

New Books from Israel • Spring 2020



THE INSTITUTE FOR THE TRANSLATION OF HEBREW LITERATURE





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NEW BOOKS FROM ISRAEL

Spring 2020

CONTENTS

Ronit Matalon, <i>Snow</i>	3
Yossi Sucary, <i>Benghazi-Bergen-Belsen</i>	4
Yossi Sucary, <i>Amzaleg</i>	5
Yair Assulin, <i>The Drive</i>	6
Amalia Rosenblum, <i>Saul Searching</i>	7
Eldad Cohen, <i>Wake Up Mom</i>	8
Illa Ben Porat, <i>The Woman Who Wasn't There</i>	9
Haim Chaimoff, <i>Chirpan in Dreams</i>	10

SPECIAL SECTION: WOMEN WRITING WOMEN

Zeruya Shalev, <i>Fate</i>	11
Sarit Yishai-Levi, <i>A Woman Beyond the Sea</i>	12
Noga Albalach, <i>Esther and Adina</i>	13
Ayelet Gundar-Goshen, <i>The Liar and the City</i>	14
Yael Neeman, <i>Once There Was a Woman</i>	15
Michal Ben-Naftali, <i>The Teacher</i>	16
Michal Ben-Naftali, <i>A Dress of Fire</i>	16

Shifra Horn, <i>Daughters of Jerusalem</i>	17
Gali Mir Tibon, <i>Abandoned Mothers</i>	18
Mira Magen, <i>Michaella</i>	19
Shoham Smith and Eitan Eloa, <i>The Bride's Dresses</i>	20
Judith Rotem, <i>Come Back, My Soul</i>	21
Galit Dahan Carlibach, <i>It's me, Iowa</i>	22
Merav Nakar-Sadi, <i>Smaadar</i>	23
Hila Amit, <i>Moving on from Bliss</i>	24
Esti Halperin-Maymon, <i>Lying Fallow [Shmita]</i>	25
Yael Shaham, <i>The Editor</i>	26
Michal Sapir, <i>The Modern Dance</i>	27

POETRY

Raquel Chalfi, <i>Circus</i>	28
Dori Manor, <i>One Soul Away</i>	29

For a complete list of publications for each author, see our website: www.ithl.org.il

P.O.B 5005, Tel Aviv 6105001, Israel. Tel: 972 3 579 6830 Fax: 972 3 579 6832 E-mail: litscene@ithl.org.il

Offices: 45 Kibbutz Galuyot Road, Tel Aviv. 3rd Floor, Studio 118.

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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 (**Minuscule**); 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

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 © YEHIEL 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

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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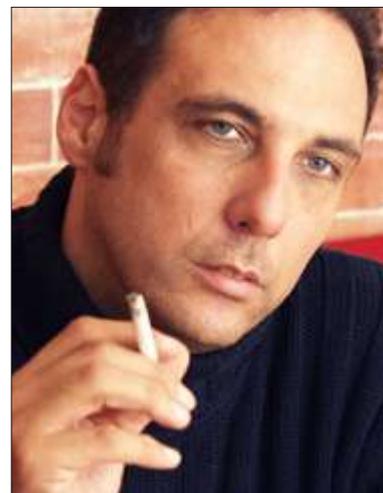


PHOTO © YEHIEL YANAI

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.

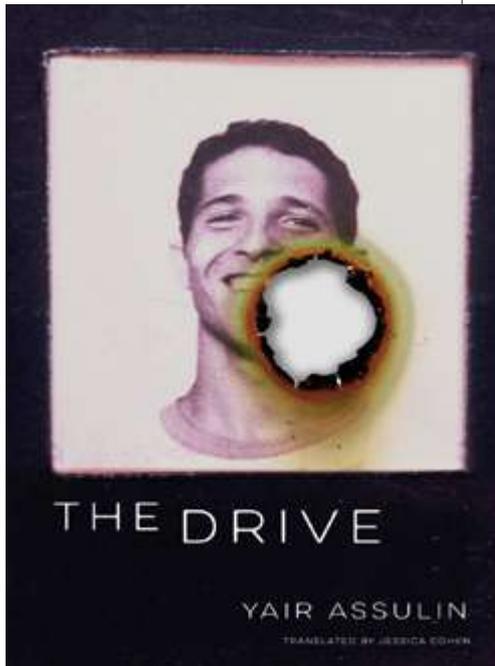
Makor Rishon

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).

The Drive has been published in English by **New Vessel Press**, New York, to great acclaim.

[CLICK HERE FOR A COMPLETE LISTING ON THE ITHL WEBSITE](#)

The drive portrayed in this novel is one that some of us are familiar with, and that others may tend to make light of: a young soldier is traveling from his base to meet a military mental health officer. It soon transpires that this is also a journey to the far reaches of the mind, to the depths of Israeli society, and perhaps also to truth and salvation. The soldier is from an Orthodox-Jewish nationalist family, for whom the very idea of shirking duty is unthinkable. Accompanying him on the journey is his father, for whom the words 'mental health', when associated with his son, attest to a failure from which there may not be a recovery. The drive becomes charged with ever more significance, skidding at times into jolting emotional storms, revealing rifts between romantic, religious longings and family and political dilemmas, and shifting back and forth between despair and fear of death on the one hand and breathtaking beauty on the other.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION AVAILABLE



PHOTO © DEVORA ASSULIN

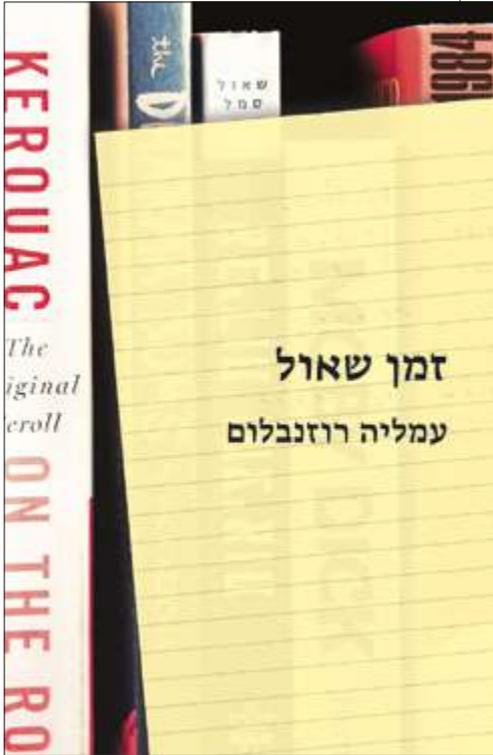
Poignant... Assulin shines at depicting the soldier's feelings of unease and the irreconcilable space between soldier and commander... This work on the fragility of the human spirit is touching."

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*

Amalia Rosenblum



Saul Searching

a novel

Ben Shemen, Keter, 2020. 411 pp.

Saul 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.

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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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

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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Yuda, 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

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.

Who 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.



