



2024 SPRING CATALOGUE



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Nano Shabtai

The Book of Men



A novel
Keter, 2015. 208 pp.

FULL English translation available

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French (**Acte Sud**)

Born in 1975 in Jerusalem, **Nino Shabtai** studied acting and directing at the School of Performing Arts of the Kibbutzim College and screenwriting at the Sam Spiegel Film & Television School. She received the 'ACUM Award for a Debut Work' for her poetry book *The Iron Girl*, (2005). *The Book of Men* was a finalist for the Sapir Prize. She has written plays and a book for children and has been the theater critic for *Ha'aretz* since 2015.



PHOTO © IRIS NESHER

Men are human beings. Humans are a type of animal, some say they're more developed. True, sometimes men are very hairy, but never as much as dogs. Also, dogs don't get dressed, except maybe poodles. Humans also have names. Animals don't. Some dogs have names, like "Bully," "Pluto," "Rex," etcetera. But who gave the dogs their names? Right, humans. Seven dog years equals one year of human life. For cats, I think it's eight. One woman told me that for her, seven years for a man is one year for a woman. That means if she meets, for example, a man who is 35, actually he's only five. If she meets a man who's 42, he's already six.

They come one after the other, these men, embodying themselves in gestures so human that might overlook the chilling logic of the series. The narrator weaves her way through the carnivalesque hell of gender relations, offering the gaping wound opened by the last man to the next one, who only widens it.

The debut novel of poet and playwright Nano Shabtai is a literary marvel that defies categorization. It is a picaresque novel that breaks boundaries, a collage of encounters and injuries both painful and humorous, and a freefall with rapidly changing vistas. A self-portrait startling in its honesty, and prose whose lyricism is pure poetry.

"The Book of Men dazzles with sharp brilliance and witty, captivating language... A brave self-examination that also sketches a human social portrait of our time... a beautiful book, very funny and terribly sad. I was sorry when it ended." Shira Stav, Ha'aretz

"The Book of Men is entertaining, annoying, impressive and at times thrilling and breathtaking—it also touches the heart." Yael Geller, Yedioth Ahronoth

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Romit Samson

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The Back Kitchen

WINNER OF THE 2021 SAPIR PRIZE FOR BEST DEBUT NOVEL



A magnificent symphony of bureaucracy and human nature

A tender for building apartments for young couples sparks a wave of hope among the residents of a small coastal town. But when the contractor disappears in the middle of the job, and the desperate residents are left with apartments that exist only on paper, the municipal dance of demons begins. Romit Samson guides us with a gentle, practiced hand through the endless labyrinth of bureaucratic corridors full of intrigue. As protagonists of this rich, complex plot, we meet an ambitious lawyer representing the residents' interests and the city's legal advisor, who juggles between a desk overflowing with cases and her dramatic private life. Romit Samson weaves together a legal drama and a high-emotion plot, constructing the details of human comedy inside dusty, neon-lit offices.

A novel
Am Oved, 2021. 434 pp.

English translation sample available

“A real literary discovery! There’s never a dull moment throughout the entire 434 pages of *The Back Kitchen*. Samson creates a convincing world of legal drama, with emotional depth and warm humorous moments.” *Haaretz*



PHOTO © BFRAT ESHEL

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Yotam Tolub



A novel
Keter, 2022. 312 pp.

English translation sample available

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The Day Money Runs Dry

A coming-of-age story of growth and healing in the shadow of orphanhood and loss

Five years after his father’s death, Tom receives an SMS message from him saying, “I’m in trouble, help me.” He believes his father is trying to return from the dead, and that his return depends solely on him. The possibility of his dead father’s return inspires Tom to fix the past and restore a life that has gone awry beyond recognition — and the painful disillusionment that came with it. Tom’s coming-of-age story goes through the various upheavals of a wounded and disrupted family. The plot reaches its climax in a Dickensian journey through nightmarish institutions for mentally troubled boys.

Yotam Tolub’s novel exposes the open wounds of childhood and the brutal encounters with institutional forces that pretend to control it. He is fueled by a passion to fix the world — and if that fails, at least to write about it. The novel is partly based on Tolub’s own experience as an activist and as an attorney for the NGO *Bizchut*.

