Abu Dhabi International Book Fair 2024 **Explores Dynamics of Digital Technology and Publishing Industry** The Fair Hosted a Group of Expert Speakers in a Session Titled

'Digital Technologies and Statistics: Developing the Global Publishing Industry and Creating Mutual Opportunities'. On the sixth day of the 33rd Abu Dhabi International Book Fair

(ADIBF 2024), a session titled 'Digital Technologies and Statistics: Developing the Global Publishing Industry and Creating Mutual Opportunities' highlighted the necessity to collaborate internationally to provide opportunities to publishers.

The discussion was moderated by Dr. Berlant Qabeel,

Programmes Section Head at the Abu Dhabi Arabic Language Centre (ALC). Karine Pansa, President of the International Publishers Association (IPA), emphasised, that our world is more data-driven than ever before, revealing that the IPA has been

working hard to research the contemporary market. "It is

imperative to show realistic numbers and data regarding the publishing sector," she stressed. "Here at the Fair, I believe the cashless payment system will gather accurate data. This is a huge step for a book fair to develop a cashless payment system to gather accurate statistics, and I believe everyone in the cultural industry has a great responsibility." "We have a dedicated Data and Statistics Department at IPA, whose core responsibility is to collect data," Pansa continued. "Any type of data is extremely important to us. We started data collection 15 years ago, and almost ten years

ago, we started getting good, important, and useful data. So, while time-consuming, this effort is necessary." Meanwhile, ALC Executive Director His Excellency Saeed Hamdan Al Tunaiji shared his insight about Abu Dhabi's contribution towards the publishing sector and digitisation of the industry. "The Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi, which our Centre forms part of, plays a key role in Abu Dhabi, providing many opportunities to publishers and

writers," he added.

"We are focusing on gradually increasing the number of readers in UAE," H.E. Al Tunaiji noted. "There is a great quality and variety of books available at the Fair, and the cashless system will provide us with accurate data." "The publishing and digital industries need to invest in Al and use it to boost their productivity," the ALC Executive Director stated. "There will be a new generation of publishers, with new ideas and new books, which will dramatically change the

publishing industry landscape. The Arabic language and

artificial intelligence duo is becoming increasingly popular.

One of the programmes the ALC is working on is using AI to

improve Arabic language and poetry."

For his part, Mohamed Rashad, President of the Arab Publishers Association, was among the distinguished panellists who thanked His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the UAE, for supporting the large-scale exhibition and enabling publishers participate in it. "This is a great platform for printing agencies, publishers,

Day Five at the 33rd Abu Dhabi International **Book Fair Hosts Discussion on Naguib Mahfouz and Criticism** A session titled 'Naguib Mahfouz and Criticism' on day five of the 33rd Abu Dhabi International Book Fair (ADIBF 2024)



support to the publishing industry," Rashad added, noting that the UAE, Egypt, and Morocco are at the forefront of promoting writers and publishers.

Contemporary readers like interactive books with pictures maps and graphics, panellists remarked, revealing that foreign countries are increasingly interested in Arab culture and literature, and that the UAE, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt have already started collecting data for the publishers. This

is an important step, they stressed, citing India's example, which used data to estimate its total book sales at USD100 million, indicating there is a great number of readers in the sub-continent. H.E. Dr. Abdul Rahman Al Maeeni, Secretary General the Emirates Intellectual Property Association, informed the audience that copyright, trademark management, and intellectual property management are key pillars in the publishing sector.

"Our main responsibility is to facilitate authors' and publishers' work," H.E. Al Maeeni said. "We are dedicated to supporting the publishing sector and eventually, it will contribute significantly to the national GDP. In 2023, we introduced laws to protect authors and publishers, in addition to launching an initiative to fight piracy of content, automatically blocking websites and hackers to ensure publishers' rights."

"We are also making sure to provide the necessary support and taking useful steps towards digitalisation," H.E. continued. 'Notably, authors can apply for a copyright certificate and the UAE Ministry of Economy will issue it within just three hours." The ALC, part of the Department of Culture and Tourism -Abu Dhabi (DCT Abu Dhabi), is organising the 33rd Abu Dhabi International Book Fair (ADIBF 2024) from 29 April until 5

May at the Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre (ADNEC).

brought together renowned speakers to critique the famed author's works, which were widely praised, emphasising to the audience the fact that he was ahead of his time. His Excellency Dr. Ali bin Tamim, Chairman of Abu Dhabi Arabic Language Centre (ALC), was among the speakers at the session, which was moderated by Dr. Amany Fouad Gadallah, Sheikh Zayed Book Award Scientific Committee

