

# New Books from Israel • Fall 2020



THE INSTITUTE FOR THE TRANSLATION OF HEBREW LITERATURE





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# NEW BOOKS FROM ISRAEL

Fall 2020

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All contracts and negotiations through the Institute

# Ayelet Gundar-Goshen

## *Relocation*

a novel

Tel Aviv, Achuzat Bayit, forthcoming

**Ayelet Gundar-Goshen** was born in Israel in 1982. After completing an MA in psychology at Tel Aviv University, she studied film and screenwriting at the Sam Spiegel Film School in Jerusalem. Gundar-Goshen has written a number of screenplays, and has produced short films which were screened at film festivals in Israel and abroad. She has also written and co-written a number of TV series.

Gundar-Goshen has been awarded 2nd prize at the IEMed European Short Story Competition (Barcelona, 2010), the Gottlieb Screenplay Prize (2010), the Berlin Today Award for the screenplay of the short film *Batman at the Checkpoint* (Berlin, 2012), the Sapir Prize for Debut Fiction (2012) and the Adei-Wizo Prize (Italy, 2016) for *One Night, Markovitch*. For her second novel, *Waking Lions*, she received the Jewish Quarterly Wingate Prize (UK, 2017) and the French WIZO Prize (2017). *Waking Lions* is included in New York Times' 100 Notable Books of 2017. *Waking Lions*, is being adapted for a TV series by NBC. Gundar-Goshen's books have been published in 13 languages.

**L**ilac Schusterman has it all. A house with a pool in the heart of Silicon Valley, a husband who is a deputy CEO of an Israeli start-up that has been bought by Americans, and a son whom she dearly loves. The family has lived out their 'temporary relocation to California' for twenty years, and Lilac feels like part of the American dream. But then a shooting attack on the Palo Alto synagogue on Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year, turns the dream into a nightmare.

Although no-one in the family was hurt in the attack, Lilac is haunted by fears. The shooter was a mentally unstable African-American man forced out of the neighborhood by the gentrification process. Lilac fears an upsurge of antisemitism, terrified by the possibility that her son, Adam, will be a victim of the next incident. When she hears of a self-defense workshop given by an Israeli parent, an engineer with combat background, she enrolls Adam, who is quickly drawn to Uri's charisma. The self-defense workshop becomes a significant part of Adam's life and Lilac is relieved.

Then, just as anxiety over the synagogue attack is receding, another tragedy occurs: A classmate of Adam's collapses and dies at a class party. At first, there seems to be no link between the two events.

Who was Jamal Jones, and how are his life and his death linked to Adam? Gradually, Lilac's concern about her son turns into a disturbing uneasiness: Could it be that Jamal's death wasn't an accident? Lilac's worry sets her off on a detective trail after her own son, trying to grasp who the child she has brought up really is. As well as being a psychological thriller, the book tackles a dramatic issue that all parents face: Do I know my own children? It also raises questions about the fate of migrants and the delicate fabric of their relations with local residents, and it bares the truth about the lofty dream of 'making it in America.'



PHOTO © ALON SIGA

No reviews available yet.  
For *Liar and the City*:

A great book with psychological depth.

**Die Zeit**

Evocative...Gundar-Goshen writes sensitively of inner turmoil and loneliness.

**New York Times Book Review**

With an alert and ironic pen, the novelist and psychologist is suing a society that is quick to lynch today those it adulated the day before.

**Le Monde des Livres**

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# Yishai Sarid

## *Victorious*

a novel

Tel Aviv, Am Oved, 2020. 195 pp.



**Yishai Sarid** was born in 1965 in Tel Aviv. He studied law at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and received a graduate degree in public administration from Harvard University. Sarid has worked in the State Attorney's office as prosecutor for criminal cases; he now works as an attorney in the private sector. He also contributes articles to the Hebrew press.

Sarid's second novel, *Limassol*, won the Grand Prix de Littérature Policière for Best Foreign Crime Novel (France, 2011), the SNCF Award (France, 2011), the Maria Giorgetti International Award (Italy, 2013), and was shortlisted for the prestigious IMPAC Award (Dublin, 2012). *The Third*, his fourth novel, won the Bernstein Prize (2016).

Sarid's novels have been published in 12 languages.

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This is the story of Abigail, a psychologist who has served in the military for many years and has developed a profound expertise in the workings of the minds of soldiers in combat. Unlike other mental-health officers, she has always seen herself as part of the fighting forces and she has never hesitated to join the troops in training exercises and even during actual operations.

Abigail has a close and tender relationship with the impressive man she met many years ago as a young battalion commander and who now occupies the office of the Chief of the General Staff. At decisive moments she is summoned to advise him on how to achieve a crushing victory in an upcoming campaign.

Among her duties is providing therapy for soldiers suffering from the trauma of warfare. Contrary to the accepted rules, she forms close personal ties with her patients.

When Abigail's son Shauli, whom she has raised as a single mother, is drafted and decides to volunteer for the paratroops, her life's mission, her professional beliefs and her loyalty to the service are put to a dramatic challenge. When she finds herself in a situation where she herself must confront the act of killing, she experiences impulses whose intensity she has never contemplated.

Yishai Sarid has created the figure of a purposeful, passionate woman whose family life and romantic relationships are lived out in the shadow of the killing.

Foreign rights sold: German, **Kein und Aber**, Zurich



PHOTO © DAN FORGES

I read *Victorious* in a few hours. It's a riveting book that keeps the reader in suspense.

