

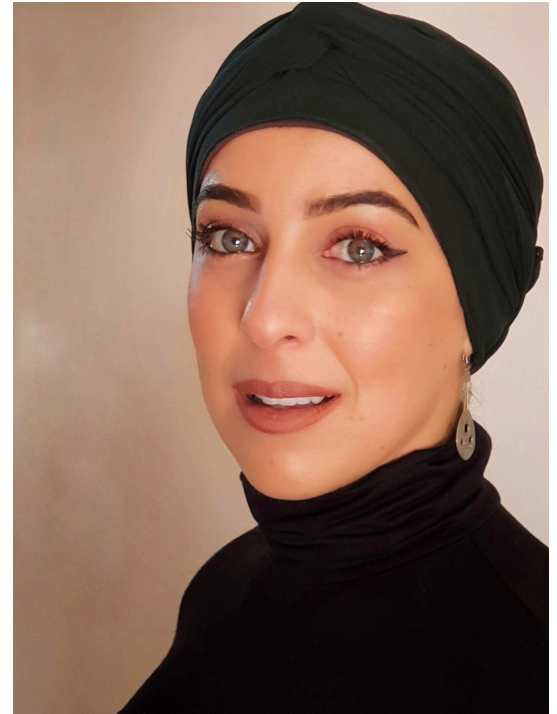
Sara M. Saleh wins the 2021 Porter Prize

Sara M. Saleh was named the overall winner of the [2021 Peter Porter Poetry Prize](#) at an online ceremony on 27 January 2021.

The Porter Prize – Australia’s most prestigious poetry competition – is worth a total of \$10,000. This year’s judges – Lachlan Brown, John Hawke, A. Frances Johnson, and John Kinsella – shortlisted five poems by Danielle Blau (USA), Y.S. Lee (Canada), Jazz Money (NSW), Sara M. Saleh (NSW), and Raisa Tolchinsky (USA). The shortlisted poems were selected from 1,329 entries sent through from thirty-three countries. They appear in the January–February issue of *Australian Book Review*.

In their report, the judges noted: “‘The Poetics of Fo(u)rgetting’ tells the story of a resettled Lebanese refugee family from a daughter’s point of view. The double shellshock of a family displaced by war is evoked with quiet pathos. But cultural observances mean one thing to the older generation and another to the next. These ruptures were sensitively observed across this lush, cinematic poem.’

On learning of her win, Saleh M. Saleh commented: ‘I come from a community and history rich with art and culture; I am indebted to family and to teachers, to the artists and poets, to those who make space and elevate others. I may be the first Muslim and Arab Australian to win the Porter Prize, but this win is not mine alone. Thank you to everyone who sees us, really sees our poems – the 2021 shortlist is a testament to this. I hope we can keep building a movement where we are free to bring our whole selves.’



Sara M. Saleh

About Sara M. Saleh

Sara M. Saleh, the daughter of migrants from Palestine, Egypt, and Lebanon, lives and learns on Gadigal land. A human rights activist, community organiser, and campaigner for refugee rights and racial justice, she has spent over a decade in grassroots and international organisations in Australia and the Middle East. Her poetry and writing has been published in English and Arabic in various places. She is co-editor of the anthology *Arab–Australian–Other: Stories on race and identity* (Picador, 2019). She is currently writing her first novel.

Further information

The Peter Porter Poetry Prize honours the life and work of the great Australian poet Peter Porter (1929–2010), an honoured contributor to *ABR* for many years. For more information about the [Peter Porter Poetry Prize](#), or to read the [2021 shortlisted poems](#), please visit the [ABR website](#).

We gratefully acknowledge the long-standing support of Morag Fraser AM and Andrew Taylor AM.

Interviews

Sara M. Saleh is available for interviews. Please direct requests to editor@australianbookreview.com.au