



## Cedars Restaurant in New Jersey

available in arabic  
[more +](#)



## The Lebanese Poet Rashid Ayoub and the Snow Story

available in arabic  
[more +](#)



## The Lebanese French international Jazz Musician Ibrahim Maalouf

available in arabic  
[more +](#)



## The Relics of the three shepherd children Visiting Umm Almarahem in Miziara on

## Commemorating a Visionary .. A tribute to Jawdat Haydar

2016-10-19



In partnership with the Consulate General of Lebanon and the New Pen League, hosted a commemoration of Haydar, offering a glimpse of his legacy through a documentary film, readings, and an exhibit featuring artifacts from his life. Lebanese poet Jawdat Haydar not only lived until 101, but produced some of his most brilliant and profound work towards the end of his life.

Born in Baalbeck in 1905, the young Haydar's childhood was filled with strife. His father and siblings were forced into exile in Turkey under the Ottoman Empire. At none, he was left alone with his mother, who was stricken with Typhus and died. He then took the long and harrowing trip to Turkey himself to reunite with his family. Haydar's life journey took him to France, and then to the U.S., where at age 16, he wrote his first poem as a student at North Texas University.

While Haydar went on to have a career outside of poetry, first as an educator at the Universal College in Aley and the Najah National School in Nablus, and then as a businessman at the Iraq Petroleum Company and the Mid-East Auto and Trading Company, the poet was always inside him. And after his retirement in 1965, he went on to publish four books of poetry: Voices, Echoes, Shadows, and 101 Selected Poems. "He was a visionary.

He wrote about universal issues like science and the beauty of nature, and focused on themes of non-violence, tolerance, and human rights," said his daughter Shahina Osseiran, who attended the event, along with several other members of his family. "He hated pollution, not just environmental pollution, but pollution in the minds of and hearts of people." The evening began with readings of Haydar's poems from alumna Hilda Ablos, and New Pen League member Rita Zihenni. "When I read his poetry, I was blown away. I felt like he was talking to me. And when I read To Be Yourself, it was like he was me, talking to myself. The poems were very personal and they touched me deeply," said Ablos. Indeed, his work touched many lives, earning him recognition from the Lebanese Order of the Cedars, the Golden Medal of Lebanese Merit, the Legion of Honor of France, and the Papal Medal from Pope John XXIII for humanitarian work. "Jawdat

March 25

available in arabic  
[more +](#)



Haydar contributed to building bridges of understanding," said Lina Beydoun, executive director of the New York Academic Center. "His life was filled with integrity, humility, philanthropy, and humanitarianism.

"It is for these reasons that Haydar is often remembered not just as a poet, but as a humanist. "While his poetry reveals a deep attachment to Lebanon, its landscape, and its people, he was also a man who moved across the world and saw things from a larger perspective," said Consul General of Lebanon Majdi Ramadan. "Haydar rejected the divisions of religion, language or ethnicity, and embraced a universal spirituality that encompasses humanity."

The evening concluded with a reading in Arabic from Youssef Abdel Samad, poet and managing editor of the New Pen League, a group that helps maintain the heritage of the early immigrant poets such as Kahlil Gibran, Mikhael Naimy, and Elia Abu Madey. One of the first Arab poets to write original works in English, Haydar's poem, "The Temple of Baalbeck," is part of the official curriculum of the Lebanese Baccalaureate. In 2011, LAU inaugurated the Jawdat R. Haydar Memorial Study Room in the Riyad Nassar Library in Beirut, to which Haydar's family has donated some of his precious books, old manuscripts, and personal belongings.

To read more of his work, visit [jawdathaydar.org](http://jawdathaydar.org)

## More Pictures



[HOME](#)  
[READERS ARTICLES](#)  
[CONTACT US](#)

SITE BY LSD  
© All Rights Reserved Al Mohajer 2014