



Photo: Chris van Houtis



ABDELKADER BENALI (MOROCCO/NETHERLANDS)

ABDELKADER BENALI was born in Ighazzazen, Morocco in 1975 and moved to Rotterdam when he was four years old to join his father who was working there.

He spoke Berber but soon started to write successfully in Dutch, winning several literary competitions, including the Kunstbende and the Arabic Arts Centre El Hizra Prize. He also won an essay writing competition held by University of Leiden, with the essay *Vernieuwing als traditie* allowing him one year of free studies at the university.

In 1996, aged 21, he made his debut with the novel *Bruiloft aan zee (Wedding By The Sea)*, which at first went unnoticed by critics. One year later the novel was nominated for the Libris Literatuurprize and also won the Geertjan Lubberhuizen-prize for the best debut work.

Acclaim for Benali's work followed rapidly, with translations of the novel appearing in many countries including England, the US, Israel, France and Germany. In 1999 he received the French Prix de Meilleur Premier Roman Etranger.

His second novel, *De langverwachte (The Long-awaited)*, was published in 2002 and received the Libris Literature Prize. He has also written the plays *De ongelukkige* and *Yasser* and a compilation of stories, reports, articles and columns, titled *Berichten uit Maanzaad Stad*.

Benali writes columns and reviews for *Algemeen Dagblad* and publishes articles, reviews and stories in various journals and newspapers including *De Groene Amsterdammer*, *Esquire*, *de Volkskrant* and *Vrij Nederland*.

His third and most recent novel, *Laat Het Morgen Mooi Weer Zun (May The Sun Shine Tomorrow)* garnered the following praise from *Vrij Nederland*: "Benali's newest novel proves yet again that he is a true storyteller who excels in sometimes laconic, sometimes absurd observations."

Benali lives and works in Amsterdam.

Bibliography

Bruiloft aan zee (Wedding By The Sea), Vassallucci, 1996

Berichten uit Maanzaad Stad (Reports from Maanzaad Town), Vassallucci, 2001

De langverwachte (The Long-awaited), Vassallucci, 2002

Laat Het Morgen Mooi Weer Zun (May The Sun Shine Tomorrow), De Arbeiderspers, 2005

