

New Israeli Fiction - or New to Us! Meet Our Library's Selection

* = owned by TSLlibrary; ss = Short Stories; mys.= Mysteries

After each author's name is date of birth, in Israel unless otherwise noted.

FICTION

Boianjiu, Shani. 1987. An amazing first novel, often funny or caustic, conveys the toll on young citizen soldiers, especially three girl friends from high school through IDF service into the years after. *The People of Forever Are Not Afraid*.*

Burstein, Dror. 1970. "The 'plot' of Natanya, [a] dazzling meditation, ...transforms human history into an intimate family story, and demonstrates how the mind at play can bring a little warmth into a cold universe." (Amazon). *Kin. Natanya*.

Castel-Bloom, Orly. 1960. Her writing "capture[s] the fragmentation of contemporary Israeli society. Her satirical novel *Human Parts** chronicles the exploits of a series of complex women ... with a strange and often surreal sense of humor" (Naomi Brenner). *Not Far From the Center of the Town* (ss), *Dolly City**, *Textile*, *Human Parts*.*

Einhar, Anat. 1970. Einhar's wonderful writing portrays a world whose orderly facade may crack at any moment...a superb, patient kind of writing (Haaretz). She takes banal, mundane materials and colors them in shades you never even knew existed.... *Summer Predators* (in process of translation).

Gavron, Assaf. 1968. *Hilltop**, hailed as "The Great Israeli Novel," "combines realism with a comic edge [telling us] how Israelis live today, in all settings, but focusing on a tiny West Bank settlement." (Tablet) *CrocAttack*, *Hydromania*, *Almost Dead**, *The End of Days*.

Gundar-Goshen, Ayelet. 1982. "...[In] prose that is wry, ironically tinged and poignant, the novel shows how ... lives are shaped not only by their own impulses but by larger historical and political forces"(Philip Womack). *One Night, Markovitch*.*

Gutfreund, Amir. 1963. Sapir award. Gutfreund's first book is "a moving and informative exploration of the thoughts and experiences of a young person surrounded by survivors" (Kirkus). *Our Holocaust**, *The World a Moment Later*.*

Hareven, Shulamit. 1930 - 2003. Poland/ Israel 1940. *Twilight and Other Stories* (ss), *City of Many Days* and *Thirst: the Desert Trilogy* (which includes three novellas: *The Miracle Hater*, *Prophet*, and *After Childhood*). First woman inducted into the Academy of the Hebrew Language, her writing encompassed poetry, journalism, children's books, novels, memoir and Israeli daily life. *The Trilogy*, set in the desert biblical period, explores "the relationship of the individual between God and society."

Hareven, Gail. 1959. Her writing is witty, compelling. "Her ...inquiry into the nature of love speaks across cultures. (Publishers Weekly) She is Shulamit Hareven's daughter. Although a prominent and prolific writer, only two of her novels have been translated into English, both dealing with women who look inward with relentless honesty. *The Confessions of Noa Weber**(Sapir Award), *Lies, First Person**.

Hedaya, Yael. 1975. "Best known for writing the TV series 'In Treatment,' Hedaya shows a marked fascination in the way people think - or often, fail to." Says of Eden, "plenty of mutual misunderstanding and miscommunication—the very stuff, in other words, of life. A graceful exploration of loneliness, ... and the worm that gnaws at the heart of all things" (Kirkus).
Eden,* *Housebroken: Three Novellas*,* *Accidents: a novel*.*

Hilu, Alon. 1972. Plays and historical novels. Sapir Award for *The House of Rajani*,* which evoked a huge controversy, with Hilu being called a traitor by some for a book which could be read as a criticism of Zionism. Hilu's writing is rich and colorful, hailed as the next great Israeli author. *Death of a Monk*,*

Hoffmann, Yoel, b. Romania 1933, Israel 1934. Began writing in his 40s. "Weaves together experimental and fragmented language with elements of Buddhism and western Philosophy into books such as the dream-like love story *The Heart is in Katmandu** and the complex mixture of reality and fantasy, *Katschen and the Book of Joseph*" (Naomi Brenner). *Bernhard*, *The Christ of Fish*, *The Shunra and the Schmetterling*,* *Curriculum Vita*,* *Moods*.

