

## Biographies of the Participants



**Ali Alsloom** is one of the rising media stars and public speakers in the Gulf. He has delivered intercultural awareness talks to hundreds of business groups. His TV show, *Ask Ali*, reaches thousands, as does his column in the magazine *M*. Schooled in the United States and Canada, Ali has called various countries home, including France, Spain and the UK. With a Master's in Branding & Cross-Cultural Management, Ali augments his training with a flair for communication and an undeniable sense of showmanship. His portal [www.ask-ali.com](http://www.ask-ali.com) answers questions on various topics related to the UAE's culture.



**Kassem Al-Tarras** was born in Damascus, Syria in 1968. He has a BA in English Literature from Damascus University and a Teacher Trainer from the University of Delaware, USA. He has been a bookseller since 1986 and has been the owner and director of Pioneers (Al Rowad) Publishing & Distributing House since 2005. He is a member of the Arab Publishers Association and the director of the ISBN Agency in Syria, and has presented workshops about the importance of ISBN numbers. He participated in the English Language Teaching Conference in Delaware, USA in 2006 and another conference about English Language Teaching in Amman, Jordan in 2007.



**Philippa Brophy** is President of Sterling Lord Literistic, Inc. in New York City, where, after graduating from Boston University, she began her career as a receptionist 37 years ago. Philippa represents several Pulitzer Prize-winning journalists, distinguished politicians and award-winning novelists, and is most interested in current events, memoir, science, politics, biography, and women's issues. Authors she represents include James McBride, author of *The Color of Water* and *Miracle at St. Anna*, Richard Ben Cramer, author of *What it Takes*, Joe DiMaggio: *The Hero's Life* and *Why Israel Lost: the Four Questions*, Rory Stewart, author of *The Places in Between* and *The Prince of the Marshes*, Ahmed Rashid, author of *Taliban* and *Descent in Chaos*, Vice President Joe Biden and Senator John McCain.



**Bachar Chebaro** (Arab Scientific Publishers, Lebanon) is Secretary General of the Arab Publishers Association and a highly accredited expert of the Arab and international book markets. He has a long experience in the union and syndical movement. He is a board member at several other active companies in the publishing and printing industry.



**Edouard Cointreau** founded the 'World Cookbook Awards' in 1995, renamed 'Gourmand World Cookbook Awards' in 2001. The award ceremony took place at the Frankfurt Book Fair the first year, and has since travelled to Barcelona, Beijing, Dordogne and Angers, Grythyttan, Kuala Lumpur, London, Paris, Périgueux and Versailles. Edouard studied business at ESCP in Paris and at the Sloan School of Management at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in the United States. Based in Madrid, he is the publisher of the Gourmand Yearbook which provides information about cookbook trends and the best cookbooks in different countries. He is also the president of China Food Television and of the Paris Cookbook Fair.



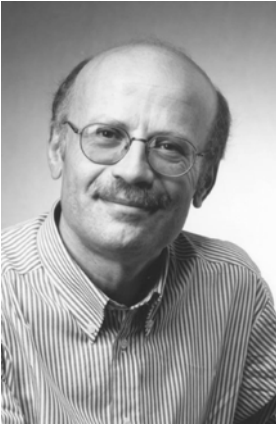
**Farid Gasim** is Grafdom's regional Director of Operations and spearheads its design, social media, online brand strategy and R&D divisions. As head of its Web 2.0 aspirations, he has helped develop interactive strategies for government agencies, multi-national organizations and SMEs. His brand optimization approach enables companies to strengthen their online reach, empower their site's search engine prominence and ultimately deliver results that greatly outweigh alternative marketing mediums.



**Ramy Habeeb** established Kotobarabia.com in 2004, which became the first Arabic language ebook publishing house in the Middle East. To date, Kotobarabia has acquired the rights to over 1,200 Arab authors and has digitized over 4,500 titles. In 2007 Ramy Habeeb was awarded the title of Egyptian Young Publisher of the Year by the British Council.