**Makor Rishon**

*Victorious*, Sarid's sixth book of prose, makes efficient use of the writer's toolbox... It offers an escape from the burning, amorphous afflictions we face, into the world of his story and it enables us to lance and drain abscesses of doubt and fear with a surgical scalpel.

**Yedioth Ahronoth**



# Nurith Gertz

## *What Was Lost to Time*

biographical novel

Hevel Modi'in, Kinneret, Zmora-Bitan, Dvir. Forthcoming



נורית גרץ

מה שאבד בזמן  
ביוגרפיה של ידירות

**Nurith Gertz** was born in Israel in 1940. She is professor emeritus of literature and film at the Open University, has served as section head in the film and television department at Tel Aviv University, and is currently head of the culture and production department at Sapir College. She has also taught abroad at UC Berkeley, Brandeis University and University of Paris-VIII. Gertz has published numerous academic studies as well as four works of biographical fiction. The second, *Unrepentant*, was selected one of the 10 Best Books in 2008. Gertz has received the Brenner Prize (2009) and the Book Publishers' Association Gold Award (2010).

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PHOTO © ALEX KANTOR

No reviews available yet.  
For *An Ocean Between Us*:

It has been some time since I have read a book that was so meticulous, so exquisite that it moved me to tears...

**Author Amos Oz**

I read Gertz's superb book without a break, thrilled and excited... A rare book.

**Poet Haim Gouri, Haaretz**

One of the loveliest and most profound love stories ever to be written.

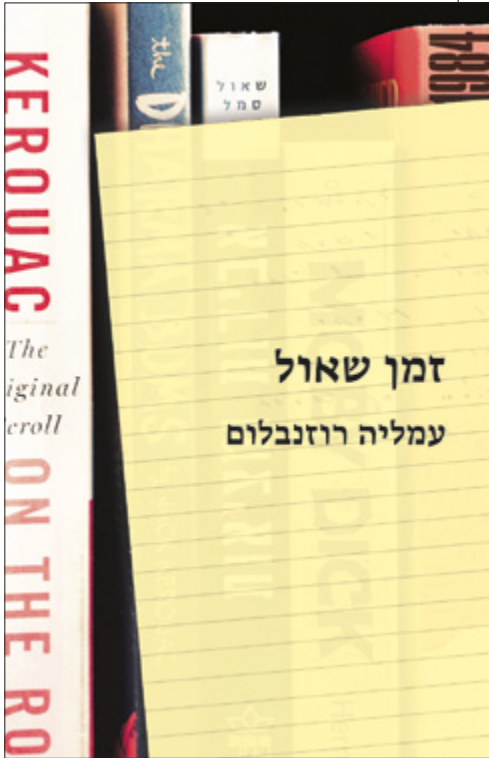
**Yedioth Ahronoth**

# Amalia Rosenblum

## *Saul Searching*

a novel

Ben Shemen, Keter, 2020. 411 pp.



**Amalia Rosenblum** was born in New York in 1974 and grew up in Tel Aviv. She spent the 1990s in New York. A writer, journalist and screenwriter, she has an MA in philosophy, another in anthropology from New School University, New York and a PhD in psychology. Rosenblum teaches at the Tel Aviv College of Management. She also writes regularly for the Israeli press, in particular literary reviews for *Haaretz*; she also writes for women's and parenting magazines. Her screenplays for *Holy for Me* and *Rum* have won awards at the Chicago, Mannheim and Jerusalem festivals.

Rosenblum's second book, *Where the Village Road Ends*, won the Ze'ev Prize for Children's Literature (2007). Her books for YA have been published in German and Italian translation to great acclaim.

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**S**aul Semel's main problem is other people. Otherwise, he is doing just fine. He is one of the best-known and respected writers in Israel, he has appeared on the world's most esteemed literary platforms, and in the fall of 2001—the time of the attack on the World Trade Center—he is a visiting professor at New York University. However, truth to tell, he has not had anything published in a decade.

If you were to ask Saul, he'd say that as far as he is concerned this is quite alright. But those around him are less satisfied. His editor, his ex-wife and even his mother all expect him to try harder in order to maintain his literary status. It is perhaps because of this that when he meets Alona—a brilliant, enigmatic young woman who worships his very being—Saul loses his head. He has never met anyone like Alona. She can write like the devil, although she does not know much about literature; she is emotionally defenseless yet has a survivor's nature. When Saul realizes that Alona possesses the key to his return to the heights of the literary world, he ignores all the alarm signals and sets out on an ambitious and wild path, endangering himself, Alona, and all that is dear to him.

*Saul Searching* is an exhilarating novel, entertaining and thoughtful, that probes our fear of admitting that the best parts of our lives are behind us, our anxiety that everything we think about ourselves is wrong, and the realization that the moment that someone even considers doing a deal with the devil, they have in effect already signed that deal.

PARTIAL ENGLISH TRANSLATION IN PROGRESS



PHOTO © VARDI KAHANA

She [writes] without rage... but rather with great enjoyment, as if at a big literary banquet at which the entire character of the hero is guzzled down, and then a glass is raised to toast the deed.

**Haaretz**

This book is an unadulterated pleasure, even for readers who take no particular interest in the dark side of the literary world.

**La'Isha**

*Saul Searching* indisputably elevates [Rosenblum] to the highest rank of Hebrew writers.

**Yedioth Ahronoth**

# Shulamit Lapid

## *Butterfly in the Shed*

a thriller

Rishon Lezion, Yedioth Ahronoth/Hemed Books, 2020. 208 pp.

