

HBKU Press publishes stunning new children's book, *Ashgar Al Hawaa*, as the successful outcome of the "BOOKS - MADE IN QATAR" project during Qatar Germany 2017

Doha, Qatar, November 29, 2017: Hamad Bin Khalifa University Press (HBKU Press), in collaboration with the Goethe-Institut Gulf Region and Qatar National Library (QNL), is proud to publish and launch *Ashgar Al Hawaa* as the successful outcome of the "Books - Made in Qatar" project, part of the official Qatar Germany 2017 Year of Culture program.

"One of our missions as a publishing house in Qatar is to support and enhance the talent of the local population and provide a platform for Qatari talents, both locally and internationally. Our collaboration with the Goethe-Institut Gulf Region and Qatar National Library has proven to be a great opportunity for all participants to develop their individual skills, and to give them a first hand experience of the way things work in the publishing industry," explains Bachar Chebaro, Executive Director of Hamad Bin Khalifa University (HBKU) Press.

The project, which began as the first project of Qatar Germany 2017 Year of Culture in January 2017, included a free workshop for ten Qatari children's authors conducted by Ute Krause, one of Germany's best-known children's and young adult authors. Participants were given the opportunity to exchange ideas, discuss the problems and challenges of writing for children, and develop their story lines and book projects with Krause in a friendly and supportive environment.

In a subsequent workshop of the "Books - Made in Qatar" project, ten illustrators were invited to illustrate the texts that were created in the writers' workshop. The workshop was once again led by Krause and explored the importance of the visual elements in relation to the texts. Krause personally assigned each illustrator to a story based on what she thought would work well with their individual style.

The final books which were created as a result of both workshops were then pitched to the editorial team at HBKU Press. Each publication was reviewed based on the criteria of clarity, creativity and originality of the content, and how well it aligned with the illustrations.

"*Ashgar Al Hawaa*, written by Dr. Jabr Al Noami and illustrated by Mahesh Kannur under the guidance of Ute Krause, was a clear choice for publication. The ideas were very well-developed throughout the course of the workshop and paired perfectly with beautifully hand-drawn illustrations that captured the text. The story was unique and well-written, and thematically explored the ideas of understanding the unknown and the acceptance of others, two lessons that are



important for today's youth," explains Jameela Sultan Al Mass Al Jassem, Children's Editor at HBKU Press. "With regards to the other authors and illustrators from the workshops, HBKU Press continues to work with them individually in an effort to support and develop their work."

"The tremendous local interest in the Books Made in Qatar program, and the wonderful book that has emerged from it, are further proof that Qatar is home to a strong culture of reading and writing community. QNL is proud to be a part of this important partnership that is getting the community involved in driving literacy, and particularly children's literacy, which is so important to child development," says Abeer al-Kuwari, Director of Research and Learning at QNL.

"We want to encourage the sustainable growth of exciting Qatari children's literature", Dr Gabriele Landwehr, General Manager of the Goethe-Institut Gulf Region, explains. "Our aim is to support talented Qatari writers in their book projects and help them develop new Qatari children's books in Arabic that explore new innovative ways of storytelling from a clear Qatari perspective."

Ashgar Al Hawaa will be launched to the public at the 28th Doha International Book Fair on November 29th, 2017. Representatives from HBKU Press, QNL and the Goethe-Institut Gulf Region, along with Dr. Jabr al Noaimi and Mahesh Kannur, will hold a panel discussing the various components of the project and its impact in the region at the Cultural Activity Pavilion at 5:00 p.m. The panel will be followed by a book reading and book signing session in the HBKU Press booth (Hall 2, B42) at 6:00 p.m.

Qatar Germany 2017 Year of Culture is a yearlong program designed to deepen understanding between nations through the mutual exchange of arts, culture, heritage and sports, developed by Qatar Museums in partnership with the Goethe-Institut Gulf Region, the German Embassy in Doha and the Embassy of Qatar in Germany.

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About Hamad Bin Khalifa University Press

Hamad Bin Khalifa University Press (HBKU Press), a member of Hamad Bin Khalifa University, launched its program as a world-class publishing house founded on international best practices, excellence and innovation. HBKU Press strives to be a cornerstone of Qatar's knowledge-based economy by providing a unique



local and international platform for literature, literacy, scholarship, discovery and learning.

Headquartered in Doha, Qatar, HBKU Press publishes fiction and non-fiction titles for adults, young adults, and for children, as well as academic and reference materials. The publishing house aims to promote the love of reading and writing by helping to establish a vibrant scholarly and literary culture in Qatar, the Arabian Gulf and Arab countries.

For further information and press inquiries, please contact Rima Ismail (+974 55564198/ rismail@hbku.edu.qa) or Ghenwa Yehia-Malaeb (+974 44542436/ gyehia@hbku.edu.qa)

Qatar National Library:

Qatar National Library (QNL), a member of the Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development, acts as a steward of Qatar's national heritage by collecting, preserving and making available the country's recorded history. In its role as a research Library with a preeminent heritage collection, QNL fosters and promotes greater global insight into the history and culture of the Gulf region. As a public Library, QNL provides equal access for all Qatari residents to an environment that supports creativity, independent decision-making and cultural development. Through all its functions, QNL provides leadership to the country's Library and cultural heritage sector.

QNL also supports Qatar's transition from a reliance on natural resources to become a diversified and sustainable economy by providing support to students, researchers, and the public to promote life-long learning and empower individuals and communities for a better future. The QNL project was announced on 19 November 2012 by Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, Chairperson of Qatar Foundation.

Website: www.qnl.qa

QNL's e-newsletter: <http://qnl.qa/programs-and-services/subscribe-qnl-newsletter>

QNL's Twitter: @QNLlib

QNL's Instagram: QatarNationalLibrary

QNL's Snapchat: Qnlib

QNL's Facebook: www.facebook.com/TheQatarNationalLibrary

QNL's YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/QNLlibrary>

Qatar National Library's Media Contacts:

Gihan M. Baraka

Communications Manager

Telephone: +974 4454 6034

Email: gbaraka@qf.org.qa

Menna Nayel

Media



دار جامعة حمد بن خليفة للنشر
HAMAD BIN KHALIFA UNIVERSITY PRESS



Relations Manager

Cell Phone: +974 33531316

Email: mennah@bljworldwide.com

About The Goethe-Institut:

The Goethe-Institut is a worldwide organization working to promote German language and culture. With a network of 159 institutes in 98 countries around the world and 12 institutes in Germany, the Goethe-Institut acts on behalf of the German Government to implement its cultural relations policy. The Goethe-Institut Gulf Region offers German language courses and organizes cultural events in the Gulf Region. Together with the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany the Goethe-Institut Gulf Region arranges the programs of Qatar Germany Year of Culture 2017.

qatargermany2017@goethe.de

www.goethe.de/qatargermany2017

SNAPCHAT: qatargermany17

FACEBOOK: deutschesaison.qatargermany2017

INSTAGRAM: ds_qatargermany2017