Member. H.E. bin Tamim opened the session by praising the works of Naguib Mahfouz and initiating a discussion among the intellectuals. "I had the privilege of presenting a book on Mahfouz, my conclusion is that Naguib Mahfouz is an institution with its own devoted fans as well as critics," he said. "He

dazzled all followers and intellectuals with his work,

For his part, Khalid bin Omar bin Gaggah, Author, a Journal-

surprising critics with each new version of his writing."

ist, and Researcher, commented: "I look at Naguib Mahfouz as someone who benefited his people at a national and international level. Criticism is important to understand any writer's work. Arabic literature has great value, especially novels, this language should not be taken for granted, or the world may miss out on key perspectives." A notable Professor of Modern and Comparative Literature

at Cairo University, Dr. Tamer Fayez praised Mahfouz for

integrating himself himself into the literary work and talking

about the value of work without inserting his opinion. "If an

opinionated writer makes his viewpoint clear in multiple

interviews, he is named as a critic although everyone has a

Meanwhile, Dr. Abdullah Ibrahim, Professor and Critic,

different opinion in the 21st century," he explained.

argued that Naguib Mahfouz was not a critic, but some of his Audiobooks: A new Medium for Cultural **Expres**sion, Bridging the Gap Between the

tive types of books, following the widespread adoption of modern technologies and the advancement of distribution and translation, opening up new avenues for readers to access books electronically and embrace the author's tone

and emotion through audio, notably as 'audiobooks'.

The cultural scene has witnessed the emergence of innova-



Department of Culture and Tourism - Abu Dhabi (DCT Abu Dhabi), is organising the 33rd Abu Dhabi International Book Fair (ADIBF 2024), open to attendees from 29 April to 5 May at the Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre (ADNEC) under the slogan 'Where the World's Tales Unfold'. This year's Fair hosts 1,350 publishers from 90 countries, of which 140 publishers are participating for the first time.

The Abu Dhabi Arabic Language Centre (ALC), part of the

Written Word and Sensory Perception

Over time, many printed books have been recorded into audiobooks accompanying students and commuters of all ages their way to university or during their daily commutes, as well as in their kitchens, markets, stores, and gatherings with friends and family. Publishing houses have kept pace with commercial advancevoice and accurate pronunciation, taking listeners on a ments, recording books in a new audio format, in response to journey to a deep and wide world of meanings and connota-

Dhabi International Book Fair (ADIBF 2024), where Sundus Almaghribi from Dar Al-Fikr Al-Jadeed in the UAE stated that audiobooks are seeing increasing demand from visitors, given the ease they provide compared to reading amidst today's fast-paced lifestyle. "Reading requires complete dedication and concentration to grasp the content, while audiobooks save effort and time," she said. For her part, Reem Alblooshi from Dar Nabati in the UAE

asserted that audiobooks sometimes constitute a simplifying

and explanatory tool, particularly in the case of Nabati poetry. "Delivery is half the journey to understanding the content," she said, "especially when being read in a beautiful

demand from readers who, in turn, have become listeners.

This shift was spotlighted in a discussion at the 33rd Abu

Heart to Heart Talk with Magdi Yacoub at the 33rd Abu Dhabi International **Book Fair** On the second last day of The Abu Dhabi International Book Fair, the Arabic edition of A Surgeon and a Maverick: The

Life and Pioneering Work of Magdi Yacoub was launched. The renowned doctor virtually joined the book fair. He highlighted that the English version of the book inspired many students to enter the medical field, I want more Arab

Launch of the Arabic Edition of this book is set to influence people from the medical field across the Middle East. Yacoub praised the authors of the book, Simon Pearson and

Dr Omar Al Falasi, Consultant Cardiologist moderated the talk. The moderator highlighted part from the book where

Dr. Magdi Yacoub had to perform a 4-hour heart surgery and

it was crucial to save the patient, and what emotions he went

through. In response, Dr. Yacoub emphasized the impor-

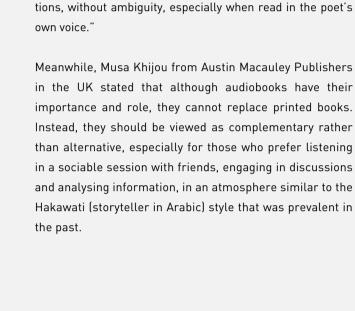
tance of the opportunity to keep the patient alive and the

students to enter this profession to serve humanity.

Fiona Gorman.

value of this opportunity.

he shared with the keen listeners.



When I started studying medicine, heart function and To be successful in any field, Yacoub urged people to its structure inspired me the most, hence I specialized do what they love, so they have a new passion to go to in this specific field. I love heart surgery and I work every day. It is also important to help marginalconvinced myself that I could do it. Today, I am thankised people. There should be no difference among ful to the people for trusting me. patients based on colour, ethnicity, religion, culture or nationality.