PHOTO © EYAL DANON

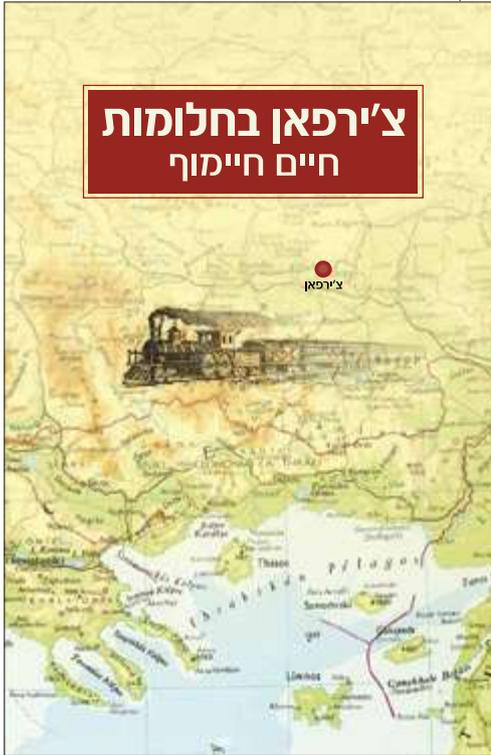
...an accurate sense of timing... and a powerful heroine. Entertainment that is effective, intelligent and diverting.

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

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Chirpan in Dreams

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

Zeruya Shalev

Fate

a novel

Ben Shemen, Keter Books, forthcoming. 250 pp.

Zeruya Shalev was born in Kibbutz Kinneret. She has an MA in Biblical studies and works as a literary editor. Shalev has written novels, poetry and two children's books. *Love Life*, *Husband and Wife* and *Thera* were bestsellers in several countries. *Love Life* is also included in *Der Spiegel's* prestigious list of '20 Best Novels in World Literature over the Past 40 Years.' *Husband and Wife* was included in the French FNAC list of '200 Best Books of the Decade.' And *The Remains of Love* was featured in *The Independent's* 'Books of the Year in Translation' for 2013.

Shalev has received the Book Publishers Association's Gold and Platinum Prizes, the Corine Prize (Germany, 2001), the Amphi Award (France, 2003), the ACUM Award (1997, 2003, 2005), the French Wizo Prize (2007), the Rome-Jerusalem Prize (2014), the Prix Fémina (France, 2014) and the ADEI-WIZO Prize (Italy, 2017). Her books have been published abroad in 28 languages, among which: English (**Grove/Atlantic**, **Canongate**, **Bloomsbury**, **The Other Press**); French (**Gallimard**); German (**Berlin Verlag**); Italian (**Feltrinelli**); Spanish (**Acantilado**, **Siruela**); Polish (**Foksal**); Dutch (**Cossee**); Greek (**Patakis**); Turkish (**Can**); Japanese (**Fuso**); Chinese (**People's Literature**); Vietnamese (**Bach Viet**); Korean (**Prunsoop**); Portuguese (**Elsinor 2020**); Russian (**Sindbad**, **Text**); Romanian (**Humanitas**, **Polirom**); Bulgarian (**Janet 45**); Albanian (**Ombra**); Czech (**Prah**).



PHOTO © ITZIK SHOKEL

The much-awaited novel by the author who has won acclaim across the globe!

After the death of her father, a renowned scientist, Atara, tracks down the woman he was married to in his youth and who fought beside him in an underground Jewish militia before the establishment of the State of Israel. The meeting between the two women sets off a dramatic series of events that changes the course of Atara and her family's lives. The narrative alternates between the minds of the two women. Rachel, the former wife, is now an elderly but clear-minded widow who misses the passion of the old days; she is worried about the country she fought for and the one that the next generation will inherit. Atara is a conservation architect, married for the second time, the mother of two children. She struggles with problems in her marriage as well as a crisis with her son, a soldier in the naval commandos. The gradual disclosure of the past sheds light on the present and forces the characters to face questions of fate, control and responsibility, disillusionment and love.

Foreign rights sold: German, **Berlin Verlag/Piper**, Berlin; French, **Gallimard**, Paris; Polish, **Foksal**, Warsaw; Italian, **Feltrinelli**, Milan; Romanian, **Humanitas**, Bucharest; Czech, **Prah**, Prague.

No reviews available yet.
For Shalev's previous novel, *Pain*:

Shalev reminds readers in keen, often brilliant prose that love, like pain, is indelible...a riveting exploration of family, sex and motherhood.

The New York Times

An immense novel.

Author Leila Slimani

Shalev's writing manages to grasp everything... [a novel of] impressive power.

Le Monde

From the great Israeli writer, a novel that searches through the cracks in our souls.

La Repubblica

A magnificent book...full of irony.

Corriere della Sera

Shalev's fifth novel...and her best so far.

Der Spiegel

Shalev's finest novel since *Love Life*.

Süddeutschen Zeitung

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Sarit Yishai-Levi

BESTSELLER – 50,000 COPIES SOLD

*A Woman Beyond the Sea*

a novel

Ben Shemen, Modan, 2019. 470 pp.

A new novel by the author of the huge bestseller *The Beauty Queen of Jerusalem!*

Three unforgettable women are at the heart of this thrilling novel. A young woman whose husband dumps her in a Paris café; a mother who vanishes for long hours every day, and her daughter doesn't know where she is; and a mysterious woman who has abandoned her newborn baby on the doorstep of a convent on a snowy night in Jerusalem. They are the keys to a volcanic tale that takes us to the alleyways of the Latin Quarter in Paris, to Tel Aviv of the 1970s, and links pre-1948 Jerusalem under the British Mandate with a picturesque village in England. In these places, the three women seek their identities and their mysterious past. And as each one faces upheavals in her life, the narrative masterfully ties the three together, striking chords of love and hate, of heartbreak, blood and tears.

Foreign rights sold: German, **Aufbau**, Berlin.

Sarit Yishai-Levi was born in Jerusalem in 1947 to a Sephardic family that has lived in the city for seven generations. She studied at the Nissan Nativ Acting Studio and later at Tel Aviv University. Before turning to journalism, Yishai-Levi acted in theater and film for several years. Later, she was a correspondent for various Israeli newspapers and magazines, including *At*, *Monitin*, *Ha'Olam Ha'Zeb* and *Hadasbot*; she also hosted Hebrew TV and radio programs in Los Angeles. At present, she is a senior correspondent for *Olam Ha'Isba* magazine and hosts TV shows on tourism and lifestyle. Yishai-Levi has published four non-fiction books. Her first novel, *The Beauty Queen of Jerusalem*, an outstanding bestseller in Israel, received the Publishers Association's Gold and Platinum Prizes (2014) and the Steimatzky Prize for bestselling book of the year (2014). It is now being made into a feature film. The book has been published in English (**St. Martin's Press**), German (**Aufbau**), Italian (**Sonzogno**), Turkish (**Koton**), Russian (**Knizhniki**) and French (**Charleston/Leduc**).