**E**lisha Friedrich, a successful Israeli writer, discovers that a manuscript he has been working on has been published under someone else's name. Stunned and livid, he sets out to find the literary thief. On the way he encounters writers' envy and deceit, love and passion, treachery and vengeance, and he meets up with quite a few of the much-loved heroes of books by Shulamit Lapid herself, such as the reclusive barman Babu and the small-town journalist Lizzy Badihi, investigator of unsolved murder cases. Taking an ironic and trenchant view of the literary scene and its critics, Lapid has woven a detective story, a roman à clef, a story about the writing of a novel, but mainly a book that is hard to put down.



**Shulamit Lapid** was born in Tel Aviv in 1934. She majored in Middle Eastern studies and English literature at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. A former chairperson of the Hebrew Writers' Association, Lapid is the author of novels, suspense novels, collections of short stories, plays, a book of poetry and books for children and youth. She has received the Prime Minister's Prize for Literature (1987), the International Theater Institute Award (1988), the German Krimipreis (1996), the Neuman Prize (1996) the Book Publishers Association's Gold and Platinum Prizes for Nunia (2006; 2007), the Book Publishers Association's Gold Prize for *Maybe They Were Not* (2011) and for *Human Error* (2013) and the Steimatzky Prize for *Human Error* (2013).

Her novels and thrillers have been published in 10 languages.

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PHOTO © LIHIE LAPID

*Butterfly in the Shed*, full of humor, that skips from one genre to another, reminds us how great this writer's influence has been on Israeli suspense literature.

**Haaretz**

Lizzie Badihi, one of the most enchanting and impressive female characters in modern Hebrew literature...steals the show, leaving one wanting more, as she always does.

**Ma'ariv**





רונית מטלון

שלג

**Ronit Matalon** (1959-2017) was born in Ganei Tikva, Israel, to a family of Egyptian-Jewish descent. She studied literature and philosophy at Tel Aviv University. Matalon worked as a journalist for Israel TV and for the daily *Haaretz*, covering Gaza and the West Bank during the First Intifada. She was also a critic and book reviewer for *Haaretz*. She was senior lecturer in Hebrew and comparative literature at Haifa University and taught creative writing there and at the Sam Spiegel Film School in Jerusalem. Matalon was a member of the Forum for Mediterranean Culture at the Van Leer Institute. Three of her books were bestsellers in Israel, and her children's book, *A Story that Begins with a Snake's Funeral*, was made into a movie.

Matalon received the Prime Minister's Prize (1994), the prestigious Bernstein Prize (2009), the Neuman Prize (2010), the Prix Alberto-Benveniste (France, 2013) for *The Sound of Our Steps*, the EMET prize (2016) and the Brenner Prize for *And the Bride Closed the Door* (2017). In 2010, she received an Honorary Doctorate from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

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## *Snow*

novella

Tel Aviv, Am Oved, 2019. 184 pp.

A man and a woman stand face-to-face in a snow-covered New York street. Once, they were lovers. Now, he is married to another woman and lives in Israel, while she is married to another man and lives in Manhattan. Nevertheless, she has contacted him and asked for a meeting, after years of being apart. Why did she do this? How did their love affair begin, and why did it end? And is there a chance that it can be resuscitated?

Ronit Matalon wrote archetypal variations of the family novel genre that have become classics of Israeli literature. She wrote tangled, dark and amusing love stories. *Snow* is a novella that she began in 2002 but never completed. It is an attempt to integrate two stories: one about a relationship between a woman and a man, probing the connections in adult romantic love; the other about family ties during childhood and adolescence. Towards the end of her life, Matalon returned to *Snow* but did not finish it. Despite this, the beauty and literary power unique to her writing radiate from its pages with no less intensity than they do from her completed works.

Ronit Matalon died in December 2017, aged 58. Different versions of the novella were found in a folder in the room where she wrote. This is one of them.

*Snow* topped the bestsellers list for many weeks following publication.

Matalon's books have been published in translation in seven languages. Her novella *And the Bride Closed the Door* was published to great acclaim in the USA (**New Vessel Press**); France (**Actes Sud**); Germany (**Luchterhand**); Spain (**Minuscula**); The Netherlands (**Ambo/Anthos**) and Italy (**Giuntina**).



PHOTO © IRIS NESHER

The importance of the publication of this novel lies, of course, in the very fact that it exists. *Snow* opens up an engrossing view of the writing processes employed by Matalon, surely one of the finest authors to have worked here.

**Maariv**

For *And the Bride Closed the Door*: [A] virtuosic novel....The lightness of Matalon's tale belies its heft. In prose that is both abrupt and tender, she skewers the hydraulics of family and the insensitivities of those who think themselves exquisitely sensitive.

**The New York Times**



# Roy Chen

## *Souls*

a novel

Ben Shemen, Keter, 2020, 325 pp.



**Roy Chen**, author, playwright and translator, was born in Tel Aviv in 1980. His paternal forefathers settled in the Galilee after the Jews were expelled from Spain over five centuries ago, and his mother's family immigrated to Israel from Morocco in the late 1940s.

Since 2007, Chen has been the house dramatist for the Gesher Theater in Jaffa. Productions of his works there include: *In the Tunnel*, *Herzl Said!*; *I, Don Quixote*; *Alice*; *The Journeys of Odysseus*; *The Spirit of the Theater*; *Someone like Me*. Chen's *The Draft Dodger*, a comedy devoid of political and/or ideological commitment, ran at the Tzavta theater in Tel Aviv. Productions of his plays, adaptations and translations have been staged in China, Russia and the U.S., among other countries.