“A convincing blend of two searing stories... The effect on the reader is powerful and compelling”
Haaretz

“A fascinating, wonderful, disturbing book, written by a master hand and read with bated breath. A must read.”

Sigal Peretz Yahalomi, CEO of AKIM

“Two different stories are beautifully woven into a powerful narrative that you’re unlikely to forget.” *Makor Rishon*



PHOTO © ALEX LIBAK

Yaniv Hagbi

Chelm – A Tale of One City



A novel
Afik, 2023. 265 pp.

FULL English translation available

Chelm. We see only its broad back, unable to discern where its gaze is directed. Chelm is a city unlike all others, for beyond it lies nothing: it physically separates us from the void. Chelm is known in Jewish folklore as a city of fools. But the truth of Chelm is much darker—its inhabitants harbor an ancient and fearsome metaphysical wisdom beneath a facade of folly. If we dare to look directly at this wisdom, we risk being blinded.

Yaniv Hagbi's novel weaves the stories of Chelm into a dizzying plot. It focuses on the tale of the son of the Chelm blacksmith, who seeks to save his soul from the city's grotesque logic. He is exiled to the neighboring city of Z, where logic and practical reasoning prevail. But the city of Z cannot endure life alongside the spiraling spectacle of folly for long, and the blacksmith's son is forced to return to Chelm one last time—this time as the leader of Z's inhabitants, to fight against his birthplace and destroy it.

Yaniv Hagbi teaches at the University of Amsterdam. He is the author of the novels *The Yemenite Guide to Writing Fairy Tales* (Babel, 2009) and *The Leviathan Library* (Keter, 2017).



PHOTO © EYAL PINKAS

Review for The Yemenite Guide to Writing Legends

“A complex, all-encompassing book. An overflowing amalgam of consciousness components, and funny to boot.”

Ketziah Elon, Ha'aretz

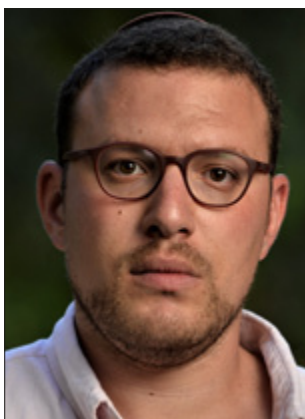
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Ariel Horowitz



A novel
Keter, 2021. 238 pp.

English translation sample available



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The Best of our Sons

A stormy political drama set in contemporary Israel

Menachem Laufer, a representative of Israel's largest religious-nationalist party, spent his days on the margins of leadership, in painful obscurity. He seemed reconciled to the dull status of a minor politician. But when his son Yoav, an influential right-wing newspaper editor, suddenly launches a political career, accelerated events reignite his smoldering ambition. Soon the entire family is thrown into turmoil. While grappling with the rising ambitions of his son Aviv, Yoav loses touch with the world of his son Eitan, whose shady business dealings threaten the family's good name. The fraying tapestry of relationships exposes a world where faith becomes an empty ritual, and intellectual and moral vacuum is translated into destructive political power.

With a rare narrative talent, moving between intimate moments and comic-satirical peaks, Horowitz unfolds a multi-generational saga, enabling a close look at the most influential stratum in Israeli society today.

"An amusing and intelligent reading experience."
Omri Herzog, Haaretz

"An interesting and enjoyable debut novel."
Arik Glasner

"*The Best of Our Sons* offers a curious and relevant glimpse into the politics of the religious-national community, as well as the turbulent social processes taking place in within it."
Ariel Shenbal, Makor Rishon

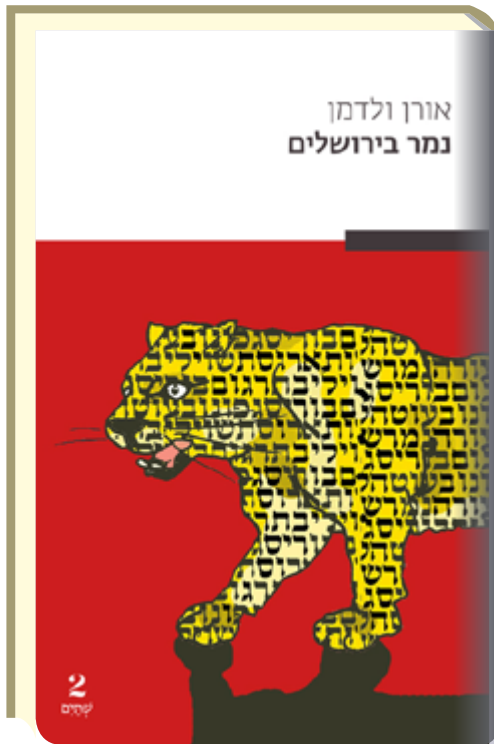
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Oren Waldman