**Geoffrey Kloske** is the Vice President and Publisher of Riverhead Books, an imprint of the Penguin Group USA. He has worked with authors that include David Sedaris, Dave Eggers, Bob Dylan, Sarah Vowell, Khaled Hosseini, Nick Hornby, James McBride, Junot Diaz, Chang-rae Lee, Mark Kurlansky and Annie Lamott. Before his current role, he edited books at Simon & Schuster, Little Brown & Company and St. Martin's Press.



**Lucien Leites**, born in 1950, has studied history, philosophy and German literature. In 1977 he founded the publishing house Unionsverlag, which he still heads today. Its first big commercial success was Naguib Mahfouz, the late Egyptian novelist who won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1988. Since its inception, Unionsverlag has been committed to publishing literature outside the mainstream, and has provided a platform for many new authors who later achieved recognition worldwide. Among its core international authors are Chinghiz Aitmatov, Yasar Kemal, Assia Djebar, Sahar Khalifa, Yuri Rytkheu and Mahmoud Dowlatabadi.



**Nermin Mollaoglu** started working at YKY, one of the largest and most prestigious publishers in Turkey, in 2002. In 2005 she established the Kalem Agency, which currently represents 56 contemporary Turkish authors and many publishers and agencies in the Turkish market. Kalem organizes the Istanbul Tanpınar Literature Festival (ITLF), the first and only literature festival in Istanbul. The four-person agency focuses primarily on fiction in all genres, but also includes children's literature and nonfiction among its titles. Nermin, who earned her master's degree in literature and language from Connecticut University, is currently writing her thesis on the loopholes in rights deals for authors and translators.



**Dr. Marco Olavarria** studied economics with a focus on management, organisation and marketing in Berlin. He was a freelancer at Roland Berger & Partners Strategy Consultants before becoming an assistant professor at the Institute for Consumer Goods and Services Marketing at the FU Berlin. He wrote his doctoral thesis on “Successful marketing strategies for business and consumer services”. Since 2001 he has served as executive shareholder at Kirchner + Robrecht Management Consultants.



**Chad W. Post** is the director of Open Letter at the University of Rochester, a new press dedicated to publishing literature in translation. He also runs Three Percent, an online blog and review site focused on international literature that is also home to the Best Translated Book Awards. Prior to starting Open Letter, he was the associate director at Dalkey Archive Press. In addition, he co-founded Reading the World, a unique collaboration between publishers and independent bookstores to promote world literature.



**Professor Yasser Arafat Qana** is the Assistant Director for the Writers in Support of Literary Creativity at the Algerian Ministry of Culture. He holds a B.A. in literature and a diploma of high studies in Law and Administrative Sciences. He has been with the Ministry of Culture for 19 years. He oversaw the publication of more than one thousand titles for Algeria: Arab Cultural Capital 2007, as well as supervising the Operation in Support of Book Publishing in Algeria for the years 2006/2010. He is well versed in cultural and literary matters and in the field of authors and publishing in Algeria.



**Seth Russo** is currently Principal of Edureach International Consulting LLC, a firm he established to support and advise publishers on international sales and marketing strategies. He served from 1997 to 2008 as Vice President of International Sales and Marketing for Scholastic Inc., the world's largest children's book publisher. Prior to that, Seth held the position of Vice President of Export Sales at Simon & Schuster, a leading trade and reference publisher based in New York. He began his international publishing career as Director of Asia Sales at the Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing Group. Seth served on the faculty of the NYU Summer Publishing Institute from 2006 – 2008 and is a frequent speaker at international book fairs and industry events.



**Ronald Schild** was Head of the new ebusiness division of the German branch of Lexmark. He then took over as Chairman of the Board of EMB AG, a firm of management consultants that specializes in e-business, and in 2005 became head of Amazon's partners' program, Merchants@. Since 2006 Ronald Schild has been Managing Director of the MVB Marketing- und Verlagsservice des Buchhandels GmbH, which is an economic subsidiary of the German Publishers and Booksellers Association (Börsenverein des Deutschen Buchhandels).