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PHOTO © ELAD DAVID, COURTESY OLAM HAISHA MAGAZINE

Yishai-Levi excels in reviving the past with historical accuracy and has built an interesting connection between her books.

Haaretz

A Woman Beyond the Sea gives us everything we need to immerse ourselves in a book: love, hate, courage, and also wonderful yarns.

At Magazine

A wonderful book.

Channel Bet radio

An enchanting book, powerful and profound.

Booklovers Reading Club

A book that swept me away.

Treasury of Words blog

Moving and powerful.

Book Parliament blog

Noga Albalach

Esther and Adina

a novel

Tel Aviv, Achuzat Bayit, 2019. 247 pp.



Noga Albalach was born in Petach Tikva, Israel, in 1971 and now lives in Tel Aviv. She received an MA in economics from Tel Aviv University and worked for several years as an equity analyst. In 2005, she left this field and started studying literature. She received her MA in literature from Tel Aviv University and at present works as the publisher of Hakibbutz Hameuchad Publishing House. Albalach has published a novel, collections of short stories and novellas as well as books for children. She has been awarded the Minister of Culture Prize for Debut Literature (2011), the Prime Minister's Prize (2016) and the Brenner Award (2018) for *The Old Man*. This novella will be published in French by **éditions do**, Bordeaux.

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PHOTO © TAL MOLCHO

What captures the reader is the voice that is totally different... Albalach once again emerges as an original and highly talented writer.

Haaretz

Albalach is steadily establishing herself as a gifted Israeli writer of prose.

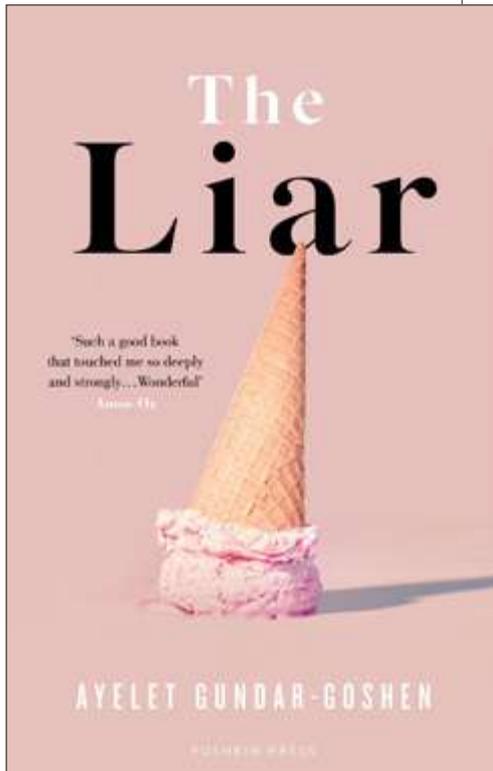
Yedioth Ahronoth

Ayelet Gundar-Goshen

The Liar and the City

a novel

Tel Aviv, Achuzat Bayit, 2018. 278 pp.



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 short screenplay *Batman at the Checkpoint* (Berlin, 2012), the Sapir Prize for Debut Fiction (2012) and the Adei-Wizo Prize (Italy, 2016) for *One Night, Markovitch*. Her second novel, *Waking Lions*, is being adapted for a TV series by NBC. Her books have been published in 16 languages.

[CLICK HERE FOR A COMPLETE LISTING ON THE ITHL WEBSITE.](#)

The narrative follows Noy, an ordinary girl who works in an ice-cream parlor during the summer. Dozens of customers come in every day, but no one gives Noy a second look—she is not one of those girls that the eye lingers on.

But everything changes when Avishai Milner comes into the ice-cream parlor. An embittered reality-show runaway, he insults and humiliates her. Deeply offended, Noy rushes out to the backyard, and Avishai—who is still waiting for his change—chases after her. “Leave me alone!” she cries with all her 17 mediocre years’ worth of hurt and frustration. Her screams alert the townsfolk, and to her surprise everyone is convinced that Avishai tried to sexually assault her.

Now, for the first time in her life, Noy finds herself the center of attention. The support that she receives from the community turns her into a kind of Cinderella and the ice-cream salesgirl becomes a Media Princess. But the magic of this Cinderella story comes from her lies about an attack that did not actually happen.

Foreign rights sold to **Pushkin Press**, London; **Little Brown**, New York; **Kein & Aber**, Zurich; **Giuntina**, Florence; **Cossee**, Amsterdam; **Presses de la Cité**, Paris; **Open Books**, Seoul; **Artforum**, Bratislava; **Sindbad**, Moscow; **Navona**, Barcelona; **Kastaniotis**, Athens.



PHOTO © ALON SIGA

The writing is brilliant.

WDR

A great book with psychological depth.

Die Zeit

It’s a pleasure to read Gundar-Goshen’s relentless exposition of her characters’ psychology.

Literatur Spiegel

A perceptive and exquisitely observed novel, *Liar* should win Gundar-Goshen a wide international readership.

The Guardian

The author unfurls her ironic fable—simultaneously timeless and contemporary—with captivating authority and in lush prose. A psychological page-turner, rich in setting, character, and wisdom.”

Kirkus Starred Review

Yael Neeman

Once There Was a Woman

Tel-Aviv, Achuzat Bayit, 2018. 253 pp.
a novel



Yael Neeman was born in Kibbutz Yehiam, Israel in 1960. She studied for her Master's degree in literature and philosophy at Tel Aviv University. Her novel *We Were the Future* received awards and was a bestseller in Israel. Neeman's stories have appeared in *World Literature Today* and the *Chattahoochee Review*. She was selected by the Fulbright Foundation to participate in the International Writing Program (IWP) in Iowa City.

We Were the Future has been published in French, (**Actes Sud**), English (**Overlook Press**), and Polish (**Wydawnictwo Czarne**).

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Once There Was a Woman is an incomparable book about an incomparable woman. Over the past ten years, Yael Neeman has researched the story of a mysterious woman who left behind no immediate family, no property, nothing of what she had created. Neeman spoke to her surviving relatives, her lovers, her neighbors, a doctor who treated her, the people she worked with, and her childhood friends—many of whom were, like her, born to parents who were Polish Holocaust survivors. From what these people told her, she has woven the story of the woman's life, and theirs.

Once upon a time, it transpires, there was a woman living among us who was blessed with talents, full of contradictions, brilliant and creative, a gifted translator who loved literature and writing, but who systematically destroyed everything that she ever committed to paper. With the help of those who shared her life, places and events connected to her are vividly portrayed, but the riddle of who she was only deepens.

Why write about someone who wished to wipe herself out of the world is addressed and echoes throughout the book: "I am still interviewing, still trapped in her web without a satisfactory reply to the question: Why am I doing this?" writes Neeman. In her uniquely lucid, trenchant style, Yael Neeman paints a portrait of a remarkable woman, that is also a riveting document about the second generation, those who were born right after the war.