Young Content Creators Share Their Ideas

and Experiences at the 33rd Abu Dhabi

Prof. Dr Magdi Yacoub a Pioneering Heart Surgeon also talked about his relationship with Princess Diana. She used to love children and joined the Hope group. She wanted children to be alive and fine. Negative media attention stirred a lot of controversy and she stopped visiting. She exceptionally liked humanity, she used to often come and meet children and always offered her help.

The heart surgeon also highlighted that after living most of my life in the United Kingdom, I came back to my home country. There is no place like home and I find peace here,

International Book Fair The Fair Hosted the Influencers in a Session Titled 'Arab Content Creators'

The 33rd Abu Dhabi International Book Fair (ADIBF 2024),

currently under way at the Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre

(ADNEC) until 5 May, hosted a group of popular young content

creators from the region in an open dialogue session titled

Organised by the Abu Dhabi Arabic Language Centre (ALC), the session brought together many influential figures, includ-

ing Saleh Al Nawawi, Presenter of the 'Bas Mobashar'

programme and a comedy and satire content creator; Maitha

Mohamed, social influencer and content creator; Mohamed

Bosh, comedic content creator; and Raief Yousef, Arabic

language content creator and presenter of 'Bel Arabi'

programme. Meanwhile, Sara Al Refai, Managing Director of

starting content creation, but they begin to follow them after

entering the field," he said, noting that he tries not to produce

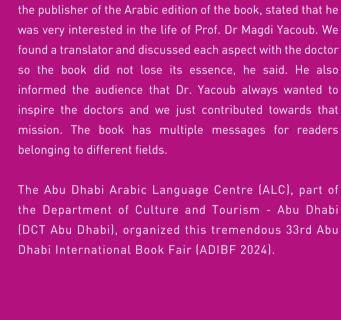
For his part, Mohamed Bosh clarified that in his content strategy, he tends to initially provide a large quantity of videos, then reduces their number in favour of quality, allowing people to become familiar with the content creator. He then reduces appearances until he achieves the desired result.

less than three videos per week.

Book Fair

(sard) in Arabic culture and language.

'Arab Content Creators: The Influencer in Our Digital World'.



Ahmed Rashad, CEO Al Dar Al Masriah Al Lubananiah and

gaining experience and maturity in mental growth." Edraak Media and content creator focusing on architecture, moderated the discussion, raising questions about the impor-"One of the challenges content creators always face is the tance of content creation in the Arab world, its impact on the audience, the benefits they derive from content creation, how issue of declining viewership," she added. "Some may experithey deal with criticism and negative feedback from the ence a decline in principles, and financial factors may push audience, their strategies in content creation, and what them to deal with companies or entities they previously rejected in order to gain financial benefits. For me, only those alternative they would resort to if content creation disappears. who can be influential in reality by launching initiatives and The influencers touched on the nature of their work in content live projects can make their income sustainably through content creation." creation, sharing their ideas and the challenges they face. They also provided insights into their personal experiences and beginnings in the field, along with their goals and aspira-The participating content creators discussed their approachtions from content creation. In response to a question about es to handling different situations, comments, and negative the strategy they follow in content creation, influencer Raief criticism from their followers, offering the audience the Yousef emphasised the importance of defining the meaning of opportunity to ask questions and discuss various matters related to content creation. strategy in content creation, explaining that it involves determining when, how much, and how to deliver the content the influencer wants to present to their followers, as well as the purpose of these videos and views. "I believe that many influencers do not know or follow specific strategies when

Moderated by novelist and writer Walid Alaaeldin, the session featured Dr. Najima ThayThay, winner of the Sard Al Thahab Award in the Narrators category; Qudrat Al-Ajni, who was shortlisted for the same category; and Adeeb Shaaban Al-Ani, President of the Union of Arab Photographers. The evening shed light on the significance of narration in the outlining its specific characteristics that must be mastered.

Dr. ThayThay, expert in the field of folk heritage and founder

of the Marrakech International Storytelling Festival, stated

that her experience began 30 years ago in Morocco. Then

when she pursued Arabic language studies at the Sorbonne University in France, she delved deeper into oral narratives

in Arabic, particularly folk tales, collecting a series of them

from the eastern regions of the Moroccan kingdom. She

then started teaching at a Moroccan university in 1992 and

continued her work with folk tales despite initial opposition

Nonetheless, Dr. ThayThay managed to collect over 5,000

folk tales with the assistance of a group of students. She

gradually used these tales in education through various

programmes, including the 'Moulding the Tales'

programme, which allowed grandmothers from nursing

homes to narrate these tales to children, fostering

together with school students. The experiment then

intergenerational communication and

from some researchers.

