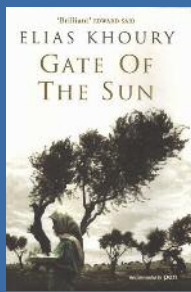
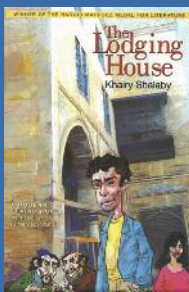
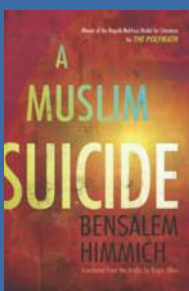
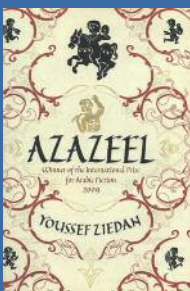
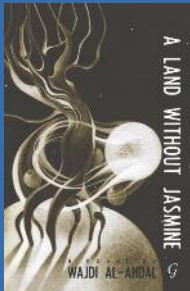
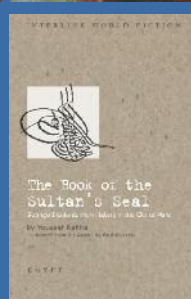
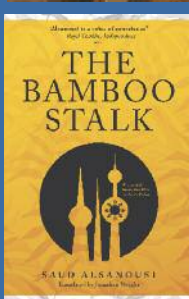
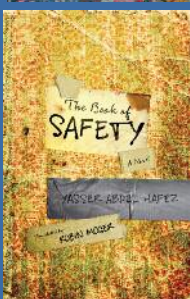
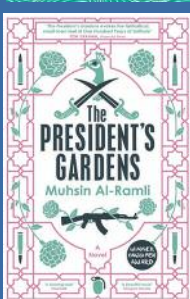
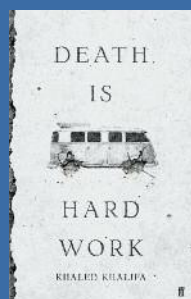


20 YEARS OF TRANSLATION AWARDS 2006 – 2025





Celebrating twenty years of the Saif Ghobash Banipal Prize for Arabic Literary Translation

With the 2025 Saif Ghobash Banipal Prize we celebrate 20 years of awarding English translations of contemporary Arabic literature – every year since 2006. The Prize was established by the Banipal Trust, which had been set up by *Banipal* magazine a couple of years earlier with a mission to extend and deepen cultural dialogue between the Arab world and the West, and an understanding that Arabic literature is an essential part of world culture and human civilisation. Furthermore, it is literary translation that takes these works of contemporary Arab literature to the widest possible audience where they can assume their rightful place within world literature and speak for themselves to a global readership. This translation of contemporary works by Arab authors was already being pioneered by the magazine which had been publishing three issues a year since February 1998.

The Prize was the first worldwide for a published work of English literary translation from Arabic. It is an annual award with a prize fund of £4,000, made to the translators of published translations in English of full-length imaginative and creative Arabic works of literary merit published after, or during, the year 1967 – widely recognised as a ‘watershed’ year for Arabic literature – and first published in English translation in the year prior to the award. The winner receives £3,000 and a runner-up £1,000. Between 2006 and 2025 a total of 72 judges have read the entries, selected 61 works as commended, shortlisted, runners-up, and winners, and chosen 22 winners (joint winners in 2013 and 2022).

Entries are judged by a panel of four distinguished literary translators, authors, critics, and literary experts, two of whom read and consider both the Arabic original and the English translation. The prize is administered by the Society of Authors in the UK, along with eleven other prizes for literary translation into English, awarded annually, biennially or every three years from European languages, from Hebrew, from Japanese, and two from any language, with an annual Awards Ceremony hosted by the Society.

After the prize’s first year’s patronage by Mohammad Ahmad Al-Sowaidi, the prize has been wholly sponsored by the Ghobash family and named in memory of their husband and father, the late Saif Ghobash, a man passionate about Arabic literature and other literatures of the world. To mark the tenth year of the prize in 2015, the Ghobash family generously extended their sponsorship to include the establishment of an Annual Prize Lecture to create further opportunities to engage in cultural dialogue.

www.banipaltrust.org.uk

or email: admin@banipaltrust.org.uk





Humphrey Davies, on winning the inaugural prize in 2006:
"Winning the Banipal Prize represents for me, primarily, recognition of the novel itself. Gate of the Sun is a work of extraordinary strength that non-Arabic readers need to have available. I am doubly happy that, in translating it, I have helped to put before the reader of English so compelling an account of the dispossession of the Palestinians."

Jonathan Wright, winner of the 2013 prize: "Translating *Azazeel* was a real pleasure, so to win a prize for the task is really the icing on the cake. Unusually for Arabic literature, the book has hardly any Arab characters and is set at a time when Arabic literature didn't exist. That's great. Why should Arabic literature confine itself to its own little world? Why not Arabic literature set in China, in space, anywhere?"



On winning the 2014 prize, Paul Starkey commented:
"It is a great honour to be offered this prize – which, as with all translation prizes, I feel really belongs to the author and the text as much as to the translator."

Luke Leafren, on winning the 2018 prize: "Learning that my translation was selected for the shortlist was already the recognition that pleased me more than any other in my life, and I've been enjoying a complicated feeling of being grateful, humbled, proud, and inspired ever since."



Leri Price, winning the 2019 prize for Khaled Khalifa's novel *Death is Hard Work*: "For me, this is a testament to Khaled's unique, humane and vitally important writing – it is every translator's dream to have such a text to work with."

Kay Heikkinen, winner of the 2020 prize for Huzama Habayeb's novel *Velvet*: "I am delighted at the recognition of Huzama Habayeb's accomplishment in writing such a beautiful human story of a courageous woman, who retains a capacity to be light-hearted in the face of crushing circumstances, and of her accomplishment in writing a new kind of Palestinian story, one that engages with politics only very indirectly."



From the 2025 Judges Report:

"Winner Marilyn Booth and runner-up Kay Heikkinen are testimony not only to the skill of the translators and artistry of the original texts, but to modern Arabic literary translation as a field, which has developed from a side-show to academic scholarship on modern Arabic literature into a mature field of artistic production, aided in no small part by the work of Banipal and the support and recognition of the Saif Ghobash Banipal Prize over the last twenty years."

In Memory of **SAIF GHOBASH**



The Saif Ghobash Banipal Prize for Arabic Literary Translation is wholly sponsored by the Ghobash family in memory of their husband and father the late Saif Ghobash, a man who was passionate about the literature of the Arab world and the literatures of other countries. Saif Ghobash was a self-made man with a broad knowledge of culture and world affairs, "an international intellectual" as his friends called him. He loved the world of books, and had his own collection in many different languages, which his family inherited on his untimely death in 1977.

Saif Ghobash was born in 1932 in Ras Al Khaimah. When he was 12 his father died and just three months later he lost his mother. He moved to live with his aunt in Dubai for the next three years. In 1949, aged 17, he left his home country and began a journey, which was to last twenty years, in search of knowledge. First, he travelled to Bahrain to continue his studies and, in 1953, after graduating from The Eastern School in Manama, he travelled to Iraq to study engineering at the University of Baghdad. In 1956 he moved to Egypt after receiving a scholarship from the Organisation of the Islamic Conference in Cairo. However, the College of Engineering in Cairo did not recognise his Baghdad studies, and so he travelled to Kuwait, where he worked as an assistant engineer in the Kuwaiti Public Works Department.

In 1959, Saif Ghobash left Kuwait for Austria, working in Graz and learning German. He then moved to Germany, working for a construction company in Düsseldorf, still determined to save enough to continue his studies. He worked also in Switzerland, from where he made frequent visits to Italy, and in 1963 travelled to Paris, working, learning French and studying literature and philosophy, before receiving a scholarship from the Soviet Union, enabling him, at last, to continue his studies at Leningrad University.

In 1969, after twenty years working and studying abroad, Saif Ghobash returned to his home town in Ras al-Khaimah. He began to work in the field of diplomacy and, on 25 December 1973, he became the First Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of the recently federated United Arab Emirates.