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Panther in Jerusalem

WINNER OF THE MINISTER OF CULTURE'S PRIZE FOR DEBUT NOVEL



A novel
Shtaim, 2021. 302 pp.

English translation sample available

A story that spans continents and eras, about a fateful friendship between a translator and a boy

Israel, 1972. Eran Volotsky is a 16-year-old boy whose mother left the house under unclear circumstances a decade ago, so he lives with only his father. As part of his school's community service program, he visits a seriously ill patient at a local hospital several times a week. The patient is Dov Gaponov, a translator with exceptional abilities, who translated the classic 12th-century Georgian epic *The Knight in the Panther's Skin* from Georgian into Hebrew. Gaponov won the Tchernichovsky Prize for translation in 1969.

Eran falls in love with Hava, a patient in the same hospital. But above all, Eran passionately depicts the inner landscapes of his life. The rare connection that develops between him and the translator reveals Gaponov's profound artistry and accompanies the boy's initiation into the art. The novel is intertwined throughout with the translator's authentic Hebrew letters and excerpts from the epic translation, creating a rich and polyphonic text that illustrates the translator's existential journey. Like the translation work itself, Waldman's poignant coming-of-age story travels between eras and places, bridging distances and dissolving solitude. *Panther in Jerusalem* has generated much excitement upon publication—so much so that Gaponov's exemplary translation is set to be reissued in Hebrew.

Original and mature, bubbling with warm emotion..." *Ma'ariv*

"The connection between the fictional character of the boy and the real-life figure of the translator is wonderful, brilliant." *Rachel Paran*



PHOTO © GALIA SIMAN-TOV

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Oren Gazit



A novel
 Shtaim, 2022. 206 pp.

English translation sample available



PHOTO © TZACHI ZEINIKER

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The Boy in the Window

A thriller replete with twists that traces the dark origins of our deepest intimate connections

Eighteen years have passed since Ketzale entered a store on Bialik Street in Ramat Gan to ask if they had baby onesies. When she returned to peek inside the stroller, she discovered her baby had vanished. Eighteen years of living in the shadow of a terrible loss, under the accusing gaze of a judgmental community. Eighteen years in a world that was transformed abruptly into an alien territory that she surveyed with constant suspicion.

And then she hears a rumor—a young man is modeling swimsuits in the display window of a store on Bialik Street. Ketzale embarks on a detective journey, during which she loses her last remaining convictions and discovers the fleeting and circumstantial nature of the love of those closest to her.

Oren Gazit has written a gripping thriller that is impossible to put down. The intricate plot traces the dark origins of the most intimate relationships. At times, we may read it as a narrative embodiment of Jean Genet's assertion that the family is the most fundamental nucleus of crime.

“A stirring plot... The use of language is simply captivating!” *Prof. Nurith Gertz*

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Rita



A novel
 Keter, 2021. 146 pp.

FULL English translation available

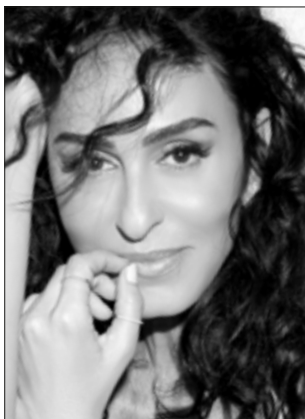


PHOTO © DUDI HASSON

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Rain-Soaked Chador

A family saga steeped in magic; an artist's coming-of-age story

The chador, the traditional garb of women in Iran, envelops the wearer, layer upon layer. In renowned Israeli singer Rita's debut novel, these layers mirror the structure of passing time as they unravel—stories of childhood, migration and emotional storms. This family saga weaves a tale of humans and demons, peddlers and rogues, miracles and fateful relationships, into a vibrant tapestry.