As part of the activities of the 33rd Abu Dhabi International Book Fair (ADIBF 2024), a cultural evening titled 'Narration in Service of Arab Culture' was held on day five of the Fair (3 May 2025), focusing on the important role of narration

At a very young age, and drawing on childhood experiences and a fertile imagination, five-year-old Emirati storyteller Mariam Issa Al Rashdi signed copies of her first story, 'Mimi's

صناع المحتوى العرب رواد التأثير في عالمنا الرقمي ab Content Creator The Influencer in Our Digital World

Meanwhile, when asked about whether sustainable income

can be made in the content creation industry, Saleh Al

Nawawi clarified that this issue cannot be decisively

answered as it relates to fate, meaning it has nothing to do

with a strategy. "At any moment, the content creation market

Maitha Mohamed also shared her thoughts regarding content

creation among young people. "I do not advise anyone under

the age of 22 to start content creation professionally because

mental maturity is not achieved until the age of 25," she

noted. "The idea is that the tools needed by influencers to

manage their time, among other things, come with age. A

creator also needs mental resilience that only comes with

could disappear," he said.

Moderator Sara Al Refai concluded the session with an announcement that her company opens its doors to young people interested in receiving courses and information to assist them in content creation. Participants Assert the Role of Narration in

developed to involve collaboration with young people, Arabic language and how it can be used to enrich Arab culture, providing them with tales from ancient heritage, tailored to align with their perspectives and contemporary needs. Recognising the significance of narration, the Abu Dhabi For his part, Qudrat Al-Ajni focused on folk poetry, Arabic Language Centre (ALC) has established the Sard Al explaining that folk narratives were historically ignored, but Thahab award, which goes beyond the traditional notion of later with the Ibn Khaldun era, a significant space was narration in novels or stories, to a spectrum of ideas, values, opened for folk literature. "These narratives are important and beliefs that govern Arab culture, drawing upon heritage, as they include various literary aspects, such as storytelling, past, and present. The award aims to revive these values and poetry, and folk proverbs," he said. "Abbas Mahmoud ideas, putting them side by side to fulfil a function. It is divided Al-Aqqad called them 'folk chants', which is the Arabic into several categories covering narration in novels, spoken equivalent of the term folklore." word, and folk heritage, including storytellers and narrators. The award also extends to imagery, with categories for visual Moreover, Al-Ajni highlighted the importance of recognising narratives, including photography or visual art. the narrative elements in poetry across various dialects,

Enriching Arab Culture at a Special Evening

During the 33rd Abu Dhabi International

Youngest Emirati Writer Mariam Issa Al Rashdi Signs Copies of Her First Story at the 33rd Abu Dhabi International Book Fair

bringing them

expressing their pride and admiration for the talent of the young writer.. directed her imagination towards broader horizons.

platform, eager to get a signed copy of the book, while

Routine - From Morning to Evening', published by Dar Shms, for visitors of the 33rd Abu Dhabi International Book Fair (ADIBF 2024), which is scheduled to run until May 5. The Fair welcomed Mariam, the youngest Emirati author, to celebrate her achievement, which promises a brilliant future in storytelling. A large audience visited the book signing

Following the book signing ceremony, Al Rashdi asserted that her love for her mother's stories inspired her to write her first book, explaining that every story she heard expanded and "I wanted to talk about myself in this story," Al Rashdi said, "so I started writing about my daily routine from morning until evening, including simple habits that every girl does, like taking care of teeth and hair after waking up, organising my bag, going to school where I meet my friends to learn and play, then describing scenes from the journey back home, getting ready for studying, and finally listening to bedtime stories from my mother."

tion here in Abu Dhabi, and we have noticed the great

interest in children's and young adult literature, which is the field we specialise in. We have published 55 books aimed at

raising awareness and nurturing the intellect and imagina-

tion of children and youth. We are proud that Mariam's story

has received this attention, and of this little girl, whom we

Haya Al Qasim, writer and founder of Dar Shms, established in 2022, asserted that: "We are delighted to be present at such a notable cultural event. This is our second participa-



become active contributors to the future of their communi-











شبكة أبوظبئ للإعلام

ties and countries.





presence.

emphasising their connection to contemporary Arab culture,

and urging further collaboration among folk poets across

the Arab world, given the characteristics that these poetic

Meanwhile, Adeeb Shaaban Al-Ani discussed the relationship

between image and narrative, emphasising the importance of

using images to serve Arab narrative, relying on our

Al-Ani also noted that he keeps thousands of photographs he captured of the Liwa Oasis, revealing that he aims to

make them into a model for visual narrative. Visual

storytelling could become the subject of films addressing

significant cultural and civilisational projects, he explained,

adding that this motivates photographers to create new

images that give Arab visual storytelling a stronger

schools have in common.

connection to the Arabic language.