Roy Chen, an autodidact, taught himself English, Russian, French, and Italian. He has translated into Hebrew classical works of Russian literature by Pushkin, Dostoyevsky and Chekhov, among others, as well as over 40 plays. He lectures on translation, writing and theater.

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Outwardly, it is impossible to guess that Grisha, a plump, quiet man who lives with his mother in an apartment in a crumbling project, has been reincarnated from body to body, from country to country, from century to century. But the lives he lived 400 years ago in a remote *shtetl* in Eastern Europe, in 18th century Venice, and 100 years later in Morocco, have left their marks and scars on him.

Grisha is perhaps the most truthful liar you have even come across, but even so no one seems to believe him. Perhaps he doesn't even believe himself. His mother will tell you that the reincarnation of souls is total nonsense. From her point of view, "There is only one life. All the rest is metaphor." All through *Souls*, Grisha and his mother fight mercilessly for the heart of the reader. But who will triumph: the soul or the body; fantasy or reality; mother or son, or the holy spirit?

*Souls* is a dizzying, brilliant carnival; a virtuoso novel that skips between eras and styles but is so entrenched in the Jewish roots of the author that it almost hurts. It is a novel that deals with the deceptive flexibility of the human soul and the desperate yearning for meaning, or at least for one small soul that will understand us.

Foreign rights sold: Italian, **Giuntina**, Florence; Russian, **Phantom**, Moscow.

EXCERPT IN ENGLISH TRANSLATION AVAILABLE



PHOTO © POLINA ADAMOV

A remarkable work of literature, fast flowing, cabaret-like, and brilliant. It is glowing, exciting and effortless. Reading it is like being on a dizzying roller-coaster ride in scenery that skillfully combines emotion and Jewish humor.

**Haaretz**

Overflowing with literary tricks and kaleidoscopic games that present a different picture and new characters at every twist.

**Makor Rishon**

# Dror Burstein

## *Present*

nature writing

Raanana, Even Hoshen, 2020. 96 pp.



דרור בורשטיין  
הווה

ה

**Dror Burstein** was born in 1970 in Netanya, Israel, and lives in Tel Aviv. He first became a fully qualified lawyer, then he left the legal field and started studying literature. He received a PhD in Hebrew literature from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem in 2001 and now teaches at Tel Aviv University. A literary editor and curator of exhibitions, Burstein writes literary and art reviews for the Hebrew press and has also edited programs for Israel Radio's music station. Since 2011 he is editor of the poetry journal *Helikon*. Burstein has been awarded the Jerusalem Prize for Literature (1997), the Ministry of Science and Culture Prize for Poetry (2002), the Bernstein Prize (2005), the Prime Minister's Prize (2006) and the Goldberg Prize (2014).

Burstein's novels have been published in French (**Actes Sud**), English (**Farrar Straus and Giroux; Dalkey Archive**), German (**Wallstein**), Italian (**Riuniti**) and Turkish (**Dedalus**).

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10 out of 10.

**Critics' Choice, Haaretz**

Burstein takes a look at the eternal and at the marginal, and it is all like a refreshing gush of spring water... A gem of a book.

**Yedioth Ahronoth**

# Yossi Sucary

## *Amzaleg*

a novel

Tel Aviv, Am Oved, 2019. 179 pp.



**Yossi Sucary** was born in Ramat Gan, Israel, in 1959 and grew up in the disadvantaged neighborhood of Pardes Katz. When he was eight, his family moved to Tel Aviv, where he still lives. Sucary studied at the Institute for the History and Philosophy of Science and Ideas at Tel Aviv University. He now teaches at the Tel Aviv College of Management, Bezalel Academy of Art and Design and Minshar School of Art. His books are included in university curricula. Sucary is the recipient of the Brenner Prize (2014) and the Prime Minister's Prize (2015).

Sucary's novel *Emilia* was published in French (**Actes Sud**). *Benghazi-Bergen-Belsen* was published in English (**Create Space**, Charleston, USA).

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PHOTO © YEHIEL YANAI

A rare literary product of the cultural climate in Israel...a uniquely important book. This is a brave and honest work that takes on a muzzled, insufficiently discussed social phenomenon, in an open, revealing manner.

**Haaretz**

A touching figure, one that does not fall into any defined ideological category.

**Israel Hayom**

A lucid novel, wise, thought-provoking and enjoyable.

**Makor Rishon**



# Yossi Sucary

## *Benghazi-Bergen-Belsen*

a novel

Tel Aviv, Am Oved, 2013. 304 pp.



**Yossi Sucary** was born in Ramat Gan, Israel, in 1959 and grew up in the disadvantaged neighborhood of Pardes Katz. When he was eight, his family moved to Tel Aviv, where he still lives. Sucary studied at the Institute for the History and Philosophy of Science and Ideas at Tel Aviv University. He now teaches at the Tel Aviv College of Management, Bezalel Academy of Art and Design and Minshar School of Art. His books are included in university curricula. Sucary is the recipient of the Brenner Prize (2014) and the Prime Minister's Prize (2015).

Sucary's novel *Emilia* was published in French (**Actes Sud**). *Benghazi-Bergen-Belsen* was published in English (**Create Space**, Charleston, USA).

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*Benghazi-Bergen-Belsen* is the first novel in Hebrew—and almost certainly in any language—to tell the story of the Jews of Libya in the Holocaust. Set from the time of the German occupation of Libya in 1941 until the liberation of Bergen-Belsen concentration camp in 1945, it relates the saga of the Hajaj family, distinguished members of the Jewish community of Benghazi, who are uprooted from their way of life, their beloved city and their homeland. Together with other Libyan Jews, they are transported by ship from the searing Sahara desert to Italy, then to a detention camp in the snow-covered mountains, and from there by train to Germany, to be incarcerated and die in Bergen-Belsen.