Rita's recounting of the rich life of the Jewish community in Tehran and her family's migration from Iran to Israel is sprinkled with magic dust. From the bustling neighbourhoods of Tehran to Bialik Street in Ramat Hasharon the novel depicts, with dazzling sensuality and dreamlike quality, a journey of self-discovery. Rita writes about the difficulties of immigration and the pain of being uprooted with candour. In parallel, she relates her journey to becoming an artist—how she nearly lost her voice due to the hardships of the journey, but managed to reclaim it through the power of song.

"This humble memoir is full of grace and radiant with beauty." *Ma'ariv*

"A wonderful and captivating book." *Walla!*

"Vivid and juicy memories depict a childhood rich in flavors and aromas, wild and full of warmth"
Makor Rishon

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Miron C. Izakson



A novel
 Kinneret Zmora-Dvir, 2021. 255 pp.

FULL English translation available

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Furthermore

“He extends his arms as we approach the crane together and helps me climb, ‘Look up, just look at where we need to reach, don’t look down, don’t look at what we are leaving”.

Dodo is a sensitive and vulnerable boy who possesses surprising powers and a burning love for cranes. He is attached to his parents and mourns the deterioration of their relationship. He loves Daphne constantly wondering, almost philosophically, about the origins of his desire to embrace her. An extremely lucky and unplanned encounter with Eitan, an eccentric and visionary man, involves Dodo in a mysterious master plan to change the face of his city and society as a whole. Dodo, his sister and their parents are swept away into an adventure that transcends the boundaries of realism into the realm of imagination, fantasy and dream. *Furthermore* is an enigmatic and beautiful novella that explores the boundaries of sanity, family and loyalty, walking boldly on the verge of destruction and healing.

“A heartfelt story about a family that is breaking apart, told by a master storyteller.” *Haaretz*



PHOTO © DINA GONA

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Ola Kravchenko



Stories
Parterre Projects, 2023. 74 pp.

English translation sample available



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Stories from a Farther-Off Land

Childhood in all its beauty and pain

Ola Kravchenko's cycle of legends recalls the taste of children's literature from before the days of the oppressive censorship of the politically correct. Ola's legends are wounded, gloomy. At times they read like an underground radio broadcast smuggled out of the desert island of childhood. When Bertrand Russell was asked to summarize Freud's doctrine in one sentence, he sighed and said, "It's so hard to be a child!"

Ola's haunting stories relate this struggle: the story of the violent kidnapping that adults call "growing up," the pain of encountering the world with its unfolding fan of terrors, and the heroic human attempt to capture these fears in a word or an image. This is not a conventional children's book. It tells of abandoned palaces, destroyed kingdoms, and girls whose childhood was devastated. It dives into the abyss, and from its depths, it reflects the stars. It touches childhood with an honesty and boldness that we—children and adults alike—need as much as the air we breathe. The stories are accompanied by breathtaking illustrations painted by the author.



"Kravchenko's landscape of imagination comes to life with a spectacular burst of shape and color" *Haaretz*

"It's been a while since I encountered such kindness, which is truly heartfelt and not saccharine sweet." *Writer Marit Ben-Israel*

"Kravchenko has created a riveting and fascinating work. It offers readers the opportunity to engage with difficult and complex subjects without panicking or fleeing, and restores splendor to the legends genre." *Yedioth Ahronoth*

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Sami Berdugo



A novel
Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 2019. 264 pp.

FULL English translation available
FULL Azeri translation available

French translation sample available

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Azeri (**Alatoran Literature Magazine**)



PHOTO © IDO BERLAD

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Donkey

Ruslan Isakov, an immigrant from Azerbaijan in his fifties, hides a donkey in his ramshackle backyard. Five months ago, while wandering around in his village, Ruslan bumped into a few police officers who asked him to hold on to their donkey for them, saying someone would come to pick it up. But no one came and the donkey has lived with him ever since. In parallel to this, Berdugo daringly describes the sexual encounters between Ruslan and his only friend, an American named Steve, pioneering new grounds in Hebrew literature. This book tells the tale of eight days during June, lived by Ruslan, filled with care and heart-melting beauty.

Donkey is a remarkable achievement in Hebrew literature. Berdugo has invented a language of subversive prose that broadens our perceptions and rattles our conventional forms of speech.