For all information about the prize, go to:

www.banipaltrust.org.uk

For all inquiries, email: admin@banipaltrust.org.uk



Celebrating twenty years of the Saif Ghobash Banipal Prize for Arabic Literary Translation



2025 Prize Entries



By Saif Ghobash Banipal Prize



The Saif Ghobash Banipal Prize for Arabic Literary Translation

A Webinar Celebrating 20 Years of Arabic Literary Translation with Five Past Winners



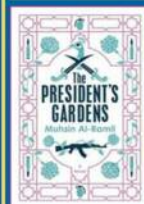
Sarah Enany (2021)



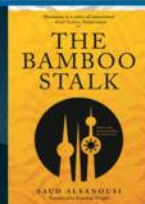
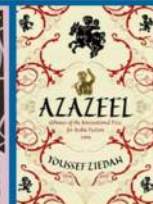
Kay Heikkinen (2020)



William Hutchins (2013)



Luke Leafgren (2018 & 2023)



Jonathan Wright (2013 & 2016)

At 6.00–7.30pm GMT on Wednesday, 19 November 2025
ALL WELCOME. Register for free at <https://bit.ly/3LgErLU>.

CELEBRATION & LECTURE 2025

13 February 2026, from 18.00 GMT, Brunei Gallery Lecture Theatre, SOAS, co-hosted by Banipal and SOAS. The Annual Lecture and the 20th year prizewinner in conversation with the chair of judges.



Boyd Tonkin, Hon FRSL, former Literary Editor at *The Independent* and re-founder of the Independent Foreign Fiction Prize, gives the annual lecture on: ***Republic of letters or global bazaar: literary translation in the new millennium***

Register to attend, in-person or online:

<https://www.banipaltrust.org.uk/lecture/lecture2025.cfm>

and <https://www.soas.ac.uk/about/events>

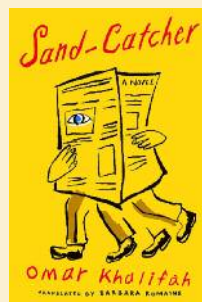
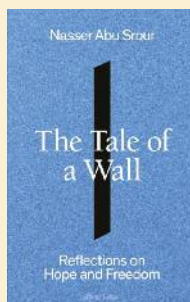
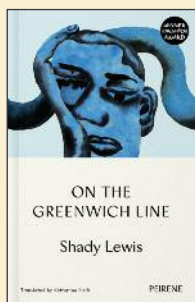


THE
SOCIETY OF
AUTHORS
TRANSLATION
PRIZES

**The 2025 Translation Prizes Award Ceremony,
10 February 2026, hosted by The Society of
Authors at the British Library and online,
18.15–20.45 GMT.**

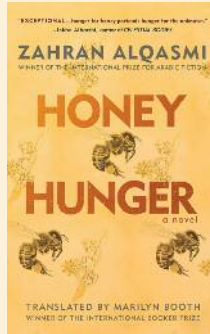
Awarding the following prizes: the first John Calder Translation Prize (any language), the TA First Translation Prize (debut translation from any language), the Premio Valle Inclán (Spanish), the Saif Ghobash Banipal Prize (Arabic), the Great Britain Sasakawa Foundation Translation Prize (Japanese), the Scott Moncrieff Prize (French), The Goethe-Institut Award for New Translation (German), the Schlegel-Tieck Prize (German), and the Bernard Shaw Prize (Swedish). To book a place and for more information go to this link:
<https://societyofauthors.org/event/the-2025-society-of-authors-translation-prizes/>.

2025 SHORTLIST



Ranya Abdelrahman and **Sawad Husain** for *The Guardian of Surfaces* by Bothayna Al-Essa (Selkies House, 2024) • **Katharine Halls** for *On the Greenwich Line* by Shady Lewis (Peirene, 2025) • **Luke Leafgren** for *The Tale of a Wall: Reflections on Hope and Freedom* by Nasser Abu Srour (Penguin Press, 2024) • **Barbara Romaine** for *Sand-Catcher* by Omar Khalifah (Coffee House, 2024).

2025 – the 20th year



WINNER

Marilyn Booth

for *Honey Hunger* by Zahran Alqasmi,
published by Hoopoe Fiction, 2024

*"Beautiful evocative prose!
A masterclass in poetic
translation!"*

The judges selected *Honey Hunger* as the winner due to its exquisite language and style in translation and on account of the significance of the themes explored in the novel (love, addiction, environment), and the fresh perspective the Omani voice and setting brings to bear on them. The challenge of *Honey Hunger* lay in recreating the lyricism of the original and bringing the remote landscapes of Oman home to the Anglophone reader. In the words of one judge, the translation "is more than a story; it's a quiet, evocative song, a lyric lament – and celebration – a product of the deeply attentive approach by both author and translator to their work".



RUNNER-UP

Kay Heikkinen

for *Granada: The Complete Trilogy*
by Radwa Ashour
published by Hoopoe Fiction
(AUC Press), 2024

"A magnificent tapestry"

This translation, bringing readers the entire trilogy into English for the first time, earns its own accolades as a stunning rendition of a masterful work of Arabic literature. The challenge for *Granada: The Complete Trilogy* lay in the vastness of the project and multitude of languages, voices and registers in the text. Kay Heikkinen has done a magnificent job, recreating these in a magnificent tapestry, a throng of voices, bringing to life the violent dismantling of Al Andalus.

THE JUDGES: **Professor Tina Phillips** (Chair), scholar and translator of modern Arabic literature; **Dr Susan F. Frenk**, Principal of St Aidan's College, Durham University; **Nashwa Nasreldin**, writer, editor and literary translator; and **Boyd Tonkin**, Hon. FRSL, journalist, writer and former Literary Editor at *The Independent*.

CELEBRATION & LECTURE 2024



Prof. Graeme Earl, SOAS
Dean of SOAS College of
Humanities



Margaret Litvin, Associ-
ate Prof. Arabic & Comp.
Lit. Boston University



Prizewinner Katharine Halls in conversation with chair
of judges Raphael Cohen

Margaret Litvin gives the annual lecture on: ***Translating Beauty and Revolt in Arabic Literature Today***, and the 2024 prizewinner is in conversation with the chair of judges. **13 February 2025, 18.00 GMT, Brunei Gallery Lecture Theatre, SOAS**, hosted by

SOAS School of Languages, Cultures and Linguistics, SOAS Centres for Translation Studies and for Cultural, Literary and Postcolonial Studies and the Banipal Trust for Arab Literature. View the video at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oCruyf69HNq>



The 2024 Translation Prizes Award Ceremony hosted by The Society of Authors at the British Library on 12 February 2025



Katharine Halls receiving her award



Photo call for all the winners of that year's translation prizes

More information here: <https://societyofauthors.org/prizes/translation-prizes/arabic-saif-ghobash-banipal-prize/>

2024



WINNER

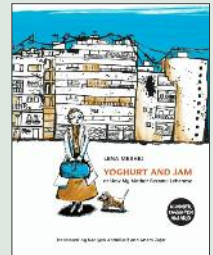
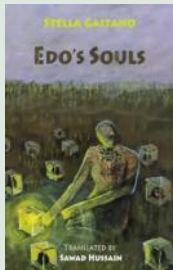
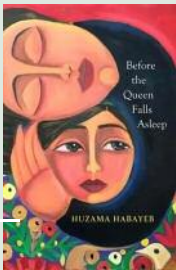
Katharine Halls

for *Rotten Evidence* by Ahmed Naji,
published by McSweeney's, 2023

*"A brilliant feat! A masterclass!
Naji's humanity shines forth!"*

Katharine Halls not only gives a masterclass on the lexical and phrasal level; she also takes a scalpel to the structure of the original Arabic to produce a text that is more accessible to the English reader and less episodic than the original. She weaves elements of the Arabic into the text in a way that allows non-Arabic speakers to appreciate puns and to get a feel for prison slang. The style is fluent, colloquial and entertaining and expertly renders the wide variety of registers in this book, from convoluted legal terminology to discussions about forbidden names for genitalia.