Three journeys are interwoven in the novel. One relates the hardships experienced by the Libyan Jews, and the master-slave relationship that arises between the children of black Africa and their Italian and German prisoners. Another is the coming-of-age story of the heroine, Silvana Hajaj, an educated, intelligent and good-looking young woman who rejects the patriarchal norms of her background. The third is an acoustical journey into the sounds of the different languages spoken by the characters, especially the Libyan Jewish Arab dialect.

The novel is very different from other, more familiar accounts of the Holocaust: it is the Holocaust of Jews from Arab countries, whose dark skin and Arabic language place them on an even lower rung on the Nazi racial scale than European Jews. They are viewed as aliens even by the European Jews who share their fate; they are foreign 'others' even on that 'other planet', as some writers have described the world of the Holocaust.

Based on true events, *Benghazi-Bergen-Belsen* rescues an important, but largely forgotten chapter of history from oblivion.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION AVAILABLE



PHOTO © YEHEL YANAI

For the first time, a novel has appeared that tells the story of Libya's Jews in the Holocaust. It provides a magnificent depiction, replete with beauty, warmth and love, of life before the calamity.

**Haaretz**

An important book. The double foreignness of dark-skinned, desert-dwelling Jews in snow-white Europe is an aspect of the Holocaust that is not spoken about enough.

**TimeOut**



# Yair Assulin

## *The Drive*

a novel

Tel Aviv, Xargol Books and Am Oved, 2011. 102 pp.



**Yair Assulin** is a thinker and author. He holds a BA in history and philosophy from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and is a graduate of the Mandel Leadership Institute. He was a visiting lecturer at Yale University. Assulin writes a weekly cultural-political column for *Haaretz*, edits scripts and teaches writing and philosophy. He served as artistic advisor for TV: Hot (drama) and Channel 8 (documentary). He was chief artistic advisor for the Gesher Multicultural Film Fund and the Avi Chai/Gesher Film and Media Collaborative. He has been a TV presenter and hosts a weekly radio program on philosophy, culture and Israeli society at the Israeli Public Broadcasting Corporation.

Assulin was awarded the Sapir Prize for Debut Fiction, The Prime Minister's Prize and the Ministry of Culture Prize. He has written two prizewinning novels, *The Drive* (2011) and *The Things Themselves* (2014), and the longform poem *Munich* (2014). He is editor and creator of the collection *Hear My Voice: New Old Psalms* (2017).

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PHOTO © DEVORA ASSULIN

Poignant... Assulin shines at depicting the soldier's feelings of unease and the irreconcilable space between soldier and commander... This work on the fragility of the human spirit is touching."

**Publishers Weekly**

*The Drive* portrays the mesmerizing story of a young Israeli torn between his own powerlessness and his lust to live. In the grip of Assulin's bracing novel, his hopes become ours.

**Benjamin Balint, author of *Kafka's Last Trial***

Foreign Rights sold: English, **New Vessel Press**, New York.

# Eran Bar-Gil

## *Of Death and Honey*

a novel

Tel Aviv, Am Oved, 2019. 355 pp.



**Eran Bar-Gil** was born in Holon, Israel, in 1969. He studied psychology and comparative literature at Bar Ilan University, and is also a musician. Bar-Gil writes articles and reviews for the Israeli press, and has published collections of short stories, books of poetry and novels. He has spent a few years between Israel and Africa and is working on a literary-musical trilogy whose first part, *1:1*, was published in 2005. Bar-Gil has been awarded the Bernstein Prize (2006), the ACUM Prize for fiction three times (2007; 2010; 2017), the Johanna Prenner Prize (2008) for a film script based on his novel, *Iron*, the ACUM Prize for Poetry (2013) and the Prime Minister's Prize (2014). *Saving Neta*, a film based on his fourth novel, *Iron*, was released in 2017.

Bar-Gil's novel *Horseshoe and Violin* was published in German (**Rowohlt**).

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A seemingly normative family comes together at a time of crisis, and their story, spanning more than a decade, unfolds through the voices of three of the family members. The father is a veteran beekeeper, the mother a school principal and their daughter a flight attendant who is eager to see the world. The son/brother, however, has become a criminal. How will his family react on the day he tries to escape the law?

In language that alternates between gentle and refined on the one hand, coarse and rough on the other, their stories are interwoven to become one, as family loyalty is put to the test.

Eran Bar-Gil presents a complex dilemma, one that becomes ever more intense as the novel progresses. He skillfully combines a psychological and an action novel, using the finest prose.

*Of Death and Honey* was awarded the ACUM Prize in the category of works submitted anonymously.



PHOTO © GADI DAGON

Don't miss this novel.  
**Yedioth Ahronoth**

In his fine new book, Eran Bar-Gil draws an excellent portrait of a family... in three very well-written voices, with skill and craftsmanship.

**Haaretz**

# Dana Heifetz

## *Dolphins in Kiryat Gat*

Short stories

Jerusalem, Safra & Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 2015. 176 pp.



**Dana Heifetz** was born in Tel Aviv in 1965, where she lives today. She is a philosopher, bibliotherapist, human rights lawyer and editor – and all these worlds can be found in her literary work. Heifetz holds a PhD in philosophy, an LLB, an MA in literature and an MAAT in bibliotherapy. She studied creative writing at Tel Aviv University and at the University of Chicago.

