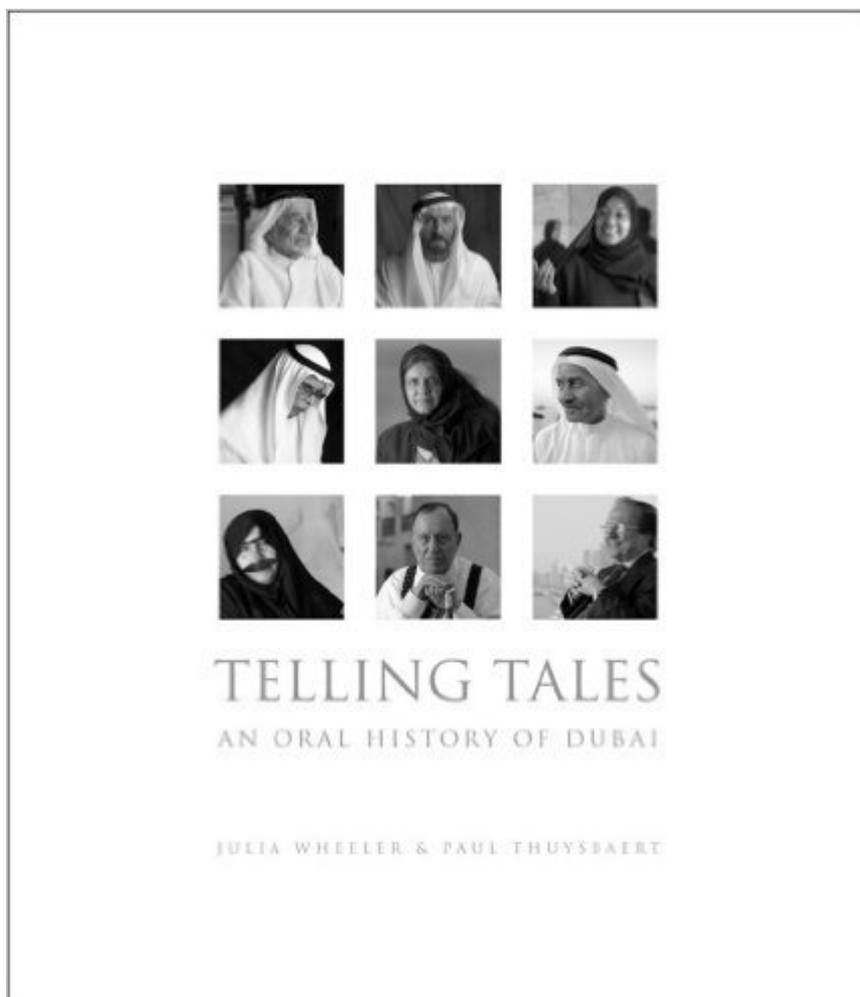


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# Telling Tales : An Oral History Of Dubai



## Synopsis

BBC Gulf Correspondent Julia Wheeler was granted the unique privilege to talk to some of Dubai's founding citizens about how life once was in this mesmerising emirate. This collection of stories provides a rare insight into a city that has undergone one of the most dramatic metamorphoses in modern history. Paul Thuysbaert's intuitive and imaginative portraits transport these stories into the present and give Dubai a compelling face.

## Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (1 customer review)

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## Customer Reviews

This magnificent book combines the modern lenses of photography, anthropology, and sociology with the grand tradition of Arab life and storytelling. Most westerners equate Dubai and the Emirates with extravagant shopping malls and five star hotels. But 50 years ago, Dubai was a very different place, though traces of those older days still exist for those willing to seek them out. It is mindboggling that the author's subjects opened up the stories of their private lives for publication -- stories which often had not been told to their own families. But the warp speed at which Dubai is changing may have motivated the storytellers to have the older lifestyles of pearl diving and the desert be captured for posterity. Many of the storytellers are now prominent individuals, shedding light on a less comfortable time. Especially moving are the stories of women who struggled first with the demands of traditional life, and then with the challenges of finding an equal footing in modern society. One cannot help but be struck by the chain of events told by men who lived as boys in the desert and are now heads of government businesses. The extraordinary stories are illuminated with elegant and insightful black and white portraits, together with photos of the storytellers in their

younger years. "Telling Tales" is also an elegy for a time and place that is vanishing as we speak. The National Bank of Dubai should be applauded for sponsoring this book, and encouraged to fund other similar projects. This book is unparalleled. Unfortunately, it probably will not get much airplay outside Dubai. I learned about it through an article in a Dubai magazine. I'd encourage anyone who got this far to buy and savour the book. And if you visit Dubai, the Emirates, or any other "exotic locale," I encourage you to skip the mall and to seek out those fragments of an older time and authentic place.

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