Keret. Etgar. 1967. ss. The most prominent of the newest wave of young Israeli authors and a consistent bestseller in Israel, Keret has almost a cult following. His stories are edgy, dark, maybe a little "magical /fantastic," funny, sometimes "over the top". *Pipelines*, *Tel Aviv Noir* (ed),* *Suddenly a Knock on the Door*,* *The Bus Driver Who Wanted to be God and other stories*,* *The Nimrod Flipout*,* *The Girl on the Fridge*,* *Missing Kissinger*, *Dad Runs Away With the Circus* (children), *The Seven Good Years: a memoir*,* *Gaza Blues: different stories** (with Palestinian exile Samir El-Youssef).

Lapid, Lihi. 1968. *Woman of Valour*. "...Two women in their first years of motherhood.....of metamorphosis, from independent working woman to mother, helpless [when finding] there's something wrong with her small daughter...." (Amazon)

Liebrecht, Savyon. 1948 Germany/1950 Isr. Everything she writes is wonderful. "Savyon Liebrecht's intense, lyrical, and emotionally complex stories have made her a best-selling writer in her native Israel" (Amazon). *Apples from the Desert: Selected Stories*,* *A Man and a Woman and a Man: A Novel*, *A Good Place for the Night: Stories*,* *The Women My Father Knew* (novel).*

Matalon, Ronit. 1959. Many awards. The daughter of Egyptian-Jewish immigrants, Barya Gur described her as "turning the pathos of the past and sentimental nostalgia into rich ambiguity, contradictions, and complexity." *The One Facing Us*,* *Bliss*,* *The Sound of Our Steps*.*

Michael, Sami. 1926 Baghdad/1946 Israel. *A Trumpet in the Wadi*.* "The layered complications of Arab/Jewish relationships [amid Israel's] myriad social ills are laid bare with humor, poignancy and clarity [in] shining prose." (Jon Papernick)

Nevo, Eshkol. 1971. "Is [a mentor] of the new generation of Israeli writers, torn between an Israeli identity and ...[one] with diasporic roots." Multiple important awards. In *Neuland*, Nevo has produced a daring, epic novel that asks profound questions, but the truth and warmth of his writing make it all-consuming and irresistibly loveable. Not yet translated into English.
Homesick.*

Rabinyan, Dorit. 1972. Her “lyrical novels offer rich emotional portraits of family life, especially the psychological ... dimensions of female characters” (Naomi Brenner). *Persian Brides*,* *Strand of a Thousand Pearls*,* *Borderlife*.

Ravel, Edeet. 1955; lives in Canada. Her delightful and gripping novels “explore ... ‘love in an impossible world,’ ... parsing the countless ways that the conflict [between Israelis and Palestinians] bedevil relationships..” (Nowak). *Lovers: A Midrash*, *The Tel Aviv Trilogy (Ten Thousand Lovers*,* *Look for Me*,* *A Wall of Light*), *The Last Rain*.*

Rubina, Dina. 1953 Russia/1990 Israel. Dina Rubina, prominent Russian-language Israeli writers, has been translated into thirty languages, with “major themes [of] theatre, autobiography, and the interplay between the Israeli and Russian Jewish cultures and between Hebrew and Russian.” *Here Comes the Messiah!**

Shalev, Zeruya. 1959. “With lyrical prose and deep psychological insight, books like *Husband and Wife** investigate the mind and desires of contemporary Israeli women.” (Naomi Brenner) *The Remains of Love*,* *True Love*.

