

7th International Poetry Festival al-Mutanabbi

June 1-7, 2007, in Zurich, Basel, Bern, Geneva, Lugano
POETRY & NOVEL

PARTICIPANTS

Samih Al-Kasim (Palestine)

Born in Zarqa, Jordan, in 1939. He studied in al-Rama and Nazareth, worked as a high school teacher in Nazareth, Galilee, and Carmel, and for the newspapers „Al-Ghadd“, „Al-Djadid“, and „Al-Ittihad“ in Haifa. Now he is the editor of „Kul-Al-Arab“. With Mahmoud Darwish and some others, Al-Kasim is one of the main representatives of the so-called Poets of the Palestinian Resistance. He is one of the most important modern Arab poets and has published over 40 books of poetry, theater and prose, as well as research work. He has been granted literary awards in several countries.

Fatima Naoot (Egypt)

Born in Cairo in 1964, where, in 1987, she studied architecture at the Ain Shams University. Beside her work as an independent author and translator, she is the editor of the review „Aqwas Qazah“. She is a member of the Egyptian Writers Union, the Egyptian House of Literature and the Cairo Workshop. Several poetry books have been published in Arabic, such as „Finger Tapping“, „An Inch from the Ground“, „Longitudinal Section through Memory“, „About a Woman's Palm“. She has taken part in various literary conferences. Her poems have been translated into English and Chinese. She has translated several short stories from English into Arabic.

Simon Lederman (Switzerland, German)

Born in Luzern in 1969, he lives in Zurich. Studies of German Literature and Philosophy at the University of Zurich. After frequenting the Actors' Academy in Zurich, he worked as an actor and literary director in Wilhelmshaven (Germany) for a year. Since then he is an independent actor, director, and author for theatre and radio plays in Switzerland.

Ali Toffan (Iraq / Switzerland)

Born in Baghdad in 1972. From 1989 to 1994 he went to the Art School in Baghdad. Then he had to leave Iraq for political reasons and continued his studies at the School for Art and Media Design in Zurich. Exhibitions in Baghdad, Tripolis, Budapest, and Zurich.

Luisa Orelli (Switzerland, Italian)

Born in Sorengo (Ticino) in 1964. She studied Oriental languages and literatures at the University of Paris III and got a diploma at the Pontificio Istituto di Studi arabi e d'islamistica in Rome. She has translated novels and stories from Arabic into Italian, among others the works of Gamal Al-Ghitani; today she works as a journalist for Radio Svizzera. She is a member of the Authors' Union of Switzerland.

Elisabeth Wandeler-Deck (Switzerland, German)

Born in Zurich in 1939. She lives in Zurich as a freelance writer and musician; until 2006 she worked as a Gestalt psychologist. An architect and sociologist by formation, she publishes regularly; six prose books and seven poetry books have appeared so far. With her texts and as a musician, she has been cooperating for many years with composers, musicians and dramatists; one such cooperation having led to a film: *The colour of sound of image of town*. She has been given numerous awards.

Claude Darbellay (Switzerland, French)

Born in 1953. He studied at the University of Neuenburg, and stayed at Grenada and London for linguistic studies. Today he teaches at the Business Academy of La-Chaux-de-Fonds; he lives in that town. He has published five books of poetry and two novels, and texts for academic reviews. He has received literary awards in Switzerland and abroad, such as the Prix du Concours international de poésie (Paris 1982) and the Grand Prix européen de poésie de l'Académie Orient-Occident (Bucarest 2001).

Tresa Rüthers-Seeli (Swiss, Rhaeto-Romanic)

Born in Falera in 1931. Formation as a teacher for Textile Design. After spending a long time abroad, she lives in Bottinghofen on Lake Constance. Since 1958 there have been many publications in reviews and anthologies. Three poetry books, published in Romansch, have been translated into several other languages. In 2001 she took part in the Festival Mondial de Poesiain Medellín as a representative for Switzerland. For „Jeu sai... e sai da nuot“ (2003) she was awarded the Schiller Prize of the Swiss Schiller Society in 2004.

Fabio Pusterla (Switzerland, Italian)

Born in Mendrisio in 1957. After his studies in Pavia, he lives in Lugano where he is a teacher at the High School. Famous most of all for his poetry, but also as a translator, an editor of French and Portuguese poetry, and an essay writer. He co-edited the review „Idra“. He translated from French a large part of the works of Philippe Jaccottet. He has published eight poetry books and been awarded many prizes, such as, in 2007, the Gottfried Keller Prize.