SHORTLIST



Before the Queen Falls Asleep by Huzama Habayeb, translated by Kay Heikkinen (MacLehose Press, 2024) • *Edo's Souls* by Stella Gaitano, translated by Sawad Hussain (Dedalus, 2023) • *Lost in Mecca* by Bothayna Al-Essa, translated by Nada Faris (DarArab for Publishing and Translation, 2024) • *Traces of Enayat* by Iman Mersal, translated by Robin Moger (And Other Stories, 2023) • *Yoghurt and Jam (or How My Mother Became Lebanese)* by Lena Merhej, translated by Nadiyah Abdullatif and Anam Zafar (Balestier Press, 2023)

THE JUDGES: **Raphael Cohen** (Chair), freelance translator of Arabic literature, politics and development; **Michael Caines**, editor at the *Times Literary Supplement*, co-founder of *Brixton Review of Books*; **Laura Watkinson**, literary translator from Dutch, German, Italian and Frisian; **Nariman Youssef**, literary translator and translation consultant.

CELEBRATION & LECTURE 2023

KHALED MATTAWA gives the
**2023 Prize Annual Lecture on: Stations of
Translation: Power, Eros, and Betrayal**



LUKE LEAFGREN, winner of the 2023
Prize for his translation of *Mister N* by Najwa
Barakat, gives readings and is in conversation
with Chair of Judges **ROS SCHWARTZ**



Prof. Adam Habib, SOAS Vice Chancellor



Prof. Paul Starkey, Banipal Trust Chair



Khaled Mattawa giving the Lecture

After a welcome speech opening the event by Prof. Adam Habib, Prof. Paul Starkey introduced the acclaimed poet and poetry translator Khaled Mattawa to give the Annual Lecture. The lecture focused on translation being a necessary capacity for articulation, as old as human speech itself. It explored the historical dynamics of translation as eros through the realms of interlingual, intercultural, and intersubjective translation, and the dynamics of translation / eros from a postcolonial perspective, with a special focus on Arabic literature and in light of the transformative tragic events taking place in Gaza.



l to r: Khaled Mattawa, prizewinner Luke Leafgren, chair of judges Ros Schwartz and Q&A moderator Prof. Wen-chin Ouyang

The Celebration on 8 February 2024, at Brunei Gallery Lecture Theatre, SOAS, was co-hosted by the SOAS Centres for Translation Studies and for Cultural, Literary and Postcolonial Studies and the Banipal Trust. View video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IARKR71ZY6Q>

2023



WINNER

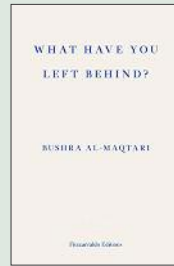
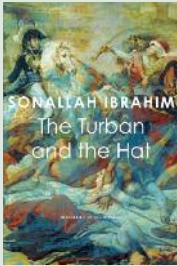
Luke Leafgren

for *Mister N* by Najwa Barakat, published by And Other Stories, 2022.

“Capturing the spirit and the letter of the original in all its depth and virtuosity”

In smooth, self-effacing prose, enriched by a widely varied vocabulary, Luke Leafgren leads the reader seamlessly into Najwa Barakat’s creation of a labyrinthine world where all is not as it seems. The shifts in time and point of view are conveyed with aplomb, and the general effect is of a riveting psychological thriller written in delightfully rich and eloquent English. Capturing the spirit and the letter of the original in all its depth and virtuosity, *Mister N* is an exceptionally good example of the translator’s art – faithful and creative, fully representing the original work.

SHORTLIST



The Turban and the Hat by Sonallah Ibrahim, translated by Bruce Fudge (Seagull Books, 2022) • *Firefly* by Jabbour Douaihy, translated by Paula Haydar and Nadine Sinno (Seagull Books, 2022) • *The King of India* by Jabbour Douaihy, translated by Paula Haydar (Interlink Books, 2022) • *What Have you Left Behind?* by Bushra al-Maqtari, translated by Sawad Hussain (Fitzcarraldo Editions, 2022) • *Thunderbird, Books One and Two* by Sonia Nimr, translated by M Lynx Qualey (Emerging Voices from the Middle East, Texas University Press, 2022)

THE JUDGES: **Ros Schwartz** (Chair), award-winning translator from French of over 100 works; **Tony Calderbank**, translator, former British Council director South Sudan, Bahrain, Libya; **Sarah Enany**, winner 2021 Saif Ghobash Banipal Prize, Assistant Professor, Department of English Lang. & Lit., Cairo University; **Barbara Schwepke**, founder / CEO, Gingko Library and Haus Publishing

2022

JOINT WINNERS



Humphrey Davies

for *The Men Who Swallowed the Sun* by Hamdi Abu Golayyel, published by Hoopoe Fiction (AUC Press), March 2022.

"A harsh, gritty tale of migration in pursuit of a better life, switching between registers of Arabic through the intimate and irreverent voice of its narrator"



Robin Moger

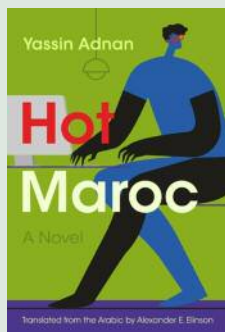
for *Slipping* by Mohamed Kheir, published by Two Lines Press, June 2021.

"Each image of this enigmatic, vivid, and captivating novel shimmers in English as it does in Arabic, through Moger's rendering of Kheir's economic and poetic brilliance"



The judges decided that a joint award seemed the best way to honour two extremely strong novels which each distinguished themselves in different ways: *Slipping* for its elegance and flow, and *The Men Who Swallowed the Sun* for the impressive skill and creativity involved in tackling such a dense and complex text written in non-standard Arabic.

SHORTLIST



Hot Maroc by Yassin Adnan, translated by Alexander E. Elinson, published by Syracuse University Press, 30 May 2021

THE JUDGES: • Charis Olszok

(Chair), Associate Professor, Modern Arabic Literature, University of Cambridge; **Katharine Halls**, joint winner 2017 Sheikh Hamad Translation Award; **Susheila Nasta** MBE, *Wasafiri* magazine founder, Professor Emerita Queen Mary College & the Open University; **Becki Maddock**, Banipal Trustee, toponymist & linguist.

CELEBRATION & LECTURE 2022

BRITISH LIBRARY

Hartmut Fähndrich gives the annual lecture on: St. Jerome or St. Christopher?



The scholar, Arabist and prolific literary translator from Arabic to German, discussed the “dubious” pleasure of translation at the British Library on 10 November 2022. He reflected on the “load” placed on translators as they carry out their work, which consisted of many parts: the desires of the authors, the demands of the publishers, the expectations of potential readers and the trials and tribulations of an adequate rendering of the text. This was the burden weighing on the shoulders of the translator as Saint Christopher, who was described by the poet Rilke as “knowledgeable on both banks” and “receptive for all that want to cross over”.

View video at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r-2LQB4EghY&t=10s>



Banipal Trust Celebration was held online on 9 February 2023 in partnership with Arts Canteen. View video at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1V1VY72bjpg>



Hugh Davies, representing his late brother Humphrey, and Hamdi Abu Golayyel read excerpts from *The Men Who Swallowed the Sun*, and Katharine Halls delivered a tribute to the late Humphrey Davies. The other winning translator, Robin Moger, and his author Mohamed Kheir discussed and read excerpts from *Slipping*. Banipal Trust president Prof Roger Allen moderated the discussion and Q&A with Robin Moger, chair of judges Charis Olszok and judge Katharine Halls



The Translation Prizes Award Ceremony on 8 February 2023, hosted by The Society of Authors at the British Library

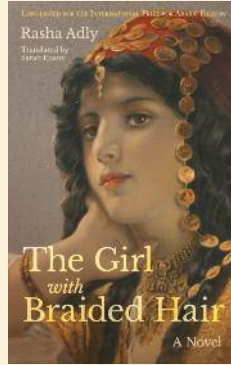


Hugh Davies, brother of the late Humphrey Davies, one of two prizewinners, receives the award on his behalf



Unable to be present, prizewinner Robin Moger speaks online about receiving the award

2021



WINNER

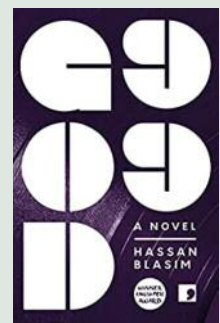
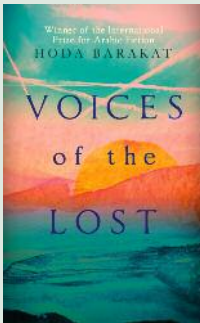
Sarah Enany

for *The Girl with Braided Hair* by Rasha Adly (Egypt), published by Hoopoe Fiction

"A unanimous choice for the excellence and readability of both its original & translated versions"

Sarah Enany's highly accomplished translation was praised by the judges for its accuracy and its ability to combine the author's two separate narratives into a seamless text that is a pleasure to read. The subtle and beautifully crafted translation faithfully echoes the style of the author, whose multi-textured story of love, war, and the ruthlessness and privileges of the invader, skilfully segmented into its two time frames, draws the reader into its two eras and worlds – a wonderful combination of art and history, of contemporary Egypt and its 18th-century past.

