the town of Rezilan, east of Oran, in 1865 and spent an afternoon there with a woman who later gave birth to his grandfather. His origins drive him towards the same goal as the others. In engaging narrative style, somewhere between history and fantasy, *The Goatherd* portrays the destructive effects of the relationship with 'the Other', and exposes dealers of religion in an Arab world sunk deep in corruption and the culture of hypocrisy. |
| **73** | 2013[L] | *Ruǧūʿ al-Šayḫ* ("The Return of the Sheikh")<br>▪ Rawāfid lil-našr wal-tawzīʿ | Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Nabī (Mohammed Abdel Nabi)<br>❖ B.A. in Languages and Translation from English and Simultaneous Translation, Azhar University<br>❖ currently working as freelance translator<br>❖ also criticism and translations | m | 1977 | 36 | EG | *The Return of the Sheikh* is a collection of intertwined stories which follow the life of Ahmad Rajaa'i. He recalls the episodes of his long life and breaks the rules of time and the inevitability of death by becoming a young man again. He wants to write down his story in two notebooks but circumstances prevent him from doing so. A young man and a young woman appear in the story. The youth, who has the same name as the Sheikh, tells the hero's story from another angle. He and the aged Sheikh vie for the love of Muna, the young woman, who is not interested in their struggle. The tale told by Ahmad Rajaa'i the youth continues, and it seems as if their narrative game will not end even with the death of the Sheikh. |
| **74** | 2013[L] | *Tūyā* ("Toya")<br>▪ al-Dār al-miṣriyya al-lubnāniyya | Ašraf al-ʿAšmāwī (Ashraf El-Ashmawi)<br>❖ judge in the Egyptian court of Appeal and a former examining magistrate in the department of the public prosecutor, where he worked for seventeen years; 7 years ago, he was seconded as legal advisor to the Ministry of Antiquities, advising on bilateral international agreements and the return | m | ???? | | EG | The year is 1970. The funeral of the Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser is being held. Youssef, son of famous skin specialist Kamal Naguib, is in medical college. Shortly after the death of the President, Youssef's father also passes away, and so he goes to Liverpool, the birth place of his English mother, to continue his medical studies. His mother wants him to marry Katherine, an aristocratic English girl, and remain in England but he travels to Kenya to do research into treatments for |

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| | | | of antiquities smuggled out of the country. author of numerous studies on crime prevention, regular contributor to newspapers and websites since 2009 (history of Egyptian antiquities, social and political criticism of the state of Egyptian society); recently published: *Legal Thefts: Stories of Thefts of Egyptian Antiquities, Their Smuggling and Attempts to Recover Them* | | | | | leprosy. While living there he meets Toya, a woman belonging to the Kikuyu tribe. The author of *Toya*, Ashraf El-Ashmawy, describes a gentle love story between two people who belong to completely different worlds and makes us ask questions about the true nature of identity, belonging and loyalty and the extent of humanity's need for these principles. |
| **75** | 2013[L] | *Qanādīl malik al-Ğalīl* ("Lanterns of the King of Galilee")<br>▪ al-Dār al-ʿarabiyya lil-ʿulūm | Ibrāhīm Naṣrallāh (Ibrahim Nasrallah)<br>❖ parents evicted from their land in 1948; spent his childhood and youth in Refugee Camp in Amman, began his working life as teacher in Saudi Arabia; after return to Amman, journalist ; since 2006 full-time writer: project: Palestinian epic covering 250 years of modern Palestinian history, in seven novels; *Time of White Horses* ShL IPAF2009; also artist and photographer | m | 1954 | 59 | JOR/*PAL | In the eighteenth century, on the shores of Lake Tiberias and the mountains of Galilee, Nazareth and Acre, an ordinary man started a journey. His was the greatest goal one could dream of in those days: to liberate the land, achieve independence and establish an Arab state in Palestine. By doing so, this man was challenging the rule of the greatest empire at that time, the Ottoman Empire, which extended over three continents: Europe, Asia and Africa. His name was Dhaher Al-Omar al-Zeidani and he ruled over Palestine and beyond.<br>This epic novel covers 86 years (1689-1775) and contains historical figures as well as fictional characters. It moves between Palestine, Syria, Jordan, Egypt, Lebanon and Istanbul. The novel is a deep reflection on the actual and spiritual history of Palestine and at the same time brings to the foreground an exceptional historical leader. Dhaher Al-Omar was unique in his understanding of the values of dignity, justice, freedom, the right to live and religious tolerance, in a way that was ahead of his time. |
| **76** | 2013[L] | *Aṣābiʿ Lūlītā* ("Lolita's Fingers")<br>▪ Dār al-Ādāb | Wāsīnī al-Aʿraǧ (Waciny Laredj)<br>❖ Prof at the Sorbonne and Central University of Algeria, having settled in Paris in 1994; has written many novels dealing with Algeria's history and its harsh upheavals. For the past ten years he has produced work on the tragedies of the Arab nation, questioning the sacred and static account of its history | m | 1954 | 59 | ALG | *Lolita's Fingers* focuses on the ordeal of Arab intellectuals in exile. In particular it looks at the persecution they suffered under dictatorial regimes from 1960 to 1980, and then again from fundamentalist movements which took their place (1990 to the present). It demonstrates that fleeing your country and going into exile is not always a means of escape from surveillance and secret services, since Western countries began to use the same methods against Muslim writers after the events of 11th September 2001.<br>The novel exposes aspects of political corruption, fundamentalist thought and international terrorism, which has increased the Arab intellectual's sense of alienation. Amidst the political discourse, the author also tells the thrilling story of the hero's romantic relationship with Lolita, who takes on different characteristics depending on whether she is in her home country or in exile away from it. |
| **77** | 2013[S] | *Yā Maryam* ("Hail Mary")<br>▪ Manšūrāt al-Ğamal | Sinān Anṭūn (Sinan Antoon)<br>❖ poet, novelist, translator; returned to Iraq in 2003 to direct a documentary film called *About Baghdad* (2004), after dictatorship and occupation; taught Arabic literature at NYU since 2005 | m | 1967 | 46 | IRQ | The events of the novel take place in a single day, with two contradictory visions of life from two characters from an Iraqi Christian family, drawn together by the situation in the country under the same roof in Baghdad. Youssef is an elderly man who is alone. He refuses to emigrate and leave the house he built, where he has lived for half a century. He still clings to hope and memories of a happy past. Maha is a young woman whose life has been torn apart by the sectarian violence. Her family has been made homeless and become separated from her, resulting in her living as a refugee in her own country, lodging in Youssef's house. With her |

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| | | | | | | | | husband she waits to emigrate from a country she feels does not want her. Hope collides with destiny when an event occurs which changes the life of the two characters forever. The novel raises bold and difficult questions about the situation of minorities in Iraq, with one character searching for an Iraq which was, while the other attempts to escape from the Iraq of today. |
| **78** | 2013[S] | *Anā, hiya, wa'l-uḫrayāt* ("Me, She and the Other Women")<br>▪ Al-Dār al-ʿarabiyya lil-ʿulūm | Ǧanà Fawāz al-Ḥasan (Jana Elhassan)<br>❖ born in N Leb, lives in Beirut; 2006 BA & and teaching diploma in EnglLit, currently working on her MA; has also investigative pieces and general articles; currently reporter for *The Daily Star* | f | 1985 | 28 | LEB | The heroine of the novel, Sahar, feels a sense of loss and loneliness within her family, following her marriage. She had hoped to be a different kind of woman from her mother but finds herself falling into the same trap after her marriage to Sami. In constructing another self in her imagination, she finds an outlet which brings intellectual and existential fulfilment. The novel has an innovative structure, psychological and philosophical depth and a profound humanity. |
| **79** | 2013[S] | *al-Qundus* ("The Beaver")<br>▪ Dār al-Sāqī | Muḥammad Ḥasan ʿAlwān (Mohammed Hasan Alwan)<br>❖ MBA from Univ Portland, Oregon; also writes weekly column for a Saudi newspaper | m | 1979 | 34 | SAU | The hero of the novel, Ghalib al-Wajzi, goes from Riyadh in Saudi Arabia to Portland in the USA. He travels back in time, through the story of three generations of his troubled family: separated parents, and brothers with nothing to connect them except the house where they live. Ghalib leaves Riyadh at the age of 40. He heads to a distant city to try to restore his memory with fragmented stories, with the help of a beaver that accompanies him on his fishing journeys to the Willamette River. Throughout the novel, he contemplates his relationship with his girlfriend who visits him over many years in different towns when she can get away from her husband. |
| **80** | 2013[S] | *Mawlānā* ("Our Master")<br>▪ Muʾassasat Blūmsburī (Qaṭar) lil-našr | Ibrāhīm ʿīsà (Ibrahim Issa)<br>❖ journalist, began on *Rose al-Youssef* when he was still in his first year of studies at the College of Media, Cairo; editor of *Al-Dustur* daily, 1995-98 and 2004-Oct2010, when sacked by the paper's owner Sayyed Al-Bedawi; among the most active of journalists in protesting against political practices in EG => authorities closed down 3 newspapers edited by him, confiscated his novel *Assassination of the Big Man*; has left *Al-Dustur* newspaper, but continues to edit electronic *The Original Dustur* which is separate from the newspaper; has been editor of *Al-Tahrir* newspaper since July 2011 | m | 1965 | 48 | EG | The novel relates the career of Sheikh Hatim Al-Shanawi ('our master'), the permanent guest of a television programme presented by Anwar Outhman. The charming Sheikh answers viewers' questions and becomes one of the richest people in the country through exploiting visual media to the utmost degree for his own ends. By using his natural cunning he gives replies to please everyone, including the security services, though they bear no relation to his personal convictions. The hero has varied adventures such as his relationship with Nashwa, veiled from head to toe, who he later discovers is an actress working for the secret services. The hero plunges into the depths of Egyptian society and uncovers its secrets in a witty and satirical style. The characters appear to live in a corrupt environment dominated by fear, spying and bribery, where people lie to each other and are only concerned with outward appearances and the surface of reality. |
| **81** | 2013[S] | *Saʿādatuhū al-sayyid al-wazīr* ("His Excellency the Minister")<br>▪ Dār al-Ǧanūb | Ḥusayn al-Wād (Hussein Al-Wad)<br>❖ university professor and researcher, author of several books on Class & MAL (studies al-Maʿarrī, al-Mutanabbi, Abū Tammām) | m | 1948 | 65 | TUN | The novel tells the story of a Tunisian teacher who unexpectedly becomes a minister. He witnesses first hand the widespread corruption in the country, eventually becoming embroiled in it himself. It is a richly humorous novel which successfully describes many aspects of human weakness. |
| **82** | 2013[W] | *Sāq al-bāmbū* ("The Bamboo Stalk")<br>▪ al-Dār al-ʿarabiyya lil-ʿulūm | Saʿūd al-Sanʿūsī (Saud Alsanousi)<br>❖ novelist and journalist, currently writing for *Al-Qabas* | m | 1981 | 32 | KU | Josephine comes to Kuwait from the Philippines to work as a household servant, leaving behind her studies and family, who are pinning their hopes for a better future on her. In the house where she works, she meets Rashid, the spoiled only son of his mother Ghanima and father Issa. After a brief love affair, he decides to |

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| | | | | | | | | marry Josephine, on condition that the marriage remains a secret. But things do not go according to plan. Josephine becomes pregnant with José and Rashid abandons them when the child is less than two months old, sending his son away to the Philippines. There he struggles with poverty and clings to the hope of returning to his father's country when he is eighteen. It is at this point that the novel begins.<br>*The Bamboo Stick* is a daring work which looks objectively at the phenomenon of foreign workers in Arab countries and deals with the problem of identity through the life of a young man of mixed race who returns to Kuwait, the 'dream' or 'heaven' which his mother had described to him since he was a child. |
| | **2014** | | | | | | | |
| **83** | 2014[L] | *al-Iskandariyya fī ġayma*<br>("Clouds Over Alexandria")<br>▪ Dār al-Šurūq | Ibrāhīm ʿAbd al-Magīd (Ibrahim Abdelmeguid)<br>❖ from Alexandria; BA in Philos from U Alex (1973), then moved to Cairo in 1975; also published documentary *Days of Tahrir* (2011); some of his work adapted for TV / film | m | 1946 | 68 | EG | In *Clouds over Alexandria*, Ibrahim Abdelmeguid completes his trilogy about Alexandria, begun with *No-one Sleeps in Alexandria* and *Birds of Amber*. In these three novels - which can be read as a sequence or individually - he describes life in the famous city, beginning in an era of openness to the wider world and ending at a time of closure to outside influences. The events of the novel take place in the 1970s, when the cosmopolitan spirit which has characterised the city throughout history has disappeared. In place of the melting pot of ethnicities, religions and cultures comes intolerance and hatred, destroying Alexandria's secular traditions. The city occupies a large portion of the imaginary space of the novel, in which the characters play out their parts to reveal the social and religious crisis of a city now bereft of its free spirit. |
| **84** | 2014[L] | *Ġarāmiyyāt Shāriʿ al-Aʿšà*<br>("Love Stories on al-Asha Street")<br>▪ Dār al-Sāqī | Badriyya al-Bišr (Badryah El-Bishr)<br>❖ PhD in Philos of Arts and Sociology from LU (2005), worked as AssProf at U al-Jazeera, Dubai (2010-11); began writing weekly articles for Saudi magazine, *Al Yamama* in 1997, became well-known for her articles, becoming the first Arab woman to win the prize for the best newspaper column at the Arabic Press Awards in 2011; almost daily column for *Al Hayat* since 2009 | f | 1967 | 47 | SAU | The events take place in the 1970s, on al-Asha Street in the populous district of Manfouha, Riyadh. Three heroines are searching for their freedom: Aziza hopes to find it through love and imitates Soad Hosny, the Cinderella of Arabic cinema, falling in love with an Egyptian doctor because he speaks the dialect of black and white films. Wadha, a bedouin woman, flees from poverty through work in the women's market, becoming its most important trader. Atwa literally runs away from her tiny village, changing her name and fate, and finds independence in the new environment of Riyadh. Their story begins in the romantic period of black and white films and lovers' trysts on the rooftops, where people sleep outside. However, with the advent of colour television comes a wave of religious extremism, opposing the social transformations which have changed the city. One of its first victims is Aziza's young neighbour, Saad. Searching for his identity, he joins the radicals led by religious activist Juhayman al-Otaybi, who famously occupied Mecca's sacred Grand Mosque in 1979. |
| **85** | 2014[L] | *Ḥāmil al-warda al-urğuwāniyya* ("The Bearer of the Purple Rose")<br>▪ Arab Scientific Publishers | Anṭuwān Duwayhī (Antoine Douaihy)<br>❖ PhD in Anthropology from Sorbonne (1979), remained in FR until mid-1990s; currently Prof in Cultural and Social Anthropology at LU | m | 1948 | 66 | LEB | tells the story of a writer's arrest and imprisonment in 'The Citadel of the Port', a 700-year old Mamluk fortress built to guard the coast. The arrest of the writer, back from a long exile in the West, is a conundrum for all his friends, who see him as a quiet, peace-loving man. He is imprisoned in a bare cell, possessing only two |

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| | | | | | | | | high windows, impossible to reach, and a picture of the tyrant, who stares at him day and night. Perhaps his arrest confirms what his mother used to tell him: 'Don't fear anything. What a man fears will happen to him.' Painfully aware of his loss of freedom, he dwells on many things, including: memories from his time of exile; journeying between two worlds; old love and new love; his mother; the destruction of nature; the tragic nature of history; the strange coincidences of fate, and the courses taken by time and death. |
| **86** | 2014[L] | *366* ("366")<br>▪ Arab Scientific Publishers | Amīr Tāğ al-Sirr (Amir Tag Elsir)<br>❖ studied medicine in EG and UK; books incl biographies and poetry. *The Grub Hunter* (2010) on ShL IPAF2011 | m | 1960 | 54 | SUD | is the love letter of one man to a woman who doesn't even know he exists. The protagonist falls in love with Asmaa the moment he sees her at a relative's wedding. Captivated, he begins a quest to find her, searching everywhere from wedding photographs to the street, the neighbourhood and the faces of other women. He even looks for her in horoscopes, in love stories and in his own vivid imagination. In his letter, he lays out details of his life – from the job that he gives up in order to search for her – to his entanglement in certain political issues. When he fails to find her, he even announces his symbolic death, signing his letter as 'the deceased', as a preliminary step before completing suicide. |
| **87** | 2014[L] | *Mawsim ṣayd al-zanğūr* ("The Season of Pike Fishing")<br>▪ Dār al-ʿAyn | Ismāʿīl Ġazālī (Ismail Ghazali)<br>❖ born in Amazigh village; BA in ArabLit, works in the media | m | 1977 | 37 | MOR | A French saxophonist is invited by a Moroccan friend to visit the Aglmam Azgza lake in the Middle Atlas mountains, to try pike fishing. Once there, he finds himself dragged into a confusing maze, at the heart of which is the legendary place itself and the savage pike. He encounters many colourful and dubious characters including: Virginia from London; a blonde fisherman nicknamed 'pike-tamer' and a young hotel employee, who is investigating the tragic fates of those who have visited the lake since 1910. There is also a young girl at the lake, a scriptwriter, two actresses called Hagar and Sara, a piano player and so on… *The Season of Pike Fishing* is a novel within a novel and many separate narratives find a place within its structure. |
| **88** | 2014[L] | *Fī ḥaḍrat al-ʿanqāʾ waʾl-ḫill al-wafiyy* ("The Phoenix and the Faithful Friend")<br>▪ Arab Scientific Publishers | Ismāʿīl Fahd Ismāʿīl (Ismail Fahd Ismail)<br>❖ full-time writer since 1985; BA in Lit & Criticism from Higher Institute for Dramatic Arts, Kuwait; worked as both teacher and in administration of educational resources, + managed an artistic production company; is regarded as the founder of the art of the novel in Kuwait (1st novel, *The Sky Was Blue,* 1970); supported many SS writers and novelists => significant impact on the Kuwaiti and Arab literary scene | m | 1940 | 74 | KU | is the life story of Mansi Ibn Abihi (literally: 'Forgotten One, Son of his Father'), who comes from a class of Kuwaitis called the *bedun* ('without') because they lack Kuwaiti citizenship. Released from prison after the liberation of Kuwait, he decides to write his life story, addressing it to the daughter he has never seen, Zeinab – who was born whilst Kuwait was under occupation - in the hope that she will get to know her father. Mansi recalls his sufferings as a *bedun* and tells his daughter of his family: of his mother, who preserves the family's documents in the hope they can apply for citizenship and of his marriage to Ohood, a Kuwaiti, whose brother Saud refuses to accept the union of a bedun and a Kuwaiti. He writes about his life as a self-made young man and the invasion of Kuwait, when he was forced to join the Iraqi 'people's army', but managed to escape and join the Kuwaiti resistance. Finally he writes of his imprisonment following liberation, and his subsequent release. |
| **89** | 2014[L] | *Māfī ʾl-rabb* ("God's Land of Exile") | Ašraf al-Ḫamāyisī (Ashraf al-Khamaisi)<br>❖ born in Luxo; editor for *Al-Thaqafa Al-Jadida* | m | 1967 | 47 | EG | *God's Land of Exile* is set in 'al-Wa'ara', an imaginary oasis in the Egyptian desert of al-Wadi al-Jadid. The main character, Hajizi, is over 100 years old and has spent |

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| | | ▪ Al-Ḥaḍāra | | | | | | most of his life working with his father Shadid, embalming the corpses of animals. Disturbed by how the speed with which the living forget the dead, he longs for immortality and fears his own death and burial. When he hears from a passing monk that Christ rose from the dead and that righteous Christians rise from death, he decides to accompany the monk to join his brethren in the mountains. There he meets Christ, who tells him to wait for 'The Comforter' who will advise him how to achieve life after death. He returns home to the oasis and waits for instruction. When two of his close friends have died, he has a vision of his own, imminent death and, having not heard from The Comforter, contrives a plan to avoid burial. It is in his last moments that the Comforter arrives and shows him what he must do. |
| **90** | 2014[L] | *Ramād al-šarq: al-ḏiʾb allaḏī nabata fī ʾl-barārī* ("Ashes of the East: The Wolf who Grew Up in the Wilderness")<br>▪ Al-Jamal | Wāsīnī al-Aʿraǧ (Waciny Laredj)<br>❖ settled in Paris in 1994, now Prof at Sorbonne & Central U of ALG; many novels on ALG's history and harsh upheavals; work on the tragedies of the Arab nation, questioning the sacred and static account of its history; his books are published in Ar & Fr. Twice on LoL: *The Andalusian House* IPAF2011, *Lolita's Fingers* IPAF2013 | m | 1954 | 60 | ALG | sees Jazz, a young musician of Arabic origin, exploring his identity through a symphony he is composing. The different elements of the music reflect the harsh reality of his life in America, where he is regarded as a hostile Muslim Arab, as well as stories from the life of his grandfather, Baba Sheriff. Going through key moments of his family history, he reconstructs an unadorned picture of the beginning of the twentieth century: such as Baba Sheriff being carried on his mother's back, or the death of Baba Sheriff's father, who was incarcerated in Lebanon's Aliah prison before being strung up on the gallows in Beirut by order of the Ottoman ruler Jamal Pasha, nicknamed 'the Manslayer'. Jazz goes back to a time shaped by the pursuit of European, rather than Arab, interests, touching on the influence of well-known historical figures: from Yusuf Al-Azmeh, who resisted the French in Syria, to the escapades of Lawrence of Arabia, Prince Faisal and Viscount Allenby. It is through his symphony, *Ashes of the East* - which he performs at the Brooklyn Opera - that Jazz finds release and brings to life a grandfather who was nothing short of a walking history book. |
| **91** | 2014[L] | *Šurfat al-hāwiya* ("The Edge of the Abyss")<br>▪ Arab Scientific Publishers | Ibrāhīm Naṣrallāh (Ibrahim Nasrallah)<br>❖ parents evicted from their land in 1948, spent childhood & youth refugee camp in Amman; began working life as a teacher in SAU; after return to Amman journalist and work for Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation; full-time writer since 2006; is in the process of writing a Pal epic covering 250 years of mod Pal history, in 7 novels. *Time of White Horses* (2007) on ShL IPAF2009; is also painter and photographer; *Lanterns of the King of Galilee* on LoL IPAF2013 | m | 1954 | 60 | JOR *PAL | The events in *The Edge of the Abyss* are told through the voices of three characters whose lives are intertwined: a former minister, known for his corrupt practices; his lawyer wife, restricted by her association with him and a professor, whose personal interests dictate that he should serve the minister, but who at the same time seeks to fulfil his dreams of love through romantic adventures and becomes entangled with the minister's wife. Their stories intersect with the changes following the Arab Spring, which is drawing everyone to the edge of the abyss. *The Edge of the Abyss* depicts an Arab reality where legitimate and illegitimate ambitions are merged, as are the suffering of the individual and that of the community. |
| **92** | 2014[L] | *Layl ʿAlī Bābā al-ḥazīn* ("The Sad Night of Ali Baba")<br>▪ al-Markaz al-ʿarabī lil-dirāsāt wa'l-našr | ʿAbd al-Ḫāliq al-**Rikābī** (Abdel Khaliq al-Rikabi)<br>❖ BA in Fine Art (1970), teacher for 12 years, editor for two magazines, *Journeys* and *Pens* | m | 1946 | 68 | IRQ | In *The Sad Night of Ali Baba*, Iraqi writer Abdel Khaliq Al Rikabi continues his imaginative retelling of the history of modern Iraq. Using the American occupation in 2003 as a starting point, he looks back at the defining social and historical events which have taken place in the country during the 20th century, from the Ottoman Empire to the British and American occupations. Focusing on the American occupation, he explores the different ways in which people have been affected; from those who have suffered random violence to those who have exploited |

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| | | | | | | | | occupation for their own benefit. He explores the explosion of repressed religious, racial and sectarian tensions in Iraq as a result of occupation, and the subsequent hatred, intolerance and desire for revenge. |
| **93** | 2014[S] | *Ṭāʾir azraq nādir yuḥalliqu maʿī* ("A Rare Blue Bird that Flies with Me")<br>▪ Dār al-Ādāb | Yūsuf Fāḍil (Youssef Fadel)<br>❖ novelist, playwright, screenwriter; imprisoned during the so-called 'Years of Lead' in the notorious Moulay al-Sheriff prison (1974-75) | m | 1949 | 65 | MOR | Aziz is a pilot at the air force base who loves flying and forgets his cares when he is up in the air. It is flying that he thinks of on his wedding night, rather his 16 year-old bride, Zina, waiting in the adjoining room. The following morning, he leaves his house at the crack of dawn, not to return for 18 years. His wife, Zina, looks for him everywhere - in prisons, offices, cities and forests – asking questions and following false leads, only to be disappointed. However, one day – in the bar where she and her sister Khatima work – a stranger presses a scrap of paper into her pocket. It takes her on one last journey in search of her husband: to the Kasbah of al-Glaoui in southern Morocco, where Aziz crouches in a prison cell, having lost hope of ever being found. *A Rare Blue Bird that Flies with Me* is a fictional testament to the terrible period of Moroccan history known as 'the years of cinders and lead'. |
| **94** | 2014[S] | *Ṭiššārī* ("Tashari")<br>▪ Dār al-Jadīd | Inʿām Kačağī (Inaam Kachachi)<br>❖ stud journalism at U Baghdad<br>❖ worked in IRQ media<br>❖ moved to Paris, there PhD at Sorbonne<br>❖ currently Paris correspondent for *al-Sharq al-Awsaṭ* and *Kull al-Usra* magazine (Sharjah)<br>❖ biography *Lorna*, about the Brit journalist Lorna Hales, wife of Irq sculptor Jawād Sālim; + book (in Fr) about Irq women's lit produced in times of war and hardship<br>❖ documentary about Nazīha al-Dulaymī, the first woman to become government minister in an Arab country, in 1959<br>❖ *al-Ḥafīda al-amrīkiyya* (2008) on IPAF 2009[S] | f | 1952 | 62 | IRQ | deals with the tragedy of Iraqi displacement of the past few decades, through the life story of a female doctor working in the countryside in southern Iraq in the 1950s. The narrative also follows her three children, who now live in three different continents, particularly her eldest daughter who has also become a doctor and works in a remote region of Canada. The title of the novel, 'Tashari', is an Iraqi word referring to a shot from a hunting rifle which is scattered in several directions. Iraqis use it as a symbol of loss and being dispersed across the globe. As a way of combating the dispersal of his own family, one of the characters, Alexander, constructs a virtual graveyard online, where he buries the family dead and allots to each person scattered across the globe his/her own personal plot. |
| **95** | 2014[S] | *Lā sakākīn fī maṭābiḫ hāḏihī ʾl-madīna* ("No Knives in this City's Kitchens")<br>▪ Dār al-ʿAyn | Ḫālid Ḫalīfa (Khaled Khalifa)<br>❖ BA in Law from U Aleppo<br>❖ successful screenplays for TV & cinema, regular contributor to newspapers.<br>❖ *In Praise of Hatred* (2006) IPAF 2008[S] | m | 1964 | 50 | SYR | is a profound exploration of the mechanics of fear and disintegration over half a century. Through the story of one Syrian family, it depicts a society living under tyranny with stifled aspirations. The family realise that all their dreams have died and turned into rubble, just as the corpse of their mother has become waste material they must dispose of in order to continue living. Written with shocking perception and exquisite language, from the very beginning this novel makes its readers ask fundamental questions and shows how regimes can destroy Arab societies, plundering lives and wrecking dreams. Khaled Khalifa writes about everything which is taboo in Arab life, with a particular focus on Syria. *No Knives in this City's Kitchens* is a novel about grief, fear and the death of humanity. |
| **96** | 2014[S] | *Taġrībat al-ʿAbdī al-mašhūr bi-Walad al-Ḥamriyya* ("The Journeys of 'Abdi, known as Son of Hamriya")<br>▪ Africa East | ʿAbd al-Raḥīm al-**Aḥbābī** (Abdelrahim Lahbibi)<br>❖ left hometown Safi for Fez in 1967, there BA ArabLang from College of Arts & HumSc (1970); teacher of ArabLang & Lit 1970-82, school inspector, curriculum co-ordinator (1984>) | m | 1950 | 64 | MOR | A researcher stumbles across a manuscript and attempts to edit it, to make it into a doctoral thesis. Entitled *The Journeys of 'Abdi*, the manuscript is an account of one man's journeys from Morocco to the Hijaz in Saudi Arabia in search of knowledge, written in the manner of Moroccan intellectuals such as Ibn Khaldun. 'Abdi's journey turns into an examination of Arabic and Muslim society, with 'Abdi |