Tsabari, Ayelet. 1975; lives in Toronto. Yemenite background. Beautiful writing. A superb read. “...The characters' struggles are human and universal ... [with] attention to detail in the stories – of scenery, smells, food, plant life, music.” (Abe’s Books) *The Best Place on Earth** (ss) (2015 Sami Rohr Prize).

ARAB ISRAELI AUTHORS

el-Youssel, Samir. 1965 Lebanon; lives in London. Although not Israeli, writes with Etgar Keret; *Gaza Blues: different stories*.* His novella, *The Day the Beast Got Thirsty*, “employs satire and surrealism to portray life in a Palestinian refugee camp.” (The Short Review)

Habibi, Emile. 1922. Anglican Palestinian Arab. His novel, *The Secret Life of Saeed the Pessoptimist*, is a classic in modern Arabic Literature. His acceptance of the Al-Quds Prize from the PLO and Israel Prize for Arabic reflected his belief in coexistence, but caused a debate in the Arabic intellectual community (Wikipedia). *The Mandelbaum Gate* (ss).

Kashua, Sayed. 1975. Arab-Israeli, Palestinian descent. Writes about Palestinian life in contemporary Israel. Has become very discouraged about any future for himself and his family there. Two books are the basis for the recent movie “A Borrowed Identity.” *Dancing Arabs*,* *Let It Be Morning*,* *Second Person Singular*.*

Shammas, Anton. 1950. An Arab Israeli, novelist, poet and translator of Arab literature into Hebrew, tells the story of his youth, in a search for origins, uncovering secrets along the way. *Arabesques*.

MYSTERIES & THRILLERS

Ben-David, Mishka. 1952. Former Mossad agent has written bestselling spy thrillers, two of which have been translated into English: *Duet in Beirut** and *Forbidden Love in St. Petersburg*.

Gur, Batya. 1947-2005. The grand dame of crime fiction, her novel *The Saturday Morning Murder,** published in 1992, was the first mystery by an Israeli to reach a wide American audience and introduced her detective, Chief Superintendent Michael Ohayon of the Jerusalem police. In all, five of Gur's novels have been translated into English. *Murder in Jerusalem,* Murder duet,* Literary murder.**

Mishani, Dror. 1975. A literary scholar specializing in the history of detective fiction, Mishani's books *The Missing File** and *A Possibility of Violence** feature police Inspector Avraham (Avi) Avraham, an interesting character himself, dealing with crimes in the Tel Aviv suburb of Holon.

Rosenberg, Robert. 1951-2006. Series involving "perhaps Israel's most hardboiled detective," Avram Cohen, reflect the tensions and conflicts in Israel. *Crimes of the City, The Cutting Room, An Accidental Murder, House of Guilt*.

Shoham, Liad. 1971. An attorney in a commercial law firm; considered by some to be the John Grisham of Israel. Of seven bestselling novels involving crime and the Israeli criminal justice, two have been translated into English: *Lineup,* Asylum City: a Novel.**

Sobol, Joshua. 1939. Internationally acclaimed playwright. *Cut Throat Dog,** a literary thriller, is his only novel translated into English.

Sofer, Barbara. 1949 US; Isr. 1971. The Israel Director of Public Relations for Hadassah, journalist and author. Her only novel, *The Thirteenth Hour*, a thriller in which two women become unlikely allies in trying to stop a web of violence.

SCIFI/FANTASY

Gafla, Ofir Touche. 1968. Sci/Fi. *The World of the End.** "...a weird and effective blend of adventure/fantasy, whodunit and romance." (Kirkus)

GRAPHIC NOVELS

Modan, Rutu. 1966. Graphic novelist. "Joe Sacco says: *Exit Wounds** is a profound, richly textured humane and unsentimental look at societal malaise and human relationships and that uneasy place where they sometimes intersect. Rutu Modan is a deeply insightful writer and artist ... in the top tier of cartoonists working today." (on line - Paul Gravett) *The Property.**