

BANIPAL

Magazine of Modern Arab Literature

Banipal is an independent literary magazine publishing contemporary authors from all over the Arab world in English translation. Its three issues a year present established and new authors in English for the first time through poems, short stories or excerpts of novels, and also include author interviews, profiles and book reviews. Each issue is well illustrated with author photographs and the full colour covers feature prominent Arab artists. A magazine for avid readers, an annual UK subscription is just £20.

Banipal has given modern Arabic literature . . . a new voice and a compelling presence within the English language. It has also proven that nothing is lost in translation

Anton Shammas



The British Council is committed to increasing links and partnerships between the UK and the Arab world, supporting and promoting a series of events to bring together writers, publishers, translators and journalists and to cultivate an exchange of Arabic and English literatures. For further information about the British Council's work in this area please contact Suzanne.Joinson@britishcouncil.org



new ways of working with libraries

The Reading Agency is an independent charity with a mission to help libraries create a 21st century reading service. It runs major national library programmes such as the Summer Reading Challenge, and has led the creation of new national partnerships for libraries with BBC Learning, BBC Radio, the nine Reading Partners publishers and Orange. For further information visit www.readingagency.org.uk



The paperback volume, *Unbuttoning the Violin*, featuring selected works by the four writers, celebrates their tour of the UK, and is available at all readings and by contacting www.banipal.co.uk. Published by Banipal Books, ISBN 0-9549666-2-7, price £3.95.

BANIPAL LIVE • 2006

London

Date: Monday 14 August
Writers' Reception Party
in Bloomsbury
By special invitation
For further information contact
info@banipal.co.uk

Date: Tuesday 15 August
Time: 7pm
Place: London Review Bookshop,
14 Bury Place, London WC1A 2JL
Tickets: £6 / £4 concs
Disabled Access: Yes, but
no accessible toilet
Box Office: 020 7269 9030,
events@lrbshop.co.uk

Chesterfield

Date: Wednesday 16 August
Time: 7.30–9pm
Place: Chesterfield Library,
New Beetwell Street,
Chesterfield S40 1QN
Tickets: £3
Disabled Access: Yes
Box Office: 01246 209292

Derby

Date: Wednesday 16 August
Time: 7.15pm (Doors
open at 7pm)
Place: Derby Central Library,
The Wardwick,
Derby DE1 1HS
Tickets: £3.50 / £2.50 concs
Disabled Access: Yes
Box Office: 01332 255398
Minicom: 01332 380712

Banipal Live 2006 is generously
supported by Arts Council England

Printed on 100% Recycled paper

Manchester

Date: Thursday 17 August
Time: 1–2pm
Place: Manchester Central Library,
St Peter's Square,
Manchester M2 5PD
Tickets: Free but please call
0161 234 1981 to reserve them
Disabled Access: Yes

South Shields

Date: Friday 18 August
Time: 7.30pm
Place: Customs House, Mill Dam,
South Shields NE33 1ES
Tickets: £3.50 / £2.50 concs
Disabled Access: Yes
Box Office: 0191 454 1234

Edinburgh

Date: Sunday 20 August
Time: 12.30pm
Place: Peppers Theatre,
Charlotte Square Gardens, Edinburgh
Ticket Price: £7 / £5 concs
Disabled Access: Fully
wheelchair accessible & infra-red
hearing aid loop
Box Office: 0845 3735888
Website: www.edbookfest.co.uk

For more information contact:
www.banipal.co.uk
info@banipal.co.uk
Tel: 020 8568 9747



BANIPAL LIVE • 2006

14-20 August

From the heart of
the Arab world,
four young writers
on tour

Mansoura Ez-Eldin
Joumana Haddad
Ala Hlehel
Abed Ismael

The Visiting Writers

In many parts of the Arab World there is a profusion of artistic creativity from the new generations of authors and artists with outspoken and innovative works. Coupled with this is an unstoppable eagerness for inter-cultural dialogue. At the forefront are two poets and two fiction writers from countries with literary heritages that go to the heart of Arab literature today.

Through performance-readings and live discussions, poets Joumana Haddad from Lebanon and Abed Ismael from Syria together with fiction writers Ala Hlehel from Palestine and Mansoura Ez-Eldin from Egypt, offer an entirely fresh perspective on daily life in the Arab world.