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| | | | | | | | | emphasising the need for Arabs to learn from Europe in order to achieve social progress. Split into two, *The Journeys of 'Abdi, known as Son of Hamriya* follows both 'Abdi's search for knowledge as well as the narrator's attempts to edit his manuscript. |
| **97** | 2014[S] | *al-Fīl al-azraq* ("The Blue Elephant")<br>▪ Dār al-Šurūq | Aḥmad Murād (Ahmed Mourad)<br>❖ studied cinematography at the Higher Institute for Cinema in Cairo<br>❖ 1st novel, *Vertigo* (2007), made into TV series (Ramadan 2012) | m | 1978 | 36 | EG | After five years of self-imposed isolation, Doctor Yahya returns to work at the Abbasiya Psychiatric Hospital in Cairo, where there is a surprise in store for him. In 'West 8', the department in charge of determining the mental health of patients who have committed crimes, he meets an old friend who reminds him of a past he is desperately trying to forget. Suddenly finding his friend's fate in his hands, Yahya's life is turned upside down, with one shocking turn of events following another. What begins as an attempt to find out the true mental condition of his friend becomes an enthralling journey to discover himself, or what is left of him. |
| **98** | 2014[W] | *Frānkinštāyn fī Baġdād* ("Frankenstein in Baghdad")<br>▪ Al-Jamal | Aḥmad Saʿdāwī (Ahmed Saadawi)<br>❖ novelist, poet, screenwriter, documentary film maker | m | 1973 | 41 | IRQ | Hadi al-Attag lives in the populous al-Bataween district of Baghdad. In the Spring of 2005, he takes the body parts of those killed in explosions and sews them together to create a new body. When a displaced soul enters the body, a new being comes to life. Hadi call it 'the-what's-its-name'; the authorities name it 'Criminal X' and others refer to it as 'Frankenstein'. Frankenstein begins a campaign of revenge against those who killed it, or killed the parts constituting its body. As well as following Frankenstein's story, *Frankenstein in Baghdad* follows a number of connected characters, such as General Surur Majid of the Department of Investigation, who is responsible for pursuing the mysterious criminal and Mahmoud al-Sawadi, a young journalist who gets the chance to interview Frankenstein. *Frankenstein in Baghdad* offers a panoramic view of a city where people live in fear of the unknown, unable to act in solidarity, haunted by the unknown identity of the criminal who targets them all. |
| | **2015** | | | | | | | |
| **99** | 2015[L] | *Baʿīdan min al-ḍawḍāʾ, qarīban min al-sikāt* ("Far from Clamour, Close to Silence")<br>▪ Le Fennec | Muḥammad Barrāda (Mohammed Berrada)<br>❖ writer and critic<br>❖ PhD from FR in Criticism and LitSociology<br>❖ SS, novels, LitCrit<br>❖ currently living in Brussels, Belgium. | m | 1938 | 77 | MOR | Looking back over the 50 years that have passed since Moroccan independence, four characters from different generations review their lives. Far from Clamour, Close to Silence's young hero, Raji, is unemployed, until a historian asks him to canvass people's views about Morocco's future. Raji is inspired to write a novel about three different people who, coming from different generations, represent the hopes, ideals and disappointments of three different eras in Moroccan history: pre-independence, post-independence and contemporary Morocco. And so he tells the story of Tawfiq al-Sadiqi, born in 1930s, a lawyer called Falih al-Hamzawi and a psychiatrist, Nabiha Sama'an, born in the 1950s |
| **100** | 2015[L] | *Ġarīqat buḥayrat Mūrīh* ("Drowning in Lake Morez")<br>▪ Dār al-Murād | Anṭuwān Duwayhī (Antoine Douaihy)<br>❖ novelist and poet<br>❖ PhD in Anthropology from Sorbonne (1979)<br>❖ in France until mid-1990s<br>❖ currently Professor of Cultural and Social Anthropology at LU | m | 1948 | 67 | LEB | is the story of a couple separated by culture and place. When the narrator, a Lebanese man, falls in love with a French woman, they begin a passionate affair. However their relationship, punctuated by separation, is fraught with difficulties and they struggle to make it work even when they are together. Looking at the larger issue of displacement, the book explores how – in our transitory, modern |

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| | | | ❖ *Bearer of the Purple Rose* on IPAF 2014[L] | | | | | lifestyle - people often feel caught between different worlds. |
| **101** | 2015[L] | *Ḥayy al-Amīrikān* ("The American Neighbourhood")<br>▪ Sāqī Books | Ǧabbūr Duwayhī (Jabbour Douaihy)<br>❖ born in Zgharta, NLeb<br>❖ PhD in CompLit from Sorbonne<br>❖ works as Professor of FrLit at U of LEB<br>❖ *June Rain* on IPAF 2008[S], *The Vagrant* on 2012[L] | m | 1949 | 66 | LEB | novel about a troubled city during an explosive period of history. It describes two contradictory worlds existing side-by-side within a single Lebanese city, Tripoli. The first: the poor, sprawling so-called American district of Bab al-Tebbeneh, from which many jihadis are recruited and sent to Iraq to fight the Americans. The second: the rich and powerful Al Azzam family's splendid home in an elite district. / Intisar, who comes from the American district, works for the Al Azzams and has a good relationship with her employers, suggesting that the two worlds can exist peacefully side-by-side. However, she becomes terrified when her son Ismail disappears and it transpires that he has been recruited for a suicide mission in Iraq. Although he abandons his mission at the last minute, Ismail finds himself trapped on return to the city and he finds himself turning to the Al Azzam family for protection. |
| **102** | 2015[L] | *Lā taqṣuṣ ruʾyāk* ("Don't Tell Your Nightmare!")<br>▪ al-Markaz al-ṯaqāfī al-ʿarabī | ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Ḥamādī (Abdel Wahab al-Hamadi)<br>❖ works for petrochemical company<br>❖ runs a tourism company specialising in historical tours<br>❖ writes for *Al-Qabas* and the (electronic) *Sabr* | m | 1979 | 36 | KU | takes place in Kuwait and gives a glimpse of the shadowy sectarianism and racism of Kuwaiti society just before the Arab Spring. It also reveals the illegal torture happening behind the scenes in detention camps. / Bassam, a young man from a respectable family, is disturbed by nightmares of a man begging for help because someone is trying to kill him. Whilst picking apart the meaning of his dream, the story also picks apart Bassam's relationships: with a lover who disappeared, to his relationship with his best friend, and with the Sheikh who interprets dreams. The more progress he makes in his attempts to find the girl or interpret the dream, the more unclear things become. Events come to a head when he is struck down by a fever and then wakes to find a message on his phone from the vanished lover, asking him to join her in Beirut. |
| **103** | 2015[L] | *al-Rāwiyāt* ("Female Voices")<br>▪ Dār Tanwīr, Lebanon | Mahā Ḥasan (Maha Hassan)<br>❖ B.A. in Law from U Aleppo<br>❖ currently living in Paris<br>❖ writes in both Ar and Fr<br>❖ *Umbilical Cord* on IPAF 2011[L] | f | 1966 | 49 | SYR (kurd) | metafictional novel told through two intertwining stories: the first is the inner monologue of an author writing a novel; the second is the story of the characters she is creating. As both narratives unfold, imagination and reality merge, showing how writing can both liberate and reveal. |
| **104** | 2015[L] | *Riyām wa-Kafà* ("Riyam and Kafa")<br>▪ al-Markaz al-ʿarabī lil-dirāsāt wa'l-našr | Hadya Ḥusayn (Hadia Hussein)<br>❖ lives in Canada | f | 1956 | 59 | IRQ | an Iraqi seamstress decides to write a novel based on her diaries, giving us an intimate look at the reality of life for women living in Iraq; a world in which they struggle to make their mark while being restricted by values and traditions. The novel, a rich and detailed portrait of the heroine and her family, ultimately deals with the wider dimension of human suffering and the conflict between good and evil. |
| **105** | 2015[L] | *Inḥirāf ḥādd* ("Sharp Turning")<br>▪ Al-Dār al-Miṣriyya al-Lubnāniyya | Ašraf al-Ḫamāyisī (Ashraf al-Khamaisi)<br>❖ editor for *al-Thaqāfa al-Jadīda*<br>❖ *God's Land of Exile* on IPAF 2014[L] | m | 1967 | 48 | EG | explores questions of life, death, and faith, in a story about a group of passengers who are mysteriously brought together to travel on a speeding minibus. One of the passengers is the prophet Sonallah, a man who has been roaming the planet for thousands of years trying to spread his message. As the group hurtles along the highway towards an almost certain death, Sonallah tries to convince them of his |

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| | | | | | | | | truth – that humanity should strive for immortality in order to rightly represent God. |
| **106** | 2015[L] | *Grāfīt* ("Graphite")<br>▪ Maktabat al-Dār al-ʿArabiyya lil-Kitāb | Hišām al-Ḫašin (Hisham al-Khashin)<br>❖ civil engineer and novelist<br>❖ SS coll *Very Egyptian Stories* (2010); 2011 two novels: *What is Behind the Doors* and *Seven Days of Tahrir* (=> TV series) | m | 1963 | 52 | EG | takes place in Egypt during the 1920s, a tumultuous time which saw the formation of the Muslim Brotherhood and the birth of the Egyptian women's movement. The story focuses on Nawal, an artist struggling to be free within an oppressive, and increasingly reactionary, society. Her life changes when she meets Doria Shafik, a historical figure known for being one of the leaders of the women's liberation movement. Despite initial jealousies, the two begin a powerful friendship, and Nawal soon finds herself swept up in the larger struggle for women's rights. |
| **107** | 2015[L] | *Ibnat Sūslūf* ("The Daughter of Suslov")<br>▪ Sāqī Books | Ḥabīb ʿAbd al-Rabb al-Sarūrī (Habib Abdulrab Sarori)<br>❖ has been Prof of Computer Science at the National Institute of Applied Sciences in Rouen, France, since 1992<br>❖ published in both Ar and Fr | m | 1956 | 59 | YEM | takes place in the seaport city of Aden, Yemen, spanning from the 1960s until the 21st century. As a young man, the narrator finds himself attracted to the daughter of a high-ranking official in the ruling Marxist party. Years later, he meets her again – only to find that she is now a niqab-wearing Salafist, calling on people to join the Islamist Salafi movement. The novel explores contemporary Yemeni reality against the backdrop of Aden's history, from the independence of southern Yemen and the subsequent establishment of The People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, to the Unification of Yemen in 1990 and the Arab Spring. |
| **108** | 2015[L] | *Bi-ḥaǧm ḥabbat ʿinab* ("The Size of a Grape")<br>▪ al-Ḥaḍāra | Munà al-Šīmī (Muna al-Sheemi)<br>❖ B.A. in Egyptian Archaeology from CU (1990), since then history teacher | f | 1968 | 47 | EG | unfolds during Ramadan in 2012 when, at the International Medical Centre in Cairo, 15-year-old Ziyad is found to have a brain tumour 'the size of a grape'. Ziyad's treatment coincides with the arrival of the former President of Egypt, Hosni Mubarak, who has been transferred to the centre under the order of his judge. / Ziyad's mother is shaken by her son's illness and it prompts her to review her life and her relationships, only to find they were not as they should have been. The novel describes the state of oppressed women in a patriarchal society, who still possess the strength to confront both themselves and others in order to recover their sense of self-worth and dignity. |
| **109** | 2015[S] | *Ḥayāt muʿallaqa* ("A Suspended Life")<br>▪ al-Ahliyya | ʿĀṭif Abū Sayf (Atef Abu Saif)<br>❖ born in Jabalia refugee camp in the Gaza Strip, family originally from Jaffa<br>❖ B.A. from U Birzeit, M.A. from U Bradford (UK), PhD in Political and Social Sciences from U Florence, IT<br>❖ teaches Political Science at Al-Azhar, Gaza<br>❖ Chief Editor of *Siyasat* magazine, published by the Public Policy Institute in Ramallah<br>❖ writes a weekly article for *Ayyam* (PAL)<br>❖ novels, short stories, plays, books of political science | m | 1973 | 42 | PAL | set in the Gaza refugee camp. Naim runs the only print shop in the camp, where he prints posters of martyred members of the community. When he is shot and killed by the Army, the fallout from his death changes the lives of the community living a quiet life on the fringes of the camp, where Naim's house sits on a small hill. The place has historical significance for the residents and, when the government plans to build a police station and mosque on the spot where Naim's house stands, it leads to a clash between the residents and the police. |
| **110** | 2015[S] | *Ṭābiq 99*<br>("Floor 99")<br>▪ Manšūrāt Ḍifāf | Ǧanā Fawāz al-Ḥasan (Jana El Hassan)<br>❖ novelist and journalist<br>❖ *Me, She and the Other Women* on IPAF 2013[S] | f | 1985 | 30 | LEB | unfolds between the 1982 massacre at Sabra and Shatila in Lebanon and life in the city of New York in 2000. Majd is a young Palestinian man who bears a scar from the massacre. In present day New York, he falls in love with Hilda, a dancer, whose wealthy family from Mount Lebanon thrived on the power of the Christian right |

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| | | | | | | | | wing during the Lebanese civil war - who were directly linked to the massacre at Sabra and Shatila.<br>When Hilda decides to return to her village on Mount Lebanon to discover her roots, Majd is torn between mental images of the old enemy and his fear of losing her. He is forced to reflect on the painful events which took the life of his pregnant mother and turned his father, a teacher, into a rose-seller on the streets of Harlem. From his office on the 99th floor of a New York building, Majd's Palestinian identity seems ambiguous, especially given that he was born and has always lived in exile. The novel reflects on the power of love to cleanse hatred and brings the post-war Lebanese generation face-to-face with their ancestors. |
| **111** | 2015[S] | *ʾAlmās wa-nisāʾ* ("Diamonds and Women")<br>▪ Dār al-Ādāb | Līnā Hūyān al-Ḥasan (Lina Huyan Elhassan)<br>❖ Diploma in Advanced Philosophy Studies U Damascus<br>❖ currently living in LEB, as journalist since 2003<br>❖ fiction & non-fiction (novels, poetry, studies of the Syrian desert) | f | 1975 | 40 | SYR | describes two generations of Arab exiles, revealing the secret, privileged world of Arab emigrants and showing their influence on their chosen cities of Paris, Sao Paolo and Damascus. The novel focuses particularly on Syrians living in Paris and Sao Paolo from the beginning of the 20th century to the 1970s and 1980s and the experiences of the heroine, Almaz, as she witnesses key points of Arab social and political history in the modern era. |
| **112** | 2015[S] | *Mamarr al-ṣafṣāf* ("Willow Alley")<br>▪ al-Markaz al-ṯaqāfī al-ʿarabī | Aḥmad al-Madīnī (Ahmed al-Madeeni)<br>❖ stud at U of Morocco, U Paris 8, and Sorbonne (from there PhD)<br>❖ novels, SS, lit.crit.<br>❖ holds academic post in higher education | m | 1947 | 68 | MOR | tells the story of a bustling, ancient Moroccan town which hides many secrets, where residents struggle to live in peace while at the mercy of a few arrogant and despotic individuals. Focusing on the struggle between the caretaker of a building under construction and a group of people clinging to their land in order to survive, the novel examines the individual's right to exist in a country where lives are vulnerable to exploitation and the powerful thrive at the expense of the weak |
| **113** | 2015[S] | *Šawq al-darwīš* ("The Longing of the Dervish")<br>▪ Dār al-ʿAyn | Ḥamūr Ziyāda (Hamour Ziada)<br>❖ worked for charitable and civil society organisations<br>❖ journalist for a number of Sudanese papers, Chief Editor of the cultural section of the Sudanese *al-Akhbār* | m | 1977 | 38 | SUD | Set in 19th century Sudan during the collapse of the theocratic state, *The Longing of the Dervish* follows the story of Bakhi Mindeel, a former slave newly released from prison and seeking revenge for his imprisonment. His release coincides with the end of the Mahdist war – a British colonial war fought between Egypt and a section of Sudanese society seeking independence under their religious leader, Mahdi – when Mahdi and his followers are defeated and force to flee. *The Longing of the Dervish* examines the social conflict between white Christian and Islamic Sufi cultures in Sudan, exploring the concepts of love, religion, betrayal and political struggle. |
| **114** | 2015[W] | *al-Ṭalyānī* ("The Italian")<br>▪ Dār Tanwīr, Tunis | Šukrī al-Mabḫūt (Shukri al-Mabkhout)<br>❖ PhD Lit from Manouba<br>❖ head of U Manouba<br>❖ on editorial board of several refereed journals, incl *IBLA* and *Romano Arabica*; several works of literary criticism<br>❖ *The Italian* is his first novel. | m | 1962 | 53 | TUN | Set in Tunis, The Italian tells the story of Abdel Nasser, nicknamed 'the Italian' due to his good looks. Against the backdrop of the protagonist's political and amatory exploits, the book sheds light on Tunisia's recent complex history, in particular the troubled transition from the Bourguiba era to the government of Ben Ali in the late 1980s. In a recent interview, Mabkhout told how he was inspired to write the novel by the events of the Arab Spring: 'Two years into the revolution… I remembered a recent period of Tunisia's history that is similar in its fears, changes and conflicts to what I was witnessing and living: it was the period of transition from the reign of Bourguiba to that of Ben Ali following the 1987 coup.' (Win-1)<br>'The whole of Shukri Mabkhout's debut novel is as astonishing as its first chapter: |

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| | | | | | | | | piquing the reader's interest through a mysterious event in the opening scene, the book gradually reveals the troubled history of its characters and a particular period in Tunisia's history. The hero, Abdel Nasser, is complex and multi-faceted and even the minor characters are convincing and we believe the logic of their actions. However, his most striking creation is that of Zina, Abdel Nasser's wife: skilfully rendered as a blend of confidence and diffidence; harshness and love; strength and fragility. She is a highly individual character who, rather than being pre-conceived, clearly developed during the act of writing. / 'The novel brilliantly depicts the unrest both of the small world of its characters and the larger one of the nation, as well as exploring themes of personal desire, the establishment, violation and opportunism. Whilst it lifts the lid on Tunisian society, the book may also surprise many of its Arab readers who may recognise aspects of their societies in its pages too. Gripping the read from the first line to the last, The Italian is a work of art and an important contribution to Tunisian, and Arab, literary fiction.' (Win-2)<br>At the heart of The Italian is Abdel Nasser (nicknamed 'the Italian') and his mysterious assault on the Imam, his neighbour, during his father's funeral procession. The book's narrator attempts to uncover the motivations behind the attack, re-constructing his friend Abdel Nasser's troubled history from childhood. It looks at Abdel Nasser's time as a left-wing student at the University of Tunis, during the final years of the Bourguiba era and the beginning of Ben Ali's, through to the period of radical changes that subsequently rocked Tunisian society, when the dreams of a generation were torn apart by the fierce struggle between the Islamists and the Left. The novel reveals the mechanisms of control and censorship exercised through the press as well as the fragility of human beings, their secret histories and buried wounds.(Win-3) = www |
| | **2016** | | | | | | | |
| **115** | 2016[L] | *Fī 'l-hunā* ("Here»)<br>▪ Platinum Books | Ṭālib al-Rifā'ī (Taleb Alrefai)<br>❖ worked for the Kuwaiti National Council of Culture, Arts and Literature (2003-08), edited monthly arts review, *Jaridat Al Funoon*<br>❖ currently cultural advisor to the Kuwaiti Minister of Media<br>❖ teaches creative writing at the AmerU Kuwait<br>❖ fiction + literary and historical studies<br>❖ served as Chair of judges for IPAF2010 | m | 1958 | 58 | KU | an unflinching portrayal of the suffering endured by a young, single Shiite woman from Kuwait who falls in love with a married Sunni man with children. The title of the novel alludes to the significance of the many places in the story. 'Here' is the office where the narrator works and the flat where the heroine, Kawthar, chooses to live alone. It is the home of her Shiite family, who refuse to let their daughter marry a Sunni man, and it is also Kuwait, a country still clinging to its traditions. = (www) |
| **116** | 2016[L] | *Tarānīm al-ġiwāya* ("Hymns of Temptation»)<br>▪ Manšūrāt Ḍifāf | Laylà al-Aṭraš (Laila al-Atrash)<br>❖ helped to establish the *Library of the Family* and *Reading for All* projects in JOR (2007)<br>❖ her social and cultural programmes have won numerous prizes at TV and radio festivals.<br>❖ In the 2015 *Human Development Report*, she was among a small number of women writers who were deemed to have | f | 1948 | 68 | JOR/ *PAL | Rawia Abu Najma – a documentary producer who has not visited Jerusalem since the Six Day War of 1967 – obtains a special permit to return. Although she has come to sort out the affairs of an aged aunt, she secretly hopes to make a film about people's lives in the city. Through her aunt's memories and those of her friend, the wife of the custodian of the Holy Mosque, a forbidden and passionate love affair between her aunt and the priest Mitri al-Haddad comes to light. She also uncovers old disagreements between the Greek Orthodox Church, Muslims and |

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| | | | been influential in their societies. | | | | | Arab Christians in Jerusalem. *Hymns of Temptation* charts the social development of Jerusalem and the struggle of different peoples to control it, describing life from the period of the Ottomans and the British Mandate at the end of the 19th century to after the Israeli occupation. It is a novel of people living through times of sweeping moral, political and social change. = (www) |
| **117** | 2016L | *Maʿbad ʾanāmil al-ḥarīr* ("The Temple of Silken Fingers»)<br>▪ Al-Iḫtilāf | Ibrāhīm Farġalī (Ibrahim Farghali)<br>❖ BA in Business Studies from U Mansoura<br>❖ works as journalist on the staff of *Al-Arabi* (KUW)<br>❖ has previously worked in UAE and Oman, and for the *Al-Ahram* | m | 1967 | 49 | EG | narrated by a manuscript which is abandoned at sea by its author. The manuscript relates what happens as it tries to reunite with its author, as well as revealing the author's past life in the UAE, Egypt and Germany. Weaved together with this are the adventures contained within the manuscript's pages: a story of copyists fleeing a city called the City of Injustice, which is dominated by extremists ruled by the head of a censorship bureau. On its journey, the manuscript is discovered by a number of new readers: the author's friend, pirates and an Ethiopian girl. = (www) |
| **118** | 2016L | *Ahl al-naḫīl* ("People of the Palms»)<br>▪ Dār al-Sāqī | Ǧanān Ǧāsim Ḥalāwī (Janan Jasim Halawi)<br>❖ studied electrical engineering in IRQ<br>❖ worked as journalist in LEB, esp for *Al-Nahar*<br>❖ has lived in SWE since 1992 | m | 1956 | 60 | IRQ | holds a spotlight on the inhabitants of the palm groves and marshlands of Basra, Iraq. The book pulsates with stories of life and death. As Basra reels with destruction and death, the terrified Ramzi and Ahlam cut a path through the devastated city, fleeing from soldiers. Their story is just one amongst a collection of disparate tales about characters from Basra's underworld: Jodi, a worker in an old people's home, killed by the police for helping the mad Muhaidi; Johnny, the sea smuggler, forced to act as an informer for the police; Jawad, a communist, who kills the local Islamic leader, Jaafar, after he declares Communists to be apostates; Badea, an ordinary girl driven to prostitution by poverty and murdered, and Alawi, the rebellious loner who kills her murderer. = (www) |
| **119** | 2016L | *Nuzūḥ Maryam* ("Mariam's Journey»)<br>▪ Dār Tanwīr, Egypt | Maḥmūd Ḥasan al-Ǧāsim (Mahmoud Hasan al-Jasim)<br>❖ writer and academic<br>❖ taught at College of Arts and Humanities in Aleppo, before moving in 2012 to his current post at the College of Arts and Sciences at U Qatar; has spent more than 14 years teaching Ar lang and grammar to non-native speakers | m | 1966 | 50 | SYR | opens with the lines: "I am writing this story for you, Mariam. You will read the story and know and pass on the truth of what happened to us." This is the story told by Sara Toni Jabbour to her daughter, Mariam. Sara, a Christian woman, moves to the Syrian city of Raqqa and marries Mariam's father, a Muslim man. When fundamentalist Salafi groups sweep through Raqqa, Sara is forced – as a Christian married to a Muslim – to retreat to her family's village. However, with Shabiha thugs in control of the area, she flees into the unknown with Mariam only to then face merciless people smugglers. Wanting to leave her daughter a true and undistorted account of their life as a family, Sara records for Mariam the joys of life with her husband and the torment of life without him. Through the story of her journey across Lebanon, Syria and Turkey, we gain an insight into the fear experienced by those forced to leave their country. = (www) |
| **120** | 2016L | *Miyāh mutaṣaḥḥira* ("Desertified Waters)<br>▪ Fadaat | Ḥāzim Kamāl al-Dīn (Hazim Kamaledin)<br>❖ writer and playwright<br>❖ has worked as an actor, director and cinematographer, but is also researcher, novelist, and SS writer<br>❖ previously lectured in Belgium (Ghent, Antwerp), supervised students on DasArts (MA theatre) courses in the Amsterdam U of the Arts | m | 1954 | 62 | IRQ | In *Desertified Waters*, Hazim Kamaledin – who is both narrator and author of the novel – is murdered. Kamaledin is a filmmaker who was once famous but has been forgotten. Famous because of his film, "Desertified Waters", which won the highest award in Saddam Hussein's Iraq: the film, intended to be critical of the regime, is cut so much by the censor that it does just the opposite. Intentionally forgotten as a result of winning the award: as those in cultural circles know the truth about how the film has been distorted, but are afraid to open up a can of worms from the |

