

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **2017 NATIONAL JEWISH BOOK AWARDS ANNOUNCED**

**Book of the Year Awarded to**  
***Lioness* by Francine Klagsbrun**

**David Grossman Wins Fiction Category for**  
***A Horse Walks Into a Bar***

**New York, January 10, 2018** – Jewish Book Council announced today the winners of the 2017 National Jewish Book Awards, now in its sixty-seventh year. The winners include the Everett Family Foundation Book of the Year, Francine Klagsbrun's *Lioness: Golda Meir and the Nation of Israel* (Schocken Books).

David E. Fishman wins the inaugural Holocaust Award In Memory of Ernest W. Michel, for his work *The Book Smugglers: Partisans, Poets, and the Race to Save Jewish Treasures from the Nazis* (ForeEdge), which focuses on the resistance group known as the "paper brigade", and the namesake for Jewish Book Council's own literary journal.

Three novels take top fiction honors. The winners include *A Horse Walks into A Bar* (Alfred A. Knopf), David Grossman's second novel to win a JJ Greenberg Fiction Award (translated by Jessica Cohen). Rachel Kadish's *The Weight of Ink* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt) is the recipient of the The Miller Family Book Club Award in Memory of Helen Dunn Weinstein and June Keit Miller. Carol Zoref's *Barren Island* (New Issues Poetry & Prose/Western Michigan University) is the winner of the Goldberg Prize for Debut Fiction.

This year, we are pleased to present the first Carolyn Starman Hessel Mentorship Award to Gary Rosenblatt, editor and publisher of the *The Jewish Week of New York*. This award recognizes his support and mentorship of Jewish authors and journalists throughout his impressive career. Author Abigail Pogrebin writes that, "Not only does he

guide and inspire writers, but he encourages innovators in the Jewish sphere who are bold enough to reenergize old organizations or brainstorm new enterprises.” Gary Rosenblatt is a pillar of the Jewish community, and JBC is proud to honor him in the inaugural year of this award.

*The Choice: Embrace the Possible* by Dr. Edith Eva Egers (Scribner) wins the National Jewish Book Award in the Krauss Family’s Biography, Autobiography, and Memoir category and *Waiting for the Light* by Alicia Suskin Ostriker (University of Pittsburgh Press) wins the Berru Award in Memory of Ruth and Bernie Weinfeld in the Poetry category.

The Barbara Dobkin Award in Women’s Studies is given to *Coming of Age in Medieval Egypt: Female Adolescence, Jewish Law, and Ordinary Culture* by Eve Krakowski (Princeton University Press). The Contemporary Jewish Life and Practice Myra H. Kraft Memorial Award goes to *The Torah of Music: Reflections on a Tradition of Singing and Song* by Joey Weisenberg (Hadar Press).

In the Children’s Literature and Young Adult Literature categories, respectively, we are pleased to recognize *The Language of Angels: A Story About the Reinvention of Hebrew* written by Richard Michelson and illustrated by Karla Gudeon (Charlesbridge Publishing) and *Refugee* by Alan Gratz (Scholastic). These books are also winners of the Association of Jewish Libraries’ Sydney Taylor Book Awards, announced today as well. A full list of AJL’s winners can be found [here](#). They include *The Seventh Handmaiden* by Judith Pransky, which won the Sydney Taylor Manuscript Award for an unpublished middle grade fiction manuscript, and Antonio Iturbe’s *The Librarian of Auschwitz* (Macmillan).

A complete list of the 2017 National Jewish Book Award winners and finalists can be found below, and additional information is available at [www.JewishBookCouncil.org](http://www.JewishBookCouncil.org).

**The winners of the 2017 National Jewish Book Awards will be honored on March 6, 2018 at a gala awards dinner and ceremony to be held at the Prince George Ballroom in Manhattan. To purchase tickets, please visit <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/67th-annual-national-jewish-book-awards-dinner-and-ceremony-tickets-41760665274> or call 212-201-2920.**

If press is interested in attending the awards ceremony, please contact Evie Saphire-Bernstein at Jewish Book Council ([evie@jewishbooks.org](mailto:evie@jewishbooks.org)).

Jewish Book Council is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to promoting Jewish interest literature. With over 250 touring authors each year; 1,400 book clubs; 1,100 events; its new annual print publication, *Paper Brigade*; the National Jewish Book Awards; the Sami Rohr Prize for Jewish Literature; the Natan Book Award; and a vibrant digital presence, JBC ensures that Jewish-interest authors have a platform, and that readers are able to find these books and have the tools to discuss them with their community.