SHORTLIST



Voices of the Lost by Hoda Barakat (Lebanon) translated by Marilyn Booth (Oneworld) • *A Bed for the King's Daughter* by Shahla Ujayli (Syria) translated by Sawad Hussain (Center for Middle Eastern Studies/University of Texas Press) • *The Frightened Ones* by Dima Wannous (Syria) translated by Elisabeth Jaquette (Harvill Secker) • *God99* by Hassan Blasim translated by Jonathan Wright (Comma Press)

THE JUDGES: **Roger Allen** (Chair) Professor Emeritus of Arabic & Comp. Lit., University of Pennsylvania; **Rosemarie Hudson**, Founder publisher, HopeRoad Publishing; **Ronak Hosni**, Professor of Arabic, American University of Sharjah; **Caroline McCormick**, Director, Achates Philanthropy

CELEBRATION & LECTURE 2021

BRITISH LIBRARY

Jonathan Wright gives the annual lecture online: **Change and Continuity in Contemporary Arabic Fiction** 10 Nov 2021. Hosted by the British Library

View video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oJRblbE9Yck&t=9s>



In his lecture, the award-winning literary translator of Arabic to English drew on his own experiences to explore the odd case of Arabic literature; written in a language that few people speak, with a morphology that has hardly changed for more than a millennium. With Q&A.



**ARTS
CANTEEN**

Banipal Trust Celebration was held online on 17 February 2022 in partnership with **Arts Canteen**. View video at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s5d9Shq7RjE>

The 2021 Saif Ghobash Banipal Prize for Arabic Literary Translation

Winning translator
Sarah Enany of the novel
The Girl with Braided Hair
and her author Rasha Adly
in conversation with chair
of judges Prof Roger Allen,
along with readings in
both languages and a Q&A.

Thursday 17 February 5pm GMT



SARAH ENANY



ROGER ALLEN



RASHA ADLY



Guest:
Nay Master
Faris Ishaq

BANIPAL
Prize of Modern Arabic Literature

**ARTS
CANTEEN**

**THE SOCIETY OF
AUTHORS**
Translators' Society



FREE online event **Eventbrite**
www.banipaltrust.org.uk/prize/award2021

CELEBRATION & LECTURE 2020

Liana Badr, the Palestinian author and film director, gives the fifth annual lecture online on 11 November 2020 on: **Creating a Mosaic of Literature**

Audience members could register for an Arabic or an English version of the Palestinian author's lecture: View the video at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E26AsqMu9nc>

BRITISH
LIBRARY



LIANA BADR CREATING A MOOSAIC OF LITERATURE

Wed 11 Nov 2020,
19:30 - 20:30
UK time
FREE ONLINE
EVENT

<https://www.bl.uk/events/creating-a-mosaic-of-literature>



ARTS
CANTEEN®

Banipal Trust Celebration, held online on 17 February 2021 in partnership with **Arts Canteen**. The audience joined us from a range of locations – from the Hebrides to Jordan, Italy to Tel Aviv, Michigan to Cairo and Doha. View video at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UMz_oOtnF4o

CELEBRATING VELVET

An evening with KAY HEIKKINEN and HUZAMA HABAYEB



Wednesday, 17 February 2021 18.00 UK Time

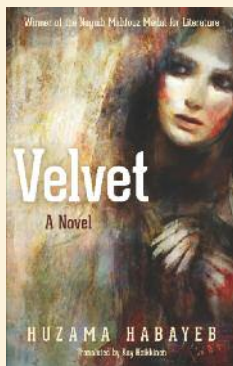


ARTS
CANTEEN®

BANIPAL
Translation of Modern Arabic Literature



2020 PRIZE



WINNER

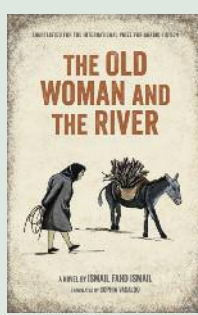
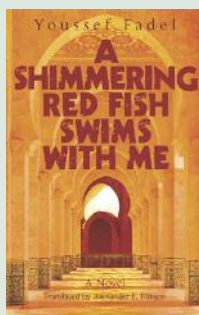
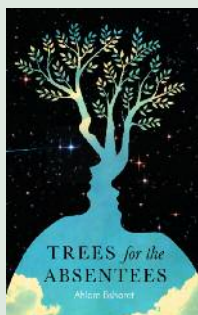
Kay Heikkinen

for **Velvet** by Huzama Habayeb, published by Hoopoe Fiction, 2019.

“Outstanding quality – a celebration of the triumph of the imagination over the mundane”

This novel is written in a rich, carefully crafted Arabic that represents a significant challenge, requiring stamina and resilience as well as accuracy and precision. The judges were impressed by how the translation succeeds in conveying not only the sense but also the mood and emotion of the original, bringing to life a narrative that vividly portrays the repressive life of ordinary Palestinian women while scrupulously avoiding any hint of political platitude. Kay's translation faithfully adheres to the elegance of the original without losing the deeply tragic tenor of its events.

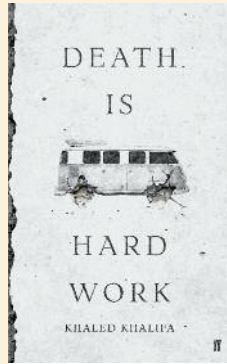
SHORTLIST



• *A Shimmering Red Fish Swims With Me*, by Youssef Fadel (Morocco), translated by Alexander E. Elinson (Hoopoe) • *Trees for the Absentees*, by Ahlam Bsharat (Palestine), translated by Ruth Ahmedzai Kemp and Sue Copeland (Neem Tree Press) • *The Old Woman and the River* by Ismail Fahd Ismail (Iraq), translated by Sophia Vasalou (Interlink Books) • *The Egyptian Assassin*, by Ezzedine C. Fishere (Egypt), translated by Jonathan Wright (Hoopoe Fiction)

THE JUDGES: **Paul Starkey** (Chair), Emeritus Professor of Arabic, University of Durham; **Justine Jordan**, fiction editor *The Guardian*; **Nii Ayikwei Parkes**, writer, publisher & broadcaster; **Omar Al-Qattan**, film director & philanthropist

2019



WINNER

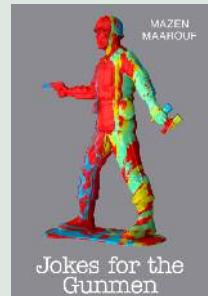
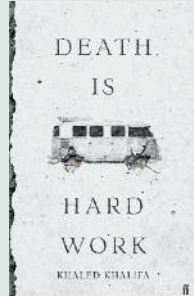
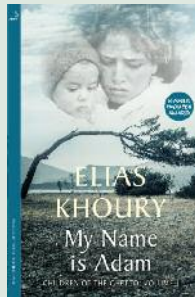
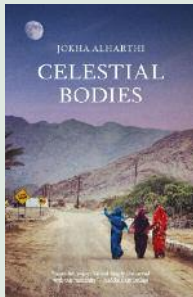
Leri Price

for *Death is Hard Work* by Khaled Khalifa, published by Faber & Faber, March 2019.

"A subtle translation that is both sharp and unobtrusive of an audacious work"

Leri Price deserves the highest commendation for her achievement in conveying the vividness and the intense style of Khaled Khalifa's compelling novel about survival and humanity in modern-day Syria in a subtle translation that is both sharp and unobtrusive. Price was successful in dealing with the intricacies and nuances of a narrative that takes us into a world of chaos, thrill and tragedy, a world imbued with the absurd and the horrific. Her translation succeeded in conveying all aspects of the author's enthralling text in a seamless and smooth manner.