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| | | | ❖ former director of the *Sahara 93* theatre workshop; currently artistic director of the Belgian *Zahrat al-Sabbar* theatre company | | | | | past, especially since the occupation has re-imposed the forceful censorship of the past. Nobody knows the truth about his death. Some say that terrorists are responsible, others that he was a victim of a random strike at the market by the American occupying forces or those working for them. = (www) |
| **121** | 2016[L] | *Rasāʾil zaman al-ʿāṣifa* ("Letters of the Storm»)<br>▪ Slaiki Akhawayn Publications, 2015 | ʿAbd al-Nūr **Mizzīn** (Abdennour Mezzine)<br>❖ Dr.med. (1992), since then doctor and public health advisor in MOR Ministry of Public Health; first poems in French, later short stories in Arabic. *Letters of the Storm* is his first novel. | m | 1965 | 51 | MOR | tells the story of a political activist in Morocco during the 'Years of Lead', a period of harsh governmental control between the 1960s and 1990s. Weaving together his personal life and political life, the novel examines the protagonist's relationships before and after his initial imprisonment in Morocco and again during a second term of imprisonment in Andalusia, during which he faces psychological trauma. Central to this is the story of the activist's love for Ghada, a woman he knew at university but lost touch with after being arrested.<br>(www) |
| **122** | 2016[L] | *Wārsū qabla qalīl* ("Warsaw a Little While Ago")<br>▪ Hachette Antoine | Aḥmad Muḥsin (Ahmed Muhsin)<br>❖ Economics at Beirut Arab Univ. => journalist for Lebanese newspapers. *Warsaw a Little While Ago* is his 2nd novel, after *The Maker of Games* | m | 1984 | 32 | LEB | is a story of identity. It tells the story of Youzef, a Jewish musician in Poland who, having escaped death in Nazi camps, decides to emigrate, first to Israel and then to Lebanon. There he marries and has a family, before returning to Warsaw years later with his grandson, Jousef. The book tells of the amorous and musical adventures of both Youzef and Jousef who, realising his grandfather's dreams for him of being a musician, learns to play the piano. Following the Israeli attack on Beirut in 2006, Jousef also finds himself torn between staying in Warsaw and emigrating to Israel like his grandfather 60 years before.<br>(www) |
| **123** | 2016[L] | *Nubūʾat al-saqqāʾ* ("The Prophecy of Saqqa»)<br>▪ Dār Tanwīr, Tunis | Ḥāmid al-Naẓīr (Hamed al-Nazir)<br>❖ currently journalist in the newsroom of Qatar TV, writes for a number of newspapers and websites. Previously presenter on the SUD Shorouk channel, the SUD Blue Nile channel and SUD radio, news correspondent for MBC in Sudan | m | 1975 | 41 | SUD | set in the 1960s, in the town of Ajayib in the hills of the Eritrean coast, where the "Ahfad", slaves to their masters the "Awtad", struggle for freedom. When a powerful Awtad asks to marry a beautiful woman from the Ahfad, they see the marriage as their chance for liberation, as prophesied. However, the Awtad look upon the proposed marriage with foreboding and do everything in their power to stop it from taking place. These events coincide with the early days of the Eritrean armed struggle for independence from Ethiopia. Its successes and failures and the divisions within the revolutionary leadership form the background to the events of the novel.<br>(www) |
| **124** | 2016[L] | *Katībat sawdāʾ* ("The Black Brigade»)<br>▪ Dār al-Šurūq | Muḥammad al-Mansī Qindīl (Mohamed Mansi Qandil)<br>❖ medical school in Mansoura (1975), but gave up medicine, devoting himself instead to writing; his works are marked by a fascination with history; *A Cloudy Day on the West Side* (2009) on ShL IPAF2010. | m | 1949 | 67 | EG | *The Black Brigade*, set between 1863 and 1867, is a novel about love, war and destiny. The French emperor, Napoleon III, makes an agreement with Khedive Said of Egypt to transport hundreds of black slave fighters to Mexico. There, they are to be handed over to Maximilian, brother of the Austrian emperor Leopold, who travels to Mexico with his young wife Carlota amidst disturbances and revolution. The novel follows the adventures of Al-Aasi, a black slave who defies the slave traders and becomes a leader of a group of the slaves. Following a series of hardships whilst he travels from Sudan to Mexico, Al-Aasi then becomes Empress Carlota's personal bodyguard and finally plays a role in the French Revolution and Paris Commune of 1867. |

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| **125** | 2016[S] | *ʿUṭārid* ("Mercury")<br>▪ Dār al-Tanwīr Lebanon | Muḥammad Rabīʿ (Mohamed Rabie)<br>❖ graduated from Fac of Engineering, CU, in 2002 | m | 1978 | 38 | EG | dark fantasy which imagines "the counter revolution" in Egypt as a reality in a nightmarish future. The eponymous hero of this fantasy novel is an officer who witnessed the defeat of the police in Cairo on the 28 January 2011. Over a decade later, Egypt is occupied by a mysterious power and the remnants of the old police force are leading the popular resistance, fighting among the ruins of a shattered Cairo. It is a daily hell of arbitrary killing, an intensified version of the sporadic massacres witnessed since the famous revolution in January. = (www) |
| **126** | 2016[S] | *Samāʾ qarība min baytinā*<br>("A Sky Close to our House")<br>▪ Manšūrāt Ḍifāf | Šahlā al-ʿUǧaylī (Shahla Ujayli)<br>❖ PhD MAL & Cultural Studies (U Aleppo), currently teaching MAL daselbst + American Univ in Madaba, JOR; fiction + critical studies, incl *The Syrian Novel: Experimentalism and Theoretical Categories* (2009), *Cultural Particularity in the Arabic Novel* (2011) and *Mirror of Strangeness: Articles on Cultural Criticism* (2006) | f | 1976 | 40 | SYR | spans the second half of the 19th century to the present, featuring characters from different backgrounds who meet in Amman, Jordan, the city at the heart of the story. It is here that Jaman Badran, a Syrian immigrant, gets to know Nasr Al-Amiri, a Palestinian-Syrian who has come to Amman for his mother's funeral. They soon discover that their grandparents were neighbours in Aleppo. Through the dramatic fall of families in Syria, Palestine, Iraq, Serbia and Vietnam, *A Sky Close to Our House* shows how wars can change concepts of identity and nation, and create new destinies for large numbers of people; it also underlines that mass tragedy does not in any way negate the significance of individual suffering. = (www) |
| **127** | 2016[S] | *Nūmīdiyā* ("Numedia")<br>▪ Dār al-Ādāb | Ṭāriq Bakkārī (Tareq Bakari)<br>❖ born in E Morocco; BA in ArabLit from U Fes (2010), diploma from Meknes Teacher Training College (2011); since then Arabic language teacher in Meknes; articles and pieces of creative writing, both in print and online. *Numedia* (2015) is his first novel | m | 1988 | 28 | MOR | tells the life story of Murad, written by his former girlfriend Julia, a Frenchwoman. An orphan, Murad is cursed by the people of his village. Ostracised, insulted and beaten, he turns to love in an attempt to take revenge on fate: first with Khoula, who becomes pregnant; then Nidal, his classmate and fellow comrade in resistance; then Julia, seen as the French coloniser, and with his final love Numedia, the mute Berber. The rich story of *Numedia* unfolds against the backdrop of the real-life historical, political and religious landscape of Morocco. = (www) |
| **128** | 2016[S] | *Madīḥ li-nisāʾ al-ʿāʾila*<br>("Praise for the Women of the Family")<br>▪ Hachette Antoine | Maḥmūd Šuqayr (Mahmoud Shukair)<br>❖ writes for adults and teenagers; 45 books, 6 TV series, 4 plays<br>❖ had leadership positions within JOR Writers' Union and the Union of Palestinian Writers and Journalists<br>❖ has spent his life betw Beirut, Amman and Prague; lives in Jerusalem now | m | 1941 | 75 | PAL | is a history of the women of the Al-Abd al-Lat clan, which has left the desert and is preparing to leave its Bedouin customs behind. The women of the clan struggle with these changes and many scorn those embracing modern life: when Rasmia accompanies her husband to a party, Najma wears a dress and Sana gets a tan on her white legs, they set malicious tongues wagging; meanwhile, Wadha, the sixth wife of Mannan, the chief of the clan, still believes that the washing machine and television are inhabited by evil spirits. Set after the *nakba* (the Palestinian exodus from what is now Israel) in a time of political and social change, the novel witnesses the rapid advance of modernity and the seeds of conflict beginning to grow in 1950s Palestine. = (www) |
| **129** | 2016[S] | *Ḥāris al-mawtà* ("Guard of the Dead")<br>▪ Manšūrāt Ḍifāf | Ǧūrǧ Yaraq (George Yaraq)<br>❖ worked as editor and freelance writer for several Leb papers<br>❖ first novel (*Night*) was published in 2013 | m | 1958 | 58 | LEB | *Guard of the Dead* is the story of Aabir, a hospital undertaker. Working in the morgue by day and the operating theatre by night, he learns to pluck out and sell the gold teeth he finds in the corpses' mouths. However, he lives in a state of constant dread and apprehension, his past working for a political party and as a sniper during the Lebanese Civil War hanging over him. One day, Aabir is kidnapped from the morgue. With no idea about where he is, who has taken him or |

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| | | | | | | | | why, he finds himself searching for clues about his kidnapping in his past. = (www) |
| 130 | 2016[W] | *Maṣāʾir: Kūnširtū al-hūlūkūst wa'l-nakba* ("Destinies: Concerto of the Holocaust and the Nakba")<br>▪ Maktabat Kull Šayʾ, 2015 | Rabʿī al-Madhūn (Rabai al-Madhoun)<br>❖ 1948 *Nakba* => family emigrated to Khan Younis (Gaza)<br>❖ studied at U Cairo and U Alex<br>❖ 1970 expelled from EG because of his political activities<br>❖ has worked at the Palestinian Centre for Research Studies and as a journalist and editor for many newspapers and magazines; currently editor for *al-Sharq al-Awsaṭ* in London<br>❖ *The Lady from Tel Aviv* (2010) on IPAF 2010[S] | m | 1945 | 71 | PAL | pioneering Palestinian novel written in four parts. Each part representing a concerto movement, the novel looks at the Palestinian exodus from Israel in 1948 (known as the '*nakba*'), the holocaust and the Palestinian right to return. *Destinies: Concerto of the Holocaust and the Nakba* is a novel of Palestine from outside and from within. It examines the tragedy of everyday Palestinian life, telling the story of Palestinians living under occupation and forced to assume Israeli nationality, as well as exiled Palestinians trying to return to their now-occupied home country. (www) |
| | **2017** | | | | | | | |
| 131 | 2017[L] | *Hūt Mārūk*<br>("Hot Maroc")<br>▪ Dār al-ʿAyn | Yāsīn ʿAdnān (Yassin Adnan)<br>❖ writer and broadcaster, cultural journalism<br>❖ always lived in Marrakech<br>❖ initiated poetry magazines => new sensibility in MOR in early 90s<br>❖ 4 books of poetry, 3 short story collections, a book about Marrakech<br>❖ *Hot Maroc* (2016) is his first novel | m | 1970 | 46 | MOR | novel about the changing face of Morocco: about Marrakech and the effects of ruralisation and deforestation, the university and its student movement, internet cafés and hackers, politics and journalism. It is about the coward who becomes a hero in both dreams and online but *Hot Maroc* is bigger than any online space and hotter than any title might suggest. |
| 132 | 2017[L] | *Ġurfa wāḥida lā takfī*<br>("One Room Is Not Enough")<br>▪ Manšūrāt Ḍifāf | Sulṭān al-ʿAmīmī (Sultan Al Ameemi)<br>❖ 19 books: 14 studies of popular culture in UAE, 3 collections of SS, 2 novels (*One Room Is Not Enough*, 2016)<br>❖ since 7 seasons judge of the Million's Poet contest<br>❖ currently director of Abu Dhabi Arabic Poetry Academy<br>❖ writes weekly column on cultural matters | m | 1974 | 42 | UAE | sees the hero of the novel wake alone in a strange room. He doesn't know how he got there and there is no way out. Through the keyhole of the door, he discovers someone else is living a normal life in the adjoining room. This person looks like him, behaves like him and has the same hobbies, but he is unable to communicate with him. In the room he finds a book entitled *Sole Choices*, with his name on the cover as the author. It contains a strange introduction, but the remaining pages are blank. In an attempt to escape his isolation, he fills the blank pages with the peculiar history of his family, followed by the account of his experiences in the room and what he sees as he spies upon his neighbour through the keyhole. |
| 133 | 2017[L] | *Fihris*<br>("Index")<br>▪ Manšūrāt al-Ğamal | Sinān Anṭūn (Sinan Antoon)<br>❖ poet, novelist, translator (English)<br>❖ 4 novels (*Index*, 2016), 1 vol. poetry<br>❖ widely translated<br>❖ documentary *About Baghdad* (2004), on Baghdad after dictatorship and occupation.<br>❖ *Hail Mary* IPAF-SL 2013<br>❖ taught Arabic literature at U New York since 2005. | m | 1967 | 49 | IRQ | tells the story of Namir, who meets Wadoud, an eccentric bookseller in Al-Mutanabbi Street during a brief visit to Baghdad after the 2003 occupation. Wadoud is working on a vast project, an index detailing the minute by minute history of the war from the perspective of rocks, trees and animals as well as humans themselves. Taken with the bookseller and his index, Namir tries to contact him to find out more, with the aim of writing a novel about him after his return to the US. Influenced by Wadoud's ideas, Namir begins to observe his own nation as it fragments, collecting newspaper clippings, images and everything relating to Iraq. Meanwhile, Wadoud is on the edge of insanity and trying to gather the broken splinters, sounds and ghosts of his surroundings. Will he succeed in rescuing them from oblivion? |
| 134 | 2017[L] | *Muntağaʿ al-sāḥirāt* | Amīr Tāğ al-Sirr (Amir Tag Elsir) | m | 1960 | 56 | SUD | follows Ababa Tsfay, who gets off a bus coming from the Eritrean border, fleeing |

| no. | year | title | author | m/f | born | age * | from | Features / plot |
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| | | ("The Resort of the Enchantress")<br>▪ Dār al-Sāqī | ❖ now doctor in Qatar<br>❖ early poetry<br>❖ 23 books (novels, biographies, poetry)<br>❖ *The Grub Hunter* (2010) on IPAF-SL 2011, *366* (2013) on LL 2014 | | | | | war in her country. She is a striking beauty who has ended up in the wrong place, friendless and penniless, without a place of refuge. Abdel Quyum Dalil Jum'a is a practised thief who lives on the streets. After noticing her, he elects himself as her protector and his love for her changes his life. However, fate has other plans in store for them. |
| **135** | 2017[L] | *Sfāstīkā*<br>("Swastika")<br>▪ Dār wa-Maktabat Suṭūr | ʿAlī Ġadīr (Ali Ghadeer)<br>❖ writer and journalist<br>❖ BA in military science (Baghdad 1993)<br>❖ taught at College of Fine Arts in Baghdad<br>❖ since 2003 journalist, founded newspapers and magazines<br>❖ 2 vols. SS, 1 prose, 1 poetry. *Swastika* (2016) | m | 1971 | 45 | IRQ | about Hawas, who is born poor but dreams of visiting a prostitute in Baghdad after hearing about her, and the cost of a night in her company, from the son of the village Sheikh. After stealing his mother's golden ankle bracelet, he boards a train to the capital city and his adventure begins. On his train journey he is joined by a strange character who shares not only his delicious food but also his theory of good luck and the means of attracting it. 'Swastika' is a Sanskrit word meaning "leading to luxury" and an ancient symbol of prosperity and regarded as good luck by Iraqis, the red Indians of America and Hindus. Denying the common belief that man is born either happy or unfortunate, 'Swastika' affirms a person's capacity to make their own good fortune. |
| **136** | 2017[L] | *Sanat al-rādiyū*<br>("The Year of the Radio")<br>▪ Dār al-Tanwīr Lubnān | Rīnīh al-Ḥāyik (Renée Hayek)<br>❖ studied Philosophy at LU, then journalism, literary translation and teaching<br>❖ 2 vols SS, 10 novels<br>❖ *Prayer for the Family* (2007) on 33IPAF-LL | f | 1959 | 57 | LEB | is set in contemporary Beirut and is the story of a young female speech therapist working in a school on a short term contract. At the end of the school year, this contract is terminated and she tries different things before finding a job for a year at a radio station. Here she works as a psychologist, presenting live programmes in which she offers advice to the parents of children with speech and psychological problems. Over the course of a year, we follow her experiences of love, loss, work, illness and unemployment. |
| **137** | 2017[L] | *Ayyām al-turāb*<br>("Days of Dust")<br>▪ Dār al-Tanwīr Tūnis | Zuhayr al-Ḥītī (Zuheir al-Hiti)<br>❖ writer and journalist<br>❖ currently living in Germany<br>❖ 3 novels, 1 study (*The Image of the Iraqi in the Arabic Novel*, 2006) | m | 1957 | 59 | IRQ | is set after the fall of Saddam Hussein and the invasion of American occupying forces, when Iraq descended into chaos. With acts of murder committed in an attempt to purify the country of its former regime, mobs sow fear in the hearts of people across Iraqi society, most notably within the Christian community. Ghusn al-Ban's family had built its fortune and reputation in the days of the monarchy. Using her relationships with various Christians and the great art collection of her grandfather, Ghusn al-Ban follows the transformation of Iraqi society in this novel. |
| **138** | 2017[L] | *al-Maġāriba*<br>("The North Africans")<br>▪ al-Markaz al-Ṯaqāfī al-ʿArabī | ʿAbd al-Karīm Ǧuwayṭī (Abdul-Kareem Jouaity)<br>❖ born in Mellal, capital of the Tadla-Azilal province of MOR<br>❖ currently director of Ministry of Culture for this region<br>❖ 6 novels: *Platoon of Ruin* (2007) IPAF-LL 2009 + other books and translations | m | 1962 | 54 | MOR | follows the central character, Mohammed al-Ghafaqi and his relationships with his grandfather, the Pasha, his military brother and the neighbours' servant girl whom he loves. It tells of how he is struck by blindness and of the broker who betrays him and steals his wife. Interwoven with this central narrative are the stories of the grandfather, the graveyard of skulls and other tales interlinked with political and social resonance. |
| **139** | 2017[L] | *Maḏbaḥat al-falāsifa*<br>("The Slaughter of the Philosophers")<br>▪ al-Muʾassasa al-ʿArabiyya lil-dirāsāt wal-našr | Taysīr Ḫalaf (Tayseer Khalf)<br>❖ writer, researcher, novelist<br>❖ >30 books (literary criticism, historical research, travel writing, novels, incl *The Slaughter of the Philosophers*, 2016) | m | 1967 | 49 | SYR | follows the final years of the city of Palmyra, which had become the capital of Eastern Europe under the rule of its king, Odaenathus. Narrated by Palmyra's Grand Priest during the reign of Queen Zenobia, the novel sheds light on obscure parts of the city's history, including Zenobia's plans to turn it into a Utopian city. This was a vision that went unrealised. Attacked by the Roman Emperor Aurelianus' |

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| | | | | | | | | forces who were aided by some of the Arab tribes, Zenobia's reign was brought to an end in the year 275. The Queen and her council of wise philosophers were escorted to Homs where a court condemned the philosophers to death and sentenced the Queen to imprisonment in Hadrian's Villa near Rome. |
| **140** | 2017[L] | *Awlād al-ġītū – Ismī Ādam*<br>("Children of the Ghetto – My Name is Adam")<br>▪ Dār al-Ādāb | Ilyās Khūrī (Elias Khoury)<br>❖ ass.ed. *Palestinian Affairs* magazine (1975-1997), ed. of cultural section of *Al-Safir* (1981-1991), *Al-Karmel* (1981-83) and *Al-Nahār* lit.suppl. (1992-2008)<br>❖ 2001- ed. *Palestinian Studies* magazine<br>❖ was visiting prof at Columbia U (1980-82), global distinguished prof at New York U (2001-2014), visiting prof at LAU (2015)<br>❖ 13 novels (1977-), incl *Sinalkul* (2012) on IPAF-LL, 3 plays, 4 critical works on theatre<br>❖ widely translated | m | 1948 | 68 | LEB | tells the story of Palestinian Adam Danun and his attempt to write a novel after immigrating to New York. A retelling of his own personal story, the novel recounts his childhood in Lud, Palestine, where in 1948 the city fell to occupying forces who drove out the majority of its inhabitants. Adam's mother remained in the city with her baby and his story is that of the barbed wire encircled Palestinian ghetto created by the occupying army. It is a tale of remaining and an attempt to interpret the victims' silence. |
| **141** | 2017[L] | *Bāwlū*<br>("Paolo")<br>▪ Dār al-Tanwīr Miṣr | Yūsuf Rakhā (Youssef Rakha)<br>❖ BA in Literature from UK<br>❖ working for *Al-Ahram Weekly* since 1997, co-founder of *The National* (Abu Dhabi)<br>❖ among the best Arab writers under 40, for the *Beirut 39* project<br>❖ writes in English and Arabic; translated into Italian, French, German, Spanish and Polish<br>❖ *The Book of the Sultan's Seal* (2011), *The Crocodiles* (2013), *Paolo* (part 2 of *The Crocodiles*, 2016) | m | 1976 | 40 | EG | eye-witness account of a man involved in the Egyptian "revolutionary movement" since 2011 who shares his experiences of the period before the election of Morsi and the struggles going on behind the scenes. But the revolutionary activist is not all he appears to be. He is more than a photographer or a bookshop manager – one of the intellectuals of downtown Cairo. Paolo is also an agent for the security services and a Don Juan, whose female lovers all end up dead. He sees himself as the covert manipulator of the revolution, who carries a message of ultimate defeat to the revolutionaries. |
| **142** | 2017[S] | *Zarāyib al-ʿabīd*<br>("The Slaves' Pens")<br>▪ Dār al-Sāqī | Nağwà Bin Šatwān (Najwa Binshatwan)<br>❖ academic and novelist<br>❖ 2 novels, 3 SS coll, 1 play<br>❖ among 39 best Arab authors under 40 (*Beirut39*) | f | 1970 | 46 | LIB | lifts the lid on the dark, untold history of slavery in Libya, of which the effects can still be felt today. Slave owner Mohammed and his slave Ta'awidha have fallen in love, but their relationship is considered taboo. Living in a community where masters take female slaves as lovers as they please, Mohammed's father sends him on a trading mission in an attempt to distance him from Ta'awidha. During his absence, his mother forces her to miscarry by serving her a spiked drink, and she is married off to another slave. On his return from his trip, Mohammed learns of his family's activities and he begins searching for his beloved. |
| **143** | 2017[S] | *al-Sabīliyyāt*<br>("Al-Sabiliat")<br>▪ Novabilis lil-našr wal-tawzīʿ | Ismāʿīl Fahd Ismāʿīl (Ismail Fahd Ismail)<br>❖ writer (full-time since 1985) and novelist<br>❖ BA in Literature and Criticism from Kuwait<br>❖ worked as teacher and in the administration of educational resources, managed an artistic production company<br>❖ is regarded as the founder of the art of the novel in Kuwait (first novel, *The Sky Was Blue*, 1970)<br>❖ since then 27 novels, 3 vols SS, 2 plays, + critical studies | m | 1940 | 76 | KUW | explores the reason behind the existence of a green artery in the midst of a vast wasteland in Iraq following the longest war of the 20th century, between Iraq and Iran. Iraqi forces blocked the entry points of the tributary rivers and streams of the Shatt al-Arab river. This prevented water flowing to the forests of palm trees situated on the western side. Years passed and the palms dried up, no longer bearing fruit. Eventually, all the trees, vegetation and fruit died apart from one green strip of land stretching from the Shatt to the edge of the desert to the west, in an area called "Al-Sabiliat". One old woman is responsible for this green lifeline, |

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| | | | ❖ *The Phoenix and the Faithful Friend* (2012) on IPAF-LL 2014<br>❖ big supporter of young, emerging writers | | | | | which supplies the village and the soldiers living in it. |
| 144 | 2017[S] | *Fī ġurfat al-ʿankabūt*<br>("In the Spider's Chamber")<br>▪ Dār al-ʿAyn | Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Nabī (Mohammed Abdel Nabi)<br>❖ BA in Languages and Translation from the English and Simultaneous Translation Dpt Al-Azhar<br>❖ works currently as freelance translator<br>❖ 5 vols SS, 1 novella, 2 novels (*The Return of the Sheikh* 2011 on IPAF-LL 2013, *The Spider's Room* 2016)<br>❖ creative writing, criticism and translations in a number of newspapers and websites | m | 1977 | 39 | EG | is the tale of Hany Mahfouz, a fictional character who shares the real-life experience of more than fifty men arrested in the notorious "Queen Boat" incident in Cairo in 2001, who were either declared innocent or sentenced to prison terms of two or three years. Hany is declared innocent but emerges from the experience a broken man. Having lost the faculty of speech during the trial process, he finds that writing is the best way of healing his soul. |
| 145 | 2017[S] | *Maqtal bāʾiʿ al-kutub*<br>("The Bookseller's Murder")<br>▪ Dār wa-Maktabat Suṭūr | Saʿd Muḥammad Raḥīm (Saad Mohammed Rahim)<br>❖ worked as teacher and journalist<br>❖ 6 vols SS, + political & lit. studies, + 3 novels (*The Bookseller's Murder*, 2016)<br>❖ 2005 Iraqi Award for Best Investigative Journalism | m | 1957 | 59 | IRQ | follows Magid Baghdadi, an experienced journalist, who arrives in Baaquba, 60 km north of Baghdad, to conduct a two-month investigation commissioned by a rich and influential anonymous person. He must write a book about the life and mysterious death of 70-year-old Mahmoud al-Marzouq, a bookseller and artist. Magid forms relationships with friends and acquaintances of the deceased and comes across a notebook containing some of his diaries. These record his life in the city since the first day of the US occupation. He also discovers letters between al-Marzouq and Jeanette, a Frenchwoman who worked as a model for artists, with whom he had a relationship when he was a refugee in Paris. From these and other sources, the personality of al-Marzouq comes to life and various chapters of his interesting and complex life are revealed. What will remain obscure is the reason for his death. |
| 146 | 2017[W] | *Mawt ṣaġīr*<br>("A Small Death")<br>▪ Dār al-Sāqī | Muḥammad Ḥasan ʿAlwān (Mohammed Hasan Alwan)<br>❖ PhD International Marketing, U Carleton, Canada<br>❖ 5 novels to date (*A Small Death*, 2016), + non-fiction work: *Migration: Theories and Key Factors* (2014)<br>❖ among 39 best Arab authors under 40 (*Beirut39*)<br>❖ *The Beaver* on IPAF-SL 2013 | m | 1979 | 38 | SAU | the fictionalised account of the life of a Sufi saint, Muhyiddin Ibn 'Arabi, from his birth in Muslim Spain in the 12th century until his death in Damascus. It follows his mystic Sufi experience and heroic travels from Andalusia to Azerbaijan, via Morocco, Egypt, the Hijaz, Syria, Iraq and Turkey. Of a sensitive and anxious nature, Muhyiddin struggles with inner turmoil throughout the course of his travels. Witnessing fictitious events including savage military conflicts, he attempts to fulfil his mission against a backdrop of states and numerous cities where he meets countless people. |
| | **2018** | | | | | | | |
| 147 | 2018[L] | *Ḥiṣn al-turāb*<br>("The Earthern Fortress")<br>▪ Dār al-ʿAyn | Aḥmad ʿAbd al-Laṭīf (Ahmed Abdel Latif)<br>❖ novelist, translator, journalist, researcher<br>❖ BA in Spanish, MA in Arabic Studies (U Madrid)<br>❖ currently living in Madrid<br>❖ studying for a PhD in Modern Arabic Literature at U Granada | m | 1978 | 39 | EG | *The Earthen Fortress* is the name of a village near Granada and the novel deals with a critical time in Arab and Western history: the fall of Islamic civilisation in Andalusia and the ensuing inquisition, torture and forced conversion of Muslims. The author weaves his story of generations over three centuries around the family of one man, Mohammed de Mulina. It begins before the fall of Granada in 1492 and ends with the crisis of the family after their emigration to Tetouan, Morocco. Having been thrown out of Spain because they are Arab Muslims, they now face persecution in Tetouan as Spanish Christians. Although the novel is set in the distant past, it cannot be read in isolation from current Arab realities, especially |