“A great book, in its glorious language, in its two plot lines that together spin a super-Israeli story, and in the enigma that lies between them.”

Haaretz

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Yitzhak Livni



A novel
N.B. Books, 2022. 160 pp.

FULL English translation available

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The Substance of Life: Fragments

A first taste of a monumental work

Rarely do we encounter a literary phenomenon like Yitzhak Livni's *The Substance of Life: Fragments*—excerpted from a monumental work that is Proustian in its scope, and published in this shortened form posthumously.

Autobiographical at its core, the work is a vast mosaic of contemplative chapters of life and memory, opening with childhood memories and closing with chapters on fatherhood. Livni examines microscopic substance through a powerful lens that isolates and amplifies events that a different author would have cast aside. The result is a cosmos of sensual textures and philosophical thoughts—stories and flashes of perspective intertwined in a bewitching manner. All of these add up to a portrait of a unique narrator, maybe a scientist of the spirit, who seeks to investigate the substance of life itself. This edition provides an introduction to a work rarely found in either Israeli or world literature.

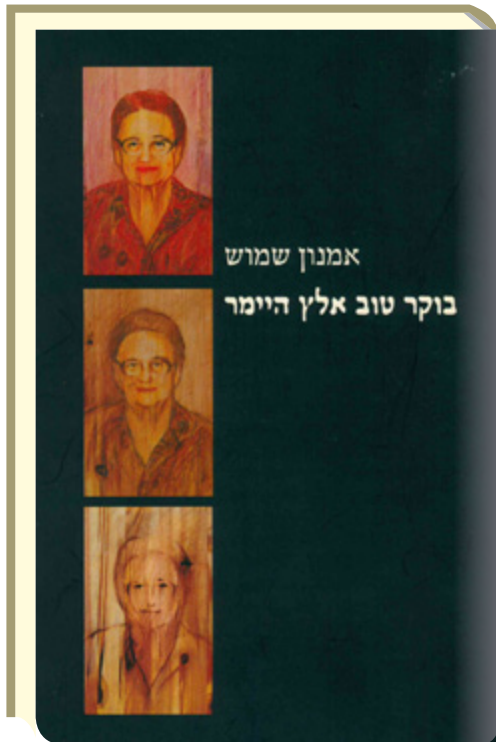
“The literary event of the year” *Haaretz*

“A literary miracle. A masterpiece... Stories like these... can only be written by a great author”
Author Eyal Megged



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Amnon Shamosh



A memoir
Massada, 2015. 198 pp.

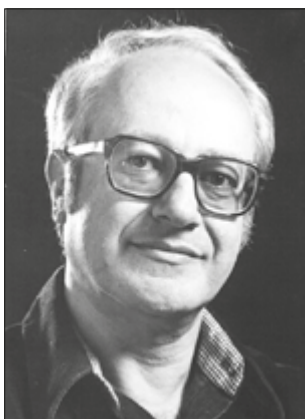
FULL English translation available

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Good Morning, Alzheimer's

Love in the shadow of illness

Even among the enlightened who are involved in supporting a person through the twilight of consciousness and life, *Good Morning, Alzheimer's* occupies an exceptional position. Amnon Shamosh supports his wife during her unfortunate journey into forgetfulness, starting on the day she was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. However, Shamosh's book is no lament. In it, forgetfulness is not a negative, lacking presence. Instead, Shamosh grants forgetfulness a place, treating it as a continent to be mapped in minute detail. He finds in it intimacy and warmth, as well as new possibilities for presence and love. He humanizes the disease, giving it an image, character, and name. He invites Mr. Alz Heimer to sit at the table with him and his life partner, forming a threesome. Instead of wrestling with the disease, Shamosh speaks with it, challenges it, and negotiates with it, incorporating it into daily life. Day by day, page by page, Shamosh's diary of this devastating illness is transformed into a powerful record of a new incarnation of love, and of life's paradoxical ability to distill itself to the essence, precisely at the point where it recedes.



"A guide to the devoted lover of any age."

David Guedj, Haaretz

"I read this diary with interest and excitement from beginning to end in one day. The diary opens a window into the complex world of Alzheimer's patients and the people around them. The diary also provides important insights into the true nature of deep love."

Prof. Aharon Ben-Zeev, Haifa University



Contact us:
www.ithl.org.il
office@ithl.org.il