Banipal Live 2006 and its partners the British Council and The Reading Agency also present a unique project in selected libraries along the route of the tour, which promotes Arab authors in English translation, enabling borrowers and reading groups to discover for themselves the wealth of contemporary literature from the Arab world.

For more information about any aspect of the tour, email info@banipal.co.uk or go to www.banipal.co.uk

Tour Host: Iraqi author Samuel Shimon
Tour Producer: Banipal Publisher Margaret Obank
Tour Manager: Freelance Live Literature Producer Julia Bird

Joumana Haddad writes passionate poems about love's constant siege of the self, the battle that neither combatant can ever win. A poet and translator, the septa-lingual Joumana is chief editor of the cultural pages in the Lebanese daily *An-Nahar*, for whom she has interviewed many international writers such as Umberto Eco, Wole Soyinka and Paul Auster. In April this year she was awarded the Arab Press Prize in Dubai for her interview with Mario Vargas Llosa. Born in 1970 in Beirut, Lebanon, she has five collections of poetry and has translated several works of poetry and prose into and from Arabic. Selected poems have been translated into several European languages. Seek solace in her poetry – as she writes in 'Who is Stealing My Forest?' – *I find shelter in the land of a brazen angel.*

At once sensual and cerebral, anarchic and self-contained, in Joumana's poems one hears the voice of Lilith, rebel woman at the origins of all three Abrahamic monotheisms

Marilyn Hacker



Ala Hlehel is Palestinian, but his short story 'My Husband is a Bus Driver' will resonate with anyone who has sat on the back seat of a bus and dreamed about a better life over the chugging of the engine. Ala Hlehel was born in Jesh, Galilee, in 1974 and graduated from the Tel Aviv School of Screenwriting and Haifa University. He has written numerous short stories, plays for theatre, and scripts for film and TV, and in 2003 took part in the international playwrights' residency at the Royal Court Theatre, London. He has received a number of awards for his work, among them the 2003 Young Writer Award from the A M Qattan Foundation. Ala has also worked as a radio presenter in Haifa, where he lives, and is now editor-in-chief of *Al-Madina* weekly newspaper.

Stunningly simple, refreshingly honest, Ala Hlehel's style lends his tales an irresistible power

Anthony Calderbank

Mansoura Ez-Eldin was just 21 when she started publishing her short stories in the Arab press. Her collection of short stories *Dhaw'a Muhtaz* (*Shaken Light*) includes a tale about the power of the teenage girl and the ghostly pull of the past. Mansoura was born in 1976 in a small village in Delta Egypt, and graduated in journalism from Cairo University in 1998. She has worked in Egyptian television, and presently runs the book review section of the renowned Egyptian literary magazine *Akhbar al-Adab* (*Literature News*). Her successful debut novel *Maryam's Maze*, published 2004, will have an English edition with AUC Press, Cairo. Mansoura is currently working on her second novel.

Mansoura's first novel is remarkable, not only for its freshness of vision but also for its prevision of language – a truly original creation

Paul Starkey



Abed Ismael asks in his poem 'Against Romanticism' 'I, who am I?' – characteristic of his inquiring, riddling work which is suffused with images of winds and rivers, birds and flashing knives. Born in 1963 in Lattakia, Syria, Abed Ismael is a poet and a translator. After a Fulbright Scholarship and a PhD from New York University, Abed now teaches American literature at Damascus University. His publications include four collections of poetry and 13 translations into Arabic of works by Walt Whitman, V S Naipaul, Jorge Luis Borges and others. He is also a book reviewer for literary magazines and newspapers, and a news editor for Syrian television. The answer to his question about identity? *I am a visible monologue, heard in silence ... I am flying feathers.*

One of the most prominent young poets of Syria, Abed's poetry is intensely individual, concerned with existential issues pressing him for an answer

Issa J Boullata



London Review Bookshop

Monday 7 August to Monday 21 August

Arab Authors Book Fortnight
London Review Bookshop
14 Bury Place, London WC1A 2JL

This two-week mini Arab Book Fair is a special promotion of contemporary Arab authors in English translations. For more information: 020 7269 9030