

## DRAMA

The Patriarch, a lamb and a barmaid walk into a pub

# Salam

FIKRY EL AZZOUZI

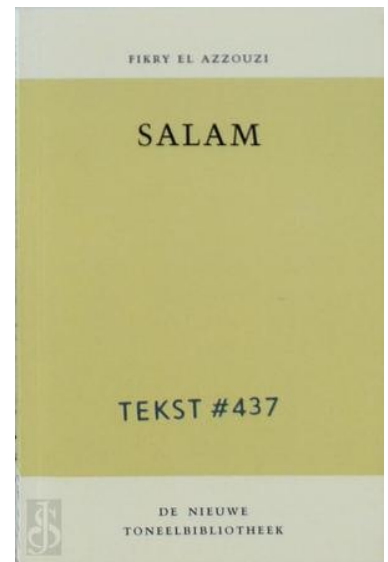
At a time of worldwide religious conflict between Islam, Judaism and Christendom, 'Salam' takes you back to the beginning: the story of Abraham and his sons Isaac and Ishmael. In this absurdly comic yet razor-sharp performance, we return to some of the first protagonists in world history and the tensions between them, their jealousy and fight for recognition.

'Salam' is a theatre text about a father who struggles to show love and two brothers who are growing further and further apart because they both want to be recognised as heir. Fikry El Azzouzi describes the conflict between them through comic dialogues: between Isaac and Ishmael, Sara, Hagar, the sacrificial lamb, Abraham and God. The latter has adopted the guise of a barmaid in this piece, and she watches as the quarrels in her pub slowly but surely escalate. The bickering between the patriarch, his sons and those around them reflect the tense relationships between the great world religions to this day.

El Azzouzi opts to represent this clash, which comes to shape history, not as a grand Biblical drama, but as a humorous and human story about love, jealousy and hurt set in a hopefully not too near future. The fact that these protagonists from the Old Testament meet in a pub in a dystopian future adds to the absurdity of the play. An intractable conflict on a human scale.

**Salam impresses with this abundance of ideas, artistry and uncomfortable truths. Luckily, the surprisingly heart-warming conclusion calms the overwhelmed spirit down again.**

TROUW



## AUTHOR



Fikry El Azzouzi (b. 1978), a Flemish-Moroccan author, writes novels, columns and plays. His texts are relevant, multifaceted and often deal with current topics. He portrays a generation of young people looking for meaning and identity in our society, and depicts the clash between people with different backgrounds in an open, impartial way. He does so in a highly distinctive style that is fast-paced, has lots of dialogue and is laced with biting humour. His is a unique voice in Flanders, for which he received the Ultima for Literature (The Flemish state prize for literature) in 2021. *Photo © Jimmy Kets*

**ORIGINAL TITLE** Salam, (2018, De Nieuwe Toneelbibliotheek, 52 pp.)

**DETAILS** 6 characters, 6 actors, premiere 10 March 2018

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