Alongside her academic research and her philosophy book *Secular Grace*, Heifetz has published short stories in several literary magazines. Her short story *Drowned* was translated into English and published in *SmokeLong Quarterly – Global Flash* (2018).

Heifetz's first collection of short stories, *Dolphins in Kiryat Gat* (2015), won the Israel Writers Association Prize and the Ministry of Culture Prize (2015). She also received the National Library of Israel's 2019 scholarship to encourage young Israeli writers. Her second collection of short stories, *Another Effort*, was published in 2019.

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PHOTO © TAL MOLCHO

Dana Heifetz's writing is engrossing due to the psychological design of the characters in her stories and her observation of the lives of young people in contemporary Israel, as well as the clean, precise style of her prose.

**From the judges' citation, Israeli Authors Association Prize**



# Rinat Schnadower



## *Showroom*

a novel

Ben Shemen, Keter, 2018. 277 pp.

**N**ina makes a living as a photographer of cadavers at the morgue, but she aspires to become a successful artist. One day, the body of a young woman is brought in, and Nina sees that lying on the cold steel table is her perfect double. From that moment on, in a boundlessly uninhibited adventure, Nina invades the lives of the people (and a cat) that the dead woman has left behind. From her point of view, all means are justified in order to produce a work of art that will leave no one indifferent, not even the local art world, which condemns her.

*Showroom* is a trenchant, vibrant and impertinent psychological novel that centers around a character who refuses to play by the rules, or even to understand them. From autopsy rooms to gallery spaces, Schnadower does not hesitate to lay bare the duplicitous morality of her characters in order to ironically and entertainingly depict a world that is made up entirely of hypocrisy and deceit as well as art, sex, and self-destruction.

**Rinat Schnadower** was born in 1978 in Mexico City. Since 1997, she has lived and worked in Tel Aviv. She holds a BA in comparative literature and arts from Tel Aviv University.

Schnadower has translated over 20 novels from Spanish to Hebrew. Among the authors she has translated: Cesar Aira, Sergio Pitol, Valeria Luiselli, Claudia Piñeiro, Guillermo Fadanelli, Juan Pablo Villalobos. As well as her literary work, she is a visual artist whose work has been featured in solo and group exhibitions in Israel and abroad. Between 2014 and 2019, she was chief photographer of Israel's Forensic Institute, a job that served as the background for her novel *Showroom*.

Her first book of short stories, *The Trouble Web of Jesus Magno and the Dragon's Vengeance* was published by Hakibbutz Hameuchad in 2006. *Showroom* (Keter, 2018) is her first novel.

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PHOTO © REVITAL GAL

Showroom is an accomplished and wise book... Contemporary comic literature with elements of suspense and social satire.

**Yedioth Ahronoth**



# Eldad Cohen

## *Wake Up, Mom*

a novel

Rishon LeZion, Miskal, 2019. 327 pp.



**Eldad Cohen** was born and grew up in Jerusalem. He has an MA in clinical psychology from Tel Aviv University. He lives and works as a psychologist in Tel Aviv. His military service as a combat soldier (1983-86), deeply affected him and found its way into some of his short stories.

Cohen has written three plays, three books of adult fiction and one book for children. His play *Repertory Theatre* (2012) received awards in major theatre festivals all over the world, including the Edinburgh Fringe, and Cohen won Playwright of the Year at the Israeli Fringe Theatre Golden Hedgehog Awards (2013). Other awards include: Ministry of Culture Prize for debut works for *Look at Me* (1998); Best Play and Best Playwright, International Festival of Plays for Children in Haifa for *Summer Holiday* (2004).

*Wake Up, Mom* is Cohen's first novel. Published in 2019, it became an immediate bestseller. It was selected as one of the recommended books of the year by the Ministry of Education, and has been adapted for the stage by Cohen and Dori Parnes.

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**Y**uda, a 12-year-old boy, lives with his mother in a small apartment overlooking the Machaneh Yehuda market in Jerusalem. He has always thought that his father was dead. "So now think that he is alive, and you have half an hour to think that," his mother tells him one morning.

At once, Yuda sets out on an absurd journey, full of trials and tribulations, to find his father. A succession of unlikely characters appear, among them: Yuda's good friend Captain Avot, who suffers from PTSD; another friend, Ronit, who has to eat before she can get ideas; his mother, both the prettiest woman in the market and a math teacher who worships Julio Iglesias; and even Yuda himself, curious and naïve, funny and touching.

This is an enchanting tale about the inner world of a boy, set in Jerusalem and Israel of the early 1980s. Through poetic, distinctive language, Yuda opens up his heart to us to reveal a sensitive and humorous view of the world he lives in.



PHOTO © OREN BIRAN

An Israeli novel infused with nostalgia for the Jerusalem of the 1980s.

**Makor Rishon**

A book with smells and sounds... heart wrenching and funny.

**Otzar Milim blog**

# Haim Chaimoff

## *Chirpan in Dreams*

historical novel

Or Yehuda, Kinneret, Zmora-Bitan, Dvir, 2006. 621 pp.



*Chirpan in Dreams* is a work of historical fiction that traces the saga of four generations of a Jewish family that has settled in Bulgaria. Their journey begins in the Russian steppes and continues in Turkey, from where they flee to Bulgaria—the young state that in 1878 has just thrown off the yoke of the Ottoman Empire. The family integrates well into the community in the southern provincial town of Chirpan, home to Orthodox Christians, Muslim Turks and Jews, and it seems as if they have found a peaceful haven. But then reality brings them down to earth.

