

# Making her voice heard

By Eleanore Robinson

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SARAH Bonnell student Mina Bint Muhammad is due to have her first book published in January after writing it aged just 14.

The Stratford student explains why she decided to put pen to paper:

She said: "Being an Asian Muslim, in the society we live in today, I wrote my novel at the age of 14 because I wanted to be recognised as a Muslim, as an Asian, as a woman, with a voice.

"My novel is all about actions and consequences, something that a lot of teenage girls have yet to learn, because they're so busy trying out new things that they don't realise the repercussions of their irrational decisions.

"In my novel, *See Red*, there's a point in which Jenna – my main character – realises that her actions have finally caught up with her.

"And, really, Jenna has a lot on her shoulders, just like most teenagers do."

Mina went on: "Jenna has to cope with racism and her inner anti-Zionism (being Palestinian), despite her being in a school where the majority of the girls are Muslim.

"Her class has a tendency of sticking with their own races – Jenna quickly realises that she doesn't actually fit into any of them, being an Arab. However, she resolves her inner conflict eventually, as certain events change her way of thinking.

"For me, writing is my way of venting out my emotions. It's my way of thinking, on paper or computer screen. Writing my first novel has been an unusual and frustrating process."

Mina added: "It's also been a brilliant experience, thanks to my publisher, Ola Laniyan-Amoako. I hope that, in time, we Muslims will no longer be associated with the stereotypes as portrayed by the media; rather, we will be regarded as a positive part of society, which is what we truly are."



WRITING DEBUT: Mina Bint Muhammed