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Authors Series

Alaa Al Aswany



Alaa Al Aswany strives to improve the human condition through his novels and by practicing dentistry

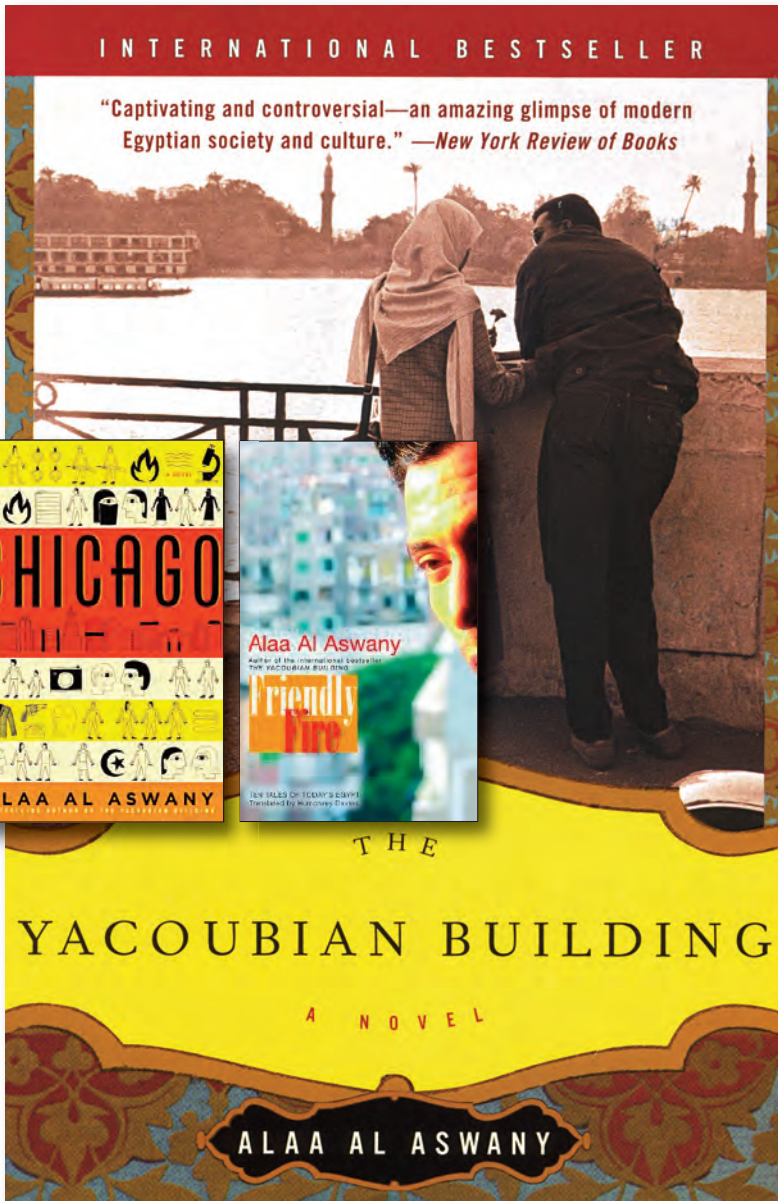
Author, journalist and dentist Alaa Al Aswany, MS '85 DENT, is one of the Arab world's best-selling novelists. His dental practice in Cairo, affords him an intimate look at the everyday lives of Egyptians — who often inspire his works.

“Both medicine, which includes dentistry, and literature, are dealing with the same issue—human pain,” he explains.

Despite the recognition he's received for his work, it's the joy of storytelling that's always drawn Aswany to writing.

“The real reward of literature is not the money or being famous,” he says. “The real reward of literature is the appreciation of your readers. That is the most important award you can get.”

Focusing on the gender, ethnic and religious inequalities that exist in Egypt, Aswany's novels have become some of the most widely read in the Arab world. His 2002 book, *The Yacoubian Building*, has sold 1 million copies in 28 languages in more than 100 countries. In addition to his novels, he has also written a collection of political columns that have appeared in the newspaper Al Arabi over the past 17 years. **His English works include:** *The Yacoubian Building*, *Chicago*, and *Friendly Fire: Ten Tales of Today's Cairo*.



“Packed with uncomfortable truths... It is as much about the human condition as the Egyptian character.”

—Robert Siegel, NPR's *All Things Considered*

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