

STATEMENT FROM BRIDGET MINAMORE:

This Saturday, Palestinian author Adania Shibli was supposed to appear at the Frankfurt Book Fair to receive a prize, the 2023 LiBeraturpreis, for her novel *Minor Detail* — published in German as *Eine Nebensache*. Earlier this week however, I read a statement from Litprom (funded by both the German government and the Frankfurt Book Fair) cancelling both the prize-giving ceremony and the accompanying discussion to honour Shibli's work "due to the war started by Hamas".

The statement also originally claimed that this decision had been made in accordance with the author. This is untrue; Adania Shibli has said she was told, not asked about this decision. If the ceremony were held, she said, she would have taken the opportunity to reflect on the role of literature in these cruel and painful times. At a time when the fair has issued a statement saying it wants to make Israeli voices "especially visible at the fair," they are closing out the space for a Palestinian voice.

Like over 700 other writers, I have also added my name to the open letter, published in the LA Times, critiquing the Frankfurt Book Fair for this decision. I have also decided I cannot in good conscience attend the Book Fair in this context, where an author has been silenced and lied about so clearly and deliberately. So, I am pulling out of my events this weekend, both those a part of the Book Fair and not. Having thought deeply about this, I want to show my unequivocal solidarity towards Adania Shibli — solidarity being one of the few things I know I have in these deeply upsetting times. I want to make clear that I am very, very proud of my contribution to *New Daughters of Africa*, but also make the point that the Frankfurt Book Fair's censorship during this time unfortunately affects other organisations and events in the same community.

To finish quoting from the open letter, "we need to look for new language and new ideas in order to approach these bleak times in a new way. For this, we need writers — including Palestinian writers — more than ever."