

Cairo, 12 December 2016

Contact: Basma El Manialawi 2615-3973

Adel Esmat Awarded the Naguib Mahfouz Medal for Literature

The American University in Cairo Press announced today the award of the 2016 Naguib Mahfouz Medal for Literature to the Egyptian writer Adel Esmat for his novel *Hikayât Yûsuf Tadrus* (The Tales of Yusuf Tadrus).

Presented by Dr. Sherif Sedky, Provost of the American University in Cairo, the award was decided by the members of the Award Committee: Dr. Tahia Abdel Nasser, Dr. Shereen Abouelnaga, Dr. Mona Tolba, Dr. Humphrey Davies, and Dr. Rasheed El-Enany. The award ceremony at AUC's Oriental Hall on the Tahrir Square Campus was attended by many writers and other distinguished personalities of Egyptian cultural life.

In their citation for the award, the judges described *Hikayât Yûsuf Tadrus* as “a journey in search of light, not undertaken by a Sufi or a priest but by an artist, who does not long for loss of self in light, but strives to capture what flows of its rays and shadows, clusters and spaces, luminosity and dissipation,” and went on to say: “The artistry of the novel is in a Coptic character who lives in Tanta, a small city compared to Cairo or Alexandria, which allows for intensely detailed accumulations of emotions that are trampled by any large city. . . . The intimate glimpse into Egyptian Christian life, rare in Egyptian fiction, is fascinating. . . . This story of a man's struggle to remain true to his calling as an artist, despite the obstacles, some self-created, that block his path, is absorbing. . . . Esmat evokes the creation and epiphany that belong to any form of art. The tales and self-portraits offer a study of esthetics, the evocation of youth, and the solitude of the artist.”

At the award ceremony, the AUC Press also celebrated the recent publication of six new paperback editions of Naguib Mahfouz novels (*In the Time of Love*, *Miramar*, *Before the Throne*, *Love in the Rain*, *The Beginning and the End*, and *The Final Hour*), and the launch in Spring 2016 of its new paperback fiction imprint, Hoopoe, and the publication of the first ten titles under the imprint, including two past winners of the Naguib Mahfouz Medal for Literature, *No Knives in the Kitchens of This City* by Khaled Khalifa and *The Longing of the Dervish* by Hammour Ziada.

The AUC Press, which established the Naguib Mahfouz Medal for Literature in 1996, has been the primary publisher of Naguib Mahfouz's English-language editions for more than thirty years, and has also been responsible for the publication of some 600 foreign-language editions of the Nobel laureate's works in more than 40 languages around the world since the author won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1988. With up to 60 new publications annually and more than 800 titles in print, the AUC Press is recognized as the region's leading English-language publisher.

Nominations and submissions for the **2017 Naguib Mahfouz Medal for Literature** are welcomed at any time until **15 February 2017**. Arabic novels published for the first time in 2015 or 2016, and not yet translated into English, are eligible. For details, see “Naguib Mahfouz Medal for Literature” on aucpress.com.