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| | | | | | | | | since the Arab Spring and the resulting sectarian wars and persecution of innocent religious groups, just like that of the Moriscos. |
| **148** | 2018[L] | *al-Ḥājja Krīstīnā*<br>("Christina")<br>▪ al-Ahliyya | ʿĀṭif Abū Sayf (Atef Abu Saif)<br>❖ born in Jabalia refugee camp (Gaza Strip), family originally from Jaffa<br>❖ BA (U Birzeit), MA (U Bradford, UK), PhD in Political & Social Sciences (U Florence, Italy) | m | 1973 | 44 | PAL | During the Israeli attack on the Gaza strip in 2009, Christina vanishes, after a car with international number plates takes her outside the camp. Her disappearance gives rise to many questions that the novel attempts to answer. Christina had begun life as "Fidda", a young girl from Jaffa who is forced to leave her city to seek treatment for an illness in London, just one year before the "Nakba" - the establishment of Israel in 1948. She is accompanied by an English journalist, a friend of her father's, and after the Nakba, when her return to her stricken country and city becomes impossible, he changes her name and registers her as his daughter. However, after his death, when Christina is in her first year at university, his sisters decide to get rid of the Arab girl and send her to Gaza to search for her family. |
| **149** | 2018[L] | *Šaġaf*<br>("Passion")<br>▪ Arab Scientific Publ. | Rašā ʿAdlī (Rasha Adly)<br>❖ researcher and freelance lecturer in the history of art<br>❖ Cairo correspondent for the Emirates Culture magazine<br>❖ 6 novels (*Passion* 2017) | f | 1972 | 45 | EG | The central theme of the novel is passion. Each of the characters is driven by passion for something different, depending on their personalities, backgrounds and the time in which they live. The novel is set in two historical periods, linked by a painting of an Egyptian girl called Zeinab, which arrives in the restoration department along with books and manuscripts damaged by the fire in the Institut d'Égypt during the January revolution. While she is restoring it, Yasmin, a researcher and art historian, discovers a terrible secret. Meanwhile, in the time of the French campaign against Egypt, Zeinab herself reveals the truth of her relationships with Napoleon Bonaparte and one of the artists in his entourage. |
| **150** | 2018[L] | *Bayt Ḥuddud*<br>("Huddud's House")<br>▪ Dār al-Ādāb | Fādī ʿAzzām (Fadi Azzam)<br>❖ born in Sweida (southern Syria)<br>❖ U Damascus (ādāb)<br>❖ has written for Arabic newspapers, 2007-09 culture and arts correspondent for *Al Quds al-Arabi*<br>❖ SS in Arabic magazines | m | 1973 | 44 | SYR | Doctor Annis returns from London to Syria in 2011, just before the revolution, to sell 'Huddud's House', the ancient house of his grandfather left to him by his uncle, as the sole remaining heir. The doctor, a heart surgeon, discovers an inheritance rich in cultural significance and some astonishing secrets concerning the present and past of the house. During his short trip, he faces a difficult dilemma which will change his life forever. *Huddud's House* is a novel of love, war and human relationships in troubled times. |
| **151** | 2018[L] | *Āḫir al-arāḍī*<br>("The Last Country")<br>▪ Arab Scientific Publ. | Anṭwān al-Duwayhī (Antoine Douaihy)<br>❖ novelist and poet<br>❖ PhD in Anthropology from Sorbonne 1979<br>❖ remained in France until mid-nineties<br>❖ currently Professor of Cultural and Social Anthropology at LU | m | 1948 | 69 | LEB | Selma Farah's sudden passing away was the first time the novel's narrator came face-to-face with death, and his life from that night would never be the same. But his tragedy had begun on the same night two years before, when his girlfriend Clara disappeared, on her way from the Royal Institute to a café just a few hundred metres away, where he was waiting for her. Her disappearance was a mystery impossible to fathom, since all the investigations showed that it was voluntary, not forced, and he was unable to discover why. Since then, his life has been devoted to the unrelenting and continual search for her. |
| **152** | 2018[L] | *Hunā 'l-warda*<br>("Here is the Rose")<br>▪ Dār al-Ādāb | Amjad Nāṣir (Amjad Nasser)<br>❖ poet and writer<br>❖ lives in London | m | 1955 | 62 | JOR | Jonah the calligrapher, the novel's hero, who is swallowed by the metaphorical whale, is likeable: a mixture of lover, rebel, adventurer and dreamer, who proceeds towards a grand goal. Alongside him are a host of characters who see him as he |

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| | | | ❖ much poetry, travel books, 3 novels<br>❖ translated into several languages; Jonathan Wright's translation of *Where the Rain Doesn't Fall* (2010, titled *Land of No Rain* in English) was commended for the 2015 Saif Ghobash Banipal Prize | | | | | really is, while he is blind to his real self, since he is the Arab 'Don Quixote'. Don Quixote had a faithful follower who kept him in touch with reality, but who will do the same for Jonah? This novel gives its readers insight into a period in Arab history when dreams existed as though they were realities and realities as if they were dreams. |
| **153** | 2018[L] | *al-Ṭāwūs al-aswad*<br>("The Black Peacock")<br>▪ Madād (SUD) | Ḥāmid al-Nāẓir (Hamed al-Nazir)<br>❖ journalist and novelist<br>❖ newsroom of Qatar TV, various newspapers, websites<br>❖ was presenter on several Sudanese TV and radio channels, news correspondent for MBC in Sudan | m | 1975 | 42 | SUD | The story begins with the enigmatic government advisor Taj al-Din, one of the leaders in the Islamic movement who wields power behind the scenes, and offers an in-depth look at modern Sudanese history, in a long period spanning from the 1970s and the rule of Gaafar Nimeiry, to the turn of the 21st century. The whirlwind of events of this period changed the political destiny of the country. The title of the novel is a reference to its hero Adam, who is thirteen years old when he spends time in juvenile prison for killing his mother, her husband and step-brother. At this point, the regime, which sees his tendency towards violence, realises he can be of use to them. He is groomed for many years before the Islamists come to power. The novel presents him both as criminal and victim who is exploited and falls into the trap of violence. Through a game of masks in the novel, Adam becomes numerous different characters, Taj al-Din being one of them. |
| **154** | 2018[L] | *al-Naǧdī*<br>("al-Najdi")<br>▪ Ḏāt al-Salāsil | Ṭālib al-Rifāʿī (Taleb al-Refai)<br>❖ novelist and short story writer<br>❖ Kuwaiti State Prize for Literature (2002) for *Scent of the Sea*<br>❖ 2003-08 in National Council of Culture, Arts and Literature<br>❖ edited monthly arts review, *Jarīdat al-Funūn* | m | 1958 | 59 | KUW | *Al-Najdi* follows the final hours in the life of Ali Al-Najdi, one of the most famed captains in Kuwaiti history, and his last adventure at sea. At the same time, it traces the history of Kuwait from Al-Najdi's birth in 1907 until his death on Monday evening, 19th February 1979. This is a tale of the love between a young Kuwaiti man and the sea; a man who has dedicated his life to it after finding life in his city unbearable, and who maintains his bond with the waters that continually call him to them. |
| **155** | 2018[L] | *ʿAlī: qiṣṣat raǧul mustaqīm*<br>("Ali, the Story of an Honourable Man")<br>▪ Dār al-Ruʿāt | Ḥusayn Yāsīn (Hussein Yassin)<br>❖ born in village 'Arrabat al-Battuf in northern Galilee<br>❖ studied Economics and Accounting in Leningrad (1973) and Haifa (1976), Insurance from Tel Aviv College (1993)<br>❖ worked as accountant in an insurance company in Ramallah and a Palestinian research centre<br>❖ 3 novels (*Ali* 2017) | m | 1943 | 74 | PAL | The novel tells the story of the Palestinian Arab volunteers during the Spanish Civil War (1936-39), men of high calibre who have been forgotten by history and the record of their deeds lost. Forty thousand foreign volunteers from 56 countries fought in the war. They were called the international volunteers fighting in the "International Brigades". Among these were five Palestinians, dedicated to the cause of freedom and justice. During the course of the novel, Ali, our hero, becomes an important military commander. |
| **156** | 2018[L] | *al-Sāq fawq al-sāq—fī ṭubūt ruʾyat hilāl al-ʿuššāq*<br>("Leg over Leg—in the Sighting of the Lovers' Crescent")<br>▪ al-Iḫtilāf | Amīn al-Zāwī (Amin Zaoui)<br>❖ Professor of North African Literature and Literary Theory at U Algiers, previously taught in Women's Studies Department, U Paris<br>❖ returned to Algeria in 1999 > director of National Library<br>❖ writes in Arabic and French | m | 1956 | 61 | ALG | The events of the novel take place within the "Al-Muru" family. It is the story of three generations: grandfather, father and son, united by passionate love of family, village and country, and divided by the force of history, political allegiances, and the chosen paths and beliefs of each one of them. At the time of the Algerian revolution, the family, along with their whole village, flee to the Moroccan border. The novel follows the intersecting fates of these characters until a time after Algerian independence. |
| **157** | 2018[S] | *Zuhūr taʾkuluhā ʾl-nār*<br>("Flowers consumed by | Amīr Tāǧ al-Sirr (Amir Tag Elsir)<br>❖ now doctor in Qatar | m | 1960 | 57 | SUD | Khamila has inherited her Italian mother's beauty and her father's wealth. Nearly 20, she returns from Egypt, where she has been studying aesthetics, to her |

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| | | Fire")<br>▪ Dār al-Sāqī | ❖ wrote also poetry, novels since 1980s<br>❖ 24 books, incl. novels, biographies, poetry<br>❖ *The Grub Hunter* (2010) on IPAF-SL 2011<br>❖ *366* (2013) on IPAF-LL 2014; + other lists and prizes | | | | | cosmopolitan home town 'Al-Sur'. Suddenly, scrawling appears on the wall that has been carried out by a group calling themselves 'Remembrance and History', who declare war upon infidels and take over the town, slaughtering its inhabitants. The women become objects of pleasure for the princes of the religious revolution, flowers of many colours eaten by the flames. An era has ended and a new one has begun. Khamila, whose name is now 'N'anaa'a, waits to be married off to one of the princes, perhaps even their leader: 'the Pious One', himself. |
| **158** | 2018[S] | *al-Ḥāla al-ḥariğa lil-madʿūw ʻK.ʼ*<br>("The Critical Case of "K"")<br>▪ Dār al-Tanwīr (LEB) | ʿAzīz Muḥammad (Aziz Mohammed)<br>❖ poetry, short stories, film reviews for cultural magazines and specialist online websites<br>❖ *The Critical Case of "K"* (2017) = first novel | m | 1987 | 40 | SAU | After reading Kafka, "K" decides to write a diary too, but he is constantly frustrated by his limited abilities, boring life, and desire to protect his privacy. When he receives news that turns his life upside down, he is torn between a sense of devastation and a feeling that he has found the way out of his writing predicament. |
| **159** | 2018[S] | *Sāʿat Baġdād*<br>("The Baghdad Clock")<br>▪ London: Dār al-Ḥikma, … | Šahd al-Rāwī (Shahad Al Rawi)<br>❖ secondary school in Baghdad<br>❖ MA in Administration, from Syria<br>❖ currently studying PhD in Anthropology and Administration<br>❖ lives in Dubai<br>❖ *Baghdad Clock* (2016) = her first novel | f | 1986 | 41 | IRQ | 1991: Two young girls meet and become best friends in a Baghdad bomb shelter where they have taken refuge from Allied aerial attacks. They share their hopes and dreams, interwoven with fantasy and illusion. A stranger arrives from the mysterious future of the city bearing prophecies, causing families to flee the city en masse, leaving it empty. When a third girl joins them, the friends begin to write a secret history of their neighbourhood, to save it from oblivion. The novel follows the girls through childhood, adolescence and university, until the war and the fall of Baghdad, which triggers a new wave of departures from the capital. |
| **160** | 2018[S] | *Wāriṯ al-šawāhid*<br>("Heir of the Tombstones")<br>▪ al-Ahliyya | Walīd al-Šurafā (Walid Shurafa)<br>❖ teaches Media and Cultural Studies at Birzeit U<br>❖ PhD on Edward Said<br>❖ first play 1991, while still at secondary school<br>❖ has 2 novels: *Coming from the Resurrection* (2013) and *Heir of the Gravestones* (2017)<br>❖ interested in visual culture and orientalism. | m | 1973 | 44 | PAL | From his prison cell on Mount Carmel, Palestinian Al-Wahid remembers his childhood during the June 1967 war, and how his father and grandfather were forcibly evicted from their village 'Ain Hawd', which the Israelis turned into an artists' village and renamed 'Ain Hood'. Suleiman, the grandfather, builds a new house in Nablus which resembles the old one. When he dies, Al-Wahid returns from his university studies abroad and tries to visit the house in the village. However, the artist living there refuses him entry. He sits in a nearby cafe, and then discovers the old sign belonging to his grandfather's house in the toilet. When he removes it, he gets into a fight with the police and accidently kills one of them… |
| **161** | 2018[S] | *al-Ḫāʾifūn*<br>("The Frightened Ones")<br>▪ Dār al-Ādāb | Dīma Wannūs<br>❖ studied French Literature at Damascus U & Sorbonne<br>❖ first stories 2007, 2008<br>❖ wrote for *Al-Safir*, *Al-Hayat*, the *Washington Post*, *Jadaliyya*<br>❖ In 2009, among best *Beirut39* authors<br>❖ currently researcher and presenter of the "I'm From There" programme on the *Syrian Orient TV* channel (Dubai) | m | 1982 | 35 | SYR | Suleima feels anxious as she looks at the pile of papers sent to her by Naseem, the handsome man with the bulging muscles. As she devours them, lingering on every word, she finds that she is reading an unfinished novel, or biography, about a woman dominated by fear, just like her. What did Naseem mean by it? Had he himself been overwhelmed by fear and unable to finish it, and did he now want her to write the ending? |
| **162** | 2018[W] | *Ḥarb al-kalb al-ṯāniya*<br>("The Second War of the Dog")<br>▪ Arab Scientific Publ. | Ibrāhīm Naṣr Allāh (Ibrahim Nasrallah)<br>❖ parents uprooted in 1948 => spent childhood in Alwehdat Pal. Refugee Camp in Amman<br>❖ began working life as teacher in SAU, then journalist and | m | 1954 | 63 | PAL | exposes the ugly transformations of society and reality using the techniques of fantasy and science fiction. It focuses on the corrupt main character, who transforms from an opponent of the regime to an unscrupulous extremist, as it reveals the tendency towards savagery inherent in societies and human beings. |

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| | | | work for the Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation<br>❖ full-time writer since 2006<br>❖ 14 poetry collections, 16 novels, incl.epic fictional project of eight novels covering 250 years of modern Palestinian **history**<br>❖ *Time of White Horses* on IPAF-SL 2009, + won 8 other prizes<br>❖ also artist and photographer | | | | | Greed intensifies and human values are ignored, until everything is permissible, even the buying and selling of people's bodies and souls. |
| | **2019** | | | | | | | |
| **163** | 2019[L] | *Nisāʾ bi-lā ʾaṯar*<br>("Women Without Trace/Influence")<br>▪ Riyāḍ al-Rayyis | Muḥammad Abī Samrā (Mohammed Abi Samra)<br>❖ stud. Cultural Sociology (LU 1983)<br>❖ since 1977 cultural journalist at *al-Safīr*, *al-Nahār* and *al-Ḥayāt*<br>❖ author of four novels (Women Without Influence 2017) | m | 1953 | 65 | LEB | women scattered across the globe as a result of the protracted Lebanese war (1975-1990)<br>intersecting stories, from the 1970s to 2015, from Beirut to Southern Lebanon, Los Angeles, Paris and Versailles.<br>Marianne, an Armenian artist from Beirut, was a member of a cell of artists and cultural figures in the Lebanese Communist party during the war. Now aged 60, and having emigrated to Los Angeles and Versailles in the 1980s, she lives in self-imposed isolation and reflects on her life, including that of her female friend, a Communist journalist. In Paris, Marianne encounters Sara, a young Lebanese woman 30 years her junior who narrowly escaped from a suicide bombing and relates episodes from her troubled life in Damascus to Moscow and Beirut. The characters of Women Without Trace explore the effect that their roots and social identities have had on their destinies and how they have rebelled against these identities to emerge as individuals with a will of their own. |
| **164** | 2019[L] | *Masrà al-ġarānīq fī mudun al-ʿaqīq*<br>("Voyage of the Cranes in the Cities of Agate")<br>▪ Dār al-Sāqī | Umayma ʿAbd Allāh al-Ḫamīs (Omaima Abdullah Al-Khamis)<br>❖ BA ArabLit, worked as teacher & dir Dept of Educational Media in Min. of Education<br>❖ full-time writer 2010-<br>❖ 4 vols SS, 1st novel *Al-Bahriyat* (2006) reprinted 7x+ special ed, 2nd novel *The Leafy Tree* (2008) IPAF-LL 2010, *Voyage of the Cranes in the Cities of Agate* (2017) prize-winning won the 2018 Naguib Mahfouz Medal for Literature<br>❖ + children's books<br>❖ writes also weekly column in *Elaph* newspaper | f | 1966 | 42 | SAU | set in the fourth century in the Hijri calendar (11th century AD), a time when there was both flourishing intellectual movement and clerical opposition centered on the "House of Wisdom" in Baghdad. From the Arabian Peninsula, Mazid al-Hanafi comes to the Abbasid capital, burdened with existential questions, and becomes a member of the "Gharaniq" secret society. From there, he visits Jerusalem, Cairo and Andalusia, seeking to implement the seven commandments he has learned during his travels. The novel reflects the strong cultural and religious diversity in the Islamic world of 402-5 (1011-14 AD) before this was suppressed. |
| **165** | 2019[L] | *Sayyidāt al-ḥawāss al-ḫams*<br>("Women of the Five Senses")<br>▪ al-Muʾassasa al-ʿarabiyya lil-dirāsāt wal-našr | Ǧalāl Barǧas (Jalal Bargas)<br>❖ poet and novelist<br>❖ works in aeronautical engineering<br>❖ first poetry, SS, travel writing, newspaper articles<br>❖ headed several cultural organisations | m | 1970 | 48 | JOR | made up of six chapters, each telling the story of a woman known by the main protagonist, through one of the human senses. The protagonist, Saraj Ezzedine, is a painter born with six senses instead of five. The story tells of his suffering caused by corrupt politicians, in particular Suleiman Al-Tali'a, who has stolen from his country. Saraj emigrates to America on 11 September 2001, and leaves on the day he sees Tunisian Mohammed Bouazizi set himself alight nearly a decade later. Returning to Amman, Jordan, a rich man, he builds himself a palace alongside his old enemy Al-Tal'ia, but after the mysterious disappearance of a number of |

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| | | | | | | | | women, people begin to panic and women no longer walk the streets. Through the character of Saraj, we follow the transformations experienced by the Arab world, its people and places, in recent times. |
| **166** | 2019[L] | *Iḫwat Muḥammad*<br>("Mohammed's Brothers")<br>▪ Dār al-Ḏākira | Maysalūn Hādī (Maysalun Hadi)<br>❖ stud. Statistics<br>❖ 15 novels, 10 SS, + transls + children's lit + articles, often on women's issues<br>❖ some fiction adapted for radio + TV, novel *A Light Pink Dream* (2009) made into a film<br>❖ lives in Baghdad | f | 1954 | 64 | IRQ | sees a female novelist warmly welcomed to a new neighborhood by a young female neighbor, aspiring writer Ursheena. On arrival, Ursheena asks the more experienced novelist to read her first novel and offer her comments. She is initially reluctant; concerned it will spoil her peace and quiet and waste her precious time, but finally agrees to the request. Ursheena comes to listen humbly to the feedback of "the mentor" as she calls her and they discuss their neighbours, who are all called Mohammed. Ursheena loves "the brothers Mohammed" so much that she leaves the ending of her novel open, in case a tragic end befalls them if she abides by the facts. Her "mentor" tells her off for this, and then an event occurs in the alley which is itself the required ending. |
| **167** | 2019[L] | *Raġwa sawdāʾ*<br>("Black Foam")<br>▪ Dār al-Tanwīr (LEB) | Ḥuğğī Ǧābir (Huji Jaber)<br>❖ born in coastal city Massawa<br>❖ 4 novels (*Black Foam*, 2018)<br>❖ currently living in Doha, Qatar | m | 1976 | 42 | ERI | follows a group of Ethiopian Jews, the "Falash Mura", who driven by poverty and desperation, emigrate to Israel in search of a better life. Amongst the group is "Dawit". Although not a Jew, he invents a new identity, changing his name and history, so that he can travel to Israel alongside the Falash Jews. However, on arrival, he faces the trials and suffering experienced by dark-skinned immigrants in the country. |
| **168** | 2019[L] | *Mayy—Layālī ʾĪzīs kūbiyā*<br>("May — The Nights of Isis Copia")<br>▪ Dār al-ʾĀdāb | Wāsīnī al-Aʿraǧ (Waciny Laredj)<br>❖ writer and academic, Prof at Sorbonne and Central University of Algeria<br>❖ settled in Paris 1994<br>❖ many novels dealing with Algeria's history and its harsh upheavals, writes Fr and Ar<br>❖ many prizes<br>❖ 3x on IPAF-LL (2011 for *The Andalusian House*, 2013 for *Lolita's Fingers*, 2014 for *Ashes of the East: the Wolf who Grew Up in the Wilderness*) | m | 1954 | 64 | ALG | based on the life of the well-known Lebanese writer May Ziade and highlights the important role played by women in a society gripped by stifling patriarchy. May finds herself unfortunately positioned amongst the great male cultural figures of her day, including Taha Hussein and Mustafa Sadiq Al-Raf'i. Although they love her, and she is one of the first to receive them at her literary salon in the 1920s and 1930s, they also fear her. Despite working tirelessly on behalf of women, she is rejected as a Lebanese Christian woman and after losing people dear to her, suffers from depression and becomes a recluse. In an attempt to gain control of her finances, her nephew Joseph has her admitted into Al-'Usfouriyya, the mental hospital. The novel hones in on the moment of her 'madness' and her attempt to prove her sanity, even as the intellectual elite wage a cruel war against her, making no attempt to save her from the jaws of Al-'Usfouriyya. |
| **169** | 2019[L] | *Qataltu ʾummī li-ʾaḥyà*<br>("I Killed My Mother to Live")<br>▪ Riyād al-Rayyis | Mayy Minassa (May Menassa)<br>❖ diploma in French Lit<br>❖ started as broadcast journalist in 1959 (1st woman broadcaster in Leb TV), literary and music critic for *Al-Nahār* since 1969<br>❖ 10 novels, 2 children's books, many translations<br>❖ *Walking in the Dust* on IPAF-SL 2008 | f | 1939 | 79 | LEB | focuses on Rasha, who lives in the isolation of autism. She draws faces without eyes, trees without leaves and houses with no windows. On overhearing that her mother Thuraya died from a haemorrhage in childbirth with her and her twin, she suffers trauma she cannot express in words or tears. Her dark drawings become deep red, and her obsession with this colour grows. She travels to an autism treatment centre in Belgium, where her former drawing book becomes a notebook filled with analysis of her 'crime'. A theatre director, Diya' Al-'Ajami, who visits the centre, reads the book and tries to draw Rasha out of her closed world through drama. As she inhabits other people, the hope is she will find new life for herself. |

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| **170** | 2019[L] | *Ġarb al-mutawassiṭ*<br>("Western Mediterranean")<br>▪ al-Muʾassasa al-ʿarabiyya lil-dirāsāt wal-našr | Mubārak Rabīʿ (Mbarek Rabi)<br>❖ SS and novels<br>❖ Emeritus, researcher in Psychology<br>❖ founded MOR Writers' Union, was Dean of College of Arts, Mohammed V (Rabat)<br>❖ many prizes | m | 1940 | 78 | MOR | introduces us to the populous Takaddoum quartier in Rabat, Morocco, to Saman Siko Mado from Ghana who works as a security guard, and to his colleague Balarabi, an older man and expert in 'the ways of people and the world'. Saman has endured much at the hands of people traffickers and has used various surreptitious means on his journey, before finally arriving in Tangiers where he is spurred on by the hope of crossing to the northern side of the Mediterranean. In the Monamay market in Rabat, he happens to meet Buto, a Nigerian woman who had made a failed journey with him from the port of Tangier. As they renew their relationship, we learn about the bitter experiences of Buto — shared with many others — in her struggle to reach safety. |
| **171** | 2019[L] | *Anā wa-Ḥāyīm*<br>("Me and Haim")<br>▪ Dār Mīm lil-našr | al-Ḥabīb al-Sāʾiḥ (Habib Sayah)<br>❖ BA in Literature from Oran U (1980), worked in Institutes of Technological Education<br>❖ 10 novels, several prizes | m | 1950 | 68 | ALG | follows two Algerians, Jewish pharmacist Haim bin Maymun and Muslim philosophy teacher Arsalan Hanafi, grew up together in the same neighbourhood. Sharing food and memories, they attended the same primary school, secondary school and university, and face racism and provocations in Saida, Mascara, Algiers and Oran under the French. Their destinies have always been linked, and they both become involved in resistance to the occupation, struggling to free their homeland in their own way. The war separates them, and the day after it finishes everything will change. |
| **172** | 2019[L] | *al-Zawǧa al-maksīkiyya*<br>("The Mexican Wife")<br>▪ Dār al-Šurūq | ʾĪmān Yaḥyà (Iman Yehia)<br>❖ writer and translator<br>❖ PhD in surgery of the urinary tract from Soviet Union (1987), works as doctor and lecturer in Suez Canal UUniversity.<br>❖ *The Mexican Wife* (2018) | f? | 1954 | 64 | EG | retelling of the great writer Youssef Idris' novel *Al-Baydaa* (*The White Woman*), a complex love story about an Egyptian man, Yehia (Youssef Idris) and a Mexican girl named Ruth, the daughter of the famous mural painter, Diego Rivera (Idris' real life wife). Narrated by Yehia and Ruth, it is set between Cairo, Vienna and Mexico in the early 1950s, mixing reality and fantasy against the backdrop of each country's struggles. |
| **173** | 2019[S] | *Šams bayḍāʾ bārida*<br>("Cold White Sun")<br>▪ Dār al-Ādāb | Kafāʾ al-Zuʿbī (Kafa al-Zou'bi)<br>❖ BA Civil Engineering St Petersburg, living there until 2006<br>❖ 5 novels<br>❖ *Cold White Sun* is her 5th novel | f | 1965 | 53 | JOR | tells the story of a young intellectual Jordanian man, impoverished and alienated from his conservative society. Working as a teacher in the Jordanian capital, Amman, he is forced to rent a miserable, windowless room in one of the poor districts. He soon discovers that his predecessor was an old seller of lottery tickets who died in the room. His body rotted and he was only found by the neighbours because of the smell. The room seems to him to be a metaphor for his life and his mental struggles, as his existentialist questions grow ever more intense. |
| **174** | 2019[S] | *al-Waṣāyā*<br>("The Commandments")<br>▪ Kutubḫān | ʿĀdil ʿIṣmat (Adel Esmat)<br>❖ BA Philosophy Ain Shams (1984), BA Library Science Tanta (1986), currently librarian in Min. of Education<br>❖ 1 vol SS, 5 novels, some prize-winning | m | 1959 | 59 | EG | follows the Dār Selim family in Upper Egypt through several generations, beginning in 1920s Egypt, from the time of the monarchy, the 1952 July revolution and Abdel Nasser, through to Sadat, the Naksa and the 1973 October War. The grandfather Abdel Rahman gives his grandson 10 commandments to help him endure life, enjoy its pleasures and stay away from temptations. Although he may not keep them, these commandments remain an important influence throughout his life. In each chapter the grandfather presents one of them, and part of the family story is told. They represent the grandfather's wisdom, acquired through his life, which he wishes to pass on to future generations. |

