



## NATIONAL BOOK TOUR MAY 9 TO 22, 2024



| MAY 9 San Francisco | MAY 10 Berkeley | MAY 11 Sacramento | MAY 16 Los Angeles  
| MAY 17 Las Vegas | MAY 20 Chicago | MAY 21 Washington DC | MAY 22 New York City

with Jordan Elgrably • Sarah AlKahly-Mills • Reza Sixo Safai • Ahmed Naji  
Sahar Mustafah • Natasha Tynes • Omar El Akkad



more tour info: [themarkaz.org](http://themarkaz.org) • [citylights.com](http://citylights.com)

**WHAT:** Book launch of new Middle East fiction anthology

**WHO:** Editor Jordan Elgrably and various writers read from [\*Stories from the Center of the World: New Middle East Fiction\*](#)

**WHERE:** Each city has its own event link. Here are the ones already set up:

**MAY 9** San Francisco, City Lights, with Sarah AlKahly-Mills, 7 pm:

<https://citylights.com/events/jordan-elgrably/>

**MAY 10** Berkeley, Books Inc with Sarah AlKahly-Mills, 6 pm:

<https://www.booksinc.net/event/jordan-elgrably-books-inc-berkeley>

**MAY 11** Sacramento, Capital Books, 5 pm:

<https://capitalbooksonk.com/jordan-elgrably>

**MAY 16** Los Angeles, Beyond Baroque, 8 pm

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/la-launch-stories-from-the-center-of-the-world-new-middle-east-fiction-tickets-880484200947?aff=oddtcreator>

**MAY 17** Las Vegas with Ahmed Naji, The Writers Block, 7 pm

<https://www.thewritersblock.org/events/upcoming-events>

**MAY 20** Chicago at Northwestern University Sahar Mustafah, 4 pm

<https://planitpurple.northwestern.edu/event/615352> &  
<https://www.facebook.com/events/1656522558491274/>

**MAY 21** Washington DC, Busboys and Poets, with Natasha Tynes, 6 pm

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/stories-from-the-center-of-the-world-a-busboys-and-poets-presentation-tickets-882925011477>

450 K St, Washington DC NW

**MAY 22** NYC at the NYPL Tompkins Square, 6 pm with Omar El Akkad  
[link coming]

Short stories from 25 emerging and established writers of Middle Eastern and North African origins, a unique collection of voices and viewpoints that illuminate life in the global Arab/Muslim world.

“Provocative and subtle, nuanced and surprising . . . these stories demonstrate how this complicated and rich region might best be approached— through the power of literature . . .” —Viet Thanh Nguyen, author of *The Committed*

*Stories from the Center of the World* gathers new writing from the greater Middle East or SWANA — a vast region that stretches from Southwest Asia, through the Middle East and Turkey, and across Northern Africa. The 25 authors included here come from a wide range of cultures and countries, including Palestine, Syria, Pakistan, Iran, Lebanon, Egypt, and Morocco, to name a few.

In “Asha and Haaji,” Hanif Kureishi takes up the cause of outsiders who become uprooted when war or disaster strikes and they flee for safe haven. In Nektaria Anastasiadou’s “The Location of the Soul According to Benyamin Alhadeff,” two students in Istanbul from different classes—and religions that have often been at odds with one another—believe they can overcome all obstacles. MK Harb’s story, “Counter Strike,” is about queer love among Beirut adolescents, and Salar Abdoh’s “The Long Walk of the Martyrs” invites us into the world of former militants, fighters who fought ISIS or Daesh in Iraq and Syria, and are having a hard time readjusting to civilian life. In “Eleazar,” Karim Kattan tells an unexpected Palestinian story in which the usual antagonists—Israeli occupation forces—are mostly absent, while another malevolent force seems to overtake an unsuspecting family. Omar El Akkad’s “The Icarist” is a coming-of-age story about the underworld in which illegal immigrants are forced to live, and what happens when one dares to break away.

**JORDAN ELGRABLY** is a Franco-American and Moroccan writer and translator, whose stories and creative nonfiction have appeared in numerous anthologies and reviews, including *Apulée*, *Salmagundi*, and *The Paris Review*. He is the editor of *Stories from the Center of the World: New Middle East Fiction* (City Lights 2024) and co-editor with Malu Halasa of *Sumūd: a New Palestinian Reader* (Seven Stories Press 2024). Elgrably founded and edits The Markaz Review.