PARTIAL ENGLISH TRANSLATION AVAILABLE

French language rights sold to **Actes Sud**, Arles.



PHOTO © TOWER EPELBAUM

Neeman writes a very intense, unadorned prose that creates great intimacy with the reader. This intimacy is very powerful.... What stands out most in this book is the emotional jolt that it gives the reader.

Haaretz

A book that is remarkable for its delivery and the way it traps the reader inside it.

Musach Literary Magazine

Michal Ben-Naftali



WINNER OF THE
2016 SAPIR PRIZE

The Teacher

a novel

Jerusalem, Keter, 2015. 185 pp.

No one knew the story of Elsa Weiss's life. She was a respected English teacher at a Tel Aviv high school, but she remained aloof from her students. Yet they sensed that they were all she had. When Elsa killed herself by jumping off the roof of her building, she remained as unknown as she had been during her life.

Thirty years later, one of her students decides to solve the riddle of Elsa Weiss, and from here on, the dizzying journey of Ben-Naftali's novel begins. Expertly dovetailing explosive historical material with flights of imagination, the novel traces the footprints of a Holocaust survivor who did her utmost to leave none. The narrator invents a fictional biography for Elsa from her childhood, up to the German invasion of Hungary; from her train journey first to the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp and then to Switzerland; how she decided to remain silent and to leave no trace. But the narrator hears her teacher's wordless scream and creates a life for her. Writing it down is a way to save her from oblivion.

Foreign rights sold to: **Open Letter**, Rochester, USA; **Actes Sud**, Arles; **Mondadori**, Milan; **Knizhniki**, Moscow; **Kul-Shee**, Haifa.

Like the discovery of a new continent.
Sapir Prize Committee, Dec. 2016

A poignant memorial to someone whom no one remembers... absorbing and well crafted. *The Teacher* suggests that Elsa's loneliness was her greatest lesson, showing us how the Holocaust could break even those who survived it.

The New York Times

Ben-Naftali achieves the impossible....An unusual novel.
Haaretz

Michal Ben-Naftali was born in Tel Aviv in 1963. A writer, translator and editor, she studied history and philosophy at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and received her PhD in contemporary French philosophy from the University of Oxford. Ben-Naftali lived in Paris for several years; she was the editor of a French series for Hakibbutz Hameuchad Publishers, and a series on Hebrew aesthetics for Resling. She teaches French

literature and creative writing at Tel Aviv University. Ben-Naftali has published collections of essays, a novella, a memoir and a novel, as well as many academic articles. Her translations from French to Hebrew include Jacques Derrida, Marina Tsvetaeva and Julia Kristeva.

Ben-Naftali has received the Prime Minister's Prize (2007), the Haaretz Prize for Best Literary Essay of the Year (2008) and the Sapir Prize (2016).



SHORTLISTED FOR THE
2019 SAPIR PRIZE

A Dress of Fire

two novellas

Ben Shemen, Keter, 2019. 176 pp.

A Jerusalem student is hired to read aloud to a charismatic woman who is losing her eyesight and she falls under her spell. The murky intimacy that grows between the two will, ironically, lead a person who is sharing her own vision with another into the depths of darkness, from which it seems doubtful that she will ever escape.

In a second story, a woman voluntarily hospitalizes herself together with her demented mother, taking her mother's seclusion upon herself. Gradually she dissolves her own self into an oblivion that was always in its essence.

The two novellas in this new and stirring book by Michal Ben-Naftali each present a story about love between women. Like the characters, the two novellas borrow light and darkness, power and secrets, from one another.

Ben-Naftali's story is one of a breakdown, but one that is described in such clear and delightful prose, and with such understanding and sensitivity, that the reader is left with a sense of beauty and pleasure.

Haaretz

The novella *A Dress of Fire*, whose title is taken from a poem by Dahlia Ravikovitch, overflows with the act of reading Proust, Descartes, Borges, Marguerite Duras and others. Ben-Naftali absorbs references and quotations into her own dizzying whirlpool and makes them hers, as they contribute strength and colour to her narrative.

Orit Neumayer Potashnik

[CLICK HERE FOR A COMPLETE LISTING ON THE ITHL WEBSITE.](#)



PHOTO © ABRAHAM BEN-NAFTALI

Shifra Horn

*Daughters of Jerusalem**[working title]*

a novel

Tel Aviv, Kinneret Zmora-Bitan Dvir, forthcoming. 250 pp.

Born in Jerusalem, **Shifra Horn** holds a BA in biblical studies, archeology and communications. She worked as spokesperson for the Ministry of Absorption, as a journalist, lecturer and TV host. Later she managed her own independent public relations firm. She has published five bestselling novels, a collection of short stories, non-fiction and books for children. In 2002, Horn was nominated Literary Woman of the Year by the Israeli financial daily, *Globes*. She has also been awarded the WIZO Prize (1997), the Book Publishers Association's Gold and Platinum Prizes, the ADAI-WIZO Prize (Italy, 2006), the Brenner Prize (2006), the French WIZO Prize (2008) and the Minister of Culture's Zionism Prize for *Scorpion Dance (Promenade à Deux)* (2014). Horn's books have been published in eight languages, among which English (**St Martin's Press, Piatkus**), French (**Fayard**), Italian (**Fazi**), German (**Bertelsman, btb**), Dutch (**Archipel/Arbeiderspers**).

By the author of the unforgettable worldwide bestseller *Four Mothers!*

Alexandra sits in a room facing the timeless beauty of the Jerusalem hills. She is writing her family's history, inspired by the house in which they once lived, now a residence for artists and writers. Alexandra's family have lived in the city for over a hundred years, but there is so much she doesn't know about them. Where is her father? Only one dim memory—a photo of a little girl presenting flowers to an elegantly dressed young man.

Generations of women will reconnect and bond via the wandering tales that follow. Alexandra turns to her grandmother Eduarda, the custodian of family memories. The old woman tells her fascinating life stories, and even identifies the photo—the little girl is Alexandra's great-grandmother Victoria, the young man Prince Edward, son of Queen Victoria and the future king of England, who visited Jerusalem in 1862. Years later in London, the two will meet again, with unexpected consequences....

In an extraordinary story that leads back to the Crimean War of 1853, then forward to shocking details about her parents and the tragic circumstances of her own birth, Alexandra gathers up her past. And Jerusalem, the city divided by complex political and religious conflicts, is an inseparable part of the book.

This novel treads a fine line between imagination and reality; the real and mythical characters and their mutual relationships, are depicted against an accurate historical backdrop of the city of Jerusalem.

