

Švicarske književnosti  
Швајцарске књижевности  
Literaturen der Schweiz  
İsviçre Edebiyatları  
Литературы Швейцарии  
الآداب في سويسرا  
Wêjeyên Swissre  
The Literatures of Switzerland  
Літератури Швейцарії  
As literaturas da Suíça  
ادبیاتِ سوئیس

# Literaturhaus Zürich

## Symposium: The Literatures of Switzerland

### 17 Sept, Fri 10 am – 6 pm

People in Switzerland have long been reading and writing in languages other than German, French, Italian and Romansh, the country's four national languages. The Literaturhaus is now holding a symposium to explore the myriad challenges and opportunities presented by this rich linguistic and literary diversity.

Professionals from the worlds of literature and culture as well as other persons interested in the topic are cordially invited to attend.

The discussions and presentations will be held partly in German, partly in the speaker's native language with a consecutive interpretation, and partly in English.

Registration fee (without lunch): CHF 40.00 / CHF 20.00  
with student ID, AHV, IV, ALV, 'Kultur-Legi', ZKB card.  
Registration at [www.literaturhaus.ch](http://www.literaturhaus.ch).

A valid Covid certificate is required to attend the symposium.  
For more information, please contact: [vonlanthen@literaturhaus.ch](mailto:vonlanthen@literaturhaus.ch).

In cooperation with Alit – Verein Literaturstiftung (Weltenliteratur), Weiter Schreiben Schweiz, Übersetzerhaus Looren, Stiftung Litar, with the generous support of Pro Helvetia, Fachstelle Kultur des Kantons Zürich and the Oertli Stiftung.

## Programme Symposium

- 10.00 Welcome address (moderators: Jennifer Khakshouri, Isabelle Vonlanthen)
- 10.15 Introductory presentations and food for thought
- Why write your mother tongue? Dragica Rajčić Holzner.
  - The place I write from: Hasan Sever (in Turkish with a German translation)
- 11.00 Multilingual literary city Berlin: Florian Höllerer (Literarisches Colloquium Berlin)
- 11.30 Discussion on presentations
- Lunch at the Helferei
- 13.30 The authors in conversation: Shukri al Rayyan, Michelle Bailat-Jones, Mićo Savanović
- 14.30 Discussions in four workshops:
- Paths of communication, literary reception, networking
  - Literature as a means of social and political integration?
  - How multilingual is our education system?
  - Everyday languages, standard languages, diminished languages
- 16.15 Funded, translated, published? With Pro Helvetia Zurich (Reina Gehrig), Übersetzerhaus Looren (Zorka Ciklaminy), Erwin Künzli (Limmat Verlag)
- 17.00 Reports from the workshops, final discussion
- 18.00 Refreshments served in the foyer
- Location: Kulturhaus Helferei, Kirchgasse 13, 8001 Zurich
- Evening reading at the Literaturhaus
- 20.00 Weiter Schreiben Schweiz (Write on Switzerland): Hussein Mohammadi, Jafar Sael.
- Location: Literaturhaus Zürich, Limmatquai 62, 8001 Zurich
- Tickets for the reading: CHF 20.00/ CHF 14.00 at [www.literaturhaus.ch](http://www.literaturhaus.ch)

Coffee break



Weiter  
Schreiben  
Schweiz

[lo:rən]  
Ober- u. Nidwalden

Litar prohelvetia



Kanton Zürich  
Fachstelle Kultur



# Authors and speakers

## Shukri al Rayyan

Born in Damascus, Shukri Al Rayyan fled the Syrian civil war, arriving in Switzerland with his family eight years ago. He lives in Burgdorf. He studied mechanical engineering and is a screenwriter and author. His novel trilogy *Syrian Tales*, consisting of *Fear's Tale*, *Revolution's Tale* and *Murder's Tale* will soon be published online in Arabic. He is participating in the project 'Weiter Schreiben Schweiz' (Write on Switzerland) in tandem with Zsuzsanna Gahse.

## Michelle Bailat-Jones

Born in Japan, Michelle Bailat-Jones grew up in the US. She has lived in several countries, including France, Japan and, since 2005, Switzerland. She is the author of award-winning novels written in English, and translates literary material from French (including works by Charles Ferdinand Ramuz). In 2021 she received a grant from Pro Helvetia to complete a trilogy of novels.

## Florian Höllerer

Florian Höllerer is head of the Literarisches Colloquium Berlin (LCB), where he is closely involved with several projects launched in Berlin in recent years about literature in various languages, a priority area at LCB. He is a widely respected for his work in the world of literature and for his in-depth knowledge of Berlin's multilingual literary circles.

## Hussein Mohammadi

Born in Afghanistan, Hussein Mohammadi grew up in Iran. He began writing literary texts and painting at an early age. His first two novels were censored by the Iranian government; his third novel *Symphony of Love* was the first of his books to be published. In 2013, he fled to Switzerland, where he found work as a stage actor at the Malaika and Experi theatre houses. His fairy tale *Die saubere Brille* (clean glasses) was aired on Swiss radio. In 2016, his first art exhibition *Ein Gemälde. Eine Geschichte* (one painting. one story) with paintings and short stories was held in Zurich. He currently works as a hydraulic mechanic and artist, and is writing a novel.

## Dragica Rajčić Holzner

Dragica Rajčić Holzner grew up in Croatia before moving to Switzerland. In 1988 she returned to Croatia, where she worked as a journalist and founded the

newspaper *Glas Kaštela* (voice of the castle). In 1991, during the Yugoslav Wars, she and her family fled to Switzerland, where she was active in peacework. She writes her texts – poetry, short prose and plays – mainly in German, but also in Croatian. She was awarded the 2021 Swiss Literature Prize for *Glück* (good fortune) published by Der gesunde Menschenverstand.

## Jafar Sael

Jafar Sael was born in Afghanistan. He began writing and reciting his poetry already as a teenager. Philosophy, poetry and music are his passion, and he also composes song lyrics in addition to singing in the Intergalactical Choir in Zurich. He has recently begun exploring painting.

## Mičo Savanović

Mičo Savanović, born in Lokvari (Banja Luka, former Yugoslavia), studied at the University of Novi Sad and completed postgraduate studies in Zurich and St. Gallen. He has lived in Switzerland since 1989 and writes lyric poetry, short prose and aphorisms. His books have been published in Serbia since 2003.

## Hasan Sever

Born in Anatolia, Hasan Sever was forced to leave Turkey for political reasons when he was still studying economics in Ankara; he then continued his studies in Zurich. From 2010 to 2016, he managed e-hayalet.net, a website covering topics from the worlds of politics, culture and art. In 2015 and 2017, his novels *Birazcık Halil* (young Halil) and *Su Duydum* (I heard water) were published by Ayrinti Publishing House (Istanbul); his first book in a German translation is scheduled to appear in 2021. He is a member of the PEN writers' association.