In this wide-ranging family saga, the author considered that he has fulfilled a duty to Bulgarian Jewry, and in particular to those who lived Chirpan, to whom the book is dedicated.

**Haim Chaimoff** was born in Chirpan, Bulgaria in 1931. He began writing when he was nine, and completed his first novel when he was 17.

In 1941, the Nazi-inspired Law for the Protection of the Nation was promulgated, abolishing or severely restricting the rights of Bulgaria's Jews. Chaimoff's father, a physician, was conscripted and sent to work in remote areas, and the whole family moved around with him.

Along with other Bulgarian Jews, he was narrowly saved from the fate of other European Jews in the Holocaust, when the deputy speaker of the National Assembly, Dimitar Peshev, and top clergymen overcame the pro-Nazi government and convinced Tsar Boris III to rescue Bulgarian Jewry from extermination.

After the war, Chaimoff emigrated with his family to Israel. After serving in the army, where he learnt Hebrew, he studied medicine at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

Chaimoff has written 40 novels, 24 plays, 19 books of poetry, four short story anthologies, a book for children, as well as two for babies.

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PHOTO © YEHUDA SOBOL

A book that is completely engrossing from start to finish.... The writer masterfully lays out before us the history of a Jewish family over a lengthy and stormy period before World War II. A remarkable read.

**Simania blog**

# Emilie Moatti

## *Blue Marks*

a novel

Rosh Ha'ayin, Tchelet, 2018. 244 pp.



**Emilie Moatti** was born in 1980 and grew up in Netanya in a religious family of Tunisian origin. The oldest of six siblings, she dropped out of high school to go to work. In 2003, she traveled to Paris to study at the Sorbonne. She also worked in Paris as a producer and spokesperson for the Israeli Cinema Festival, and joined a number of forums dealing with Jewish cultural matters. She was involved in two left-wing peace projects: the Geneva Initiative and the Israel Regional Initiative. Since 2014, she has been a member of the board of WePower, a feminist NGO whose goal is to integrate women into the municipal and national political spectrum. She was a candidate for the Labor Party in the 2020 parliamentary elections.

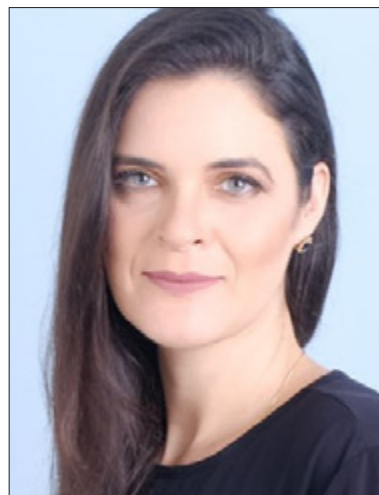
Moatti is a publicist, politician, and a social activist who appears regularly as a commentator on various Israeli TV channels. She was awarded the Education Ministry Prize for First Book in 2018 for her novel *Blue Marks*, film rights of which have been sold.

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A young woman travels to Paris to escape her life on the margins of Israeli society. All Iris desires is to start her life anew, in a new language, in a place where no one knows her. With a good job and a rented apartment, her dream seems to have a chance of coming true. But just as she begins to believe she has achieved her goal, it transpires that fate has a different plan in store for her. A divinely handsome man appears before her. He doesn't take his eyes off her for a moment. He is the man who has only a first name; the man who rapes her; the man she murders.

Behind prison walls, the abyss Iris inhabits is exposed. Via vivid, powerful memories she meanders a tortuous path between pain, hope and redemption: memories of a father who abandoned a home that fell into darkness and of a mother frozen by the trauma; of the streets of Paris that refused to embrace her; of the accursed evening that she thought she would be able to leave behind.

Moatti skillfully paints the portrait of a remarkable heroine who, by her choices and deeds, has rejected the rules of society even at the price of her freedom, becoming in a way a female counterpart of Mersault, the hero of Albert Camus' *L'Étranger*. Moatti also deals with the issues of rebellion and the absurd—not as philosophical theory, but rather as the gritty reality of the life of a woman.



*Blue Marks* bestows a voice upon a voiceless character without reverberating with a sense of triumph or being intoxicated by itself. It has an open-eyed, even audacious intensity... It leaves its mark on you."

**Haaretz**



## Illa Ben Porat

*The Woman Who Wasn't There*

a literary thriller

Ben Shemen, Keter, 2019. 309 pp.



**Illa Ben Porat** was born in Ramat Gan in 1972, and lives with her family in Tel Aviv. She is a writer, a translator (from French to Hebrew) and a musician. She received a PhD from the department of education at Ben Gurion University in the Negev. Her academic work deals with the sociology of immigration. She teaches sociology at Kibbutzim College of Education, Technology and the Arts.

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**W**ho does the title of this book refer to? Is it Yafit Na'im, a young woman, married with two children, who goes out one morning and vanishes without leaving a trace? Or perhaps it is the woman who is searching for her, Inspector Sigal Shemesh-Levin of the Givatayim police, who is tasked with looking into unsolved missing persons cases and finds that there is something about Yafit that she can't let go of? The idea that the mother of small children suddenly decided to get up and abandon everything seems too unlikely to Sigal, and she is convinced that if only she gives this case a little more time she will uncover the crime that explains this mysterious disappearance. But her efforts to trace the missing mother turn into a dangerous obsession, and the further her investigation takes her, the more the tangle of the motives of the people involved becomes difficult to unravel, until the moment that she finally succeeds—only to see everything immediately becoming entangled once again.