Ali Sidki Abdulkader (Lybia)

Born in Tripolis in 1924. He studied Arabic languages and Law, and lives in Tripolis as a lawyer. Since 1957 he has published twelve poetry books and is considered one of the most important writers of his country. His poems have been translated into several other languages, such as English, French, Italian, Spanish and Chinese. In Lybia he has received several literary prizes. Several doctoral theses have been written about his works, in Serbian among others. Lybians say he is a „poet of love“ and „poet of youth“. He has taken part in many readings in Lybia and abroad.

Fawzi Al Delaimi (Iraq / Italy)

Born in Baghdad in 1950. He completed his studies of painting at the Brera Academy of Fine Arts in Milano. In 1983 he published his Arabic poetry book „For me and for you“; numerous translations of the most important Arabic poetry into Italian have appeared. The artist, poet, and translator teaches Arabic language and literature at the University of Milano-Bicocca and at the Italian Institute for Africa and the Middle East.

Sam Hamill (U.S.)

Born in 1943. The Californian poet is one of the founders of the U.S.-based group „Poets Against the War“ organizing world-wide readings on „World Poetry Day“, for example with European poets in Bern. The poet, essay writer, and translator from the Chinese and the Japanese has published 13 books of poetry, 3 volumes of essays, and numerous translations. His own poems have been translated into more than a dozen languages. He has been awarded several prizes and has been honoured for his pacifist activities.

Amal Musa (Tunisia)

Born in Tunis in 1971. She studied journalism and sociology, and she works as a journalist for the newspaper „Alsabah“. She published several books of poetry, such as „Water Woman“ (1996), „Timidity of Rubies“ (1998), and „He Makes Me Twice Feminine“ (2005). Her poems have been

translated into English, French, Italian, Polish and Spanish. She has taken part in international poetry festivals in Italy, France, Spain, and several Arab countries.

Hasan Al-Matrushi (Oman)

Born in Oman in 1965. He studied Arabic and English literatures. Today he works as a journalist for the newspaper „Alwatan“, and directs its cultural department. He has published four poetry books and academic work and been awarded two poetry prizes in the United Arab Emirates (1999) and in Oman (2000). He has taken part in several international poetry festivals. He is a member of several cultural organizations. His works have been translated into English.

Tarek Eltayeb (Sudan / Austria)

Born in Cairo in 1959 of Sudanese parents. Since 1984 he has been living in Vienna. After studying Social Sciences and Economics at the University for Economics in Vienna, he has been working as a translator and a professor at the International Management Center in Krems. Since 1985 he has been working as a writer; besides several publications in Arabic, four books have been published in German translations by Ursula Eltayeb: „A Suitcase Full of Doves and Cooing“, poems and prose (1999), „From the Carpet of My Shadows“, poems (2002), and the two novels „Cities Without Date-Palms“ (2000) and „The Palm House“ (2007).

Rascha Umran (Syria)

Born in Almallaga in 1964. She studied journalism and Arabic language. From 1996 to 2004 she lived in the Arab Emirates. Today she lives in Damascus, working for the Arabic Literature Union and directing the Al-Senayana Festival. She has published several poetry books, among them „O Wind, I'm Not Like You“, „Pain in Form of Life“ (1997), „As If Exile Was My Body“ (1999), „Your Shadow Spread in My Greatest Longing“ (2003).

Adhely Rivero (Venezuela)

Born in Arismendi in 1956. He studied at the University of Carabobo, where today he directs the Department for Literature in the Faculty for Cultural Sciences and coordinates the International Poetry Festival. He lives in Valencia; he has published seven books of poetry, and he is co-editor of the review „Poesía“. He has been given several Venezuelan literary awards, such as the „Premio Cecilio Chio Zubillaga de Carora“ and the „Premio Universidad Rómulo Gallegos“.

Ulrike Draesner (Germany)

Born in Munich in 1962. Studies of German, English and Philosophy in Munich. Doctorate in 1992. Since 1994 she has worked as a freelance writer and translator. She lives in Berlin; she has published four books of poetry, three novels, and two books of stories. She often works together with artists and other writers on „intermedial“ projects, where her texts fuse with sculpture, action art and music. She has been awarded several prizes for her work; recently she was given the „Prize of the Houses of Literature“ (2002) and the „Droste Prize of the Town of Meersburg“ (2006).