No reviews available yet.
For *Four Mothers*:

Poignant, earthy and engaging.
Daily Telegraph

A rich and magical tale.
The Bookseller

A novel that is palpable...filled with voices and suggestiveness.
La Stampa

[Amidst] Jerusalem's residential neighborhoods, [Horn's] characters are epic heroines.
Publishers Weekly

A lively, reader-friendly tale effectively flavored with atmospheric detail and fascinating chunks of Israeli folklore and myth.
Kirkus Reviews



PHOTO © DAN FORGES

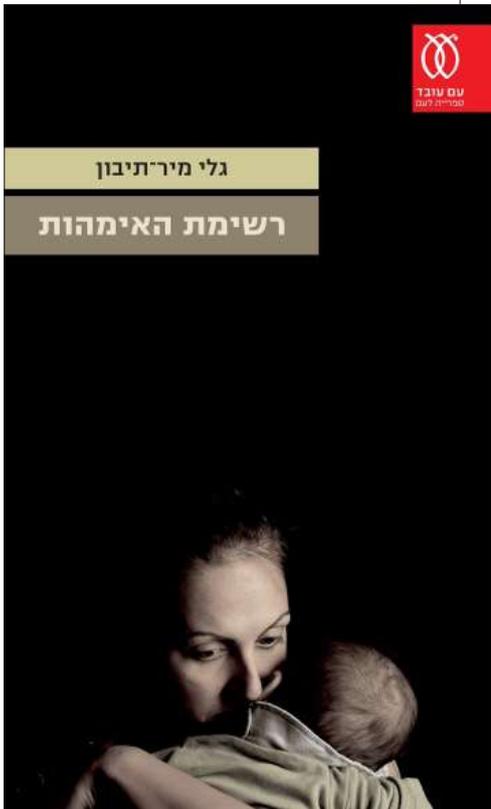
[CLICK HERE FOR A COMPLETE LISTING ON THE ITHL WEBSITE.](#)

Gali Mir-Tibon

Abandoned Mothers

a novel

Tel Aviv, Am-Oved, 2017. 263 pp.



Gali Mir-Tibon was born in Kibbutz Kvutzat Shiller, near Rehovot. She has a PhD from Tel Aviv University in Holocaust Studies. A former principal of high schools in Bat Yam and Ma'alot Tarshicha in the Galilee, she is now a lecturer at Carnegie-Mellon University in Pittsburgh, PA. and at Bar-Ilan University. In addition, she trains teachers in the Amit school system. Mir-Tibon is the founder and CEO of the Institute for Excellence in the Humanities. *Abandoned Mothers* is her first novel.

[CLICK HERE FOR A COMPLETE LISTING ON THE ITHL WEBSITE](#)

On one side of the table, an investigator is determined to find out the truth. On the other side sit two people who are being questioned about a horrific accusation: sending hundreds of Jewish mothers with their young children to be imprisoned in a deserted military base, with no food or water and no way out. Guards were placed outside the locked doors, and they refused to open them.

One by one the two interrogatees speak their answers, open up and confess, or hide and lie. Neither is innocent, neither a criminal. Under the circumstances, maybe no one could remain uncorrupted.

We also hear the voices of three mothers, and the voice of a girl who goes through what no child should ever experience.

Many have written about World War II, but Gali Mir-Tibon, in her debut novel, bravely shines a light on one of its darkest corners. A harsh investigation takes place in this novel, but it is not restricted to one room. Instead, step by step, it goes ever deeper into the human soul—its best and its worst, and the struggle between the two.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION AVAILABLE

A heart-rending story that also makes one's blood boil, but the writer fills it with a radiant love of humanity, compassion for human frailties, and a profound curiosity towards what drastic situations do to people.

Amos Oz

Mir-Tibon...has written a courageous novel. She refrains from provocation, and precisely because of that her book is meaningful, complex and resonant. The book haunted me long after I finished reading it for exactly this reason: it has no simple moral, perhaps no moral at all; only human faces that are uncovered when the mask of humanity is removed from them.

Haaretz



PHOTO © NATHAN MANGESTU

Mira Magen

Michaella

Tel Aviv, Kinneret Zmora-Bitan, 2018. 320 pp.



Mira Magen was born in Kfar Saba, Israel, in 1950 to an Orthodox family. She studied psychology and sociology before turning to nursing. She worked as a nurse at Hadassah Hospital in Jerusalem and started publishing short stories in the early 1990s. Magen has published several bestselling novels and a book of short stories. She was awarded the Olschwung Foundation Award (1988), the Prime Minister's Prize (2005) and won the Book Publishers Association's Gold Book Prize five times (2001; 2004; 2005; 2011; 2012). Her books have been published in German (**dtv, S. Fischer**), French (**Mercure de France**) and Italian (**Atmosphere Libri**) to great acclaim.

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PHOTO © DAN FORGES

Michaella seems to have it all—beauty, a good career as a couples counselor, a lovely husband and three gorgeous children. But beneath the surface is a painful family past that she can neither escape nor forget.

Michaella and Rona's father left them early on, and their mother was hospitalized with psychiatric problems soon after, leaving the two small girls at their aunt's. The sisters grew up to be very different and drifted apart: Michaella created a good life for herself, while Rona is deeply disturbed, lost in alcohol and drugs. Now, as a part of Rona's rehab, and hoping for a stable framework to start out anew, she moves in with her sister. But peace is fleeting: attracted to a patient of her sister's—a married man—she starts an affair. What's more, their mother is released into Michaella's care, and the three women share the same house again after years of separation.

How old-new emotions rise to the surface makes for an unforgettable novel, as Magen goes to the heart of the relationship between the two sisters.

No reviews available yet.
For previously published books:

A superb novel.
L'Express

With her incomparable style, Mira Magen has again succeeded in writing a wonderful novel full of love, longing and sadness.

David, Jüdische Kulturzeitung

Mira Magen's strength is the best sort of entertainment novel... However, in its most brilliant passages, her novel exceeds simple entertainment.

Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung

The way Mira Magen gives life to the little group of people, makes them laugh and suffer, is just magnificent....This book develops a maelstrom...eternally human, eternally thoughtful – and fascinating!

Weltexpress

Shoham Smith & Eitan Eloa

The Bride's Dresses

a graphic novel

Milta, Rehovot, 2018. 32 pp.



Shoham Smith was born in Jerusalem in 1966 and lives in Tel Aviv. She studied industrial design at the Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design and literature at Tel Aviv University. Smith writes book reviews and is a translator. She has published collections of short stories and a number of children's books. She received the Prime Minister's Prize (2009), the ACUM Award for Furthering the Publication of Children's Books twice (2011; 2015), the Devorah Omer Prize for *A Treasury of Hebrew Legends for Children* (2014) and the Lea Goldberg Prize for *My Aunt Lea Goldberg* (2017).

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Eitan Eloa was born in Ashdod in 1984 and lives in Tel Aviv. He studied visual communication at the Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design and criminology and human resources at Bar Ilan University. He works as a graphic designer and illustrator. Eloa's illustrations have been published in children's books, graphic novels and *Haaretz* weekend magazine. He has received the Israel Museum Children's Book Illustration Award (2016), the Israeli Design Award (2015) and two Silver Medals in the special format category of the Society of Illustrators, New York (2015; 2016).