SHORTLIST



Celestial Bodies by Jokha Alharthi, translated by Marilyn Booth (Sandstone Press, June 2018) • *My Name is Adam: Children of the Ghetto, Volume I* by Elias Khoury, translated by Humphrey Davies (MacLehose Press, UK / Archipelago Books, US, 2018) • *Death is Hard Work* by Khaled Khalifa, translated by Leri Price (Faber & Faber, March 2019) (Hoopoe Fiction, September 2018) • *Jokes for the Gunmen* by Mazen Maarouf, translated by Jonathan Wright (Granta Books, January 2019).

THE JUDGES: **Ghazi Gheblawi** (Chair), author and publisher; **Jan Fortune**, publisher and writer; **Abla Oudeh**, lecturer in Arabic studies and translator; **Catherine Taylor**, journalist, editor and literary critic.

CELEBRATION & LECTURE 2019

BRITISH LIBRARY



Hanan Al-Shaykh, the internationally acclaimed Lebanese novelist and playwright, gives the annual lecture on 7 November 2019 on: **My travels through Cultures, Languages and Writing – From Abu Nuwas to Bint Al-Shaykh**

View the video at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M_etRG1o-k8

AN EVENING WITH LERI PRICE AND KHALED KHALIFA

the
mosaic
rooms

13 February 2020 at The Mosaic Rooms, London.

Hosted by The Mosaic Rooms and the Banipal Trust. *Listen on Soundcloud:*

<https://soundcloud.com/themosaicrooms/book-launch-khalid-khalifa-in>



Prof. Paul Starkey and Leri Price



Khaled Khalifa and Leri Price



Author and translator



The 2019 Translation Prizes Award Ceremony was held on 13 February 2020, hosted by The Society of Authors at the British Library



Leri Price at the award ceremony and with author Khaled Khalifa



CELEBRATION & LECTURE 2018

BRITISH LIBRARY



Adonis, the internationally renowned poet, philosopher and theoretician of Arab poetics, gives the lecture on 9 November 2018 on: **Translation, a Second Act of Creation?** View the video at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sKcW_FD4m0w&t=5s

AN EVENING WITH LUKE LEAFGREN AND MUHSIN AL-RAMLI

14 February 2019 at Waterstones Piccadilly, London.

Hosted by Waterstones and the Banipal Trust.

View on Video at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Speh8MgNoPk>



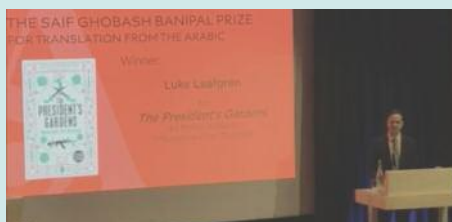
On the panel at Waterstones Piccadilly Bookshop are: (l to r) Interpreter Samira Kavar, author Muhsin al-Ramli, prizewinner Luke Leafgren, chair of judges Pete Ayrtton and Banipal Trust chair Prof. Paul Starkey



The 2018 Translation Prizes Award Ceremony was held on 13 February 2019, hosted by The Society of Authors at the British Library

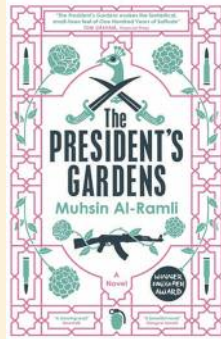


Group photo of the winners & shortlisted of the 2018 literary translation prizes



Luke Leafgren on stage, reading from the book

2018



WINNER

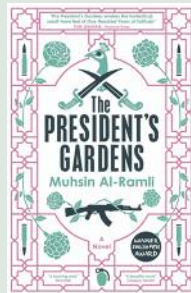
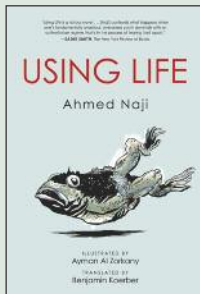
Luke Leafgren

for *The President's Gardens*
by Muhsin Al-Ramli,
published by MacLehose Press, UK,
April 2017

*"A seamless rendering of an
outstanding work of fiction"*

This translation by Luke Leafgren is imperceptible and mirrors the writer's many changes of register. The author is fortunate to have found a translator totally in sympathy with his writing. Faced with many difficult choices, Leafgren has produced a work both faithful to the Arabic and a work of art in English. Tender, funny, tragic, wise and poetic, *The President's Garden* is imbued with the richness and complexity of a region that has known little peace over the last century. Luke Leafgren's translation conveys beautifully the spirit and idiosyncrasies of the original.

SHORTLIST



THE SHORTLIST: *Using Life* by Ahmed Naji (Egypt), translated by Ben Koerber (CMES Publications, University of Texas Press); *The President's Gardens* by Muhsin Al-Ramli (Iraq), translated by Luke Leafgren (MacLehose Press); *Concerto al-Quds* by Adonis (Syria), translated by Khaled Mattawa (Yale University Press); *Frankenstein in Baghdad* by Ahmed Saadawi (Iraq), translated by Jonathan Wright (Oneworld)

THE JUDGES: Pete Ayrton (Chair), publisher & translator; Georgia de Chamberet, editor and translator; Fadia Faqir, Jordanian author; Sophia Vasalou, university lecturer and translator.

2017

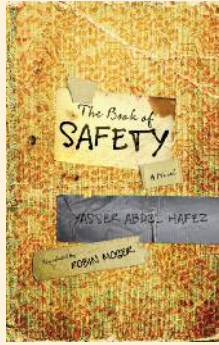


WINNER

Robin Moger

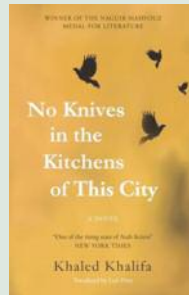
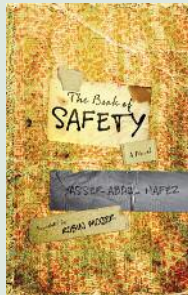
for ***The Book of Safety*** by Yasser Abdel Hafez, published by Hoopoe Fiction (AUC Press), January 2017.

"An alluring translation that captures beautifully the nuances of the Arabic original"



Robin Moger's translation captures beautifully the moods, paces, rhythms and nuances of the Arabic original and, ruthlessly but lovingly, lures us into the conflicting, conspiratorial, and violent world that it draws. He makes us believe this is our world, the very world we live in, and we care about the characters and their shenanigans, look out for whispers that will give their secrets away, and cannot wait until we know their fate. A relatively new voice in Arabic literary translation, the full force of his talent is certain to be felt in the years to come.

FIRST SHORTLIST



THE FIRST SHORTLIST: *The Dove's Necklace* by Raja Alem (Saudi Arabia), translated by Katharine Halls and Adam Talib (Duckworth); *The Book of Safety* by Yasser Abdel Hafez (Egypt), translated by Robin Moger (Hoopoe); *No Knives in the Kitchens of This City* by Khaled Khalifa (Syria), translated by Leri Price (Hoopoe Fiction); *Limbo Beirut* by Hilal Chouman (Lebanon), translated by Anna Ziajka Stanton (CMES, University of Texas Press)

THE JUDGES: Dr Alistair Niven (Chair), writer & literary figure; **Peter Kalu**, author and editor; **Wen-chin Ouyang**, Professor of Arabic & Comparative Literature, SOAS; **Salam Sarhan**, poet and journalist.

CELEBRATION & LECTURE 2017

BRITISH LIBRARY



Robert Irwin after the lecture with James Currey, editorial director of the original Heinemann African Writers Series

Robert Irwin, the historian and fiction writer, gives the lecture on 7 November 2017 on: **Tayeb Salih's Season of Migration to the North: "The most important Arabic novel of the 20th Century"**

View the video at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0qpWfJYvFsA>



Translating Arabic Fiction Today –

The 2017 winner in discussion with the 2016 and 2015 winners

5pm, 3 March 2018, Djam Lecture Theatre, SOAS Main Building

Moderated by Prof. Wen-chin Ouyang

View on Video at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6W3BtPG-eQ4>



Robin Moger, centre, with Jonathan Wright (2016) and Prof Wen-chin Ouyang from the 2017 judging panel. Prof. Paul Starkey (2015) was not able to attend due to storms closing the railway lines.

