



دار بلومزبري - مؤسسة قطر للنشر
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BLOOMSBURY QATAR FOUNDATION PUBLISHING BOOK WINS LEADING AWARD AT PRESTIGIOUS EDINBURGH INTERNATIONAL BOOK FESTIVAL

Kuwaiti Author Earns Accolade For Debut Literary Work

Doha, 29 October 2014: Mai Al-Nakib, whose debut book was published through Bloomsbury Qatar Foundation Publishing (BQFP), a member of Qatar for Education, Science and Community Development (QF), has won the Edinburgh International Book Festival's 2014 First Book Award.

A Kuwaiti author, Mai Al-Nakib won with *The Hidden Light of Objects*, a stunning collection of short stories, which explores the private struggles of adolescence, marriage and middle age by taking a quiet look at the lives of ordinary people living in the Middle East.

By presenting the outside world with exceptional literary works of Gulf and Arab writers such as *The Hidden Light of Objects*, BQFP is supporting QF on its mission of fostering a progressive, engaged society appreciative of its heritage.

Mai Al-Nakib's debut literary work, written in English, features stories ranging from the invasion of Kuwait to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the US occupation of Iraq. This is the first time the award has been given to a collection of short stories and only the second time it has been granted to an international writer.

On winning the award, Mai Al-Nakib said: "I am incredibly grateful for this award. It was a tremendous honour to be included among the stellar group of 46 writers nominated for the Edinburgh International Book Festival's First Book Award.

"This was my first time at the Book Festival, and I cannot thank the organisers enough for their support. To have my book selected by readers is especially encouraging. It means so much to know that readers from all over the world are connecting with 'The Hidden Light of Objects.' Perhaps this suggests that some are eager to discover other versions of the Middle East than those commonly depicted in the media."

Arend Küster, Acting Director of Bloomsbury Qatar Foundation added: "We are very proud that our author Mai Al-Nakib has been honoured by this award. It speaks volumes for the book and for the general interest in new voices from the Gulf and the Arab peninsula. Bloomsbury Qatar Foundation will thrive by bringing more of these exciting voices to readers, locally and internationally."

Now in its fifth year, the First Book Award encourages the Festival audience to discover the wealth of debut fiction featured in the Edinburgh International Book Festival programme. A total of 46 novels and short story collections were eligible for the 2014 award, and readers



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were invited to vote for their favourite. Over 2,200 votes were received by the closing date and for the first time in the Award's history, the winning book is a short story collection.

BQFP has published several important literary works such as 'The Corsair' by Qatari engineer and journalist Abdul Aziz Al Mahmoud.

For more information about BQFP, please visit: <http://www.bqfp.com.qa>.

Image Caption

Image 1: The Edinburgh International Book Festival's 2014 First Book Award winner - The Hidden Light of Objects published by Bloomsbury Qatar Foundation Publishing

Image 2: Kuwaiti winner Mai Al-Nakib, author of The Hidden Lights of Objects

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About the Author:

Mai Al-Nakib was born in Kuwait in 1970. She holds a PhD in English Literature from Brown University in the USA and teaches postcolonial studies and comparative literature at Kuwait University. She is currently writing her first novel.

About Bloomsbury Qatar Foundation:

Bloomsbury Qatar Foundation Publishing is a partnership of Qatar Foundation and Bloomsbury Publishing Plc. Its focus is on publishing books of excellence and originality in six main areas: fiction and non-fiction for adults and for children, educational books for schools, academic books for universities and researchers, classics of Arabic literature, and reference books.

For more information or press inquiries, please contact Helene Theros: htheros@qf.org.qa

About Qatar Foundation:

Qatar Foundation for Education, Science, and Community Development (QF) is a private, non-profit organisation that is supporting Qatar on its journey from carbon economy to knowledge economy by unlocking human potential, for the benefit of not only Qatar, but the world. Founded in 1995 by His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, the Father Emir, QF is chaired by Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser.



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QF's work encompasses education, research and community development. World-class universities are brought to Qatar to help create an education sector in which young people can develop the attitudes and skills required for a knowledge economy. At the same time, QF builds Qatar's innovation and technology capacity by developing and commercializing solutions through key sciences. The Foundation also works to foster a progressive society while enhancing cultural life, protecting Qatar's heritage and addressing immediate social needs in the community.

For a complete list of QF's initiatives and projects visit: www.qf.org.qa