BIOGRAPHY

Nina Bouraoui was born in 1967 and raised both in France and Algeria. During the rest of her adolescence, her family lived in Switzerland and the United Arab Emirates. She attended French lycées and finally moved to Paris to pursue her university studies. She studied law for two years, then philosophy for another two years, during which time she worked on her first novel, *La Voyeuse interdite*. Bouraoui published her first text, *La Voyeuse interdite*, in 1991 and has since produced thirteen further texts with Gallimard, Fayard and Stock. Her texts are largely autofictional accounts written in the first-person and are strongly influenced by the works of Marguerite Duras, Violette Leduc, Hervé Guibert and Annie Ernaux.

Her first text, *La Voyeuse interdite*, presents controversial images of the role of femininity in Algerian Islamic culture: a young girl, Fikria, narrates her experience of being stifled by the confining elements of her culture and seeks to transform her passive suffering and subjection to the male gaze into a reactive, performative, visionary pain, by appropriating and self-inflicting physical violence.

The 2002 *La Vie heureuse* marks the point at which she fully explores lesbian sexuality in her writing and expressions of lesbian desire are further developed in *Poupée Bella*'s diary-format. *Mes Mauvaises Pensées* is a confessional interior monologue that seeks to capture repressed and unconscious thoughts and desires, while the 2007 *Avant les hommes* considers youth, identification and sexuality.

Bouraoui's work has been met with critical acclaim from the beginning of her writing career, with *La Voyeuse interdite* being awarded the *Prix du Livre Inter in 1991*. More recently in 2005, *Mes Mauvaises Pensées* gained the prestigious *Prix Renaudot*. Bouraoui is perhaps best known as being at the forefront of contemporary francophone North African writing, as well as contemporary lesbian/queer writing in French.
SELECTED WORKS

*Mes Mauvaises Pensées*, Stock, 2006

*Nos Baisers sont des adieux*, Stock, 2010


About *Forbidden Vision*, Station Hill of Barrytown Press, 1998

This extraordinary first novel was accepted for immediate publication in France and went on to sell more than 120,000 copies there. *Forbidden Vision* is the compelling first-person account of a woman's forced enclosure among a repressive and abusive family in Moslem Algiers; her only escape from confinement is the hypnotic tale she weaves in her mind. The novel weaves together two passionately developed themes: the violent repression of women, not only by Islamic culture, but by western patriarchal culture as well; and the liberating power of the imagination.

"Bouraoui's quiet and inwardly focused coming-of-age novel delves deeply into intimate questions of self-definition—and ultimately the urge to become a writer."

Publishers Weekly

About *Tomboy*, Bison Books – University of Nebraska Press, 2007

How do you live in Algeria when you grow up speaking French, with a French mother? How do you live in France when you've spent your childhood in Algeria with an Algerian father? *Tomboy* is the story of a girl whose father calls her Brio, whose alter ego is Amine, and whose mother is a blue-eyed blond. But who is she? Born five years after Algerian independence in 1967, she navigates the cultural, emotional, and linguistic boundaries of identity living in a world that doesn't seem to recognize her.

“Nina Bouraoui is by all accounts one of the most compelling of today's young French writers. The publication of her best-known work, Tomboy, is timely, as are its themes of French-Algerian biculturalism and trans-gender identity.”

Isabelle de Courtivron, professor of French studies and director of the Center for Bilingual/Bicultural Studies at MIT