

# Ra'ad Abdulqadir

## *Except for This Unseen Thread*

Translated from the Arabic by Mona Kareem

Published in Baghdad in 2006, *Falcon with Sun Overhead* and *The Age of Entertainment* inspired a new generation of Iraqi poets, charmed by Ra'ad's ability to write tender poems in times of destruction and fury. While many of his peers were writing poems about battlefields and faraway exiles, Ra'ad was looking closer in, at the loneliness of those left behind. Hailed for its cinematic portrait of Iraq under sanctions—the bread queues, busy cemeteries, empty schools, and the impossible departures and returns, Ra'ad's work commemorates the wonders of a city staying still, one blink at a time. *Except for This Unseen Thread*, the first collection of Ra'ad's work in English translation, is comprised of poems selected from both titles, with an introduction by the translator.

// Fragile, tender moments observed during life and death under sanctions and wars in Iraq.

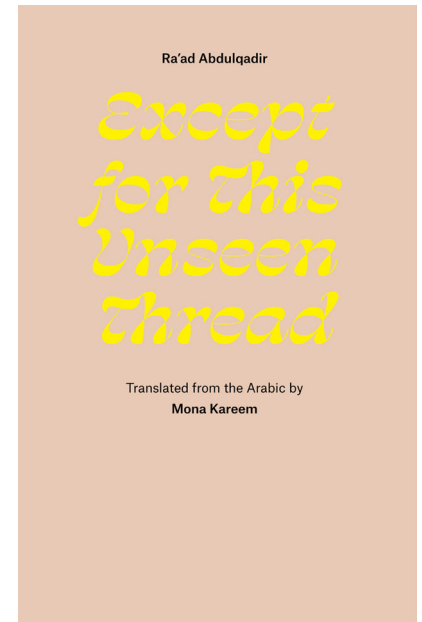
— DON MEE CHOI

// A melancholic voice with a prophetic vision.

— SINAN ANTOON

// [Abdulqadir] alchemizes Iraq's modern history into songs of innocence and experience.

— ROBYN CRESWELL



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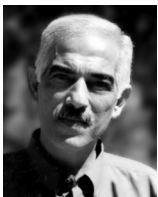
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**Ra'ad Abdulqadir** (1953–2003) is a pioneer of the Iraqi prose poem, the author of five poetry collections, and a lifelong editor of *Aqlam*, Iraq's leading literary magazine.



**Mona Kareem** is the author of three poetry collections. She holds a PhD in Comparative Literature and is a Translator-in-Residence at Princeton University.

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