

Qalam: GU-Q's New Literary Series Debuts with Nobel Laureate Abdulrazak Gurnah

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Georgetown University in Qatar (GU-Q) is proud to launch *Qalam: Great Writers in Conversation with Kamila Shamsie*, a series that will bring some of the world's most acclaimed writers to engage with the community. Led by award-winning novelist, and GU-Q's inaugural Writer-in-Residence Kamila Shamsie, this series offers a unique exploration of how storytelling can bridge cultures and ideas.

The inaugural event, open to the public, will be held on GU-Q's campus on September 15, 2024, from 5:30 pm to 7:00 pm. It will feature an extraordinary conversation with Abdulrazak Gurnah, winner of the 2021 Nobel Prize in Literature. Gurnah's powerful works, including *Paradise* and *Afterlives*, explore themes of colonialism, migration, and identity—subjects that resonate deeply in

the modern world. Shamsie, whose own novels, such as *Home Fire* and *Burnt Shadows*, examine the intersections of history, politics, and personal experience, will join Gurnah in discussing these important topics.

“Qalam will allow audiences to hear from writers who look unsparingly at the complexities of the world and the human heart, bypassing easy answers in favor of deep exploration,” said Shamsie.

She went on to share her enthusiasm for her role at GU-Q and the upcoming program of events:

“I’m particularly excited by the opportunity to bring some of the world’s greatest writers to audiences in Doha—we often talk of literature as ‘universal’ but conversations and interpretations are always shaped by context, and I’m sure it will be a delight to both the writers and their audiences to encounter each other in Qatar where so many different histories intersect.”

Following this inaugural event, *Qalam* will continue on October 23, 2024, with Hisham Matar, the Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *The Return*. In November 2024, Ahdaf Soueif, the acclaimed Egyptian novelist of *The Map of Love* and founder of the Palestine Festival of Literature (PalFest), will also take part in the series.

In addition to public talks, *Qalam* offers students the chance to participate in intimate fireside chats, book clubs, and other activities designed to foster deeper engagement with these distinguished authors.

A special initiative driven by Dean Safwan Masri as part of GU-Q's 20th anniversary celebrations, *Qalam* reflects the university's commitment to fostering dialogue and bringing diverse voices together—challenging, inspiring, and transforming how we understand the world and each other.

[Visit GU-Q's website](#) to register for this exciting conversation and learn more about upcoming events.