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| **175** | 2019[S] | *al-Nabīḍa*<br>("The Outcast")<br>▪ Dār al-Jadīd | ʾInʿām Kačağī (Inaam Kachachi)<br>❖ studied journalism at Baghdad U, worked in Iraqi press and radio > then Paris, PhD Sorbonne<br>❖ currently Paris correspondent of *Asharq Al-Awsat*<br>❖ 1 biography (*Lorna*, about British journalist Lorna Hales), 1 hist. of Irq war lit.<br>❖ documentary about Nazīha al-Dulaymī (1st Arab woman minister)<br>❖ *American Granddaughter* on IPAF-SL 2009, *Tashari* IPAF-SL 2014 | f | 1952 | 66 | IRQ | based on a true story and spans the history of modern Iraq. Amid the upheavals of the 1940s when Iraq was ruled by a monarchy, the novel's main protagonist, Taj al-Muluk Abdelmagid, a journalist and female owner of the first magazine in Iraq, has relationships with Nuri al-Said, the Prime Minister, and Abd al-Ilah, Regent to King Faisal II. Forced to flee due to her involvement in anti-government activity, she moves to Pakistan with her Palestinian colleague Mansour al-Badi where they work for Karachi Arabic radio, fall in love, but are forced to part. While Taj al-Muluk moves to Paris and gets married, her lover Mansour becomes an advisor to Hugo Chavez, the Venezuelan President. Meanwhile, Widyan, a young violin player in the Iraqi symphony orchestra, has lost her hearing after being attacked by the son of the Iraqi President. She travels to Paris for medical treatment, where she is befriended by Taj al-Muluk. Despite the difference in their ages, they form a close friendship, bound by their sense of belonging to a country which has rejected them both, for no fault of their own. |
| **176** | 2019[S] | *Bi-ʾayy ḏanb raḥalat?*<br>("What Sin Caused her to Die?")<br>▪ Cultural Book Centre | Muḥammad al-Maʿzūz (Mohammed Al-Maazuz)<br>❖ writer and researcher<br>❖ PhD Political Anthropology from Sorbonne (1991), PhD Arabic Thought (Philosophy) from Rabat (1999)<br>❖ books in political anthropology (Fr + Ar) | m | 1959 | 59 | MOR | is a call to return to philosophy, goodness and beauty in the fight against ugly distortions of human nature. Despite her divorce, Raheel is determined to remain hopeful. Having always found refuge in reading Sartre and Le Beauvoir, and contemplating the worlds of music, philosophy and human freedom, she determines to reengage with the world and resist depression through music. Her mother had tried to do the same through drawing and painting, although she committed suicide, leaving her young daughter behind. Raheel chooses to use 1her freedom to play and sing, sowing a last seed of hope. |
| **177** | 2019[S] | *Ṣayf maʿa l-ʿaduww*<br>("Summer with the Enemy")<br>▪ Ḍifāf Publ. | Šahlà al-ʿUğaylī (Shahla Ujayli)<br>❖ PhD MAL & Cultural Studies from Aleppo U<br>❖ teaches MAL and Aesthetics at American University in Madaba, Jordan<br>❖ 4 novels (*A Sky Close to Our House*,2015, on IPAF-SL 2016; *Summer with the Enemy,* 2018), 2 vols SS, lit.crit. | f | 1976 | 42 | SYR | story of Lamees, who having fled the war in her home country, arrives in the German city of Cologne to meet Nicholas, a lecturer at the University of Munich, who welcomes her and enables her to pursue her studies in Germany. In the 1980s, Nicholas followed in the footsteps of the Arab astronomer Al-Battani and spent a summer in Lamees' home town of Raqqa in Syria. While doing research and surveying the sky, he met and fell in love with her mother Najwa. The courtship tortures Lamees and Nicholas became her sworn enemy. Through Lamees' voice, who is in her thirties, we hear the story of three generations of women, and learn about the history of the Arab region and surrounding areas over the course of a century. |
| **178** | 2019[W] | *Barīd al-layl*<br>("The Night Mail")<br>▪ Dār al-Ādāb | Hudà Barakāt (Hoda Barakat)<br>❖ worked as teacher & journalist<br>❖ currently living in France<br>❖ 6 novels, 2 plays, 1 SS, 1 memoirs, + French books<br>❖ einige Orden in F<br>❖ *The Kingdom of This Earth* (2012) on IPAF-LL 2013 | f | 1952 | 66 | LEB | tells the stories of letter writers. The letters are lost, like those who have penned them, but each is linked to another and their fates are woven together, like those of their owners. The writers are foreigners, either immigrants by choice or forced by circumstance to leave their countries; exiled and homeless, orphans of their countries with fractured destinies. There are no certainties in *The Night Mail*. The killer is not a criminal, nor is the prostitute a whore. It is — like the times we live in — a realm of deep questioning and ambiguity, where boundaries have been erased, and old places and homes lost forever. |

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| **179** | 2020[L] | *ʾĀḫir ʾayyām al-bāšā*<br>("The Last Days of the Pasha")<br>▪ al-Dār al-ʿarabiyya lil-ʿulūm nāširūn 2019 | Rašā ʿAdlī (Rasha Adly)<br>❖ born in Cairo<br>❖ researcher and freelance lecturer in history of art, and Cairo correspondent for the *Emirates Culture* magazine<br>❖ 7 novels: *The Clamour of Silence* (2010), *Life is Not Always Rosy* (2013), *The Tattoo* (2014), *Confused Women* (2014), *The Shores of Departure* (2016), *Passion* (2017; on IPAF 2018[L])<br>❖ also academic studies, incl *Cairo, the City and Memory* (2012) and *Women in the History of Art* (forthcoming) | f | 1972 | 47 | EG | The novel takes us on the journey of Hasan al-Barbari, who accompanies the giraffe sent by Mohammed Ali Pasha, ruler of Egypt in the nineteenth century, as a gift to the King of France. His journey reveals some surprises, since he is much more than a mere guard of the giraffe. The other protagonist in the novel is a historian who has dedicated his life to study and research. He is convinced that there was a conspiracy against the Pasha which struck fear into him at the end of his life. He explores all possible avenues in order to discover the truth, and finally decides to open the grave of the Pasha and examine his remains… |
| **180** | 2020[L] | *Safarbarlik*<br>("Seferberlik")<br>▪ Dār al-Sāqī | Maqbūl al-ʿAlawī (Magbool Al-Alawi)<br>❖ 1992 BA in Artistic Education from U Umm Al Qura, Mecca<br>❖ works as teacher2017<br>❖ 1st novel *Turmoil in Jeddah* (2010) on IPAF 2011[L]; 2nd novel, *Years of Love and Transgression* (2011) on SL for Saudi Arabia Novel Award 2012; 5 further novels, 2 SS coll. | m | 1968 | 51 | SAU | Dheeb is taken prisoner by Ottoman soldiers at the start of the great Arab uprising of 1916 and deported to Damascus, like other citizens of Medina, western Arabia, who suffered the tyranny of its Ottoman ruler. Previously, Dheeb had been kidnapped from Mecca and sold as a slave. Now he finds himself in Damascus working in an inn owned by a woman, waiting for the Ottomans to leave the city. The novels depict an important period in the history of the Arabian Peninsula, known as "seferberlik", or the mass deportation and forced conscription of Arabs into the Ottoman army during the First World War. |
| **181** | 2020[L] | *Ribāṭ al-Mutanabbī*<br>("Al-Mutanabbi's Rabat")<br>▪ al-Markaz al-Ṯaqāfī al-ʿArabī | Ḥasan ʾAwrīd (Hassan Aourid)<br>❖ PhD Political Science, U Muh.V<br>❖ teaches Political Science U Muh.V; consultant for Mor academic journal *Zaman*<br>❖ academic and literary books in Ar & Fr; 6 novels: *Wistful Conversation* (2015) *Morisco* (publ in Fr transl 2011, Ar 2017), *Biography of a Donkey* (2014), *Sintra* (2017), *Cordoba Spring* (2017) and *Mutanabbi's Rabat* (2018). | m | 1962 | 57 | MOR | The great classical poet Al-Mutanabbi comes to Rabat, Morocco, after the Arab Spring and talks to the book's narrator, who makes him promise never to leave the apartment, since he will not understand the modern world. However, Al-Mutanabbi does not keep his promise and when the narrator is not looking, slips out. He falls into the hands of the security forces and is placed in a mental hospital, from where the narrator attempts to have him released, without success. During the narrator's visit to him in the hospital, they dissect the ailments of Arab culture. In the second part of the book, it becomes clear that in fact the narrator is suffering from hallucinations and receiving treatment. It is he who imagines the solutions presented by Al-Mutanabbi to rescue a world which has lost its compass. |
| **182** | 2020[L] | *Māḏā ʿan al-sayyida al-yahūdiyya Rāḥīl?*<br>("What About Rachel, the Jewish Lady?")<br>▪ al-Muʾassasa al-ʿArabiyya lil-Dirāsāt wa'l-našr | Salīm Barakāt (Salim Barakat)<br>❖ Kurdish-Syrian novelist and poet, born in Qamishli<br>❖ studied ArLang in Damascus for 1 year, then (1972) moved to Beirut<br>❖ there publ 5 coll.s of poetry, 2 novels, 2 autobiographies<br>❖ 1982: moved to Cyprus > editor of *Al-Carmel*, under chief edr Maḥmūd Darwīš<br>❖ there 7 novels, 5 coll.s of and poetry<br>❖ 1999: moved to Sweden, where he now lives | m | 1951 | 68 | SYR | *What About Rachel, the Jewish Lady?* offers a rich panorama of Syria in the days following the defeat of the 1967 six-day war, exposing police brutality at that time and the role played by the intelligence services in facilitating the emigration of Jews from Qamishli, in north-eastern Syria, smuggling them to Turkey and Lebanon, and thence to Cyprus. From there, they made their way to Palestine and America, where many settled in Brooklyn, New York. The novel gives an insight into life in the Jewish quarter of Qamishli, occupied by Jews, Kurds and Armenians, and is framed by the story of a teenage boy's love for a girl living in the quarter. |
| **183** | 2020[L] | *Ḥammām al-ḏahab* | Muḥammad ʿĪsà al-Muʾaddab (Mohammed Eissa al-Mu'adab) | m | 1966 | 53 | TUN | Before departing for Marseilles, fleeing German aggression in Tunis, the Jewish |

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| | | ("The Golden Hamam")<br>▪ Masʿā lil-našr wa'l-tawzīʿ | ❖ novelist and short story writer<br>❖ SS coll *Wedding of Fire* (1995), won Tun National SS Prize 1995; SS coll *Which Woman Am I?* (2013); first novel (*Soft Jihad*, 2017) won Tun Golden Comar Prize 2017 for the Ar Novel | | | | | minority community hid all records of their history in the ground under the *hamam* (Turkish bath or spa) in the Al-Hara district. This mysterious, forgotten history intrigues Helen, the novel's main protagonist. A Jewish Tunisian living in France, she embarks on a journey to discover her roots, returning to Tunis and specialising in the study of history. On the way to uncovering the hidden secret, she meets Saad, a Muslim student from Tunisia, and they fall in love. Interwoven with this story is a legend about the *hamam*, which tells how the floor gave way, revealing gold, and how a woman bathing there was kidnapped by an evil spirit. Through these two interwoven tales, the novel asks questions relevant to the present, touching on identity, extremism and the power of belonging to the same place (here, Tunisia), despite the ethnic and religious differences existing within it. |
| **184** | 2020[L] | *Ḥarb al-ġazāla*<br>("The War of the Gazelle")<br>▪ Maktabat Ṭarāblus al-ʿIlmiyya al-ʿĀlamiyya 2019 | ʿĀʾiša ʾIbrāhīm (Aisha Ibrahim)<br>❖ born in Beni Walid<br>❖ BA in Sciences (spec. Mathematics), Higher Diploma in Statistics<br>❖ worked as a teacher, then in the media, as editor-in-chief of the official website of the Libyan Ministry of Culture<br>❖ currently editor-in-chief of the website of the High Commission for the elections<br>❖ began literary career in 1990s while still at university; 1990 State Prize for Students for Theatrical Writing; SS coll *The World Ends in Tripoli* (2019), 2 novels: *Qasil* (2016) and *The War of the Gazelle* (2019); now working on book about the history of the arts in LIB | f | 1969 | 50 | LIB | *The War of the Gazelle* tells the untold story of the foundational history of Libya, before the existence of cuneiform writing and hieroglyphics. The plot is built on the author's interrogation of cave inscriptions and the mummy of a boy belonging to the Muhijiaj people, which precedes the mummies of the Pharaohs by two thousand years. Drawing on these, she explores Libyan history from the time when man ceased hunting and became settled, rearing animals and growing crops, focusing on the lives of the tribal peoples of the "Muhujia" kingdom – so named after the cave where the mummy was found in the extreme south-west of Libya. In this kingdom, Queen Tandrus ascends the throne after her brother dies in mysterious circumstances, and makes war on neighbouring tribes, to mark the boundaries of her power. The last of these wars is waged against the Maghiu tribes who have stolen the queen's gazelle, an animal close to her heart with a special symbolism connected to her throne. |
| **185** | 2020[L] | *al-Nawm fī ḥaql al-karaz*<br>("Sleeping in the Cherry Field")<br>▪ Dār al-Rāfidayn 2019 | ʾAzhar Ǧirǧīs (Azhar Jerjis)<br>❖ writer and novelist, born in Baghdad<br>❖ journalist in IRQ since 2003<br>❖ articles and stories in local and Arab newspapers and periodicals<br>❖ 2005 *Terrorism…Earthly Hell*, satirical book about terrorist militias > assassination attempt against him > forced to flee > SYR > Casablanca > NO (where he now lives permanently)<br>❖ cultural editor for *Telemark* newspaper, and as a simultaneous translator between Ar and Norw<br>❖ 2 SS coll: *Above the Country of Blackness* (2015), *The Sweet-maker* (2017); *Sleeping in the Cherry Field* (2019) = his first novel | m | 1973 | 46 | IRQ | The novel tells the story of Said, an Iraqi immigrant working as a postman in Oslo, who falls in love with a young woman, Tuna Janssen, who is teaching Norwegian to immigrant foreigners. She helps him develop his language skills and fulfil his dream of writing stories. He even manages to get a job as a columnist in a well-known Norwegian newspaper. However, her death is a shocking and terrible blow. After that, he spends his time writing, in isolation, only meeting his neighbour, Jacob Jondal, an old man who dreams of sleeping in a cherry field. In his final days, he buys a cherry field and leaves instructions that he should be buried there, since he firmly believes that by doing so, he will become a cherry tree, according to an old legend which says that after death, people turn into something suited to the place where they were buried. If buried on a mountain, he would become a rock, if in the desert, a grain of sand, etc. After the death of his kindly neighbour, Said becomes more isolated and cuts himself off from the outside world, until he receives an urgent letter from Baghdad calling him to return there immediately. The female writer of the letter informs him that his father's remains have been found in a mass grave, so he decides to return to Iraq. Once there, however, he is kidnapped by an armed religious militia, imprisoned in a dark cellar in the Wadi al-Salem cemetery near Najaf and condemned to death. His adventures continue with some surprising |

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| | | | | | | | | and paradoxical twists and turns of the plot. |
| **186** | 2020[L] | *Salālim Ṭurūlar*<br>("The Stairs of Trolar")<br>▪ Manšūrāt al-Barzaḫ | Samīr Qasīmī (Samir Kacimi)<br>❖ born in Algiers<br>❖ graduated in law<br>❖ 9 publ novels, incl. *A Permit for Lostness* (2009), the first Alg novel to deal with prison in Alg > won Hashemi Saidani Award for best first Algerian novel; *A Great Day to Die*, on IPAF 2010[L]; *Halabil* (2010); *In Love with a Barren Woman* (2011), some chs > Engl, in *Banipal*; *The Dreamer* (2012); *Love in a Declining Autumn* (2014) > Fr transl<br>❖ took part in IPAF *nadwa* on creative writing 2013 | m | 1974 | 45 | ALG | … a daring and prophetic novel which re-imagines the political history of Algeria – and through it Arab history as a whole – in a satirical style, using fantastical elements to simulate reality. It follows the intersecting lives of different characters, according to the possible scenarios ordained for them by fate. The novel is set in the Algerian capital, whose story we read through that of Jamal Humaidi, his former wife Olga and others. Their stories are intertwined with the destiny of the explosive "Algerian revolution"; that revolution which arrived twenty years late. |
| **187** | 2020[L] | *Lam yuṣalli ʿalayhim ʾaḥad*<br>("No-one Prayed Over Their Graves")<br>▪ Hachette Antoine/Nawfal | Ḫālid Ḫalīfa (Khaled Khalifa)<br>❖ BA in Law from U Aleppo;<br>❖ successful screenplays for TV & cinema, regular contributor to newspapers.<br>❖ Third novel (*Madīḥ al-karāhiya*, 2006) on IPAF 2008[S], on LL for Independent Foreign Fiction Prize 2013, widely translated; fourth novel (*No Knives in the Kitchens of This City*, 2013) on IPAF 2014[S], won 2013 Naguib Mahfouz Medal for Lit (> Engl transl); (Engl ed of) *Death is Hard Work* (2016) was finalist for 2019 US National Book Award for Translated Lit | m | 1964 | 55 | SYR | In 1907, in the outskirts of Aleppo, Syria, a flood sweeps away the pleasant life which had existed on both sides of its banks. Close friends Hanna and Zakaria are in a castle enjoying worldly pleasures and are saved. Hanna's wife and child, and Zakaria's son are not. Nothing is the same after the flood. Hanna enters a monastery and contemplates the meaning of life and death. These small lives are pictured against a backdrop of the wider destiny of Aleppo, a city which has endured floods, earthquakes and famines, and has absorbed deep social, political and religious changes. The novel follows these changes, threaded throughout by the dichotomy of love and death. |
| **188** | 2020[L] | *Iḫtilāṭ al-mawāsim*<br>("The Mingling of the Seasons")<br>▪ al-Iḫtilāf | Bašīr Muftī (Bachir Mefti)<br>❖ born in Algiers<br>❖ grad from College of ArabLang&Lit, U Algiers<br>❖ works as a journalist, editor of *al-Athar* supplement of the *Algeria News* newspaper; editor of cultural programmes on Alg TV, Algerian correspondent for London-based *al-Ḥayāt*<br>❖ works include: *Toy of Fire* (2010), IPAF 2012[S], *Ghosts of the Murdered Town* (2012), *Room of Memories* (2014), *The Game of Happiness, or The Short Life of Mourad Zahir* (2016)<br>❖ some novels transl into Fr, individual chapters in Engl and It | m | 1969 | 50 | ALG | *The Mingling of the Seasons* tells the story of a young Algerian man - 'the Killer'. The book opens with his existential questions about the meaning of truth, death, good and evil, questions without answers in the context of a family life steeped in poverty and misery. When he kills a cat, he becomes convinced that within him is a secret power driving him to kill and to enjoy it. As the country goes through turmoil, he joins the killing brigade of the National Guard, fighting the armed terrorists who are murdering people daily (in 1994). He becomes a professional killer, happily executing nightly operations. The novel follows his story and the lives of other young Algerian men who came into existence in a time of savagery, where corrupt human beings wreak havoc and destruction, and human values are deprived of any meaning. |
| **189** | 2020[S] | *al-Ḥayy al-rūsī*<br>("The Russian Quarter")<br>▪ Manšūrāt Ḍifāf | Ḫalīl al-Riz (Khalil Alrez)<br>❖ novelist and translator<br>❖ 1 play, 9 novels, including *A White Cloud in the Window of the Grandmother* (1998), *Where is Safed, Youssef?* (2008) and *In Equal Measure* (2014)<br>❖ translates from Russian, e.g., Evgeny Schwartz's *Tales About Lost Time* (2004), *Selected Russian Short Stories* (2005) and *Selected Stories of Anton Chekhov* (2 vols, 2007). | m | 1956 | 63 | SYR | – describes the daily existence of ordinary people living on the frontlines of war, based on the author's experience of a Damascus neighbourhood.<br>– tells the story of a neighbourhood that for many years resists being dragged into the war going on around it, but is finally compelled to get involved. However, it enters the war with stories rather than weapons. The book's characters include a giraffe from the zoo, a poodle, a female Afghan hound and a sparrow made of wool. Its human characters include the narrator, a translator living in the zoo in the neighbourhood's Russian quarter; Victor Ivanitch, a Russian former journalist |

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| | | | | | | | | and now manager of the zoo; Abu Ali Suleiman, French teacher and owner of a clothes shop; ʻIsam, a popular hero working in a cabaret; Rashida from Morocco, former oud player in the cabaret; Arkady Kuzmitch, a little-known Russian writer; and Nuna, daughter of a clarinet player, who knits wool and lives with the narrator in the zoo. |
| **190** | 2020[S] | *Malik al-Hind*<br>("The King of India")<br>▪ Dār al-Sāqī | Ǧabbūr Duwayhī (Jabbour Douaihy)<br>❖ born in Zgharta, northern Lebanon<br>❖ PhD in CompLit from Sorbonne, Prof of Fr Lit U Lebanon<br>❖ 8 novels, + SS, children's books<br>❖ first novel (*Autumn Equinox*, 1995) won the Translation of ArabLit Award (U Arkansas); fourth novel (*June Rain*, 2008) on IPAF 2008[S], later publ in Engl, Fr, It, Ge; fifth novel (*The Vagrant*), won the Hanna Wakim Prize for LebNovel, then IPAF 2012[S], Fr ed won 2013 IMO Prize for the best work of fiction translated Ar > Fr; *The American Quarter* (2014) on IPAF 2015[L] (Engl transl available) | m | 1949 | 70 | LEB | – recounts the story of a Lebanese murder case against the backdrop of sectarian animosity in the region.<br>– In mysterious circumstances, the body of Zakaria Mubarak is found at the boundary of his village, Tel Safra. He had just returned from a long exile in Europe, America and Africa, carrying with him a painting by Marc Chagall, the "Blue Violinist", a gift from his girlfriend in Paris. Suspicion falls on the cousins who may have killed him to get a treasure supposedly buried underneath the house built by their grandmother when she came back from America. This absorbing novel tells the story of Zakaria's murder, intersected with fables of gold, sibling strife, the love of French women, the fake promise of revolution and sectarian enmities which have been flaring up from time to time in Lebanon for the last 150 years. |
| **191** | 2020[S] | *Ḥaṭab Sarāyīfū*<br>("Firewood of Sarajevo")<br>▪ al-Iḫtilāf 2018 | Saʿīd al-Ḫaṭībī (Said Khatibi)<br>❖ novelist, lives in Slovenia<br>❖ studied in ALG & F, BA in Fr Lit U Algiers, MA in Cultural Studies from Sorbonne<br>❖ worked in journalism since 2006<br>❖ published works include: *The Orbit of Absence* (a translation into French of Algerian stories, 2009), *Book of Sins* (a novel, 2013), *Flaming Gardens of the East* (a book about travels in the Balkans, 2015), *Forty Years Waiting for Isabel* (a novel, 2016) | m | 1984 | 35 | ALG | – follows two Algerian protagonists seeking a new life away from conflict in Slovenia.<br>– (the author) compares and contrasts the sad destinies of two countries. At one time tied by bonds of friendship and ideology, both have become embroiled in futile civil wars, descending into hell and reaching a state where pain is the only common denominator uniting people. In Algeria, as in Bosnia Herzegovina, the twentieth century had a bloody end as people were torn apart by issues of religion and ethnicity. The novel's protagonists, Salim and Ivana, both fled destructive war and hatred in their countries, and went on to build a new live in Slovenia. Through them, the ugliness of conflict between brothers belonging to the same land is exposed, now brothers only in pain. Even in exile, the smell of war lingers in their nostrils and its effects are felt in their everyday lives. |
| **192** | 2020[S] | *al-Tānikī*<br>("The Tank")<br>▪ Manšūrāt al-Mutawassiṭ | ʿĀliya Mamdūḥ (Alia Mamdouh)<br>❖ writer and novelist<br>❖ studied Psychology, graduated 1971 from Mustanṣiriyyah, Baghdad<br>❖ editor of weekly Baghdad paper *Al-Rasid* for >10y<br>❖ left Baghdad 1982 > lived in various cities<br>❖ 1973 SS coll. *Overture for Laughter* > 8 novels (some translated into Engl, Fr, It, Span)<br>❖ most well-known: *Naphtalene* (1986) > transl. into 9 lang.s | f | 1944 | 75 | IRQ | – details the architectural development of modern Baghdad, while also following its main protagonist in her new life in exile, with all its positives and negatives.<br>– explores the relationship between human beings and the places which have been taken away from them. After four decades of exile, the writer imagines her return to Iraq and begins her journey of observing the huge changes experienced by the country and society. It is a literary return with a tragic undertone, and interwoven with the text is the life of the writer who has shared with her characters the upheavals which have shaken her homeland. |
| **193** | 2020[S] | *Fardiqān – iʿtiqāl al-šayḫ al-raʾīs*<br>("Fardeqan – the Detention | Yūsuf Zaydān (Youssef Ziedan)<br>❖ novelist & scholar (specialising in Arabic and Islamic studies)<br>❖ author of >60 books, numerous international prizes | m | 1958 | 61 | EG | – transports the reader back a thousand years to depict the life of Avicenna, the Muslim polymath whose work had a profound impact on world philosophy.<br>– depicts the life of Avicenna, or "the Great Sheikh", the Muslim polymath whose |

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| | | of the Great Sheikh")<br>▪ Dār al-Šurūq 2018 | ❖ *ʿAzāzīl* (2008) won the 2009 IPAF, widely translated + intern. prizes<br>❖ other novels: *The Shadow of the Serpent* (2008), *al-Nabaṭī* (2010), *Muhal* (2012), *Guantanamo* (2014), *Nūr* (2016) | | | | | work has had a profound influence for the last thousand years**.** It takes the reader on a thrilling journey from Avicenna's birthplace in a village near the ancient Uzbek city of Bukhara, until his death in Persia after an eventful life. Although he became a vizier twice, Avicenna was detained in the remote fortress of Fardeqan, where he wrote some of his philosophical works. |
| **194** | 2020[W] | *al-Dīwān al-ʾIsbarṭī*<br>("The Spartan Court")<br>▪ Dār Mīm lil-Našr (2018) | ʿAbd al-Wahhāb ʿĪsāwī (Abdelouahab Aissaoui)<br>❖ novelist, born in Djelfa, Algeria<br>❖ stud Electromechanical Engineering, U Zayan Ashour, Djelfa<br>❖ works as maintenance engineer<br>❖ first novel (*Jacob's Cinema*, 2012) won President of the Republic Prize; second novel (*Mountain of Death*, 2015) won Assia Djebar Pr (most important prize for the novel in ALG)<br>❖ took part in IPAF creative writing workshop for talented young writers (2016)<br>❖ 3rd novel (*Circles and Doors*, 2017) won 2017 Kuwaiti Suad al-Sabah Novel Prize for 2017; (unpubl.) *Testament of the Deeds of the Forgotten Ones* got Katara Novel Prize | m | 1985 | 34 | ALG | follows the interconnected lives of five characters in Algiers from 1815 to 1833. The first is a French journalist covering the colonial campaign against Algeria and the second is a former soldier in Napoleon's army who finds himself a prisoner in the city and then a planner for the campaign. The other three Algerian characters have different attitudes to the Ottoman and French colonial powers. Ibn Mayyar thinks that politics is a means of building relationships with the Ottomans and even the French, whilst Hamma al-Salawi believes that revolution is the only means of achieving change. The fifth character, Douja, is suspended somewhere between all these: she witnesses the transformation of Algiers helplessly and is forced to become part of this changing world. For one must live according to the city's rules, or one must leave. |
| | **2021** | | | | | | | |
| **195** | 2021[L] | *Bint Diǧla*<br>("Daughter of the Tigris")<br>▪ Dār al-Madà | Muḥsin al-Ramlī (Muhsin Al-Ramli)<br>❖ poet, academic, translator (Arabic <=> Spanish), journalist and cultural editor for the Arab, Spanish and Latin American press<br>❖ born in the village of Sudara in northern Iraq<br>❖ lives in Madrid since 1995<br>❖ PhD in literature and philosophy from U Madrid<br>❖ currently at Saint Louis Univ. (= American univ. in Madrid)<br>❖ writes in both Arabic and Spanish<br>❖ publ > 30 books (SS, plays, novels, translations), some prize-winning or shortlisted<br>❖ *Dates on My Fingers* (2008) and *The President's Gardens* (2012) were on IPAF 2010[L] and 2013 [L] | m | 1967 | 53 | IRQ | … shines a light on Iraq after the fall of Saddam Hussein's regime and the entry of American forces into the country, and follows his earlier title, *The President's Gardens*. It gives an insight into the worsening conditions experienced by the country in new forms: the emergence of parties and militias, looting, assassinations, rapes, explosions, the struggle for power and senseless killings. People's lives have become worthless and the dead are mere statistics. Mass graves, once a symbol of the old oppressive regime, have – in a bizarre twist – turned into shrines where people seek blessing. |
| **196** | 2021[L] | *Qāf qātil, sīn saʿīd*<br>("M for Murderer: S for Sa'id")<br>▪ Riwāyāt (2019) | ʿAbd Allāh al-Baṣīṣ (Abdullah Albsais)<br>❖ poet and novelist<br>❖ member of the Kuwaiti Writers' Association<br>❖ publ 2 SS coll.s, 1 diwan, 3 novels | m | 1980 | 40 | KUW | In his grandmother's wardrobe, Majed, an investigator, stumbles across the memoirs of his uncle Adel – a police officer who died six years before. His own investigation into the death by natural causes of Fahd Nashwan leads him to open a 23-year-old closed case: the disappearance of Said Jonkar, an 18-year-old who was thought to be mad. Majed knows that Fahd was a suspect in the case and that someone interfered with the investigation in order to clear him. In his attempts to uncover the truth, he finds recordings made by Fahd which tell the strange story of how Said Jonkar disappeared. Finally, Majed discovers why his uncle helped Fahd Nashwan clear his name. |