Adolf Muschg (Switzerland, German)

Born in Zurich in 1934. Studies of German and English in Zurich and Cambridge. In 1959 he got his Ph.D., from 1970 to 1999 he was Professor for German Language and Literature at the ETH in Zurich. From 2003 to 2006 President of the Academy of the Arts in Berlin. He has published nine novels, stories, dramatic texts, speeches, studies, and essays. He has been awarded literary prizes in several countries, such as the Buechner Prize in 2004. His works have been translated into several languages; four books have been published in Arabic.

Mussa Oald Ibno (Mauritania)

Born in 1956. He studied journalism in Paris. Ph.D. at the Sorbonne. Professor of Philosophy at the Mauritanian University of Nouakchott. He has written several novels in French and Arabic. He is Cultural Advisor for the President of Mauritania.

Elham M. Manea (Yemen)

Born in Egypt in 1966. The daughter of a diplomat spent her youth in Egypt, Yemen, Iran, and Koweit. Studies of Political Sciences in Zurich, Washington and Kuwait. She has published about politics in the Arab world, as well as articles and essays about women in Arab countries, humanistic Islam, tolerance, family structures, power relations, and other subjects. Since 1995 she has been living in Bern / Switzerland. She has written two novels, one of which is „Echo“, published in 2005. She teaches Political Sciences at the University of Zurich.

Ibrahim al-Koni (Lybia / Switzerland)

Born in 1948. He grew up as a member of a Touareg tribe in the Lybian desert. After studying Literature at the Gorki Institute in Moscow, he worked as a journalist in Warsaw and Moscow. Since 1993, Ibrahim al-Koni has been teaching in Switzerland; he has published numerous novels and books of stories. For his novel „Bleeding Stone“ he was awarded the Literary Prize of the Town of Bern, for the novel „The Magicians“ a prize of the Canton of Bern. In 1996 he was given the Lybian State Award for Art and Literature for his work.

Mohamad Al-Dourobi (Syria)

Born in Homs in 1958; there he spent his childhood and youth and frequented primary and secondary schools. From 1985 to 1991 he studied Political Sciences in Belgrad, where he got his Ph.D. The author has been living in Switzerland since 1993; he now lives in Neuchâtel. He has published several novels, such as „The Dance in the Temple of the Orient“ (1999), „The Lover in the Monastery“ (2004), and „Visitation of the Old House“ (2006), as well as two textbooks about journalism. Today he works as an independent writer and journalist.

Salim Matar (Iraq)

Born in Baghdad in 1956, where he grew up and attended school. His family comes from the Southern part of the country. He went into exile in 1978. Since 1981 he has been living in Geneva. Among his publications, there are two novels, „The Woman of the Bottle“ (1990), for which he was awarded the Al-Naked literary prize, and „The Lost Twin“ (2000) as well as several books about Iraqi identity. Since 2004 he is the editor of the review „Mesopotamia“.

TRANSLATORS

Dr. Günther Orth (Germany)

German-Arabic-German

Born in Ansbach in 1964. Studies of Islamic Sciences, Geography, Sociology and Arabic in Erlangen, Berlin, Leipzig, Cairo and Damascus. He works as a lecturer, researcher, translator and interpreter from Arabic. He lives in Berlin; he has published numerous translations from Arabic into German, such as „Faces and Places: Modern Stories from Yemen“, and about stories from Syria, as well as from German into Arabic (books and films).

Dr. Leslie Tramontini (Pakistan / Germany)

German-Arabic-German

Born in Rawalpindi, Pakistan, in 1960. She studied Arabic, Islam Sciences, and Philosophy at the University of Münster, and Arabic at the University of Kuwait. She got her Ph.D., with a thesis about Badr Shakir al-Sayyab, at the University of Münster, combined with the University of Baghdad, in 1989. Her main research subjects are ethnic conflicts in the Middle East (Iraq and Lebanon), religion, politics and ethnic-denominational conflicts in Malaysia. She has specialized

on modern Arabic literature. Among her recent publications: „Shades in Global Culture“ and „Dictionary of Modern Arabic Writers“.

Rüdiger Fischer (Germany)

French-German, English-German, Italian-German

Born in Trier in 1943. Studies of French and English in Munich and Saarbrücken. From 1973 to 2004, teacher in the Bavarian Forest. Since 1985, he has been translating contemporary poetry from French, English, and Italian. Publisher since 1991; 90 books, mostly bilingual, have been published by his Éditions En Forêt / Verlag Im Wald, three quarters of which are francophone poetry. Other books are by Italian, American, Greek authors. Only in German: Liliane Atlan's „An Opera for Terezin“, with 32 illustrations by artists deported to the Ghetto of Theresienstadt.