

## Fact Sheet

### **SCREENSHOT by Jason Danino Holt - Literary Fiction, Debut**

#### **Synopsis:**

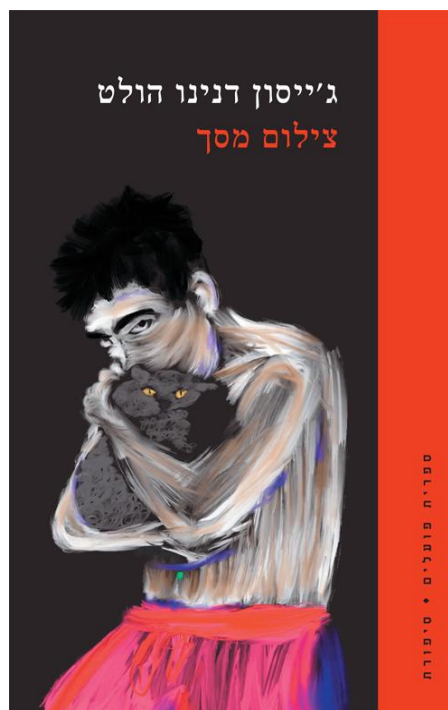
Told in a first-person, stream of consciousness style narrative, SCREENSHOT tells the story of the complex, damaged, sexually charged coming of age of a gay man.

The story shifts back and forth in time from the molestation of a beautiful eight year old boy, to passionate long-distance love stories, damaged relationships, and episodes of drug-laced sex gatherings which take place in the wide gray area between sexual exploration and abuse.

Raw and brutally honest, SCREENSHOT shies away from nothing, including coercion, sex work, drug addiction and sexual grooming in the gay community.

This short novel is anything but preachy, allowing readers the freedom to experience everything with the narrator, providing no easy answers to difficult questions.

Me Too has reached the queer community, and a moment of reckoning has arrived. In this context, SCREENSHOT hits like a shot to the heart. No one will be indifferent after experiencing it, and it has the potential to be a pivotal work at this point in queer history.



#### **ABOUT THE AUTHOR:**



*Photo: Nadav Yahalom*

Jason Danino Holt was born in 1987 in Israel to a Moroccan-Canadian mother and a British father. He is a multidisciplinary artist, and artistic director at the Habait Theater in Tel Aviv. Danino Holt received the Rosenblum Prize for outstanding and innovative artist in theater in 2016. SCREENSHOT is his debut novel.

## SPECS:

- Title: Screenshot
- Author: Jason Danino Holt
- Publisher: Hakibbutz Hameuchad - Sifriat Poalim
- Number of pages: 160 (in Hebrew)
- Editor: Yoav Rosen
- Date of publication: December 2021
- Cover design: David Benarroch
- World rights available
- English reading sample (first three chapters) will be available October 2022

*\*SCREENSHOT received a grant for outstanding literary works of fiction from the Israeli Center for Libraries and the Ministry of Culture and Sports in Israel.*

## Critical Reviews

**SCREENSHOT, Jason Danino Holt's debut novel is toxic and intoxicating... indecent and corruptive, vulnerable and powerful**

*Omri Herzog, [Haaretz](#), January 27, 2022*

"[SCREENSHOT is a] hard read, that is even harder to stop reading. Its voyeurism becomes corrupting and erotic: through the first-person point of view the narrator appears fully exposed: one can be mesmerized by the raw writing and its vulnerable beauty. It feels like we can touch [the narrator] or save him, just like the men surrounding him. Reading this book is an indecent act. In the tradition of authors like Jean Genet and Dennis Cooper he depicts the aesthetics of the gutters - a story of beauty and lust.

