



Poetry Event in Honor of Imprisoned Qatari Poet Mohammed al-Ajami – 12 November 2015

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Washington, D.C. – 10 November 2015 - To mark four years since the arrest of the Qatari poet Mohammed al-Ajami, Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain (ADHRB), Split This Rock, and Busboys and Poets will host an event entitled *Stifled Verse, Free Verse: A Night of Poetry and Solidarity*. The event is free and open to the public, and light snacks will be served. The event will also be live streamed at <http://ustre.am/1i0nL>.

**About the event:**

Thursday, November 12, 2015 from 8:00pm to 10:00pm  
Busboys and Poets, The Cullen Room  
1025 5<sup>th</sup> St NW, Washington DC 20001

*Stifled Verse, Free Verse* celebrates artists protesting restrictions on free and artistic expression in the Middle East and North Africa. The evening honors Mohammed al-Ajami, a Qatari poet currently serving a 15-year prison sentence for the contents of his poetry.

**Featured Poets:**

Rasha Abdulhadi grew up between Damascus and rural south Georgia. She is a cultural worker, educator, community technologist, and a member of Alternate ROOTS and the Radius of Arab American Writers. Her work appears at [sinnerscreek.com](http://sinnerscreek.com), in *Mizna*, and in a forthcoming anthology on Arab American aesthetics.

Sarah Browning is co-founder and Executive Director of Split This Rock. She is an Associate Fellow of the Institute for Policy Studies and a featured writer for Other Words. Author of *Whiskey in the Garden of Eden* (The Word Works, 2007), now in its second printing, and coeditor of *D.C. Poets Against the War: An Anthology* (Argonne House Press, 2004), she is the recipient of artist fellowships from the DC Commission on the Arts & Humanities, a Creative Communities Initiative grant, and the People Before Profits Poetry Prize.

Zein El-Amine was born and raised in Lebanon. He has an MFA in Poetry from the University of Maryland, where he teaches classes on Arabic language and culture. His poems have been published by *Wild River Review*, *Folio*, *Split This Rock Poem of the Week Series*, *Foreign Policy in Focus*, *Beltway Quarterly*, *DC Poets Against the War Anthology*, *Penumbra*, *GYST*, and *Joybringer*.

Amin “Drew” Law is a nationally touring performance poet and writing facilitator. Amin looks to connect his Palestinian roots and American upbringing through art and is the co-founder of the Poetry for Gaza benefit show. A three-time member of the DC Beltway Slam team and current DC grand slam champion, he has been seen on TV One’s Verses and Flow and has performed at multiple colleges.

Joseph Ross is the author of three books of poetry: *Ache* (forthcoming, 2017), *Gospel of Dust* (2013) and *Meeting Bone Man* (2012). His poems appear in many places, including *The Los Angeles Times*, *Poet Lore*, *Tidal Basin Review*, *Beltway Poetry Quarterly*, and *Drumvoices Revue*. He has received multiple Pushcart Prize nominations and won the 2012 Pratt Library/Little Patuxent Review Poetry Prize.