This is a post-modern fairy tale—grotesque and wild—about an insecure bride, whose wedding date was set by a fortune teller before she had even found a groom. It takes place during two eventful days filled with love and envy, hope and disappointment. Madness, freedom, happiness, cruelty, and irony are all mixed together.

When the upcoming wedding still has no groom, the focus shifts to the intense and explosive relationship between mother and daughter, and tension builds around the wedding dress. The struggle between mother and daughter is both hilarious and heart-breaking, and the brilliant illustrations bring out the best, and worst, in the characters. A bitter-sweet and funny tale.

The book is designed as a two-way concertina—one for each day—and is printed in a limited edition of 1,000 copies, collated by hand. It received a silver medal at the annual competition of the American Society of Illustrators.

ENGLISH PDF AVAILABLE



PHOTO © MOTIKIKAYON



PHOTO © TZUR KOTZER, THE ISRAEL MUSEUM, JERUSALEM

No Reviews available yet. For Shoham Smith, *Things that My Heart Fails to Tell*:

In addition to her distinctive humor and command of the language, there is Smith's abundant imagination. The book is rich in voices, tales and different worlds, and it is very colorful.

Haaretz

Shoham Smith's linguistic freedom is marvellous.

Iton Tel Aviv

Smith knows how to listen and submit to the language, to herself, to her environment, and especially to the relation between the three.

Yedioth Ahronoth

Judith Rotem

*Come Back, My Soul*

Tel Aviv, Am Oved, 2018. 255 pp.

a novel

The life stories of two women unfold alongside each other in this book. One of the women, Yuli, is a migrant worker from Ukraine, escaping from a life of poverty and the treacherous father of her children. She comes to Tel Aviv with her younger son, 5-year-old Dima. Yuli wanders around the old bus terminal, an area inhabited by migrant workers and misfits, tries to find a job, decent accommodation and to protect her child in the harsh neighborhood. She meets Barry who helps her, but ultimately discovers that her reliance on him has a terrible price. She also meets an Eritrean asylum-seeker, Koplom, whose situation is as desperate as hers.

The other woman, Shelly, is much older and a widow. She has given up on religion for the sake of freedom and is searching for a loving, creative way of life. As she struggles with her memories and her longing for her dead husband, she is swept into a stormy late-life romance that threatens her world—with the same Barry that Yuli has met.

Although these two women are very different, they are connected through Barry, an Orthodox Jew, a seductive, multifaceted character who insinuates himself into their lives with deceitful charm.

Freedom of choice, passion, survival and enslavement are portrayed in this novel that looks without wavering at contemporary Israeli society.

Judith Rotem was born in Budapest, Hungary. As a baby, she was taken on the 'Kastner train,' spent several months in Bergen-Belsen and then in a refugee camp in Switzerland. She arrived in pre-state Israel at age three. Later she married an ultra-Orthodox yeshiva student, and supported the family as a teacher while raising her seven children. In 1983, she divorced and left the ultra-Orthodox community, taking her children with her. She subsequently wrote and edited hi-tech publications, wrote many books and articles, and ghost-wrote a number of autobiographies for Holocaust survivors.

Rotem has published novels, short stories, non-fiction and books for children. She has been awarded the Book Publishers Association's Gold and Platinum Prizes (2001; 2004), the Prime Minister's Prize (2002), the Ramat Gan Prize (2010) and the Arik Einstein Prize (2014).

Selected books have been published in Italian (**Feltrinelli**), German (**Paul List**), English (**Jewish Pub. Soc. of America**) and Hungarian (**Mult es Jovi**).

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PHOTO © DAN FORGES

Warmly recommended.
Saloon

Rotem writes wonderfully, quotes from the Bible and from Hebrew poetry, and rummages in the human soul as only a few writers know how.

Yedioth Ahronoth

Lovely, stirring...rich in feeling...reveals a verbal as well as cultural wealth that express the personal and literary maturity of the author.

Makor Rishon

Galit Dahan Carlibach

It's Me, Iowa

Tel-Aviv, Graff, 2018. 126 pp.
a novella



Galit Dahan Carlibach was born in 1981. She grew up in Sderot, Ashdod and Jerusalem. She has published three novels, two novellas and two fantasy books based on Moroccan tales told by her grandmother. Her stories, poems and essays are published on different platforms including *Haaretz*, *Alaxon*, *Maariv*, *929* and more. In addition, Dahan Carlibach gives writing workshops and lectures and takes part in *Persona Non Grata*, a literary-musical duo, as a singer and guitarist. Dahan Carlibach has been awarded the Prime Minister's Prize (2014) and the National Library of Israel Pardes Prize (2014). She was a participant in the International Writing Program in Iowa and the Shanghai Writing Program. Her previous novel, *Alice's Storm*, was longlisted for the 2017 Sapir Prize.

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PHOTO © GAL HERMON

Dahan Carlibach...sweeps the reader away toward the bloody and wonderfully enjoyable collision.

Yedioth Ahronoth

Acrobatic, at times virtuoso Hebrew....In this short novella, Dahan Carlibach positions herself as a promising writer who has kept her promise.

Makor Rishon

The story takes us to the cornfields of the U.S., only to shine a searing spotlight on contemporary Israel in which the personal and the public are always mingled.

Haaretz

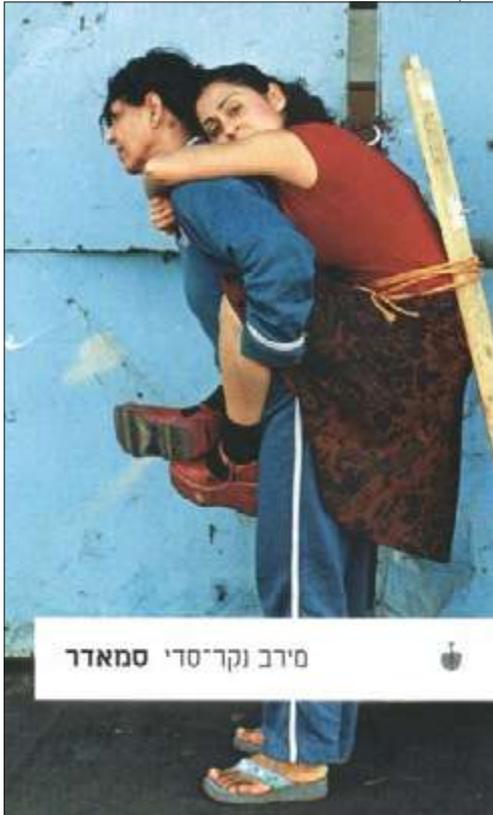
PARTIAL ENGLISH TRANSLATION AVAILABLE

Merav Nakar-Sadi

Smaadar

a novel

Tel-Aviv, Babel, 2017. 149 pp.



