



pen
INTERNATIONAL

Promoting Literature, Defending Freedom of Expression

The jailor kills me with a sword
I answer with a word,
and he sets my pages alight

Oh God
I burn the cigarettes of these days
in my cell
My heart is the fifth wall;
I set it alight

يقتلني بالسيف
أعدُّ له الكلمة
يحرق أوراقى بالنار

ربَّاهُ
أنا أشعلُ في السجنِ
سجائرَ أيامي
والقلبُ جداري الخامسُ
أشعلهُ

Dia'a Al-Abdulla, 'The Crypt',
translated by Ghias Aljundi and Mitch Albert

Dia'a Al-Abdullah

is a Syrian poet and blogger. He was arrested on 13 February 2012 from his home in Asswaida by the Air Forces secret services after writing and publishing on his Facebook page an open letter entitled As A Syrian Citizen I Announce in which he demanded that the President step down in order to prevent further bloodshed. Al-Abdullah remains detained incommunicado at an unknown location, and is considered to be at serious risk of torture and ill-treatment. Al-Abdullah was previously detained and interrogated for his writing in June 2011. He was held incommunicado and reportedly subjected to torture until his release, seven months later.

PEN International expresses grave concern for the well-being and whereabouts of poet Dia'a Al-Abdullah, and calls for his immediate and unconditional release.



Please send via your nearest diplomatic representative of Syria.

For more information visit www.pen-international.org, or email info@pen-international.org. International PEN, trading as PEN International, is a registered charity in England and Wales with registration number 1117088.



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Syria is longing for freedom
Syria is demanding freedom
We will oust Bashar
With our strong will alone
We are Muslims and Christians
Demanding freedom
Greetings to Daraa city
Who started this peaceful uprising

سورية بدها حرية
سورية بدها حرية
وبدنا نشيلك يا بشار
بهمتنا القوية
إسلام ومسيحية
نحن بدنا الحرية
ولدرعا تحية
اللي بدت الثورة السلمية

From "Syria is Longing for Freedom"
translated by Ghias Aljundi and Mitch Albert

Ibrahim Qashoush

was a Syrian poet and song writer. He was kidnapped on 5 July 2011 from his home in Hama city, Damascus, by the security forces after he had performed anti-government songs at a demonstration in the city. His body was found in the Al-Assi river on 6 July with his throat cut. Qashoush was known for his political songs that were critical of the Syrian authorities, and which he had performed regularly to protestors throughout the uprising sparked in mid-March 2011.

PEN International urges the Syrian authorities to ensure that a full and impartial investigation is conducted into Qashoush's killing, and that the perpetrators are brought to justice.



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I will walk with all walking people
And no
I will not stand still
Just to watch the passers by
This is my Homeland
In which
I have
A palm tree
A drop in a cloud
And a grave to protect me

سامشي مع جميع المشيين
ولا ولن أقف
بلا حراك لأراقب موكب
العابرين بي

هذي بلادي لي بها
نخلة وقطرة في
السحاب وقبرا يحتويني

translated by Ghias Aljundi and Mitch Albert

Tal Al-Mallouhi

is a young Syrian poet, blogger and student. She was arrested on 27 September 2009, aged 19, after being summoned for questioning about her blog entries. She was sentenced to five years in prison reportedly on charges of espionage, although no charge has officially been made known. The court session was closed, and Al-Mallouhi's family were banned from attending. No evidence has been presented against her. She was held incommunicado at an undisclosed location without charge or access to her family for the first nine months of her detention.

PEN International considers Tal Al-Mallouhi to be detained solely for peacefully exercising her right to freedom of expression, and it urges her immediate and unconditional release.



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