**Bettina Schrewe** started her publishing career as a bookseller in Germany. Before setting up Bettina Schrewe Literary Scouting in 1995 in New York, Bettina worked as the foreign rights director at Carl Hanser Verlag in Munich. BSLS' current clients are international publishers in Germany, Holland, France, Italy, Spain, Scandinavia, Poland, Greece, Brazil and Australia, among others. BSLS scouts for literary and commercial fiction, crime, thrillers and mysteries, fantasy, as well as all areas of nonfiction – history, science, current affairs, pop culture, biography and autobiography, mind/body/spirit – and children's and young adults' books. Furthermore, BSLS watches for European fiction and nonfiction for and from her clients to be published around the world.



**Ira Silverberg** joined Sterling Lord Literistic in 2008. He has worked in publishing since 1984 and has held various positions including Editor-in-Chief of Grove Press and Publisher of Serpent's Tail/High Risk Books. He began agenting in 1998 and represents, among others, New York Times best-sellers Neil Strauss, Erica Kennedy, and Ishmael Beah; National Book Award Nominees Adam Haslett, Christopher Sorrentino, and Rene Steinke; Commonwealth Writers' Prize winner David Bezmozgis; PEN/ Hemingway finalist Gabe Hudson; Prix Sade winner Dennis Cooper; Guggenheim Fellow Sam Lipsyte; and Ako Prize winner Arnon Grunberg. Silverberg also represents style visionaries Kate Spade, Andy Spade, and Amanda Brooks. He represents the Estates of Kathy Acker, Jacqueline Susann and David Wojnarowicz. Long active in the New York literary community, he serves on the Boards of the New School MFA Writing Program, the Council of Literary Magazines and Presses, BOMB Magazine, and the American Committee of the JIBF.



**Michael Smith** is Executive Director of the International Digital Publishing Forum (IDPF). Michael aims to help advance the interests of publishers, technologists and readers by evangelising the adoption of IDPF standards for electronic reading applications and products. Michael has over 24 years of book publishing and print production expertise. Prior to joining the IDPF, Michael was employed by Toronto-based romance publisher Harlequin Enterprises Ltd., where he managed ebook and book production servicing North America, UK and Australian markets.



**Anna Soler-Pont** (Barcelona, 1968), studied Arabic Language and Culture at the University of Barcelona while she began her professional career in publishing. In 1992 she launched Pontas, a literary, film and TV agency that represents a broad range of authors internationally. Pontas sells rights throughout the world in many markets and across many media. The company is also involved in the development production of feature films and TV projects and in the organization of international cultural events.

[www.pontas-agency.com](http://www.pontas-agency.com)



**Ruth Weibel** joined the Liepman Agency in 1968 and became Partner in 1981. Liepman represents publishing houses and agencies mainly from English- and French-speaking countries for German translation rights, among them the American University in Cairo Press for whom they placed the German rights of Naguib Mahfouz, Jehan Sadat, Alaa al-Aswany, Miral al-Tahawy and others. Ruth Weibel hopes to discover more Arabic literature and general non-fiction on politics and social issues for representation in the German market. Additionally, Liepman Agency handles world rights for many international literary authors, like the Swiss writer Peter Stamm and the Iranian writer Mahmud Doulatabadi, as well as the estates of Norbert Elias (sociology) and Erich Fromm (social psychology) whose work might interest publishers in the Arab world.



**Basema M. Younes** holds a MSED in International Management and Policy from the British University in Dubai – University of Birmingham. She is the Head of Programmes and Prizes at the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Community Development in the UAE and a fiction writer, novelist and playwright. She is a member of the UAE Writers Union and many other Arab associations in literature and arts. She has published 13 books and won 23 literature awards.