**About the National Jewish Book Awards:** The National Jewish Book Awards is the longest-running awards program of its kind and were established by the Jewish Book Council in 1950 in order to recognize outstanding works of Jewish literature.

**Jewish Book of the Year**

Everett Family Foundation Award

**Winner:**

*Lioness: Golda Meir and the Nation of Israel*

Francine Klagsbrun

Schocken Books

**Carolyn Starman Hessel Mentorship Award**

Gary Rosenblatt

**American Jewish Studies**

Celebrate 350 Award

**Winner:**

*Jews on the Frontier: Religion and Mobility in Nineteenth-Century America*

Shari Rabin

NYU Press

**Finalists:**

*Who Will Lead Us?: The Story of Five Hasidic Dynasties in America*

Samuel C. Heilman

University of California Press

*City on a Hilltop: American Jews and the Israeli Settler Movement*

Sara Yael Hirschhorn

Harvard University Press

*Hollywood's Spies: The Undercover Surveillance of Nazis in Los Angeles*

Laura B. Rosenzweig

NYU Press

**Biography, Autobiography, and Memoir**

The Krauss Family Award in Memory of Simon & Shulamith (Sofi) Goldberg

**Winner:**

*The Choice: Embrace the Possible, a Memoir*

Dr. Edith Eva Eger

Scribner (Simon & Schuster)

**Finalists:**

*Jewish Justices of the Supreme Court: From Brandeis to Kagan*

David G. Dalin

Brandeis University Press

*Hayim Nahman Bialik: Poet of Hebrew*

Avner Holtzman

Yale University Press

*No Room for Small Dreams: Courage, Imagination, and the Making of Modern Israel*

Shimon Peres

Custom House (HarperCollins)

**Book Club**

The Miller Family Award in Memory of Helen Dunn Weinstein and June Keit Miller

**Winner:**

*The Weight of Ink*

Rachel Kadish

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt

**Finalists:**

*On the Sickle's Edge*

Neville D. Frankel

Diálogos

*We Were the Lucky Ones*  
Georgia Hunter  
Viking

*Waking Lions*  
Ayelet Gundar-Goshen  
(trans. Sondra Silverston)  
Little, Brown and Company (Hachette)

*Three Floors Up*  
Eshkol Nevo  
(trans. Sondra Silverston)  
Other Press

### **Children's Literature**

#### **Winner:**

*The Language of Angels: A Story About the Reinvention of Hebrew*  
Richard Michelson; Karla Gudeon, illus.  
Charlesbridge Publishing

#### **Finalists:**

*Lucky Broken Girl*  
Ruth Behar  
Nancy Paulsen Books

### **Contemporary Jewish Life and Practice**

Myra H. Kraft Memorial Award

#### **Winner:**

*The Torah of Music: Reflections on a Tradition of Singing and Song*  
Joey Weisenberg, with translations by Joshua Schwartz  
Hadar Press

#### **Finalists:**

*The Wisdom of Not Knowing: Discovering a Life of Wonder by Embracing Uncertainty*  
Estelle Frankel  
Shambhala Publications, Inc.

*My Jewish Year: 18 Holidays, One Wondering Jew*  
Abigail Pogrebin  
Fig Tree Books LLC

*Survivor Café: The Legacy of Trauma and the Labyrinth of Memory*  
Elizabeth Rosner  
Counterpoint Press

**Debut Fiction**

Goldberg Prize

**Winner:**

*Barren Island*  
Carol Zoref  
New Issues Poetry & Prose/Western Michigan University

**Finalists:**

*What to Do About the Solomons*  
Bethany Ball  
Grove/Atlantic

*Viva Rose!*  
Susan Krawitz  
Holiday House

**Jewish Education and Identity**

In Memory of Dorothy Kripke

**Winner:**

*The Origin of the Jews: The Quest for Roots in a Rootless Age*  
Steven Weitzman  
Princeton University Press

**Finalists:**

*Learning to Read Talmud: What It Looks Like and How It Happens*  
Jane L. Kanarek & Marjorie Lehman  
Academic Studies Press

## **Fiction**

JJ Greenberg Memorial Award

### **Winner**

*A Horse Walks into a Bar*

David Grossman

(trans. Jessica Cohen)

Alfred A. Knopf

### **Finalists:**

*4 3 2 1: A Novel*

Paul Auster

Henry Holt & Company (Macmillan)

*Waking Lions*

Ayelet Gundar Goshen

(trans. Sondra Silverston)

Little, Brown and Company (Hachette)

*Three Floors Up*

Eshkol Nevo

(trans. Sondra Silverston)

Other Press

## **History**

Gerrard and Ella Berman Memorial Award

### **Winner:**

*The Many Deaths of Jew Süß: The Notorious Trial and Execution of an Eighteenth Century Court Jew*