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| **197** | 2021[L] | *Ǧīm*<br>("J")<br>▪ Dār al-ʾĀdāb | Sāra al-Nams (Sara al-Nams)<br>❖ novelist and short story writer<br>❖ born in Tiaret, Algeria<br>❖ B.A. in English Language from U Ferhat Abbas for Languages and Literature, Sétif province<br>❖ taught English and worked as an editor; currently managing "Ajniha" publishing house<br>❖ novels *Love With An Algerian Flavour* (2012), *Water and Salt – Letters to a Palestinian Prisoner* (2016), *J* (2019) | f | 1989 | 31 | ALG | The main protagonist of *J* is a poor young man from the Algerian city of Oran who decides to travel to the desert to escape from his traumatic past. On the bus taking him south, he meets a mysterious young woman (called "J") who astonishes him with her stories, including her shocking experience of abuse by her father. The novel explores the dreams and pain of Algerian young people, the memory of the 1990s Algerian civil war, the crisis of language and identity, and how an individual can belong to a country and yet be a foreigner to his/her own body. The two protagonists exchange dangerous confidences and confessions, until the heart of the truth is reached. |
| **198** | 2021[L] | *Ḥufra ilà l-samāʾ*<br>("Hole to Heaven")<br>▪ Dār Rašm | ʿAbd Allāh Āl ʿIyāf (Abdullah Al-Eyaf)<br>❖ engineer, writer, film director<br>❖ born in Dammam<br>❖ graduated from King Fahd Univ of Petroleum and Minerals in 2001<br>❖ won local and regional prizes for his films, served as jury member and chair of judging panels for film festivals, currently head of the Film Institute of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia<br>❖ since 2007, hundreds of articles about cinema, media, literature and culture in local, Arab and foreign newspapers and magazines<br>❖ *Hole to Heaven* = author's first novel | m | 1976 | 44 | SAU | *Hole to Heaven* takes us to the village of Majihira, a place filled with legends and folklore about death and daily life events like marriage and divorce. Each character has their own story, beginning with Taima and after her, Eissa, Farj, Ghaith and others. The final story is that of Fatoum, who departs the village after everyone in it has died, leaving behind only a palm tree which bears her name as a memorial of past times. |
| **199** | 2021[L] | *ʿUlab al-raġba*<br>("Boxes of Desire")<br>▪ Dār al-ʿAyn | ʿAbbās Bayḍūn (Abbas Baydoun)<br>❖ author, teacher and journalist<br>❖ born in Tyre<br>❖ studied Arabic Literature, M.A. from Sorbonne<br>❖ jailed, as a political activist, in 1968 and 1982 (Isr. occup. of Leb.), no longer politically active now<br>❖ served as cultural editor of *Al-Safir*<br>❖ publ 18 vols of poetry<br>❖ has been translated into Engl, Fr, Ge, and other lang.s<br>❖ focus on prose and fiction since the 1990s, some prize-winning novels | m | 1945 | 75 | LEB | Bassam, the narrator, tells the story of the assassination of his friend Aziz in Lebanon by an Islamic organisation and its aftermath. Aziz was a vocal critic of the organisation and a supporter of the Palestinian resistance, which the organisation opposes. Aziz was also having an affair with a married woman, Nada, and the organisation used this to poison the atmosphere against him in his village, Al-Midan. Since they control the village, it is easy to do this and in this way his assassination seems to have been undertaken with their consent. Bassam stands by Nada and their friendship develops into a romantic relationship. Meanwhile, Israel occupies Lebanon and is resisted by the organisation. In the ensuing turmoil, one by one, Aziz's murderers are killed. |
| **200** | 2021[L] | *Fākihat al-ġurbān*<br>("Fruit for the Crows")<br>▪ Al-Mutawassiṭ | ʾAḥmad Zayn (Ahmed Zein)<br>❖ novelist and journalist<br>❖ born in Al-Hudaydah<br>❖ lives in Riyadh, working as cultural journalist<br>❖ published 2 SS coll.s, 4 novels: *Correction* (2004), *American Coffee* (2007), *War Under the Skin* (2010), *Steamer Point* (2015) | m | 1966 | 54 | YEM | … tells the story of Nura's lover Giap (named after the Vietnamese leader) and the lives of those he knows. Their interlocking stories reveal comrades' struggle for power in the Socialist regime of Aden, Yemen, in the 1970s and 1980s. The novel shows how old tribal allegiances won over slogans of comradeship and the common good. These slogans drew left-wing Arabs to this Yemeni city, to exile and broken dreams. |
| **201** | 2021[L] | *ʿAynān ḫaḍrāwān* | Ḥāmid al-Nāẓir (Hamed al-Nazir) | m | 1975 | 45 | SUD | Against the background of armed struggle between the Sudanese government and |

| no. | year | title | author | m/f | born | age * | from | Features / plot |
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| | | ("Two Green Eyes")<br>▪ al-Tanwīr (2020) | ❖ journalist and novelist<br>❖ currently working in the newsroom of Qatar Television and writes for several newspapers and websites.<br>❖ previously, he has presented on the Sudanese Shorouk channel, the Sudanese Blue Nile channel, Sudan radio, and MBC in Sudan<br>❖ 4 novels, some prize-winning: *Farij al-Murar* (2014), *The Prophecy of Saqqa* (2015) (IPAF 2016[L]), *The Black Peacock* (2017) (2018[L]), *Two Green Eyes* (2020) | | | | | the opposition supported by Eritrea, Urfa is imprisoned in military camps in Wadi Al Aqiq. Moving from one camp to another, she and the other female prisoners frequently are badly mistreated and raped. Since she is beautiful and her green eyes make her stand out from the other women, Urfa suffers more than they do. When she manages to escape, she finds herself alone with nobody to support her, and pregnant. At last, she finds refuge in a church in Port Sudan, where she fulfils her ultimate dream – to study. After her teacher falls in love with her, they marry and have a child, but Urfa's sufferings are not over. As a Muslim married to a Christian, she endures harsh social opposition to her marriage and is accused of apostasy. The novel explores the themes of suffering, surviving war and the determination of human beings to make their own choices. |
| **202** | 2021[L] | *Basāṭīn al-Baṣra*<br>("The Orchards of Basra")<br>▪ Dār Mīm | Manṣūra ʿIzz al-Dīn (Mansoura Ez Eldin)<br>❖ novelist and short story writer<br>❖ her works have been translated into >10 languages<br>❖ in 2009 selected as one of the best 39 Arab writers under 40 by the *Beirut 39* project<br>❖ publ 3 vols SS, 5 novels (*Beyond Paradise* on IPAF 2010[S])<br>❖ currently deputy editor of the weekly *Aḫbār al-Adab* and editor of its books section | f | 1976 | 44 | EG | The Orchards of Basra is set in two different time periods. In present-day Minya, Egypt, Hisham Khatab is a young manuscripts dealer who is passionate about old books. This leads him to interpret a dream in The Great Book of Interpretation of Dreams, ascribed to Ibn Sirin, and believe he was someone called Yazid bin Abihi, who lived in the 2nd hijri century (8th century AD) in Basra, Iraq. The dream introduces the reader to important figures from that era, including Wasil bin Ata and Al-Hasan al-Basri, and others like Mujeeba, the wife of Yazid and her lover 'Adi bin Malek, the copier of manuscripts from Iraq, as well as Khatab, his mother Leila and friend Mirvat from contemporary Egypt. Despite the many voices telling their stories and the differences in time and place, the characters all have much in common: their belief in signs, and an area of guilt in their lives or a point at which their lives radically changed. |
| **203** | 2021[L] | *Ṭayr al-layl*<br>▪ ("The Night Bird")<br>Manšūrāt al-Ḥibr | ʿAmmāra Laḫūṣ (Amara Lakhous)<br>❖ born in Algiers, lived in Italy for 18 years, currently in New York<br>❖ studied philosophy at U Algiers, PhD in Anthropology from U Rome<br>❖ writes in Arabic and Italian<br>❖ first novel *Bedbugs and the Pirate* (1999, in Ar); 2nd novel *How to Breastfeed from a She-Wolf Without Being Bitten* (2003), first in Ar, then rewritten in Italian as *Clash of Civilizations over an Elevator in Piazza Vittorio* (2006) => several prizes, translated into 8 lang.s, made into a film (2010); *Little Cairo* (2010, Ar), *The Night Bird* (2019, Ar), *Divorce Islamic Style* (2010, Ital), *Dispute over a Very Italian Piglet* (2012, Ital), *The Prank of the Good Little Virgin in Via Ormea* (2014, Ital), published in multiple languages | m | 1970 | 50 | ALG | In downtown Oran, north-west Algeria, on the morning of the anniversary of the country's independence, a former fighter in the struggle for freedom is found murdered. Kerim Sultani, head of the anti-terrorism unit, cuts short his holiday to take charge of the case. Three questions are on his mind: who killed Miloud Sabri? Why on this day in particular? And does this mean a return to the 1990s years of terror and the killings of opponents? The investigation begins in downtown and suburban Oran and surprising plot twists follow. We meet complex characters and discover secrets from the history of the Algerian war and some of the events in the following sixty years of independence. The novel touches upon themes of love, violence, hatred, loyalty and betrayal, until finally the mystery of the crime is solved unexpectedly. |
| **204** | 2021[L] | *Ḥayāt al-farrāšāt*<br>("The Life of Butterflies")<br>▪ Al-Mutawassiṭ | Yūsuf Fāḍil (Youssef Fadel)<br>❖ novelist, playwright, screenwriter<br>❖ born in Casablanca | m | 1949 | 71 | MOR | *The Life of Butterflies* attempts to fill gaps left in the history books with its account of the 1972 attempted coup in Morocco and subsequent events. Set in Casablanca, it begins with Salem, a singer, being asked to read the official statement of the |

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| | | | ❖ imprisoned in the notorious Moulay al-Sheriff prison 1974-75 ('Years of Lead')<br>❖ publ. plays and novels<br>❖ ninth novel, *A Rare Blue Bird that Flies with Me* (2013) was on IPAF 2014[S] | | | | | coup on the radio, after he had arrived to record a song. Events are divided according to the days of the week with each day given a special title. The novel explores how power works and offers in-depth psychological portraits of its characters, whose destinies are interwoven. |
| **205** | 2021[S] | *al-Malaff 42*<br>("File 42")<br>▪ Al-Markaz al-Ṯaqāfī al-ʿArabī (2020) | ʿAbd al-Maǧīd Sibāṭa (Abdelmajid Sebbata)<br>❖ born in Rabat<br>❖ M.A. in Civil Engineering from U Abdelmalek Essaadi, Tangiers<br>❖ articles and translations on literary, cultural and historical subjects (print and online)<br>❖ 3 novels: *Behind the Wall of Passion* (2015), *The Zero Hour 00:00* (2017), and *File 42* (2020)<br>❖ translated 2 French thrillers by Michel Bussi | m | 1989 | 31 | MOR | *File 42* follows two parallel storylines. In the first, Christine Macmillan, a successful American novelist, and Rasheed Benaser, a young Moroccan researcher and doctoral student, embark on an investigation to find the unknown author of a forgotten Moroccan novel from 1989, in which Christine's father, Steve, appears as one of the characters. Steve worked as a soldier at an American military base in Morocco during and after the Second World War. Their search leads them to a 1959 event - the tragedy of the poisoned cooking oil, one of the worst disasters to occur in the years after Moroccan independence. The second plot line is narrated by Zuheir Belqasem, a rich and delinquent Moroccan teenager who rapes Al-Ghalia, an underaged maid. His mother uses her influence as a prominent lawyer to close the case and send him to Russia to pursue his university studies. However, horrors await him there which no-one had foreseen. Written in the style of a "crime thriller" full of suspense, *File 42* explores themes of reading and writing, as well as the issue of human worth and the Moroccans' search for dignity, as a fundamental human right. |
| **206** | 2021[S] | *ʿAyn Ḥammūrābī*<br>("The Eye of Hammurabi")<br>▪ Dār Mīm (2020) | ʿAbd al-Laṭīf Wuld ʿAbd Allāh (Abdulatif Ould Abdullah)<br>❖ born in Mostaganem, Algeria<br>❖ diploma in Architecture from U Algiers<br>❖ writes on cultural subjects for newspapers and online<br>❖ 3 novels: *Out of Control* (2016), *Flaunting Finery* (2018), *The Eye of Hammurabi* (2020). | m | 1988 | 32 | ALG | The novel opens with the interrogation of a man in a military encampment after he fled from the angry inhabitants of Douar Sidi Majdoub. This district in the town of Mostaganem, Algeria, is named after a Muslim saint whose tomb he and his German friend raided for ancient artefacts. He now faces serious charges, from conspiracy with foreign organisations against his country to murder. His accusers offer him a deal to protect him from the anger of the mob in exchange for a full confession. Throughout the course of the cross examination, he revisits his past to explore the roots of his present dilemma and tells stories which blend imagination and reality, illusion and the truth. |
| **207** | 2021[S] | *Nāzilat Dār al-ʾAkābir*<br>("The Calamity of the Nobility"<br>▪ Dār Masʿà (2020) | ʾAmīra Ġunaym (Amira Ghenim)<br>❖ writer and academic<br>❖ Higher Teaching Certificate (agrégation) in Arabic Language and Literature, PhD in Linguistics<br>❖ teaches Linguistics and Translation at U Tunis<br>❖ books on translation and linguistics<br>❖ *The Yellow Dossier* (2019, prize-winning), 2nd novel *The Calamity of the Nobility* | f | 1978 | 42 | TUN | *The Calamity of the Nobility* relates an important, untold story from Tunisia's contemporary history. Its hero is the historical figure, the reformer El-Taher El-Haddad. Although historical references do not mention anything about his relationship with women, except for his desperate defence of them, the author adds an imaginary love affair with a woman called Lella Zubaida to her fictional retelling of his life. The novel gives prominence to the voices of female narrators, as custodians of memory who contradict a distorted, patriarchal version of history. |
| **208** | 2021[S] | *Wašm al-ṭāʾir*<br>("The Bird Tattoo")<br>▪ Dār al-Rāfidayn | Dunyā Mīḫāʾīl (Dunya Mikhail)<br>❖ Iraqi poet, currently living in USA<br>❖ B.A. in English Literature from U Baghdad, M.A. Eastern Literatures from Wayne State U | f | 1965 | 55 | IRQ | *The Bird Tattoo* is a painful novel about the sale of Yazidi women in Iraq by ISIS. It focuses on Helen and Elias, who fall in love and marry, and their experiences with the organisation. Alongside this tragedy, the novel sheds light on aspects of Yezidi folklore, rich in astonishing customs and legends. |

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| | | | ❖ teaches Arabic Language and Literature at U Oakland, Michigan<br>❖ 9 Ar books, several of which translated into Engl, Chin, Fr, Hindi, Ital, Polish | | | | | |
| **209** | 2021[S] | *al-Ištiyāq ʾilà l-ğāra*<br>("Longing for the Woman Next Door")<br>▪ Dār al-ʾĀdāb | al-Ḥabīb al-Sālimī (Habib Selmi)<br>❖ born in Al-Ala, Tunisia<br>❖ Higher Teaching Certificate (agrégation) in Arabic Language<br>❖ since 1985 in Paris<br>❖ teaches Arabic in a prestigious secondary school<br>❖ novels include *Goat Mountain* (1988), *Portrait of a Dead Bedouin* (1990), *Sand Labyrinth* (1994), *Warm Pits* (1999), *Bayya's Lovers* (2002) and *Abdallah's Secrets* (2004). | m | 1951 | 69 | TUN | On the face of it, they have nothing in common, apart from both being Tunisian and living in the same apartment building. He is in his sixties, educated and married to a Frenchwoman. She is several years younger and from a lower social stratum, and married to an eccentric man. At first, he is cautious and patronizing. But later, the rules of the game change. The novel explores a rich, turbulent and extraordinary relationship, which celebrates life in its simplest and most beautiful manifestations but is also tinged with darkness and tragedy. |
| **210** | 2021[W] | *Dafātir al-warrāq*<br>("Notebooks of the Bookseller")<br>▪ al-Muʾassasa al-ʿarabiyya lil-dirāsāt wal-našr | Ğalāl Barğas (Jalal Barjas)<br>❖ poet and novelist<br>❖ works in the field of aeronautical engineering<br>❖ currently head of the Jordanian Narrative Laboratory + radio programme "House of the Novel"<br>❖ 2 collections of poetry, short stories, travel literature, novels (some prize-winning)<br>❖ *Women of the Five Senses* (2017) on IPAF-LL 2019 | m | 1970 | 50 | JOR | Set between 1947 and 2019, this novel is based on several notebooks of stories about people facing different hardships, such as losing their homes or not knowing who their family are. Their interwoven destinies reveal the value of the house, as a symbol of one's homeland, as opposed to the surrounding ruination. The central character is Ibrahim, a bookshop keeper, a cultured man and voracious reader of novels. In fact, he even takes on the identity of the protagonists in novels which appeal to him. However, due to his isolation, loneliness and maltreatment by a cruel world, he suffers mental illness and descends into full schizophrenia. He attempts suicide, before meeting the woman who will change his life. |
| | **2022** | | | | | | | |
| **211** | 2022[L] | *ʾAyna ismī?*<br>("Where Is My Name?")<br>▪ Dār al-Ādāb | Dīma al-Šukr (Dima al-Shukr)<br>❖ born in Damascus, currently living in Paris<br>❖ critic and translator, writes articles for the Arab cultural press<br>❖ lit.crit.: *Prosody – Past and Present* and *Arabic Prosody in the 13th Century (post al-Khalil b. Ahmad)*, co-written with Bruno Paoli<br>❖ translations from French, including *In Praise of Borders* by R. Debray and *The Mirror of Damascus* by J.-P. Filiu | f | 1972 | 49 | SYR | It is the nineteenth century and Qamour, a young Syrian girl, is working as maid in the house of the British consul, Richard Francis Burton, translator of *The Thousand and One Nights* into English. Qamour travels with Richard and his wife Isabel, living in London and Trieste. These trips allow Qamour to discover two new talents: manuscript copying and chronicling. The second task is dubious, marred by a personal wound of Qamour and an even greater one of her city, Damascus, in the 1860 massacre. The British consul gives her the task of collecting stories and eyewitness testimonies of the massacre, although the book will be published without the name of its female author. *Where Is My Name?* brings to life events and conflicts of the past, highlighting the sufferings of ordinary people and foreign, orientalist views of Arab cultural heritage and identity. |
| **212** | 2022[L] | *al-Miʾḏana al-bayḍāʾ*<br>("The White Minaret")<br>▪ Al-Mutawassiṭ | Yaʿrab al-ʿĪsà (Yaa'rab al-Eissa)<br>❖ born in the countryside near Hama<br>❖ worked as a journalist since 1988 and has lived for most of his life in Damascus | m | 1969 | 52 | SYR | … explores the complex relationship between power and corruption in its many facets, through the story of Mike, a young Syrian man who aspires to power and influence and sells his soul to the devil, then wishes to get it back again and make a legendary ending for himself. The novel describes the game of grasping for money and power, and the exploitation of different crises in the region to amass ill-gotten gains. It takes the reader on a journey through the sad history of the contemporary East, with its deeply entrenched corruption and artificially created wars. |

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| **213** | 2022[L] | *Hams al-ʿaqrab*<br>("The Whisper of the Scorpion")<br>▪ Dār al-ʿAyn | Muḥammad Tawfīq (Mohamed Tawfik)<br>❖ novelist, engineer, diplomat (last post as ambassador to the USA)<br>❖ 2 SS, 1 novella, 3 novels: *One Night in the Life of Abd al-Tawab Tootoo* (1996), *A Naughty Boy Called Antar* (2003), *Candy Girl* (2010) = trilogy exploring the development of Egyptian society throughout the 20th and 21st centuries | m | 1956 | 65 | EG | … is inspired by the true-life story of a Saharan journey to the Kufra oasis made in 1920 by Ahmed Hassanein (later Head of the Diwan of the Egyptian court) and the British explorer Rosita Forbes, the first European woman ever to visit the oasis. 'Hussein' and 'Rose' meet in 1938, at a private party given by King Farouk in the Montaza palace and reminisce about the trip. The novel follows in parallel the events of the journey and the royal party. Rose embarks upon the expedition after her traumatic experience as a nurse in the First World War and the loss of her family and loved ones. She makes the journey as an act of self-realisation, at a time when women were struggling to achieve equality with men. Ahmed Hassanein is trying to escape the mental turmoil caused by divided loyalties: he was Secretary to the British High Commission when the Egyptian 1919 Revolution broke out and is inwardly torn between his Azharite background and Oxford education and enchantment with the West. In the Sahara, the caravan faces destruction more than once. As Hussein and Rose are forced to confront their inner demons, the relationship between them deepens. At the Kufra oasis, the ruler of the place, Saidi Fawzi, welcomes them into his house. However, their presence upsets the delicate balance needed to preserve the oasis and comes to represent an existential threat, to the local people and to them. |
| **214** | 2022[L] | *Ḫādimāt al-maqām*<br>("The Maids of the Shrine")<br>▪ Dār al-Sāqī | Munà al-Šammarī (Mona al-Shammari)<br>❖ novelist, short story writer and screenwriter<br>❖ studied Theatre and Drama at U Kuwait<br>❖ won several prizes | f | 1966 | 55 | KUW | One ill-fated night, the body of a woman with a swollen belly is washed up on the shore of the island of Failaka, Kuwait. But the shrine of Al-Khidr ("the Green One") – whose miracles are desired by the people of the island as much as they fear his wrath – wills that life be brought from the heart of death, and thus appears "the child of the shrine". Adhiba, a maid of the shrine, conceals a dangerous secret; she knows that the story of the shrine is just a ruse concocted by Maria the Ethiopian, who decided to change her life by becoming the woman in charge of the shrine. The child grows up among the maids of the shrine and his destiny is intertwined with that of the people of Failaka, embroiled in battles over love, betrayal, superstition and trade. |
| **215** | 2022[L] | *al-Hunġārī*<br>("The Hungarian")<br>▪ Dār al-ʾĀdāb, Algeria | Rušdī Riḍwān (Rouchdi Redouane)<br>❖ writer and journalist<br>❖ 2 poetry coll.s, 1 travel writing, 1 monodrama<br>❖ won several prizes | m | 1979 | 42 | ALG | Against the turmoil of the Second World War, the fates of two men from different backgrounds collide: Gino Matyoush, a piano player from a town in the Hungarian countryside, and Masoud, a ney (flute) player from a small town in Algeria, fleeing from forced conscription by the colonial powers. The two men find themselves caught up in a meaningless war fought on a distant soil, in northern France. During the gruelling and humiliating journey to France, Matyoush loses his fingers and Masoud his desire to live. In Paris, capital of war and madness, in the darkness of a dungeon far from the eyes of the Gestapo, they meet Yahya the Jew, and another story begins. The destinies of the three men intertwine in a complex tale threaded through with the joys of music and the terrors of war. |
| **216** | 2022[L] | *Zanqat al-Ṭalyān*<br>("The Alley of the Italians")<br>▪ Al-Iḫtilāf (2021) | Bū Madyan Bal-kabīr (Boumediene Belkebir)<br>❖ academic, researcher, novelist<br>❖ 3 novels: *The Myth of the Strong Man* (2016), *Zoudj el Beghal* | m | 1979 | 42 | ALG | The 'Alley of the Italians' is a district of the Algerian city of Annaba, whose residents are the poor and marginalized. Among them is Jalal the journalist. Jalal challenges the mayor who is determined to destroy the district, along with its |

| no. | year | title | author | m/f | born | age * | from | Features / plot |
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| | | | (2018), *The Alley of the Italians* (2021), + numerous academic books | | | | | history. There is also Jalal's cat, who watches everything that goes on around him, and Najat, who dresses like a man, is known by a man's name – Naji – and lives and dies in the street. Noonu is a musician who sells himself to the security services as an informant, and Rasheed is a dervish whose identity is unclear. Is he really just a dervish or – as the security forces say – an evangelist for a dangerous religious organization? All these characters desperately fight to preserve their humanity, even though some of them work to harm those they care for. In contrast, the government, the town council and the security forces fail to see the people living in the alley of the Italians. They think only about the land which will bring them power and wealth. |
| **217** | 2022[L] | *Rāmbū al-ḥabašī*<br>("The Abyssinian Rimbaud")<br>▪ Takwīn, Kuwait (2021) | Ḥaǧǧī Ǧābir (Haji Jabir)<br>❖ born in the coastal city of Massawa, Eritrea<br>❖ 5 five novels, some prize-winning: *Samrawit* (2012), *Fatma's Harbour* (2013), *The Game of the Spindle* (2015), *Black Foam* (2018, IPAF 2019[L]), *The Ethiopian Rimbaud* (2021)<br>❖ his books have been translated into Engl, Fr, Ital, Hebr, Kurd, Farsi | m | 1976 | 45 | ERI | … is the untold story of a woman from the Harari people who was the companion of the nineteenth-century French poet Arthur Rimbaud during his final years in Ethiopia, although Rimbaud is silent about his lover in his letters to his mother. The novel gives her a name, voice, history and a memory, and through her we view Rimbaud from the perspective of the Ethiopians. The novel is centred on Harar, city of coffee and khat, the Mecca of Africa which non-Muslims were forbidden from entering. Enticing tales were told about the city, drawing travellers from all over the world, at a time when the great powers were reshaping the African continent. *Rimbaud the Abyssinian* also touches on the citizens' pride in their descent from the Companions of the Prophet, before the Emperor Menelik invaded and plundered the city, and it lost its sacred shrine. |
| **218** | 2022[L] | *ʾUmm Mīmī*<br>("Mother of Mimi")<br>▪ Dār al-Madà | Bilāl Faḍl (Belal Fadl)<br>❖ journalist and screenwriter<br>❖ born in Cairo<br>❖ graduating in journalism from U Cairo<br>❖ co-founder (in 1995) of *al-Dustūr* newspaper<br>❖ worked for several papers and TV channels<br>❖ co-founder (in 1999) of *Cairo* newspaper (issued by Min. of Culture), producer for the ART and MBC channels | m | 1974 | 47 | EG | The main protagonist of *Mother of Mimi* has dreams of studying Media and rebels against his family in order to pursue them. As a result, he finds himself forced to live in a shabby, miserable flat with an old lady ("Um Mimi" or "mother of Mimi") and her eccentric son. After the old woman dies, he has to arrange the burial and summon her daughter and her husband, who are just as peculiar as the son. Um Mimi's husband, Abu Mimi, had been forbidden by a court order from visiting, and when he arrives, the hero discovers another version of the family history from the one he has been told. Abu Mimi decides to adopt him, to compensate himself for disappointments with his own children. The hero also finds out about a conspiracy against him, organized by a girl he thought loved him, who sees in him a way of escaping from the shame of her family. He has to save himself from all this, having learned more about life, the world and himself than he would have done if he had just lived the comfortable existence admired by most people. |
| **219** | 2022[L] | *al-Baḥṯ ʿan ʿĀzār*<br>("In Search of Azar")<br>▪ Al-Kutub-ḫān | Nizār Āġrī (Nizar Aghri)<br>❖ Syrian-Kurdish writer and translator, born in Turkey<br>❖ currently living and working in Oslo<br>❖ translates from several languages (incl. Italian E. De Luca)<br>❖ 3 novels: *The Papers of Mullah Za'afran* (2005), *Salem Street* (2017), *In Search of Azar* (2021) | m | 1961 | 60 | SYR | One of the two main protagonists, Eid, reminisces about his boyhood and youth and his relationship with his close friend Azar, who left the city of Qamishli suddenly, with his Jewish family. Eid recalls how their special friendship began when they were young boys and how it developed and grew stronger, before the shock of parting. As he narrates the story in detail, the diversity of life in Syrian cities is also revealed, with their assortment of religions, sects and races. The two friends finally meet again after forty years, when Eid's daughter meets Azar's son. |