SCREENSHOT is written and edited with an awareness of its radical effect. An unreliable narrator delivers this seductive and poisonous monologue. One cannot know if he is telling his truth, exaggerating, or inventing it all. His testimony shifts between times and voices; blurring delusion and memory. It tells the narcissistic drama of a brilliant, beautiful boy who has a bottomless need for approval, and will do anything to get it: he will pretend and beg, offer his body, his beauty, as well as his words, all this so he can see himself through the gaze and touch of the other. 'I want to try and explain how disgust and desire wire a young mind,' he writes with the courage of someone who has nothing to lose, not even his self-respect [...] ***[This book] is toxic and intoxicating [...] indecent and corruptive – and it's impossible to take our eyes off it.***"

## **“We Can No Longer Suppress”**

**Dor Babayoff, [Mako](#), January 4, 2022**

"Jason Danino Holt invites us to drain toxins with him [...] This book is raw, at times sick, with tons of sex and drugs, and it arrives at just the right time, as Me Too erupts in the gay community.

Already in the opening chapter, [...] everything melds together: violence, desire, disgust, guilt [...] When the twenty-one year old narrator tells of a taxi driver who stops in a dark parking lot and looks him in the eye, I don't need an explanation of why he doesn't even try to open the car door, which isn't locked, and simply leaves. I don't need an explanation of why he doesn't tell anyone, not even himself, but buries it and goes on. I understand. I've been there."

## **Feedback from bloggers and readers:**

“So beautiful. With brutal honesty, this book moves between a childhood that was corrupted and a corrupt adulthood, and describes the gray areas between abuse, love, and devotion. It takes courage to tell this story of desire and desperation in Hebrew literature. Well done.”

- **Prof. Michael Gluzman (Department of Literature, Tel Aviv University)**

“It’s important to read this book [...] because the world needs new male voices: a new way of processing pain, and of telling desire, curiosity, danger, power dynamics, and healing. This book needs readers and witnesses precisely now.” - **Yael Biegon-Citron (Neve Schechter Center for Contemporary Jewish Culture and Arts)**

“As soon as I finished Jason Danino Holt’s novel, I went in search of a thread that would pull me back to reality. I got up off the couch and started cleaning the house.

“Anyone who works with LGBTQ youth needs to read this book [...] thousands of young people enter this world every year, without knowing much about it. They may be marred by abuse. Thanks to MeToo reckoning that is reaching the LGBTQ community, things are starting to open-up.” - **Dr. Ruth Gophen (Co-founder, LGBTQ clinic, Tel Aviv)**

“I couldn’t stop reading it [...] Even after I drove home and was sitting in the dark in my car, I turned on my phone’s flashlight, and kept on reading. I simply couldn’t stop.” - **Lidor Books**

“If you’re OK dealing with tough questions that often don’t have a clear answer, if you like books that take you deep into the soul of the author, you’ll love this book.” - **Itamar Dor-On**

“[...] an important book. [...] a disturbing story. The pain is raw, the details - whether fictionalized or not - are sad, and [the] literary style makes this book even more powerful.

This is a world in which boys want to be men, and men take advantage of boys to feel like men; [...] it is a world that [the author] put into words wonderfully. [...] I don't know what Holt himself went through, but I know that what he depicts many have experienced. Experienced, and are still experiencing." - **Shahar Ben-Porath**

"In the very last week of December 2021 I read Jason Danino Holt's SCREENSHOT, and was happy to have found one Israeli book that truly touched me, that I could include in the list of the best books I've read in 2021 [...] This [...] short novel [...] has everything in it: desperation, love, longing [... and] the aching, living, beating heart of Jason Danino Holt.

"The redemption that Jason (author or narrator, real or fictitious; if indeed there is a difference between the two) is seeking, consciously or subconsciously, goes through the gutters. [...] the moments in which grace and beauty come through - they shine like bright stars in a stormy sky." - **Netta Koblenz**

"I was pulled-in by the honest, provocative language from the very first page [...] The book shifts quickly from one scene to the next [...] I finished it in just a few hours. Highly recommended." - **Rea Valdan**

"SCREENSHOT by Jason Danino Holt describes the coming-of-age of a boy whose beauty is a golden cage. 'I want to try and explain how disgust and desire wire a young mind,' writes Danino Holt; and by the end of the novel, it is clear he has accomplished this with his rare talent." - **Daniel Baumgarten**

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