Hosted by the Banipal Trust and SOAS



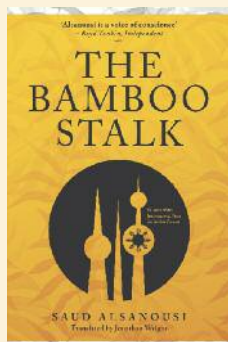
The 2017 Translation Prizes Award Ceremony on 1 March 2018, hosted by The Society of Authors at the British Library

The translation prizes awarded were the Saif Ghobash Banipal Prize for Arabic, the Goethe-Institut Award and the Schlegel-Tieck Prize – both for German, the Scott Moncrieff Prize for French, the Premio Valle Inclán for Italian, the Vondel Prize for Dutch and the inaugural TA First Translation Prize for translation from any language into English.



Robin Moger receiving his award

2016



WINNER

Jonathan Wright

for *The Bamboo Stalk* by Saud Alsanousi, published by Bloomsbury Qatar Foundation Publishing, Qatar

"A 'page-turner' translation with a universal appeal"

The judges were unanimous in deciding to award this year's prize to Jonathan Wright for his translation of Saud Alsanousi's *The Bamboo Stalk*. "Originally published in Arabic in 2012, *The Bamboo Stalk* is a daring work which takes a critical but objective look at the phenomenon of foreign workers in the Arab countries of the Gulf. The novel examines problems of race, religion and identity through the life of a half-Filipino, half-Kuwaiti young man, who moves from an impoverished life in the Philippines to return to his father's Kuwait – a 'paradise', as his Filipina mother has described it to him since he was a child. The Arabic work had already won the author the 2013 International Prize for Arabic Fiction, and the judges found in the book the same qualities that had commended it to the IPAF jury. It combines a daring choice of subject with a tight but subtle literary structure and an approach to a highly charged and emotional subject matter that is both sensitive and measured.

"The judges questioned the omission, in the English publication, of the Arabic edition's 'second title page' – which had added an additional structural twist to the original work – but this was not felt to detract from the quality of the translation itself. Jonathan Wright's seamless English rendering does full justice to the original, exhibiting a sureness of touch that fully captures the spirit of the Arabic version. Although the particular cultural context of the work will be unfamiliar to many English-speaking readers, Wright's 'page-turner' translation has a universal appeal, and it is difficult not to be moved by the predicament of the narrator, with his dual identity of Isa and José, as he comes to terms with the reality of life in Kuwait.

"The judges discussed at length a number of other entries – including some by younger translators – with a view to naming a runner-up, but after extensive discussion decided not to do so on this occasion. The translators had tackled challenging works with equally impressive results, but none came close to matching the broad appeal that the judges discerned in *The Bamboo Stalk*, and in these circumstances it was felt inappropriate to single out any particular work to be named as runner-up."

THE JUDGES: Paul Starkey (Chair), Emeritus Professor & winner of the 2015 prize; Lucy Popescu, author and journalist; Zahia Smail Salhi, lecturer and translator; Bill Swainson, editor and literary consultant.

CELEBRATION & FIRST LECTURE 2016



Anton Shammass



*Daniel Lowe (BL), Anton Shammass,
Peter Clark (Banipal trustee)*



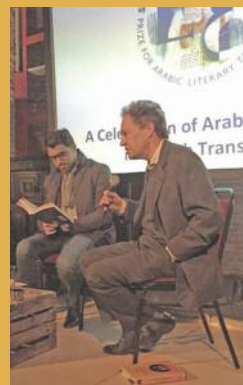
*Illustrations of the issues of
perspective discussed in the lecture*

Anton Shammass, the Palestinian author, essayist and translator, gives the inaugural annual lecture on 14 October 2016 on: **Blind Spots: A millennium of Arabic in translation – from Ibn Al-Haytham to William Faulkner via Don Quixote**. For more info go to: <https://www.banipaltrust.org.uk/lecture/lecture2016.cfm>

Prizewinner Jonathan Wright with his author Saud Alsanousi



in conversation with
Manchester journalist **Ben East**
7pm, 23 February 2017
International Anthony Burgess Foundation
Introduced by YA author **Melvin Burgess**



The Manchester audience • Melvin Burgess and Jonathan Wright • Jonathan on stage with Saud Alsanousi

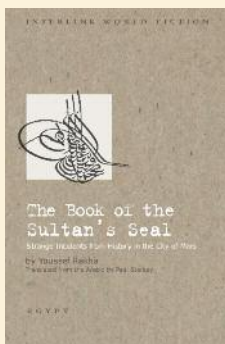


**The 2016 Translation Prizes
Award Ceremony,**
hosted by The Society of Authors
on 22 February 2017
at the British Library



Jonathan Wright receiving his award... and reading an excerpt

2015



WINNER

Paul Starkey

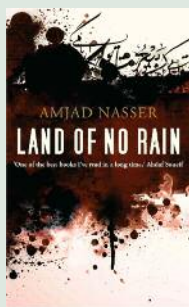
for *The Book of the Sultan's Seal: Strange Incidents from History in the City of Mars* by Youssef Rakha, published by Interlink Books (US)

"A tour de force translation"

"One of the most adventurous and innovative novels to have appeared in Arabic in recent years and its English version is a *tour de force* of translation," said the judges.

"This text confronts the translator with extraordinary challenges. It mirrors the fundamental tension in the book between the heritage and modernity by constant reference to the classical literary tradition. The author chooses the pre-modern form of 'epistles' or 'treatises' for his rambling narrative, and the language of the text swings from the most formal classical Arabic to the most contemporary vernacular, along with extraordinary fusions of linguistic registers.

"Paul Starkey addresses these problems with great skill, and has produced a masterly English version of this riotous, chaotic and often comedic story, which is also deeply moving."



COMMENDED

Jonathan Wright

for *Land of No Rain* by Amjad Nasser, published by Bloomsbury Qatar Foundation Publishing

"Sureness of stylistic touch"

"The outstanding feature of this book is its highly poetically charged prose . . . rendered into English with a sureness of stylistic touch which does complete justice to the Arabic original." The judges were deeply impressed by Jonathan Wright's translation of *Land of No Rain*, "an inspired and inspiring account of that perennial theme of modern Arab experience: exile and return".

THE JUDGES: Robin Ostle (Chair), Emeritus Research Fellow at St John's College, Oxford; Samira Kavar, literary translator; Alastair Niven, lecturer and writer; Susannah Tarbush, cultural journalist and blogger.

2014



WINNER

Sinan Antoon

for his translation of his own novel
The Corpse Washer,
published by Yale University Press

The judges' report says that ***The Corpse Washer*** is "heart-warming and horrifying, sad and sensuous in equal measure. It is

the moving story of Jawad, a young Iraqi whose family washes and prepares bodies for burial, and of the fracturing effects of war, occupation and civil strife – on Jawad, his family, his friends and their country".

"Thoughtful, precise and consistent in voice and mood, Sinan Antoon comes close, in this translation of his own novel, to the ideal in literary translation – the invisibility of the translator. His fluent and forthright language matches the style and rhythm of his own original Arabic and the unadorned, sometimes affectless tone reflects the hollowness of life as the onslaught of war brings an onslaught of bodies for the corpse washers of Baghdad. The novel ends with Jawad sitting under the pomegranate tree that grows from the water he uses to wash the corpses. A rich, profound insight into an Iraq we hear very little of, this is a story that resonates with human pathos and bears every hallmark of becoming a modern classic."



HIGHLY COMMENDED

Paula Haydar

for ***June Rain*** by Jabbour Douaihy,
published by
Bloomsbury Qatar Foundation Publishing

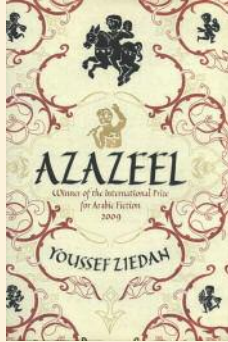
"Paula Haydar's astonishing translation exactly captures the tone and heft of an extraordinary novel that tells us so much about sectarianism

and its heartbreaking legacies. Lyrical and at times wistful, Douaihy's novel, part tragedy, part 'whodunnit', is rendered through a kaleidoscope of superb stories and characters."