*The Woman Who Wasn't There*, is an intriguing detective story (the first in a series), that takes a piercing look at Israeli reality, but is also full of compassion and honesty, as seen through the unrelenting gaze of Inspector Sigal Shemesh-Levin.

EXCERPT IN ENGLISH TRANSLATION AVAILABLE



PHOTO © EYAL DANON

...an accurate sense of timing...  
and a powerful heroine.

Entertainment that is effective,  
intelligent and diverting.

**Haaretz**

It meets all the standards of the genre; otherwise, I wouldn't have gulped it down in one day (and continued to think about it afterwards). The Israeli suspense bookshelf lacks female detectives, and it's even better when they are flawed and chase after ghosts.

**La'Isha**



# Jacob Mishori

## *End*

a novel

Rosh Ha'Ayin, Tchelet, 2018. 183 pp.

סוף

יעקב מישורי

**Jacob Mishori** was born in Tel Aviv in 1952. A prominent Israeli painter, he is a self-taught, nonconformist, post-modernist artist, whose oeuvre has changed frequently over the years. Mishori dropped out of school at the age of 15 in order to paint, supporting himself by working as a mover, an occupation that was his main source of livelihood until he was 40. He had the first of many one-person exhibitions at the age of 26, and his work has featured in numerous group exhibitions in Israel and abroad. He has won awards from the Ministry of Education and the Sharett Foundation, and his paintings are to be found in many private and museum collections. At the age of 44 he began teaching at the Bezalel Academy of Art and at Beit Berl college. He has also served as head of art department of the Avni Institute. He has written numerous articles and essays, dealing mainly with what he sees as the disastrous domination of the academic method, language and spirit over the teaching and the practice of art, and calling for a break between the academy and the making of art. After recently ceasing to paint, he wrote *End*, his first work of fiction.

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A healthy man is compelled to set out on journeys to the medical, urban, professional and erotic regions that comprise his life. He gallops on the horse of his anxieties, calculating when the End will come, delineating the borders between memories of childhood, birth and parenting, thoughts of divorce, bottles of liquor and lubricious descriptions of sex. At the center of the book, there is a masculine consciousness very different from that of the usual repertoire of Hebrew literature, one that aligns with the heroes of modern world literature. In parallel with engagement with the individual—the hero, the abundant, burgeoning descriptions create a distinct geographical and urban space. All of this is accompaniment to the process of taking leave, full of love but devoid of sentimentality, from his mother who is living in a medical institution.

*End* is the first work of prose by Jacob Mishori, a painter of repute and a teacher with a powerful presence on the Israeli artistic scene. Roving recklessly between the tempting aspect of death and the alluring light of life, this novel is a remarkable work of literature, audacious and outspoken, a resolute dance between bourgeois cafes and gleaming pharmacies, cacophonous streets and bustling inter-urban bus stations. The book is unique and radical, from the language to the corporal and sensual phenomenology that Mishori creates as if the words were paints on his palette.



PHOTO © NOA YAFE

In this book, artist Jacob Mishori examines the most fundamental elements of being – love, parting, birth, sex, death – from inside the body outward and within each of these elements he finds beauty. A petrifying beauty.  
**Yedioth Ahronoth**

## Carmit Sahar

*Set Theory*

a novel

Ben Shemen, Keter, 2020. 423 pp.



**Carmit Sahar** was born in Rishon leZion in 1967. During her childhood, she lived in a number of different countries where her father worked. Today she lives in Tel Aviv with her husband and their four children. Sahar has a BSc in computer science and a PhD in physics from Tel Aviv University. She is employed as chief scientist at a start-up software company. Previously, she worked as an expert in algorithms, machine learning and data science for a number of companies, including Google, EMC and Verint. She has acquired a large number of patents in technological fields and for several years has taught at the Holon Institute of Technology. In addition, she serves as a consultant for the European Union's Horizon 2020 program for research and innovation. *Set Theory* is her first book.

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In this book, written over more than a decade, teenage Alex is growing up, but rather slowly. The second child of the Hoffman family in London, he is a constant source of disappointment to his parents. His brother Mark is a brilliant mathematician; his older sister and younger brother are gifted pianists who travel the world to perform. Alex, however, mainly gets into trouble. To his parents' relief, each summer Alex and Mark are sent to Israel for a long vacation with their aunt. While in Israel, Alex meets Arkady, and they become soulmates—soulmates who fight each other with a desperate violence that continues throughout their adolescence.

*Set Theory* is a coming-of-age novel that follows Alex's wondrous but painful progress to adulthood. With great sensitivity, the author portrays a boy who is physically a late developer, and who has a huge, tempestuous soul. Alex Hoffman bursts through every hurdle that he encounters determined to achieve two, often incompatible goals: to be loved and to be true to himself.

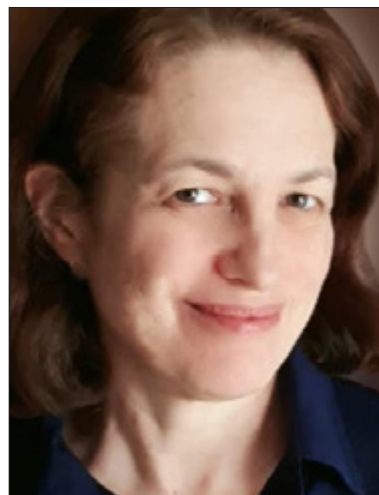


PHOTO © CARMIT SAHAR

Carmit Sahar creates a layered and glittering literary world centering around the violent and passion-saturated story of the coming of age of two teenagers. In this book she has revealed herself to be a mature, charismatic and daring author.

**Haaretz**