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| | | | | | | | | *In Search of Azar* is a quest for the ambivalent innocence of childhood. It also puts social diversity and difference under the spotlight, filled with optimism for the future. |
| **220** | 2022[L] | *Ḥikāyat Faraḥ*<br>("Farah's Story")<br>▪ Dār al-Šurūq | ʿIzz al-Dīn Šukrī Fušayr (Ezzedine Choukri Fishere)<br>❖ 7 novels, two of which on IPAF lists (*Intensive Care*, 2008[L]; *Embrace on Brooklyn Bridge*, 2011[S])<br>❖ some translated into Engl, Fr, Ital; *The Killing of Fakhreddin* (1995) and *Abu Amr the Egyptian* (2009) made into TV series | m | 1966 | 55 | EG | Farah wakes up one morning to begin a day which will mark a turning point in her life. She will destroy the house where she spent her childhood and leave the only man she ever passionately loved. She will place her mother in an old people's home and reject her daughter. Has Farah lost her mind, heart and humanity? Or is she trying to save herself and those she loves from losing everything? *Farah's Story* is a novel about love, motherhood and freedom, about a humanity threatened by the ravages of time. |
| **221** | 2022[S] | *al-Ḫaṭṭ al-ʾabyaḍ min al-layl*<br>("The White Line of Night")<br>▪ Dār al-Sāqī | Ḫālid al-Naṣr Allāh (Khaled Nasrallah)<br>❖ writer and novelist<br>❖ BA in Physical Education, worked as teacher in Kuwaiti Min. of Education<br>❖ articles in the Kuwaiti papers<br>❖ SS and novels, some prize-winning / longlisted | m | 1987 | 34 | KUW | Since childhood, the main protagonist of *The White Line of Night* has been obsessed by reading. As a young child, he would search for words and forage for scraps of paper containing letters and expressions. When he leaves school to begin work, he gets a job as copy editor in the Department of Published Works. However, at work, he is often disturbed and pained when he has to ban a book. It annoys him to have to refuse books which he likes, so he ends up breaking the rules. In the novel's atmosphere of political dystopia, the authorities are in conflict with the people. The hero plays an important role in dramatic events which build up to a climactic, shocking finale. |
| **222** | 2022[S] | *ʾAsīr al-Burtuġāliyyīn*<br>("The Prisoner of the Portuguese")<br>▪ Dār Mīm | Muḥsin al-Wakīlī (Mohsine Loukili)<br>❖ born in Taza, Morocco<br>❖ plays, short stories and novels, some prize-winning | m | 1978 | 43 | MOR | *The Prisoner of the Portuguese* is the story of a simple man who leaves Fez and goes to the countryside looking for work, only to find himself a prisoner in a Portuguese jail on the North African coast, leaving behind a wife and three children. However, he bargains with his jailer, telling him stories to avoid the firing squad. He must tell a story which pleases the jailor or face execution. The novel thus follows in parallel the stories told by the prisoner and the main narrative. The novel illuminates a difficult period in the history of Morocco in the sixteenth century, torn by the struggle between the Saadis and the Marinids and the Portuguese occupation, while also exploring feelings of fear, expectation, love, hatred and the desire for revenge. |
| **223** | 2022[S] | *Yawmiyyāt Rūz*<br>("Rose's Diary")<br>▪ Dār al-ʾĀdāb | Rīm al-Kamālī (Reem al-Kamali)<br>❖ novelist, writer, researcher<br>❖ editor of the cultural section of *Al-Bayan* (Emirates)<br>❖ studied history at university and is fascinated by archaeology, art, myths and culture in general<br>❖ several novels, some prize-winning | f | 1972 | 49 | UAE | The events of *Rose's Diary* take place in in the historic neighbourhood of Shindagha, Dubai, in the 1960s, before the foundation of the UAE. After the death of her mother, Rose's uncle refuses to allow her to travel to Damascus to study Arabic literature with her secondary school classmates. Rose - a voracious reader who loves writing - pours out her anger in secret diaries containing stories and questions about life, drawing upon local history, society and ancient traditions. When each notebook is full, she throws it into a nearby river, so that no-one can read what she has written. |
| **224** | 2022[S] | *Dilšād*<br>("Dilshad")<br>▪ Takwīn, IRQ | Bušrà Ḫalfān (Bushra Khalfan)<br>❖ SS writer and novelist<br>❖ weekly articles in Omani papers (2002-11) | f | 1969 | 52 | Oman | set in Muscat, the capital of Oman, in the first half of the twentieth century, the story is divided into three parts, each named after a district of the city. Dilshad, a young native of Muscat, of unknown parentage, grows up in extreme poverty in |

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| | | | ❖ 2010-12 Head of Literature and Creativity Committee at Muscat Cultural Club<br>❖ 2014 founded Omani narrative laboratory (> creative writing workshops in Oman and Gulf region) | | | | | one of the Balochi areas of the city, experiencing Balochi as well as Arab culture. His daughter Mariam inherits his poverty and carefree nature, and she becomes everything to him, helping him cope with his blindness. However, their dire circumstances drive her to leave home and work in the house of a Muscat merchant, where she is initially content, but finally is forced to run away. *Dilshad* is a novel of hunger, sadness, adventure and love. Its multiple narrators speak different languages, pointing to the cultural diversity of Muscat. |
| **225** | 2022[S] | *Mākīt al-Qāhira*<br>("Cairo Maquette")<br>▪ Manšūrāt al-Mutawassiṭ | Ṭāriq ʾImām (Tarek Imam)<br>❖ novelist and journalist<br>❖ deputy chief editor of *Radio and Television* magazine (Cairo)<br>❖ 11 novels and SS coll.s<br>❖ some works translated<br>❖ won numerous Egyptian, Arab and international prizes | m | 1977 | 44 | EG | Cairo 1945, The "Cairo Work Gallery", an independent gallery dedicated to marginalized arts, announces that it is offering a grant to build a small model (maquette) of Cairo as it was a quarter of a century ago, in the year 2020, when it was still the capital of Egypt. From this starting point, the novel explores the capital city at four points in its history: 2045, 2020, 2011 and an unknown time in the distant future, focusing in each period on a main protagonist who is an independent artist. There is Urija, passionate designer of maquettes of the city, who has suffered the stigma of being blamed for the death of his father since he was a child; Noud, a documentary film maker under police surveillance since coming out of prison two years before, where she had done time for offending public morals in her last film; Baliardo, a graffiti artist at the time of the January revolution, always on the run from the police for defacing the city walls; and Manga, the cartoonist who possesses two kinds of memories of the city. While the different time periods intersect, the location remains the same: the gallery. *Cairo Maquette* explores the relationship of the city with the individual, and in particular with the marginalized artist, searching for his identity, who is rejected by everyone, by state and society alike. |
| **226** | 2022[W] | *Ḫubz ʿalà ṭāwilat al-ḫāl Mīlād*<br>("Bread on the Table of Uncle Milad")<br>▪ Dār al-Rašm (2021) | Muḥammad al-Naʿʿās (Mohamed Alnaas)<br>❖ short story writer and journalist<br>❖ BA in Electrical Engineering (U Tripoli 2014)<br>❖ SS *Blue Blood* (2020). *Bread on the Table of Uncle Milad* = his first novel | m | 1991 | 30 | LIB | In the closed society of his village, Milad strives to live up to the definition of ideal masculinity, as his society views it. However, after all his best efforts, he fails to be 'a man', and after meeting his sweetheart and wife-to-be, Zeinab, decides to forget about this definition and be himself. Living at home, he performs the tasks which his society reserves for women, while Zeinab works and supports the family. Milad is unaware of how he is mocked in the village until his nephew breaks it to him. *Bread on the Table of Uncle Milad* questions static ideas of gender and champions the individual in the face of destructive ideas adopted by the majority. |
| | **2023** | | | | | | | |
| **227** | 2023[L] | *ʿUṣūr Dāniyāl fī Madīnat al-ḫuyūṭ*<br>("The Ages of Daniel in the City of Threads")<br>▪ Dār al-ʿAyn | ʾAḥmad ʿAbd al-Laṭīf (Ahmad Abdulatif)<br>❖ novelist, translator, journalist, researcher<br>❖ born in Cairo, currently living in Madrid<br>❖ BA SpanLang&Lit, MA ArabLit, preparing PhD thesis on Ar novel (U Madrid)<br>❖ has written and translated for the cultural press since 2003<br>❖ translated >30 books Span>Ar, some price-winning 8 novels: (#1) *The Keymaker* (2010) > 2011 Egyptian State | m | 1978 | 46 | EG | The novel is a dystopic allegory about the apocalypse, set in a nameless city of threads, or dolls, which might be a macabre projection of Cairo. In the opening scene, naked men with their throats cut are laid out around a fountain in the shape of a flower. Daniel meanwhile has been shot and is the only one still fully clothed; the narrative works backward to explain why. Several Daniels appear in the story, each numbered to represent different stages of his life. Daniel 2 works in an oppressive archive where there are files on the whole population, and there he reads about Daniel 1, a younger version of himself, who lived in the days before the |

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| | | | Encouragement Prize; (#3) *The Book of the Sculptor* (2013) > 2015 Sawiris Cultural Award; (#5) *The Earthen Fortress* > IPAF 2018[L] > transl. into Span 2019 > on 2020 Sawiris Cultural Award SL | | | | | apocalyptic flood, suffered sexual abuse committed by his teacher and took revenge on him. The novel has a unique narrative and linguistic style, with frequent repeated refrains and a lack of punctuation when Daniel 2 speaks, reinforcing its uncanny, nightmarish quality. |
| **228** | 2023[L] | *Ḥākimat al-qalʿatayn* ("Ruler of the Two Fortresses")<br>▪ Dār al-Ādāb | Līnā Hūyān al-Ḥasan (Lina Huyan Elhassan)<br>❖ born in the desert near Hama<br>❖ diploma in Advanced Philosophy U Damascus<br>❖ journalist in Lebanon since 2003, currently living in Beirut<br>❖ 9 works of fiction and non-fiction, incl. novels, poetry, and studies of the Syrian desert<br>❖ *Diamonds and Women* (2015) was IPAF-shortlisted; 3 novels for young adults shortlisted for Sheikh Zayed Book Award (2016-18); travel writing, *The Fairy's Heel* (2022), won the 2022 Ibn Battuta Prize for Travel Literature | f | 1975 | 47 | SYR | The heroine of the novel, Khatun Al-Maghouliya, is one of the last female practitioners of magic and divination in Syria. Her daughter, now a young woman, disapproved of her mother's profession and left her home to study philosophy in Damascus, far from the influence and reputation of her mother. Khatun disappears just before some factions of ISIS invade the north-eastern region of Syria, including the area between two historic fortresses – Halabiye and Zalabiye – built on the banks of the Euphrates by Queen Zenobia. The daughter tries to find her mother, and when she has to give up, she resolves to write about her life and those of other female sorceresses. *The Ruler of the Two Fortresses* offers an insight into magic rites practiced to summon the dead and converse with them, taking us on a journey into unknown territory, where the women involved in such practices are usually condemned. |
| **229** | 2023[L] | *Bār Liyālīnā* ("Bar Lialina")<br>▪ Dār al-Shurūq | ʾAḥmad al-Faḫarānī (Ahmed El-Fakharany)<br>❖ born in Alexandria<br>❖ novelist and journalist (EG + other Ar countries)<br>❖ 6 novels: *Mandourla* (2013), *The Story of the Pasha* (2016), *The Family of Jado* (2017), *Souk of the Syrians* (2019), *Taming the Dog* (2021), *Bar Lialina* (2022); 1 SS: *The Kingdom of the Orange Juice* (2011); 1 poetry: *Simple Decoration* (2017) (in Eg ʿāmmiyya)<br>❖ *Souk of the Syrians* won 1st prize in Sawiris Cultural Award (2020), *Mandourla* 2nd place (2016). | m | 1981 | 41 | EG | In this satirical novel, protagonist Nuh Al-Rahimi – an acting extra – resorts to trickery to gain admittance to Bar Lialina, frequented by the cultural elite. He hopes that through emulating them, he will discover what makes them so intelligent, while he by contrast is an ignoramus with inferior creative ability. He disguises himself as a rich film producer, but when his ruse is exposed, the bar's regular clients decide that he must be thrown out. When he refuses to leave, they decide to have some fun by cruelly deceiving him, making Nuh into a laughingstock to deter him from ever daring to return to the bar. However, twenty years later, Nuh decides to go back and seek revenge, exposing these intellectuals for what they really are. |
| **230** | 2023[L] | *Maʿzūfat al-ʾarnab* ("The Melody of the Rabbit")<br>▪ Al-Mutawassiṭ | Muḥammad al-Harrādī (Mohammed Harradi)<br>❖ born in al-Qunayṭra<br>❖ worked as chief inspector for National Ministry of Education, a lecturer in Education, and a researcher in the Centre for Educational Planning in Rabat<br>❖ 5 novels: *The Bitter Almond* (1980), *Dreams of a Cow* (1988), *Rooster of the North* (2001), *Dante* (2015), *Melody of the Rabbit* (2022); 1 SS: *The Cat's Tail* (1990); 1 biography: *Noubir Amaoui: On the Summit of a Mountain* (1995) | m | 1946 | 76 | MOR | Idris, the main protagonist of *The Melody of the* Rabbit, lives a monotonous existence working in a gloomy basement archive under the city, which represents state surveillance of its citizens. Passionate about Russian history, culture and its revolutionary heroes, he spends his time researching the Russian families who settled in Rabat after the Bolshevik Revolution. Living in a parallel fantasy world and indulging in constant daydreaming to escape his Kafkaesque existence, Idris begins to imagine that he is one of the Russian immigrants and styles himself as "His Majesty". Underlying this charade, he relives painful childhood memories, in particular the killing of his father in the bloody political struggles following Moroccan independence. He remains in isolation, with no visitors to the basement, until a new colleague arrives: Suaad, who has studied English literature, and they begin an ambiguous romantic relationship. |
| **231** | 2023[L] | *Ismī Zayzafūn* ("My Name is Zayzafoune")<br>▪ Al-Rabie Publications | Sawsan Jamīl Ḥasan (Sausan Jamil Hasan)<br>❖ novelist and doctor, born in Damascus, currently living in Berlin<br>❖ studied Medicine at U Tishreen (Latakia), trained in hospitals in Abu Dhabi in early 1980s > practiced medicine in Latakia<br>❖ resigned from job 2013 to dedicate herself to writing fiction<br>❖ 6 novels: *Silk of the Darkness* (2008), *A Thousand Nights in a Night* (2010), *My Name is Zayzafoune* (2022) etc. | f | 1957 | 65 | SYR | The novel explores Arab moral double standards which make the individual, women in particular, wear a false face and live as spectators of their own lives rather than autonomous players in them. The two names of the heroine of the novel (Jahida/Zayzafoune) serve to highlight these double standards. After a watershed moment in her life when she faints, at the age of sixty Zayzafoune realises that life can be imagined in a way entirely different to how she has lived it all these years. This moment, in Latakia, Syria, on a summer's day in 2019, marks one of two parallel time strands in the novel, which continues into the early months of 2020. |

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| | | | ❖ regular contributor to Ar newspapers, journals, websites | | | | | The second timeline consists of memories of the past. The novel reflects deeply on the self: In what ways do people hate themselves? How can they hold on to life and love it, and what reason can they find to do that? |
| **232** | 2023[L] | *Ṣundūq al-raml*<br>("The Box of Sand")<br>▪ Al-Mutawassiṭ | ʿĀʾisha ʾIbrāhīm (Aisha Ibrahim)<br>❖ born in Beni Walid<br>❖ BA in Sciences (spec. Mathematics), Higher Diploma in Statistics<br>❖ worked as teacher, then editor-in-chief of the websites of the Libyan Ministry of Culture and the High Commission for the elections.<br>❖ started writing in the 1990s while still at university.<br>❖ 1991 State Prize for Students for Theatrical Writing (for play *Emerald Village*)<br>❖ 1 SS: *The World Ends in Tripoli* (2019); 2 novels: *Qasil* (2016), *The War of the Gazelle* (2019) (IPAF [L]2020) | f | 1969 | 53 | LIB | It is 1911 and Sandro Compartini has just graduated from the Journalism Institute in Milan. He boards a steamer as a soldier in the 84th Corps, sent from Italy to war in Libya. While stationed in a trench in the desert, he falls in love with a milk seller from Tripoli, but she and her younger brother are arrested and sent to the Italian penal colonies after the bloody attack on al-Manshiyya Quarter in which their mother is killed. The novel then follows Sandro after his discharge from the army and return to Italy. Drawing on an archive of articles in the Italian and English press from this period, Ibrahim's novel exposes a dark and unreported side of the war, when Libyan girls, pregnant women, mothers and children were rounded up and imprisoned without any charges or standing trial. |
| **233** | 2023[L] | *al-ʾAntikẖāna*<br>("The Antikkhana")<br>▪ Dār al-Šurūq | Nāṣir ʿIrāq (Nasser Iraq)<br>❖ born in Cairo<br>❖ grad. Fac. of Fine Arts in Zamalek (1984)<br>❖ co-founder (2002) of *Dubai Al-Thaqafiya* magazine, editor-in-chief for 8 years; currently editor-in-chief of the *Arabic Letters* magazine (Cultural and Scientific Association, Dubai)<br>❖ 12 novels, incl. *The Unemployed* (2011) (IPAF [S]2012), *Al-Uzbakeya* (2015) (Katara Prize 2016 > transl. into Engl and Fr); several books on film and plastic arts; several prizes and listings | m | 1961 | 61 | EG | The novel transports us to nineteenth-century Cairo and the Antikkhana, the first museum founded in Egypt in the time of the Khedive Ismail (1863-1879). The narrative unfolds through the eyes of four main characters. The first is Ramadan al-Mahmadi, an Egyptian carpenter who lures housemaids with promises of marriage into stealing artefacts from the house of the German archaeologist Heinrich Brugsch, and later also from the Antikkhana. If any of them tries to make him keep his promise, he kills her and buries her in his garden. Then there is Heinrich Brugsch, who helps 'Mariette Pasha' (Auguste Marriette), the director of the museum, in his work; and Ahmad Effendi Kamal, the first Egyptian archaeologist, who has only managed to get an administrative job at the Antikkhana since Mariette Pasha refused to employ Egyptians in jobs directly connected to the artefacts. He makes a monumental effort to find out who has stolen the antiquities, and falls in love with his French colleague, Josephine – the last of the four central characters – who has come to work at the Antikkhana after running away from an angry ex-fiancée in Paris. |
| **234** | 2023[L] | *Baytunā al-kabīr*<br>("The Family House")<br>▪ Dār al-ʾAyn | Rabīʿa Rayḥāna (Rabia Raihane)<br>❖ head of Moroccan Forum for Culture and the Arts, founder of Safi Festival of Female Creativity, was head of Moroccan Writers' Union for 2 years<br>❖ 8 SS: *Women's Rain* (1999), won Female Creativity Prize (UAE), etc.; 3 novels: *Ways of Loving* (2013), *Aunt Um Hani* (2020), *The Family House* (2022)<br>❖ translated into Dan, Engl, Fr, Ge, Span | f | 1951 | 71 | MOR | The novel is set in Morocco in the first half of the twentieth century. Farida relates memories of her childhood and growing up in 'the family house' built by her grandfather Kabour, a strong, brave and chivalrous man who fled his village after a physical altercation with a local official who had attacked a farmer. In his new abode on the banks of the Tensift River, near the city of Safi, Kabour establishes himself as a patriarch. He marries four women to give him innumerable children to work for him. He becomes a successful businessman and a local legend. Farida meanwhile is forced to leave her mother as a young child after her parents' divorce and move to the family house, where she shares in the life of the different generations living there. Reaching the age of forty, she decides to enrol at film school and write a screenplay about the life of her extraordinary and complex grandfather. |
| **235** | 2023[L] | *Layla wāḥida takfī*<br>("One Night is Enough")<br>▪ al-ʾĀn | Qāsim Tawfīq (Qassem Tawfik)<br>❖ born in Jenin, PAL<br>❖ 1978, BA ArabLang&Lit U Jordan > worked in banking sector in JOR, UAE, etc, also EUR countries > auditor, now retired | m | 1954 | 68 | JOR (PAL) | The events of the novel take place in a café in the Jordanian capital, Amman, on the night of the start of the "Naksa" (Six-Day War), in June 1967. Wijdan, a nurse who works at Amman Hospital, takes refuge in the café at the moment the war breaks out and the sky is filled with smoke. She is forced to remain there to avoid the |

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| | | | ❖ 5 SS, 15 novels, incl. *A More Beautiful Land* (1987), *Al Shindagha* (2006), *A Story Called Love* (2009), *Smell of the Bitter Almond* (2014), *Haemorrhage of the Small Bird* (2017, Katara Prize for ArNovel 2018), *An Inn Above the Ground* (2020), *Abdoun Bridge* (2021), *One Night Is Enough* (2022) | | | | | danger of her journey home, and strikes up a conversation with café employee Dheeb. Although its main events take place within a narrow timeframe and setting in the present day, the novel traces the past lives of the two protagonists across various locations. Dheeb is a young man who was forced into exile before returning to Amman; Wijdan's family were exiled from Palestine in the 1948 Nakba, and she suffered the painful and tragic loss of her fiancée. The novel delves into the psychology of the two characters, revealing how their connection develops over the course of one night as chaos erupts around them. |
| **236** | 2023[L] | *al-Kull yaqūl ʾuḥibbuk*<br>("They All Say I Love You")<br>▪ Dār al-Šurūq | Mayy Tilmisānī (May Telmissany)<br>❖ born in Cairo<br>❖ teaches Arabic Studies and Cinema at U Ottawa, CAN<br>❖ 3 SS, 4 novels: *Dunyazade* (1997; tr. into 8 lang.s, won prizes in EG and FR), *Heliopolis* (2000), *A Capella* (2012), *They All Say I Love You* (2021). *Paradise Has a Fence* (memoirs, 2009; about experience of exile and travel betw EG and CAN, publ. in Fr in Montreal).<br>❖ academic research on cinema, arts, popular culture and postcolonial studies<br>❖ 2021 awarded French Order for Arts and Letters with the rank of knight, in recognition of her contributions in the fields of culture, arts and literature | f | 1965 | 57 | EG | With a quiet humour, *They All Say I Love You* gets under the skin of five middle-aged, middle class Arab intellectuals living in Canada and America, following the twists and turns of their love lives as they question their choices in life and reflect on (un)faithfulness in romantic relationships. They meet on various forms of transport – a train, a plane and on the motorway – and their stories intersect and mirror each other. The reader experiences each character both as a first-person narrator and a third person figure in another character's story, creating a complex reality with multiple perspectives. As exiles, the protagonists all grapple with issues of language, identity and assimilation, and remain connected to the lands of their birth through annual visits, painful memories of past trauma or political engagement. |
| **237** | 2023[S] | *al-ʾUfuq al-ʾaʿlà*<br>("The Highest Part of the Horizon")<br>▪ Mīskalyānī/Masciliana - UAE | Fāṭima ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd (Fatima Abdulhamid)<br>❖ born in Jeddah<br>❖ BA Psychology<br>❖ worked as teacher, then psychologist<br>❖ SS *Like a Paper Plane* (2010); 3 novels: *The Edge of Silver* (2013), *F for Female* (2016), *The Highest Part of the Horizon* (2022) | f | 1982 | 42 | SAU | *The Highest Part of the Horizon* is a satirical black comedy, narrated by Azrael, the Angel of Death. He confides in the reader directly about his mission and describes the lives of people he encounters and what they say to him when he arrives to tell them their time is up. Through him, we meet Suleiman, a widower in his fifties, whose mother married him off when he was thirteen to a woman eleven years his senior. All his life, Suleiman has been looked after by various women, and in his weakness, he is a counterpoint to the stereotypical image of the macho Arab man. Left alone in his flat, Suleiman has a new, unexpected beginning when he falls in love with a neighbour he glimpses in the house opposite. Combining magical realism and psychological exploration, *The Farthest Horizon* seems to imply that planning and predicting the future are impossible, since you will be tricked by life and death, and whatever your choices may be, much is down to chance. |
| **238** | 2023[S] | *Mannā*<br>("Drought")<br>▪ Dār al-Dāwiya | Al-Ṣiddīq Ḥāǧǧ ʾAḥmad (Siddiq Hadj-Ahmed)<br>❖ born in Adrar, Algeria<br>❖ works at Arts College U Adrar as lecturer (General Linguistics and Linguistic Discourse), is lead researcher in narratives from the Sahara<br>❖ won Ministry of Culture's State Appreciation Prize for writing connected to the Sahara<br>❖ 3 novels: *The Kingdom of Ziwan* (2013), *Comrade* (2016), and *Drought* (2021) | m | 1967 | 57 | ALG | *Drought* tackles a new subject in the Arabic novel: the fate of the Tuareg, who fled their lands after the 1973 drought which hit the Sahara in the north of Mali, and headed towards southern Algeria and Libya, settling in refugee camps there. From 1980, they were used by Gaddafi in wars in Chad and Lebanon in exchange for a promise of an independent Azawan state in northern Mali. Having endured conflict and imprisonment in camps in Chad, they gave up hope that Gaddafi would fulfil his promise, and began a series of revolts against the regimes in Mali and Niger. The novel's narrator is one of the refugees, who has recorded his story and that of his son on a badly stained manuscript found in a box. It covers the major political and social developments which occurred in the region in the forty years before the fall of Gaddafi in 2011. |
| **239** | 2023[S] | *Kūnšīrtū Qūrīnā ʾIdwārdū*<br>("Concerto Qurina | Najwà Bin Šatwān (Najwa Binshatwan)<br>❖ born in Ajdabiya, Libya | f | 1970 | 52 | LIB | A coming-of-age novel about a young girl in Libya, her extended family, and how their lives are affected by politics and war, in a narrative rich in characters and |