THE JUDGES: **Jonathan Wright**, literary translator and joint winner of the 2013 Prize; **Lulu Norman**, translator and writer; **Paul Blezard**, broadcaster and writer; **Samuel Shimon**, Banipal editor and trustee

2013

JOINT WINNERS

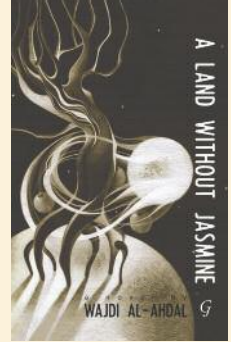


Jonathan Wright

for *Azazeel* by Youssef Ziedan,
published by Atlantic Books

"A masterful achievement. *Azazeel* is an enthralling book. The author, and translator, have evoked, and re-evoked, a time, a region, and people that come alive on the page despite our distance from them. The conflicts of the day between tolerance and anathematization – so reminiscent of those of our own time – are seamlessly embodied in the events . . . The translation is notable for its delicacy and well-judged restraint and deftly captures the feeling of the original.

"A beautifully crafted and evocative tale. Rich in description of the arid Syrian landscape and steeped in early history, *Azazeel* has been flawlessly translated, making this an easily accessible story."



William M Hutchins

for *A Land Without Jasmine*
by Wajdi al-Ahdal,
published by Garnet Publishing (UK)

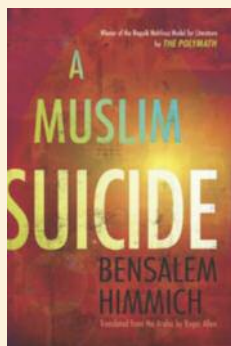
"Altogether a gripping page-turner from a talented writer, superbly translated by William Maynard Hutchins.

"Through its use of multiple perspectives we are given a revealing insight into society, reminding us that no event, or place, has an objective existence or truth. Wajdi al-Ahdal is a gifted and original storyteller.

"*A Land Without Jasmine* gives fascinating insight on life in Yemen, with a thriller-like plot . . . In sparse, lucid prose with a tight narrative structure, the author paints a riveting portrait of sexual confusion, frustration and shame. The translation succeeded in creating an enjoyable English read and at the same time preserving the soul of the original."

THE JUDGES: **Humphrey Davies**, literary translator, twice winner and twice runner-up of the prize ; **Hassan Abdulrazzak**, playwright; and authors **Rajeev Balasubramanyam** and **Meike Ziervogel**.

2012



WINNER

Roger Allen

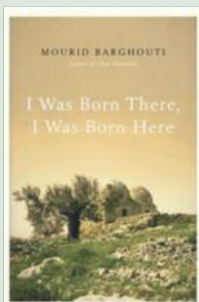
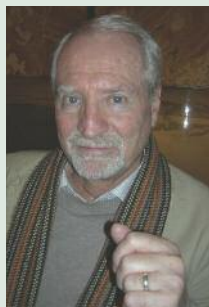
for *A Muslim Suicide*

by Bensalem Himmich, published
by Syracuse University Press (USA)

"Seamless translation"

"A highly ambitious and erudite work that opens up remarkable historical, cultural and religious perspectives on the Islamic heritage. It is a highly challenging, yet deeply enriching read in its English translation. This is chiefly due, however, to the immense insight and long and hard-earned cultural and linguistic awareness of its translator.

"It is very hard indeed to imagine anyone besides Roger Allen capable of bringing this serious book alive to English readers. All those able, even briefly, to browse a little of the Arabic original would quickly recognize the translation as a major achievement. It is a major work of translation [that impressed all the judges] with its remarkable sophistication and ambition, its rich philosophical and literary tapestry, and the seamless way in which it has been translated."



RUNNER-UP

Humphrey Davies

for *I was Born There, I Was Born Here*

by Mourid Barghouthi, published by
Bloomsbury Publishing (UK/USA)

"Exactly the right palette"

"Humphrey Davies catches the spirit of the original text and lets us feel and enjoy the beauty of his English prose. He has adopted exactly the right palette of both vocabulary and tone right the way through, giving readers the beautifully rendered revisiting of a riven landscape. In this fluid translation of a thoughtful and moving book he manages a rare thing – to make you feel you are reading the book in the language in which it was written."

THE JUDGES: Authors **Ruth Padel** and **Esther Freud**; author and translator **Fadhil al-Azzawi**; translator **John Peate**

2011



WINNER

Khaled Mattawa

for **Adonis: Selected Poems**,
published by Yale University Press
(USA/UK)

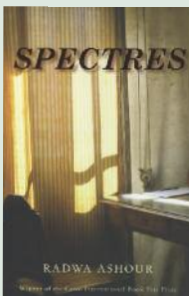
"Khaled Mattawa's translation of this selection of Adonis's poetry is destined to become a classic. It is a monumental

piece of work, a long-overdue compendium of works by one of the most important poets of our time, a contribution to world literature that demonstrates the lyricism and full range of Adonis's poetry. Anglophone readers will gain a new appreciation of why Adonis has so often been likened to TS Eliot and Ezra Pound, with the freshness of his lines and imagination liberated from the self-conscious archaism of other translations, and allowing his unique reworking of the legends of East and West, the arcs of love and death, to spring forth.

"Khaled Mattawa has brought Adonis's poems to the English language with a musicality and aesthetic sensitivity that echo their innovative, conceptual and stylistic complexities – and in doing so he has created an original, powerful and lyrical poetic work in English. In a word: stunning."

RUNNER-UP

Barbara Romaine

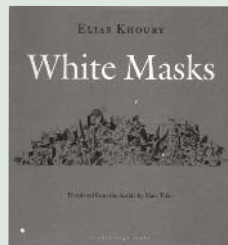


for **Spectres** by
Radwa Ashour,
published by Arabia
Books (UK), Interlink
Books (USA)

"Impressive
translation – fluent
and refreshing"

COMMENDED

Maia Tabet

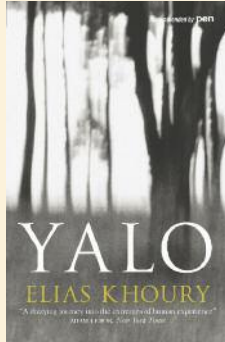
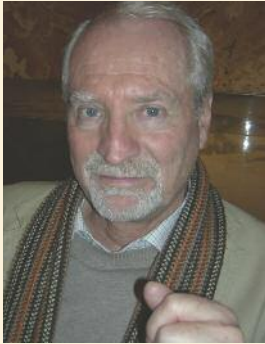


for
White Masks
by Elias Khoury,
published by
Archipelago
Books (USA)

"A masterful
translation"

THE JUDGES: Professor and broadcaster **Sarah Churchwell**;
journalist **Joan Smith**; academic and translator **Christina Phillips**;
Banipal editor and trustee **Samuel Shimon**

2010



WINNER

Humphrey Davies

for *Yalo* by Elias Khoury,
published by Maclehose Press (UK)

"A narrative free of clutter"

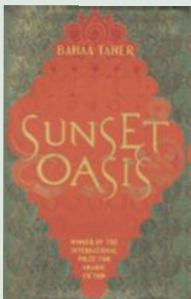
"This novel is a *tour de force* for both author and translator. It is a powerful, moving

book that works on many levels . . . The judges this year were impressed by the sensitivity of the winning translation and its ability to take the reader into the inner recesses of Yalo's mind and soul in an intimate way. The simple but exquisitely crafted prose lines create a narrative free of clutter which is sometimes present in translations of Arabic fiction. The authentic voice of the author comes through rather than that of a univocal translator who renders different texts in a near monochrome fashion.

"Humphrey Davies's seamless translation hides the skill with which he works here. The language of this novel is notoriously difficult. Davies renders this difficulty in a fluent British idiom, but never at the expense of the complexities of the original."

RUNNER-UP

Humphrey Davies

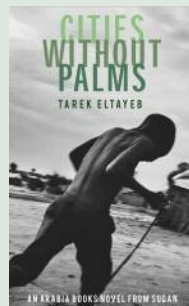


for
Sunset Oasis
by Baha Taher,
published by
Sceptre (UK)

*"... the virtuosity
of Humphrey
Davies"*

RUNNER-UP

Kareem James Abu-Zeid

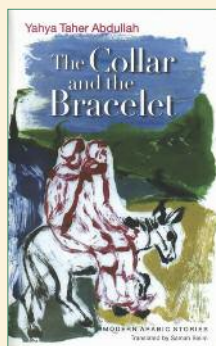


for
Cities without Palms
by Tarek Eltayeb,
published by Arabia
Books (UK)

*"A skilful and
unobtrusive
translation"*

THE JUDGES: Author **Margaret Drabble**; Professor **Susan Bassnett**; professor and translator **Elliot Colla**; and Banipal trustee Professor **Yasir Suleiman**

2009



WINNER

Samah Selim

for *The Collar and the Bracelet*

by the late Yahya Taher Abdullah,
published by AUC Press

*"The translation
succeeds admirably"*

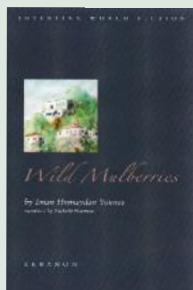
"This wonderful translation captures a particular style of narrative, written a third of a century ago but entirely modern.