Merav Nakar-Sadi was born and grew up in Or Yehuda, Israel. She studied sociology and anthropology at Tel Aviv University, and has a PhD in sociology from UCLA. Her dissertation focuses on the complex relationships between immigration and welfare policies in the USA. In 2013, her debut novel *Oxana*, about an illegal worker living in Israel, was published and won the Sapir Prize for Debut Novel. *Smaadar*, her second novel, was shortlisted for the Sapir Prize, 2018.

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PHOTO © MEIR AZULAY

Smaadar, the heroine of Nakar-Sadi's new book, is a new type of girl in Hebrew literature.

Haaretz

A remarkable literary achievement.

Hebrew Psychology

Smaadar is ostensibly a minor tale about a tragic adolescence, and yet the broken but beautiful language, together with the female characters, create a defiant and powerful novella.

Israel Hayom

Hila Amit

Moving on from Bliss

stories

Tel Aviv, Am Oved, 2016. 191 pp.



Hila Amit was born in Kfar Saba, Israel, in 1985. She studied literature and creative writing at Tel Aviv University and received a PhD in gender studies from the School of African and Oriental Studies (SOAS) in London in 2016. She has published poetry and short stories in several literary magazines and anthologies. She was awarded the Ministry of Culture Prize for Debut Authors (2016) for her book *Moving on from Bliss*. She currently divides her time between Tel Aviv and Berlin, and is working on her third book. Amit's non-fiction book, *A Queer Way Out*, was published by **Suny Press**, New York in 2018.

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Dana, a single mother, and Mounir, a young Palestinian from Nablus, meet in a restaurant in a run-down Tel Aviv neighborhood where they both work. A warm father-daughter relationship grows between Mounir, who is gay, and Dana's little girl Natalie. When Mounir travels to Canada for medical treatment and decides to live there, Dana follows him, leaves Natalie with him and returns to Israel. Mounir and his partner bring Natalie up, and an unusual family is formed.

Joumana, an Arab doctor living in Tel Aviv with her Jewish partner, leaves the city when her father dies, and goes back to her parents' home in Umm al-Fahm. Once again, she confronts what made her leave her conservative family—not only her desire to study, but also her sexual identity. Her father's death frees her from his tyranny and heals her relationship with her mother, her sisters and elder brother.

A girl who is estranged from her strict, taciturn mother falls in love with Oshri, a neighbor, and decides to move in with her. In Oshri's home she finds an alternative family, and in Oshri's mother a loving substitute for her own. The story, which takes place after Oshri's death in a car accident, is a lyrical lament on the death of a partner as she tries to cope with grief and longing.

Jewish Adele is attracted to Tahrir, an Arab girl and the daughter of a well-known crime family, who lives near her in Jaffa. The forbidden, the alien and the dangerous all become more familiar in this and other stories in this collection.

Amit depicts gays, lesbians, Arabs and other marginalized characters. There is much courage and talent in this book—the courage to take on big subjects, and the talent to write about them in an original way

ENGLISH TRANSLATION AVAILABLE



PHOTO © HILA SPAK

Amit writes differently about 'different'...unique and beautiful.

Haaretz

Amit finds different ways, some of them simple and very effective, to rein in tragedy and the cheap handling of heartache.

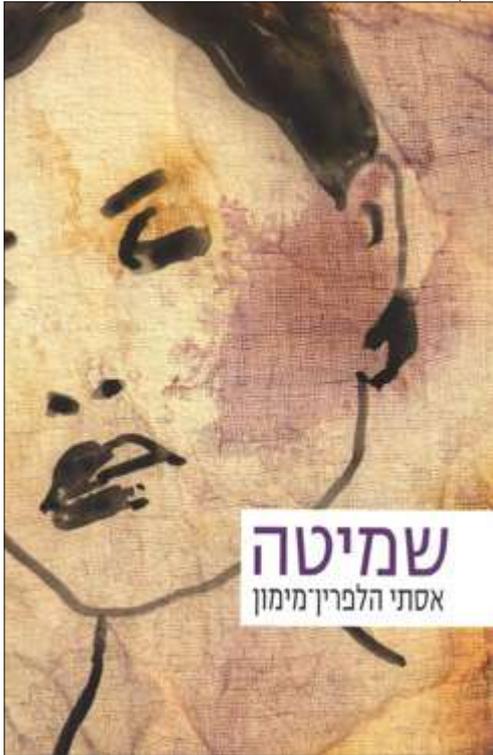
Yedioth Ahronoth

Esti Halperin-Maymon

Lying Fallow [Shmita]

a novel

Tel Aviv, Kinneret, Zmora-Bitan, 2017. 239 pp.



Esti Halperin-Maymon was born in Israel in 1978. She holds an MA in clinical psychology from Tel Aviv University as well as an MA in research psychology from Bar-Ilan University. She works in the field of psychotherapy in a private practice in Tel Aviv. In 2015 Halperin-Maymon won a writing competition award from the Arditi Foundation for Intercultural Dialogue. *Lying Fallow [Shmita]* is her first novel.

In a religious settlement, among identical houses inhabited by similar families, inside a closed and conservative community, a forbidden relationship develops between a teacher and one of her female students.

Tamar is a 27-year-old teacher of language and literature in a religious girls' seminary and, according to her strictly Orthodox community, is an aging spinster. All the other women of her age are married with children, and she is scorned for being different. She lives in a small apartment next to her parents' home and spends her free time marking her students' work and clinging to memories of her love for Michal, an old classmate. Naomi, a lovely, much-courted 17-year-old student, lost her mother in a terror attack and her world is falling apart. Soon, she will be engaged to Avishai, a much admired young man in the settlement. But she wonders whether he understands her and could make her happy.

An implicit lesbian connection springs up between between the two young women. The essays Naomi submits to Tamar, and Tamar's remarks about them are the code through which the two signal their attraction, their refusal to live by the norms of their community and their fears.

Lying Fallow [Shmita], Esti Halperin-Maymon's debut novel, is seductive and profound. It calls on the reader to realize the power and price of being different; to contemplate the disturbing fact that identity—personal, communal and sexual—is fluid; and to acknowledge a fundamental otherness within the human condition that cannot be overcome, except at brief moments of grace.



PHOTO © RONIT LUBEZKY

This is an intriguing and exciting glimpse into a world that has not yet been discovered, and the forces that drive it. *Lying Fallow* is a sensitive and profound novel.

Author Ayelet Gundar-Goshen

Esti Halperin-Maymon is a true writer, and that is no trivial matter. She [simply] knows how to write.

Yedioth Ahronoth

It broke my heart...astonishing... A lovely book.

KAN 11 TV

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Yael Shaham

The Editor

a novel

Ben Shemen, Keter, 2018. 287 pp.



Yael Shaham was born in Tivon, a suburb of Haifa, in 1957. She grew up in Haifa, graduating from the Re'ali High School. She is the mother of four children and lives in Tel Aviv.

For 25 years Shaham worked as an editor of books and magazines for the financial newspaper *Globes*. In recent years she has developed a documentary series entitled *The History of the Middle Class*.

The Editor is Yael Shaham's first novel and she is currently working on her second.

