

Fady Joudah



Fady Joudah is a Palestinian American physician, poet, and translator. The son of Palestinian refugees from

Isdud, he was born in Austin, Texas, and grew up in Libya and Saudi Arabia. He was educated at the University of Georgia, the Medical College of Georgia, and the University of Texas.

Joudah's debut collection of poetry, *The Earth in the Attic* (2008), won the prestigious Yale Series of Younger Poets competition in 2007. "I wanted to do something different with poetry in the sense that as a son of refugees, exile for me was not a metaphorical state, it was a lineage," he said in a 2008 interview with the *Houston Chronicle*. "I wanted to engage the concept of the stateless person as a theme. For me, being a physician, patients are displaced people, at least momentarily. I wanted to take that to a larger stage, a world stage." Joudah's second book of poetry, *Alight* (2013), was followed by *Textu* (2013–2014), a collection of poems written on a cell phone where

each poem is exactly 160 characters long.

Joudah's precise, often narratively driven poems frequently take on themes of faith, struggle, and identity with urgent clarity. As critic Charles Bainbridge observed in a 2008 *Guardian* review of *The Earth in the Attic*, "Joudah's poetry thrives on dramatic shifts in perspective, on continually challenging received notions."

Joudah's translations of Mahmoud Darwish's poetry in *The Butterfly's Burden* won the Banipal Prize for Arabic Literary Translation in 2008, while *If I Were Another* received the PEN Award for Poetry in Translation in 2010. His translation of Ghassan Zaqtan's *Like a Straw Bird It Follows Me* won the Griffin International Poetry Prize in 2013.

Joudah has also translated a selection of the poetry of the Jordanian poet Amjad Nasser in *A Map of Signs and Scents*.

In 2014, Joudah was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship in poetry. His fourth poetry collection, *Footnotes in the Order of Disappearance*, is forthcoming in 2018 from Milkweed Editions.

Joudah lives with his wife and children in Houston, where he works as a physician.