"The Collar and the Bracelet is the author's most famous and enduring literary monument: a collection of short stories originally, combined into a novel it manages to place its reader into a fish-bowl society, where traditional mores, family feuds, and elemental passions all come into play as part of the narrative. The translation succeeds admirably in conveying all these facets of Abdullah's style and technique.

"Samah Selim has been able to catch the Upper Egyptian and folkloric rhythms – and their utterly unromantic yoking to the everyday grimness and intimacy of modern realities – that Abdullah pioneered in his fiction."

RUNNER-UP

Michelle Hartman

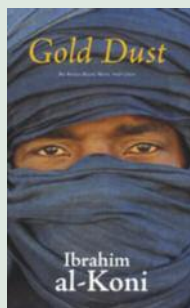


for *Wild Mulberries*
by Iman Humaydan,
published by
Interlink Books
(USA)

*"Mirrors the
original's
narrative traits"*

RUNNER-UP

Elliot Colla



for *Gold Dust*
by
Ibrahim al-Koni,
published by
Arabia Books
(UK)

*"Excellent
translation"*

THE JUDGES: Author **Aamer Hussein**; journalist and broadcaster
Francine Stock; professor and translator **Marilyn Booth**; professor
and translator **Roger Allen**

2008



WINNER

Fady Joudah

for *The Butterfly's Burden*, selected poetry of Mahmoud Darwish in a bilingual edition, Bloodaxe (UK), Copper Canyon (USA)

"A major achievement"

"The translator's sensitivity to the nuances and music of the original texts is already evident in the way in which the poetry is introduced and the translation process discussed in the Preface. Darwish is there described as 'a songmaker whose vocabulary is accessible but whose mystery is not bashful.' The resulting versions in English replicate, deliberately so, the structures of the original poems that parallel them on the opposite pages. The poems can be read . . . as wonderful transfers of the images and music of the Arabic poems.

"It goes without saying that this bilingual anthology is a major achievement. Darwish's recent contributions to contemporary Arabic poetry and to the literary tradition of his Palestinian people – most especially the siege poem emerging from the Second Intifada – are here made available in a carefully produced and beautifully translated volume."

RUNNER-UP

Ghassan Nasr

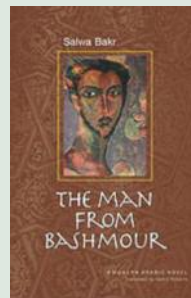


for *The Journals of Sarab Affan* by Jabra Ibrahim Jabra, published by Syracuse University Press (USA)

"... transfers the nuances"

COMMENDED

Nancy Roberts

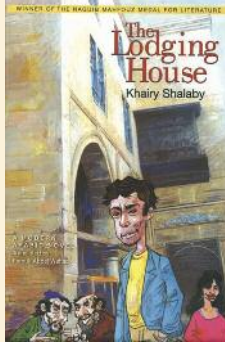


for *The Man from Bashmour* by Salwa Bakr, published by the American University in Cairo Press (Egypt/US)

"highly complex"

THE JUDGES: Professor and literary translator **Marilyn Booth**; author **Aamer Hussein**; editor **Bill Swainson**; and professor and literary translator **Roger Allen**

2007



WINNER

Farouk Abdel Wahab

for *The Lodging House* by Khairy Shalaby, published by the American University in Cairo Press (Egypt/US)

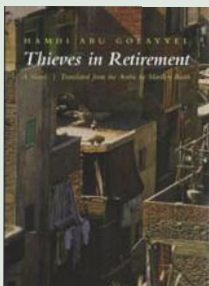
"A brilliant exercise"

"The Lodging House is a wise, anarchic, ribald, compassionate compendium of life at its most precarious and most ebullient. Its narrator is a young drop-out expelled from teachers' college for assaulting an instructor who picked on him as 'barefoot riffraff', one of a generation of peasants and urban poor rising with the widening of education.

"Set in the years following the Egyptian Revolution of 1952, after political parties have been dissolved by decree, and as suspected members of the outlawed Muslim Brotherhood are being rounded up, jailed or executed, the novel hints at the forces feuding in Egyptian society, while illuminating the lives of those whose main goal is simply to survive. The translation is a brilliant exercise in the transfer of both literal meaning and nuance into the context of another language's culture – no mean feat."

RUNNER-UP

Marilyn Booth

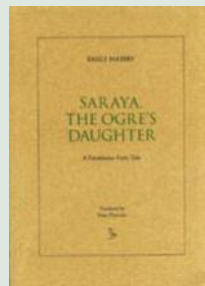


for *Thieves in Retirement* by Hamdi Abu Golayyel, published by Syracuse University Press (USA)

"A supple, subtle translation"

COMMENDED

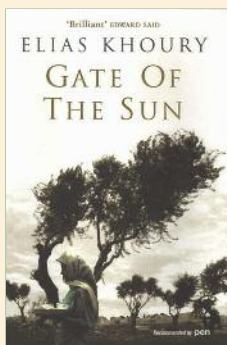
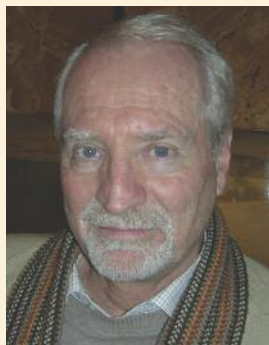
Peter Theroux



for *Saraya the Ogre's Daughter* by Emile Habibi, published by Ibis Editions (Israel)

THE JUDGES: Author **Moris Farhi**; literary journalist **Maya Jaggi**; professor and literary translator **Roger Allen**; poet and Banipal trustee **Saadi Youssef** (Chair)

2006



INAUGURAL WINNER

Humphrey Davies

for *Gate of the Sun* by Elias Khoury, published by Harvill Secker (UK), and Archipelago (US)

"Inspired by refugees' accounts of the Palestinian expulsion of 1948 and its lingering aftermath, Khoury's ambitious and richly crafted novel is an epic retelling of

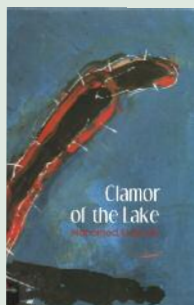
myriad individual stories through the central narrative of Khaleel, a doctor tending a comatose former Palestinian fighter in a refugee camp's makeshift hospital on the outskirts of Beirut.

"Tracing the meshed histories of Lebanon and Palestine from the 1930s to the 1990s, and the multiple crossings of a once-porous border with the state of Israel, it subtly questions the nature of memory and history, literature and imagination, heroism and defeat. The novel is a monumental achievement, whose translation by Humphrey Davies brilliantly captures the nuances and style of the original."

On being told of his award, Davies said: "Winning the Banipal Prize represents for me, primarily, recognition of the novel itself. *Gate of the Sun* is a work of extraordinary strength . . . I am doubly happy that, in translating it, I have helped to put before the reader of English so compelling an account of the dispossession of the Palestinians."

RUNNER-UP

Hala Halim

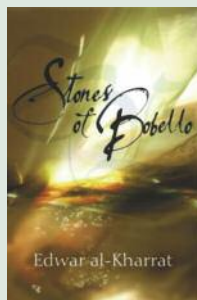


for *Clamour of the Lake* by Mohamed el-Bisatie, published by the American University in Cairo Press (AUC)

"Superbly renders the original's lyricism and fluidity"

COMMENDED

Paul Starkey



for *Stones of Bobello* by Edwar El-Kharrat, published by Saqi Books (UK)

THE JUDGES: Author **Moris Farhi**; literary journalist **Maya Jaggi**; professor and literary translator **Roger Allen**; poet and Banipal trustee **Saadi Youssef** (Chair)

The Winners – 2006 to 2025