The Editor portrays a woman in an era when men are falling apart. A magazine editor who insists on saying whatever she thinks, even when it is unnecessary. A woman who is trying to manage her magazine, her home, her life as a divorcee and her love life and, most of all, to keep her head above water while the waves toss her about without mercy. Although she has already achieved everything that was expected of her—especially by her mother—she feels empty-handed. She's a woman who has always walked a slightly crooked path, yet has somehow, shrewdly, managed to see straight ahead. And perhaps this is also what love looks like to her. Perhaps not.

The Editor is a funny and painful novel that is biting and razor sharp. It is written in prose that contrives to be both direct and convoluted. It tells the story of a disintegrating marriage but also of falling in love; of humanity, of cravings, of obsession and, most of all, of greed. It is a tale of female redemption set in the bustling workplace of an alternative culture magazine, and it is a trenchant statement on the direction that the Israeli media has taken.



PHOTO © TAMAR LEWINSOHN

A bold work...free flowing and trenchant...The final scene, principally the final paragraph, is outstandingly outrageous, a lesson in how to write. It left me stunned, alarmed. A story that deserves to be read.

Haaretz

A clever book.

Yedioth Ahronoth

A wise and entertaining book, at times disturbing, without ever being really murky.... Vibrant, cool, creative.

7 Nights Weekend Magazine

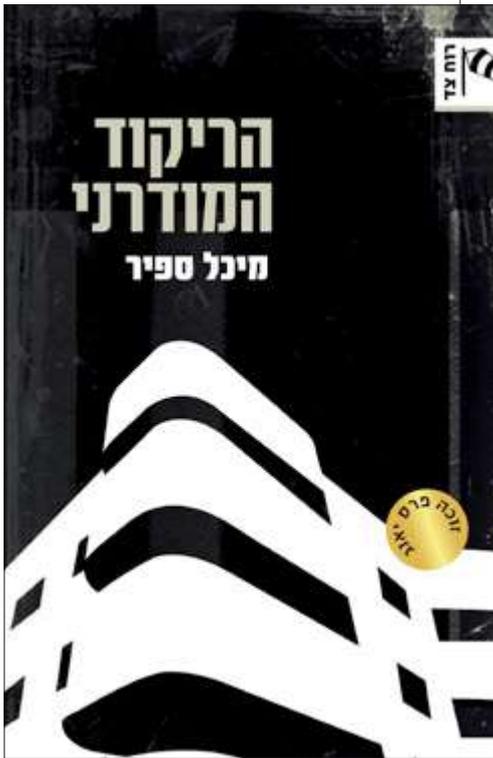
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Michal Sapir

The Modern Dance

a novel

Hevel Modi'in, Kinneret, Zmora-Bitan, Dvir, 2018. 304 pp.



Michal Sapir, born in New York in 1966, is a writer, translator and musician. She has a PhD in comparative literature from New York University. In 2011 she published a biography of her grandfather, the legendary Israeli finance minister Pinchas Sapir. Among her notable translations: Georges Didi-Huberman's *Survivance des lucioles*, Zygmunt Bauman's *Culture in a Liquid Modern World*, Prof. Yigal Schwartz's *The Zionist Paradox: Hebrew Literature and Israeli Identity*. Michal is also the songwriter, singer and guitarist in the band Afor Gashum. *The Modern Dance* is her first novel.

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PHOTO © TALU SHAMIR

A rare literary and intellectual pleasure, a new kind of beauty.

Haaretz

This book invites us to...think ourselves into the bodies and minds of those who have no place or language of their own, or who feel alien to [them]...it makes us identify with alternative cultural histories...A breathtaking linguistic monument.

Prof. Yigal Schwartz

Raquel Chalfi

Circus

Tel Aviv, Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 2019. 133 pp.



Poet **Raquel Chalfi** was born in Tel Aviv, where she lives and works. She completed her MA in English literature at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and later studied theater at Berkeley and film at the American Film Institute in Hollywood. Chalfi has worked as a journalist and film maker and has taught film at Tel Aviv University. She has made documentaries as well as experimental films and has written plays for which she won awards, both in Israel and abroad. She published her first book of poetry, *Underwater and Other Poems*, in 1975.

Chalfi is the recipient of several literary awards, among which: the Prime Minister's Prize (1999), the Ashman Prize (1999) the Bialik Prize for Poetry (2006), the Brenner Prize for Poetry for *The Book of Creatures* (2013) and the ACUM Prize for *Lifetime Achievement* (2016).

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PHOTO © CHAIM TADMOR

Chalfi...presents the real world in all of its nakedness and reveals the delusion that lies behind the spotlights.

Haaretz

The circus is actually the world.... A marvelous book.

Kan

Chalfi should be acclaimed as a courageous virtuoso poet, as poetry's trapeze artist, fire eater and sword swallower.

Maya Weinberg



Dory Manor, a poet, translator and editor, was born in Tel Aviv in 1971. He was a founding member of the literary group 'Ev', whose aim was to find a new poetic interface between classical and modern Hebrew. He studied French and general literature at Paris VII University, then taught Hebrew literature and translation at INALCO University and at Sciences Po. He received a PhD in translation studies and comparative literature from INALCO University of Paris.

Manor is the founder and editor of the prestigious literary magazine *Ob!* and served as editor-in-chief and senior education specialist at Israel's Educational Program for the Arts & Humanities. He is also a lecturer and broadcaster, and collaborates with musicians.

Manor has published five collections of poetry, including a volume of his collected poetic works, *The Center of the Flesh*, (2012) and *One Soul Ahead* (2019), as well as his Hebrew translations of classic literature. Manor co-edited (with Ronen Sonis) *Niflaata*, the first Hebrew language anthology of LGBT poetry, spanning ancient poetry to contemporary Israeli verse.

Manor received the Prime Minister's Prize (2007; 2018), the Tchernichovsky Prize for Translation (2008), and the Yehuda Amichai Prize for his poetry. He participated in the International Writing Program at Iowa University. Since 2018 he is a Chevalier in the Ordre des Arts et des Lettres of France.

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Dory Manor

One Soul Away

Tel Aviv, Hakkibutz Hameuchad, 2019. 125 pp.

This fifth book of verse by Dori Manor continues with the pioneering process that he has been leading in Hebrew poetry in the past two decades, adding to it a new and inspiring layer. He conducts a penetrating search of his own soul and takes a bold and trenchant look at the stations of his life. He has created a poetic, sophisticated autobiography that strips himself perpetually naked before his readers.

The book is divided into a number of different cycles, about love, parting, family, as well as a painful political cycle entitled 'The Trees of our Land' and an Ars Poetica cycle, 'Poetry Workshop', among others.



PHOTO © GREG BAL

Virtuoso verse that is devoid of superfluous mannerisms.

Maariv

Dori Manor is a pillar of contemporary Israeli poetry. His new book adds a new and important layer to his verse.

Soferet Sfarim blog