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| | | Eduardo")<br>▪ Takwīn - IRQ | ❖ academic and novelist<br>❖ first Libyan author to be IPAF-shortlisted (2017), for *The Slave Yards* (2016)<br>❖ + 3 other novels: *The Horses' Hair* (2007), *Orange Content* (2008), *Concerto Qurina Eduardo* (2022)<br>❖ chosen as one of the 39 best Arab authors under 40y by Beirut39 project (2009-2010) > story 'The Pool and the Piano' included in *Beirut39* anthology<br>❖ won Banipal fellowship for creative writing 2018<br>❖ + several other prizes | | | | | perspectives. She belongs to a family with Greek origins, an ethnic minority who have their own distinctive culture in multi-ethnic Libyan society. Through her eyes, we view the changes which occurred in Libya from the 1970s until the revolution which overthrew Gaddafi in 2011 and the civil war in 2014. The novel describes her father's killing during a period known as the 'cultural revolution' in Libya, the nationalization of the family's factory, and the impact of this huge economic change upon them. Binshatwan weaves together complex themes including the experience of Libyan Jews, and their emigration or expulsion in the 1960s; the civil war and its effects on the social fabric of society; the smuggling of ancient artefacts and mistreatment of Libyan cultural heritage; and the cultural and ethnic exchanges between Mediterranean peoples. |
| **240** | 2023[S] | *Ḥaǧar al-saʿāda*<br>("The Stone of Happiness")<br>▪ Dār al-Rāfidayn, LEB | ʾAzhar Ǧirǧīs (Azher Jirjees)<br>❖ born in Baghdad<br>❖ since 2003 journalist in Iraq, wrote for local and Arab newspapers and periodicals<br>❖ 2005 *Terrorism…Earthly Hell*, satirical book about terrorist militias > assassination attempt against him > forced to flee the country > Syria > Casablanca > Norway, where he now lives permanently, literary editor and translator Arabic ↔ Norwegian<br>❖ 2 SS: *Above the Country of Blackness* (2015), *The Sweetmaker* (2017); 2 novels: *Sleeping in the Cherry Field* (2019) on IPAF [L]2020, Engl tr. by Banipal Books; *The Stone of Happiness* (2022) | m | 1973 | 49 | IRQ | The events of *The Stone of Happiness* take place in Mosul and Baghdad between 1962 and 2018. After his younger brother drowns in the river Tigris in Mosul, young Kamal Touma runs away, terrified of his father's brutal reaction, and hides in a fearsome place known as the "garden of the spirits". Just before boarding a lorry heading south to the capital city, he picks up a small stone. Upon arrival in Baghdad, he searches for a place of refuge and finds himself in Khan al-Rahma, where he grows up in an atmosphere blighted by poverty and fear. Yet he finds comfort and strength to carry on pursuing his dreams from the strange stone. Kamal meets a photographer who helps him fulfil his personal and professional destiny, becoming an itinerant photographer himself, roaming through alleyways and markets and recording the life of the city and its people. As the years pass and the country goes through hard times, armed militias occupy the district where Kamal lives, and his life is turned upside down. Fear begins to ravage the inner peace he has always strived to preserve. |
| **241** | 2023[S] | *ʾAyyām al-šams al-mušriqa*<br>("Days of the Shining Sun")<br>▪ Dār al-ʿAyn | Mīrāl al-Ṭaḥāwī (Miral al-Tahawy)<br>❖ born in al-Sharqiyya Governorate<br>❖ novelist and academic, taught at U Virginia, N Carolina, and College of Sciences U Al-Fayoum<br>❖ currently prof. of ArabLit at College of World Languages and Translation, U Arizona<br>❖ 1 SS, academic studies, many well-known novels, incl. *The Tent* (1995), *The Blue Aubergine* (1998, won 2002 State Incentive Prize for the Novel in EG), *The Strumming of the Gazelles* (2002), and *Brooklyn Heights* (2010) (IPAF [S]2011, won Naguib Mahfouz Medal for Lit., AUC); widely translated into >20 languages | f | 1968 | 54 | EG | The events of *Days of the Shining Sun* are sandwiched between the suicide of Jamal, a young man torn between different identities, in the opening pages, and the suicide of Mimi, an African girl who has survived a massacre in her country, at the end of the novel. They take place in an imagined small town called Shining Sun on the southwestern border of America, where the illegal smuggling of workers and immigrants is a daily occurrence. The novel sheds light on a group marginalized in Western society who are – incorrectly – regarded as the survivors, and gives them a voice, delving deep into their concerns. Whilst it is a classic example of a narrative conveying the disorientation of exile, above all else it platforms the foreigner's perspective; simultaneously rebelling against this new reality and finding a way to adapt to its harshness. |
| **242** | 2023[W] | *Taġrībat al-qāfir*<br>("The Exile of the Water Diviner")<br>▪ Rashm | Zahrān al-Qāsimī (Zahran Alqasmi)<br>❖ poet and novelist<br>❖ born in Dima Wattayeen (Oman)<br>❖ 4 novels: Mountain of the Horseradish Tree (2013), The Sniper (2014), Hunger for Honey (2017), Exile of the Water Diviner (2021); 10 poetry collections; 1 SS: Biography of the Stone 1 (2009); 1 non-fiction: Biography of the Stone 2 (2011) | m | 1974 | 48 | Oman | In its Arabic meaning, a "narrator" is someone who – literally – "waters" people and satisfies their thirst, and The Exile of the Water Diviner restores this original function to its narrator. Set in an Omani village, it tells the story of a water diviner employed by the villages to track springs of water hidden deep in the earth. Since birth, his life has had a profound connection with water: His mother drowned, and his father was buried when the roof of one of the water channels – or aflaj – collapsed on him. The diviner himself ends up imprisoned in a water channel, battling for his life. The novel's subject matter is a new departure in the Arabic novel, steeped in the history of the aflaj, a farming system of garden irrigation |

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| | | | | | | | | which is inextricably linked to village life in Oman, and has become the inspiration of many stories and legends. |
| | **2024** | | | | | | | |
| **243** | 2024[L] | *Kull yawm taqrīb*$^{an}$ ("Nearly Every Day")<br>▪ Markaz al-Maḥrūsa | Muḥammed ʿAbd al-Nabī (Mohammed Abdel Nabi)<br>❖ BA in Languages and Translation from U al-Azhar, Dpt. of English & Simultaneous Translation<br>❖ works as a freelance translator<br>❖ 5 SS, 1 novella (*Imprisoned Phantoms,* 2000), 2 novels: *The Return of the Sheikh* (2011) (IPAF 2013[L]), and *The Spider's Room* (2016) (IPAF 2017[S]), some prize-winning<br>❖ also criticism, translations, + teaching creative writing (book on narrative techniques) | | 1977 | 46 | EG | Just before turning 40, Fouad decides to get rid of 30 years' worth of diaries in an effort to free himself of the past and start a new life. However, in browsing through the journals, he instead embarks upon a final writing project. Years go by and the project is uncompleted, until a group of ghosts arrive to lend their assistance, inhabiting Fouad's mind and seeming to know him better than he knows himself. The ghost narrators transform the raw material of the diaries into a vivid portrait of people, times, and events, shining a light on the pivotal moments in an ordinary person's life, while in the background the nation of Egypt looms large. |
| **244** | 2024[L] | *Fūmbī* ("Foumbi")<br>▪ Dār al-Sāqī | Badriyya al-Badrī (Badriya Albadri)<br>❖ born in Muscat<br>❖ poet and novelist<br>❖ many novels (*Behind Loss*, 2015; *The Last Crossing*, 2017, Engl. tr. 2023; *The Shadow of Hermaphroditus,* 2018; *Foumbi*, 2022), some prize-winning, + classical & popular poetry, children's literature (2 young adult novels: *Smoothie, the Adventurer*, 2021; *The Scarecrow*, 2021), scripts for TV series (*Band 9*, = the first police cartoon series in the Arab world) | f | 1975 | 48 | Oman | set in Congo under Belgian colonial rule between the late 19$^{th}$ century and the beginning of the 20$^{th}$ century. According to African legend, the white man is a *foumbi*, a spirit or ghost, fleeing from the grasp of Satan after stealing the ghost's colour. He is an ugly creature who has been beautified to make him tolerable to look at. In the novel, playing out as if in a court of law, we see characters who are either implicated in or witness to events which took place in that period. They try to justify the atrocities they committed, and to reconcile these acts with their conscience; compared with others who are untainted by these crimes. The novel is unflinching in its portrayal of death and suffering caused by the extraction of rubber to African slaves, yet it is equally about the powerful human longing for freedom and dignity. |
| **245** | 2024[L] | *Samiʿtu kull šayʾ* ("I Heard Everything")<br>▪ Dār al-Ḥikma | Sāra al-Ṣarrāf (Sara Alsarraf)<br>❖ born in France<br>❖ graduated (1997) from Dpt of English, U al-Mustanṣiriyya, Baghdad<br>❖ worked first as a news editor at the *Iraq* satellite channel<br>❖ moved to UAE => journalist, presenter, writer<br>❖ interest in social issues => awareness campaigns on social media, prominent influencer<br>❖ *I Heard Everything* (2022) = debut novel | f | 1975 | 48 | IRQ | *I Heard Everything* has two narrative voices: Ishtar, a young girl who lost her parents in an accident and documents her thoughts in a diary; and her maternal aunt Aida, a journalist, who has a love affair with her boss, Abbas. Through their eyes, the atmosphere of 1980s Iraq is brought to life, spanning the turbulent years of the Iran-Iraq war to the harmonious co-existence of Arab, Kurdish and Armenian communities in Baghdad, Basra and Sulaymaniyah at the time. The novel explores the deep attachment in both family relationships and between lovers in intimate detail, through a narrative interwoven with compelling dialogue, song, and the vivid imaginings of a child. |
| **246** | 2024[L] | *al-Waǧh al-ʾāḫar lil-ẓill* ("The Other Face of the Shadow")<br>▪ Dār al-Sāqī | Rašīd al-Ḍaʿīf (Rashid al-Daif)<br>❖ born in Zgharta, Lebanon<br>❖ prof. of Arabic Lit. at the Univ of Lebanon<br>❖ 19 novels (incl. ), 3 poetry collections<br>❖ *Dear Mr Kawabata*, 1995, translated into 8 European languages; *This Side of Innocence*, 1997, Engl.tr. 2001, proze-winning; *Passage to Dusk*, 1986, filmatised in French 2000; *The Tyrant*, 1983, filmatised as *Zunnār al-Nār* "The Belt of Fire" in 2004; *Paving the Sea*, 2011, IPAF 2012[L]) | m | 1945 | 78 | LEB | After being touched by a cloud, the Queen suddenly becomes pregnant. The King has not been near her since he married her, and now the prophecy he once saw in a dream is being fulfilled: she will give birth to a boy who is not fathered by the king, who will one day inherit the throne. The Queen flees, wandering aimlessly in the steppes and wasteland, and later gives birth to her child surrounded by nature. The King and his courtiers track her doggedly for years, convinced that they are battling a world of *jinn* (spirits). The story unfolds in a realm of myth and superstition, until at last "the other face of the shadow" is revealed. |
| **247** | 2024[L] | *ʾUḫfī al-hawà* ("I Hide Passion")<br>▪ Sindbād | Durra al-Fāziʿ (Dorra al-Fazi')<br>❖ born in Tunis<br>❖ writer and lawyer<br>❖ BA in Literature (1993), Teaching Diploma in Law from the | f | 1975 | 48 | TUN | Set in Tunis in 2014-15, *I Hide Passion* depicts the polarisation of political parties and wide-ranging social consequences following the revolution. The main character, the retired General al-Shādhlī al-Sharīf, has lived through all the regimes since independence, and faces both ostracism within his family and unresolved business |

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| | | | Fac. of Law and Political Science Tunis (1997), Diploma in Advanced Legal Studies (2011)<br>❖ teaches Law at Fac. of Economic Sciences and Management in Nabeul, Tunisia<br>❖ 2 novels (*Something of the Sea in Us*, 2020; *I Hide Passion*, 2022), several screenplays for TV series | | | | | from the past. The destinies of the novel's characters intersect, and their conflicting interests spark a violent clash in a working-class neighbourhood where the bright hopes of the revolution are beginning to evaporate. Terrorist attacks spread, and fundamentalism tightens its grip, aided by a crisis in education. |
| **248** | 2024[L] | *ʿAyn al-ḥidʾa* ("Eye of the Kite")<br>▪ Dār Rašm | Ṣāliḥ al-Ḥamad (Saleh al-Hamad)<br>❖ novelist and academic<br>❖ BA Engl.Lit. from U King Abdulaziz, MA in American Lit. U California (2017)<br>❖ works as academic in U King Abdulaziz, Jeddah => several research papers in academic journals<br>❖ *Eye of the Kite* (2023) = his first novel | m | 1989 | 34 | SAU | Wāʾil, a young man in his twenties, is sentenced to death in Saudi Arabia for the murder of his girlfriend Ghāda. The sentence is due to be carried out in 30 days' time, which becomes the novel's timeframe, counting down in days and then hours before the execution. Tracing his teenage years, his university studies in California, and his final days in prison, the novel reveals Wāʾil's internal struggles, the cause of his violent outbursts, and the reason why he has the number 26 tattooed on his arm. It delves into his relationships with the forceful Ghāda and his strict father, whose deteriorating health causes a shift in their relationship; with Salmān, his cousin and opposite in personality; his complicated sister ʿArīj, sometimes tender and at other times his determined adversary; and with his mother, a shadowy and yet significant presence in the home. *Eye of the Kite* explores existential and philosophical themes relating to faith and justice, love and friendship, guilt and forgiveness, and how human beings relate to death and continue to search for meaning in life, even in their final moments. |
| **249** | 2024[L] | *ʿĀṣifa ʿalà l-ǧuzur* ("Storm over the Islands")<br>▪ Dār al-Tanwīr Algeria | ʾAḥmad Manūr (Ahmed Menour)<br>❖ born in El Ançor, Algeria<br>❖ worked as Lecturer in Higher Education at U of Algiers, specialist in Alg. lit (Arabic and French)<br>❖ *For Both Their Sakes, I Lived* (2019, tells life story of Ben Badīs), *The Prince Returns in the Middle of the Night* (2021), *The Great Bazaar* (2022), *Storm over the Islands* (2022), + 3 young adults novels | m | 1945 | 78 | ALG | Muṣṭafà bin Saʿīd is seconded to teach Natural Sciences on the Comoros Islands and finds himself in a teaching faculty akin to a micro-United Nations, with teachers from Arab countries, Europe, Africa and America. This diversity is reflected in the syllabus and variously impacts the teachers' relationships with students and society. Muṣṭafà enjoys a cordial relationship with his students, and there is mutual respect; however, his approach to teaching comes into conflict with some of the local beliefs and taboos. He also falls foul of the regime, which recruits secondary school pupils for its cause. His own students begin to write reports on him, claiming that his lessons are interfering in the internal affairs of the country and messing with their minds. Meanwhile, the country's ruler – who seized power in a military coup d'état – is paranoid about being ousted in a similar coup by the same European mercenaries who helped him seize power. Indeed, his fears are soon realised and he is killed. Muṣṭafà meanwhile pays the penalty for writing about the mercenaries leader Bob Denard in the French press and is exiled. *Storm over the Islands* is one of the first Arabic novels to deal with the society, culture and environment of the Comoros islands. |
| **250** | 2024[L] | *Dāʾirat al-tawābil* ("Spice Circle")<br>▪ al-Mutawassiṭ | Ṣāliḥa ʿUbayd (Salha Obeid)<br>❖ born in Sharjah, UAE<br>❖ several SS (*Alzheimer's,* 2010, German tr. 2011; *Postman of Happiness*, 2012; *iPad of Life in the Style of Zorba*, 2014; *An Implicitly White Lock of Hair*, 2015), novels (*Maybe It's a Joke*, 2018)<br>❖ member of the council of the Dubai Culture and Arts Authority and the Association of Emirati Women Writers<br>❖ founder of the 'Society of the Intellectual' project<br>❖ weekly column in Emirati newspaper *Al-Ru'ya* | f | 1988 | 35 | UAE | The heroine of the novel belongs to a family of spice traders. Those close to her realise that she is able to distinguish the various elements of spices with remarkable accuracy, and with this powerful sense of smell she also judges people based on their scent. When she meets "the boy of the graveyard", she is disgusted and revolted by his smell; yet she is simultaneously drawn to him. As she grows up her family forbid her from playing by the graveyard wall since she is "too old for games", and they later leave the district altogether, putting an end to her friendship with the boy. However, he never forgets their childhood spent together, and one day suddenly appears to ask for her hand in marriage. She refuses, since he now has no discernible scent at all, which she finds unsettling. As well as the story of this |

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| | | | | | | | | personal relationship, *Spice Circle* tracks the wider context of the rapid transformation and growth of Dubai and Emirati society. |
| **251** | 2024[L] | *Qāriʾat nahǧ al-dabbāġīn* ("Reader of the Tanners' Alley")<br>▪ Masciliana | Sufyān Rağab (Sufyan Rajab)<br>❖ born in Enfidha, Tunisia<br>❖ poet, novelist, short story writer, and journalist (literary criticism in *Al Arab*, London, a*l-Amīrāt al-Thaqāfiyya*, and a*l-Ḥayāt al-Thaqāfiyya* magazines)<br>❖ 3 poetry collections, 3 SS, 4 novels (*The Liberal Monkey*, 2016; *The Factory of American Shoes*, 2022; *Today is Friday and Tomorrow Is Thursday*, 2022; and *The Reader of the Tanners' Alley*, 2023), some prize-winning, some translated into Engl, Fr, Ital, Span, Swed | m | 1978 | 45 | TUN | Leila's passion for reading leads her to Tanners' Alley in Tunis, famed for selling of old books. There she encounters an eccentric man who dreams of founding an association for ghostwriters. She becomes unwittingly embroiled in his fantastical schemes, and one day stumbles across an unusual novel alternately written by a male and a female ghostwriter about the experience of a transgender person – purportedly a friend of the male writer. The individual characters and their genders become increasingly fluid, leaving questions about their true identity and that of the narrator, Leila. Although the novel's apparent subject is gender identity, on a deeper level it tackles a deep-rooted fear inside us all, and the challenge of writing in the face of opposition from censorship, power and society. In a layered narrative, it plays on the trope of the ghostwriter to suggest that authors who do not reveal their true selves in their work become insubstantial and ghostlike themselves. |
| **252** | 2024[L] | *al-ʾAṣnām* ("The Idols")<br>▪ Editions Daliman Algeria | ʾAmīn al-Zāwī (Amin Zaoui)<br>❖ born in Bab al Assa, Tlemcen, Algeria<br>❖ prof. of CompLit and Contemp.Thought at Central U, Algiers, was (2008- 2022) Director General of the National Library of Algeria<br>❖ was head of Algerian branch of Anna Lindh Foundation for the Dialogue Between Cultures<br>❖ writes in Arabic and French; novels (Arabic): *The Neighing of the Body* (1982), *Satan's Road* (2009), *The Goatherd* (2011, IPAF 2013[L]), *Sensual Delight* (2012), *The Queen* (2014), *Leg Over Leg* (2016, IPAF 2018[L]), *The Pals* (2018), *The Pasha's Secretary* (2019), *Chewing Gum* (2022); novels (French) include: *La Soumission* (1998); *Haras de Femmes* (2001); *Festin de Mensonges* (2007); *La Chambre de la Vierge Impure* (2009); *L'Enfant de l'Oeuf* (2017); novels translated into 13 languages, numerous international prizes | m | 1956 | 67 | ALG | *The Idols* portrays the loving relationship between two brothers. The younger brother, Humaymid, fiercely defends his older sibling Mahdi, a fragile young man who is assassinated in mysterious circumstances by an Islamic terrorist group in Algiers University. A religious charity working with the terrorist group moves his body by night to the "city of the idols" (now known as Chlef) and it is buried under the rubble of buildings destroyed by an earthquake. Everyone therefore believes that he has been killed by the earthquake, like thousands of the city's inhabitants; all except Humaymid, who begins a long journey in search of the group responsible for killing his brother, following their leader to Afghanistan to take his revenge. At its heart, the novel is a philosophical inversion of the story of Cain and Abel, where the blood of Abel is shed by his brother Cain, playing out against the backdrop of political and religious violence in 1980s Algeria. |
| **253** | 2024[S] | *Bāhbal: Makka Multiverse 1945–2009* ("Bahbel: Makkah Multiverse 1945-2009")<br>▪ Dār Tanwīr – Lebanon | Rağāʾ ʿĀlam (Raja Alem)<br>❖ born in Makkah, currently residing in Paris<br>❖ novels include: *The Silk Road* (1995); *The Holy Man, Wahadanah* (1998); *Khatem* (2007); *The Doves' Necklace* (2010, IPAF 2010[W], tr. into 5 lang.); *Sarab* (2018, transl. to English and German) | f | 1975 | 48 | SAU | The Al-Sardars are a typical example of an ancient and noble family in Makkah. Into this family, where the father controls every aspect of their lives, a child is born – Abbas (Bahbel) – as one of a pair of twins; yet the midwife says the other twin has 'disappeared'. Abbas grows up close to the women of the family, and decides to write about their lives. Through this novel, we see Makkah – and in particular, the lives of women living there – from 1945 to 2009, a period of huge change in a city dominated by the presence of sacred shrines. |
| **254** | 2024[S] | *Ḫātim Sulaymà* ("Suleima's Ring")<br>▪ Tanmiya Publishing | Rīma Bālī (Rima Bali)<br>❖ born in Aleppo<br>❖ studied Commerce and Economics at U Aleppo<br>❖ worked in tourism and hotel sector, managing a historic hotel in old Aleppo<br>❖ continued to live there during the first 3 years of the conflict, before leaving Syria in 2015, now residing in Madrid<br>❖ novels include: *Milagro* (2016); *The Blue Sunflower* (2018; Spanish tr. *El Girasol Azul*); *Suleima's Ring* (2022); *Flute in a* | f | 1969 | 54 | SYR | Unfolding across Aleppo and Toledo, the novel tells the interwoven stories of half Spanish, half Jewish photographer Lucas and Syrian protagonist Selma. Switching between multiple narrators, it explores the relationships between Selma and Shams al-Din – an Italian musician living in Aleppo with whom she is infatuated – along with Lucas, Lucas' girlfriend Lola, and his son. The titular ring, at times held by various characters, alludes to the legendary ring of Solomon with its fabled magical powers. Although Selma, Lucas and Shams al-Din are distinct personalities from contrasting backgrounds, they all share one thing: their love for Aleppo, the enthralling and afflicted city buried under the rubble of dreams and lost |

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| | | | *Western Orchestra* (2023). + a contribution to Arabic/Danish collection of writings entitled *Exile: New Arab Voices* (2019) | | | | | opportunities. Will Suleima's magic ring be enough to free the lost souls of Aleppo? Or will it take another Solomon to come to life and reassert his authority over the warring creatures who are left, if he can only find his lost ring? *Suleima's Ring* draws the reader into an atmosphere permeated by Sufism, perfume, dreams, and passionate love, against the backdrop of the Syrian war. |
| **255** | 2024[S] | *Samāʾ al-Quds al-sābiʿa* ("The Seventh Heaven of Jerusalem")<br>▪ al-Mutawassiṭ | ʾUsāma al-ʿĪsa (Osama al-Eissa)<br>❖ born in Dheisha refugee camp, Bethlehem<br>❖ moved to Jordan in 1987, there journalist for various Arab and Palestinian newspapers, editor-in chief of *Al-Sada* weekly<br>❖ 4 SS (incl. *We, the Poor, Are Still the Most Capable of Love*, 1984); several novels, incl.: *Al Maskobiya* (2010), *The Madmen of Bethlehem* (2013). – 6 academic and historical books, incl. *The Scrolls of the Dead Sea* (2003). – Research for documentary films about Palestinian culture and politics<br>❖ several prizes | m | 1963 | 60 | PAL | *The Seventh Heaven of Jerusalem* takes us to 1970s Jerusalem, when the city is suffering a famine in the wake of a second war in twenty years, and is struggling to come to terms with its trauma under occupation. The novel celebrates place and characters living in the city of holy texts and destiny; yet it also questions unchallenged assumptions, popular slogans and even the sacrifices of the early freedom fighters who – despite the enormity of those sacrifices – failed to liberate the city. The Jerusalem portrayed in heroic songs and official pronouncements is not the Jerusalem of the people, who always end up paying the price. Nor do those versions represent the city trapped in roughly a square kilometre of walls for centuries, enduring incurable wounds enduring incurable wounds, and the rule of one occupier after another, each more violent than the last. This novel does not show Jerusalem as written by the victors. It is, rather, the intractable Jerusalem which is described here, with its inhabitants from many different races and backgrounds; the other Jerusalem of ordinary, defeated people. |
| **256** | 2024[S] | *Muqāmara ʿalà šaraf al-Lēdī Mītsī* ("Gambling on the Honour of Lady Mitzy")<br>▪ Dār Dawwin | ʾAḥmad al-Mursī (Ahmed al-Morsi)<br>❖ BA in Media from U Cairo, Dept. of Radio and TV<br>❖ works as journalist and producer for Dream TV, editor for the Rotana network, writing articles for Egyptian and Arab newspapers such as *Al-Watan*<br>❖ 3 novels: *What is Left of the Sun* (2020), *Written* (2021), *Gambling on the Honour of Lady Mitsy* (2023) | m | 1992 | 31 | EG | *Gambling on the Honour of Lady Mitzi* transports us back to the beginning of the last century in Egypt through the absorbing stories of four people who meet at a race-course: a boy forced to become a jockey; an English lady who buys his horse, having seen in the young boy the image of her deceased son; a bookmaker; and a retired policeman who places bets to pay for his sick wife's treatment. Triggered by the unexpected win of the boy's horse, adventures and struggles follow as the characters' interests and aspirations collide and emotions run high. |
| **257** | 2024[S] | *al-Fusayfisāʾī* ("The Mosaicist")<br>▪ Masciliana | ʿĪsa Nāṣirī (Eissa Nasiri)<br>❖ born in M'Rirt, Morocco<br>❖ MA from U Sidi Mohammed Ben Abdallah, Fes (thesis? about Language Development and Issues of Literary Terminology)<br>❖ currently secondary school teacher of Arabic Language<br>❖ SS *The Fanged Monster* (2016), novels (*The Mosaicist*, 2023 = debut novel); several prizes | m | 1985 | 38 | MOR | Inspired by the art of the mosaic, *The Mosaicist* is set in the Moroccan town of Oualili, site of the ancient Roman city of Volubilis. It is a novel conceived as three manuscripts: two novels, and a memoir. The events of the first section, 'The Young Moor', take place in the second century A.D. during the Roman occupation of Morocco, inspired by mosaics depicting the protest of the Moors – the original inhabitants of the region – against the Roman invasion. In the second part, set in 1994 to 1996, American author Ariadna Noel embarks on a search for a missing piece of mosaic. She is directed from afar by a fellow American, Lina, widow of a Moroccan husband, in whose house the missing piece rests. Ariadna meets Jawad, author of *The Young Moor,* and they begin a romantic relationship whilst she writes her own novel, *Nights of Oualili,* telling the story of her research and their love. The third manuscript contains the memoirs of a psychologist, Nawal al-Hinnawi, who writes about two of her patients: Tihami al-Ismaili and Ayash al-Hafyan. The latter was falsely accused of stealing the valuable statue of Bacchus from the Oualili archeological site and spent ten years in prison. The three manuscripts connect the distant past with the present and, like mosaic pieces, fit together to create a novel that is simultaneously historical, fantastical, and psychological, posing questions about freedom, memory, writing and love. |
| **258** | 2024[W] | *Qināʿ bi-lawn al-samāʾ* ("A Mask, the Colour of the | Bāsim Ḫandaqǧī (Basim Khandaqji)<br>❖ born in Nablus, Palestine | m | 1983 | 40 | PAL | Nur, an archaeologist living in a refugee camp in Ramallah, finds a blue identity card belonging to an Israeli in the pocket of an old coat. He adopts the mask of the |

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| | | Sky")<br>▪ Dār al-Ādāb | ❖ studied Journalism and Media at U Al-Najah, Nablus<br>❖ imprisoned 21 years old (2004)<br>❖ completed university studies in Political Science at U Al-Quds while in prison (thesis on Israeli Studies)<br>❖ continued writing, also about literature, politics, female Palestinian activists and prisoners inside Israeli prisons.<br>❖ several poetry collections (*Rituals of the First Time,*2010; *The Breath of a Nocturnal Poem*, 2013; *The Narcissus of Isolation*, 2017, several novels (incl. *The Eclipse of Badr al-Dīn,* 2019; *The Breath of a Woman Let Down*, 2020; and *A Mask, the Colour of the Sky*, 2023). | | | | | occupier in an attempt to understand the Zionist mindset. As "Nur" becomes "Ur", he joins an archaeological dig on a settlement, and historical Palestine is revealed. In the chasm between Nur and Ur – between the blue Israeli identity card, and the pass required by Palestinians for travel within Israel; and between the character's suppressed original narrative, and the new dominant one – will Nur succeed in throwing off his mask, triumphing over Ur and reaching the light? |
| | **2025** | | | | | | | |
| | 2025[L] | | | | | | | |
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