Yair Mintzker

Princeton University Press

### **Finalists:**

*Jewish Comedy: A Serious History*

Jeremy Dauber

W. W. Norton & Company

*The Book Smugglers: Partisans, Poets, and the Race to Save Jewish Treasures from the Nazis*

David Fishman

ForeEdge (University Press of New England)

*The Story of Hebrew*

Lewis Glinert

Princeton University Press

### **Holocaust**

In Memory of Ernest W. Michel

### **Winner:**

*The Book Smugglers: Partisans, Poets, and the Race to Save Jewish Treasures from the Nazis*

David Fishman

ForeEdge (University Press of New England)

### **Finalists:**

*Theresienstadt 1941-1945: The Face of a Coerced Community*

H. G. Adler, Belinda Cooper, trans.

Cambridge University Press

*Suzanne's Children: A Daring Rescue in Nazi Paris*

Anne Nelson

Simon & Schuster

*Saving One's Own: Jewish Rescuers During the Holocaust*

Mordecai Paldiel

University of Nebraska Press (Jewish Publication Society)

### **Modern Jewish Thought and Experience**

Dorot Foundation Award in Memory of Joy Ungerleider Mayerson

### **Winner:**

*Consumer Culture and the Making of Modern Jewish Identity*

Gideon Reuveni

Cambridge University Press

**Finalists:**

*Modernity and the Jews in Western Jewish Thought*

Chad Alan Goldberg

University of Chicago Press

*Unorthodox Kin: Portuguese Marranos and the Global Search for Belonging*

Naomi Leite

University of California Press

*Movies and Midrash: Popular Film and Jewish Religious Conversation*

Wendy I. Zierler

SUNY Press

**Poetry**

Berru Award in Memory of Ruth and Bernie Weinflash

**Winner:**

*Waiting for the Light*

Alicia Suskin Ostriker

University of Pittsburgh Press

**Finalists:**

*Line Study of a Motel Clerk*

Allison Pitinii Davis

Baobab Press

*Late Beauty*

Tuvia Ruebner

Zephyr Press

*Galaxy Love: Poems*

Gerald Stern

W. W. Norton & Company

**Scholarship**

Nahum M. Sarna Memorial Award

**Winner:**

*Pious Irreverence: Confronting God in Rabbinic Judaism*

Dov Weiss

University of Pennsylvania Press

**Finalists:**

*Maimonides and the Merchants: Jewish Law and Society in the Medieval Islamic World*

Mark R. Cohen

University of Pennsylvania Press

*Coming of Age in Medieval Egypt: Female Adolescence, Jewish Law, and Ordinary Culture*

Eve Krakowski

Princeton University Press

*Ancestral Tales: Reading the Buczacz Stories of S.Y. Agnon*

Alan Mintz

Stanford University Press

**Sephardic Culture**

Mimi S. Frank Award in Memory of Becky Levy

**Winner:**

*Across Legal Lines: Jews and Muslims in Modern Morocco*

Jessica Marglin

Yale University Press

**Finalist:**

*The Merchants of Oran: A Jewish Port at the Dawn of Empire*

Joshua Schreier

Stanford University Press

**Visual Arts**

**Winner:**

*Arthur Szyk: Soldier in Art*

Irvin Ungar

D Giles Limited, London, in association with Historicana and The Arthur Szyk Society

**Finalists:**

*Pierre Chareau: Modern Architecture and Design*

Esther da Costa Meyer, ed.

The Jewish Museum

*Roberto Burle Marx: Brazilian Modernist*

Jens Hoffmann and Claudia J. Nahson

The Jewish Museum

*The Carved Wooden Torah Arks of Eastern Europe*

Bracha Yaniv

The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization

**Women Studies**

Barbara Dobkin Award

**Winner:**

*Coming of Age in Medieval Egypt: Female Adolescence, Jewish Law, and Ordinary Culture*

Eve Krakowski

Princeton University Press

**Finalists:**

*Before All Memory is Lost: Women's Voices From the Holocaust*

Myrna Goldenberg, ed.

The Azrieli Foundation

*If All the Seas Were Ink: A Memoir*

Ilana Kurshan

St. Martin's Press

*Mothers in the Jewish Cultural Imagination*

Marjorie Lehman, Simon J. Bronner, Jane L. Kanarek

The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization

**Writing Based on Archival Material**

The JDC-Herbert Katzki Award

**Winner:**

*Confessions of the Shtetl: Converts from Judaism in Imperial Russia, 1817-1906*

Ellie R. Schinker

Stanford University Press

**Finalist:**

*Seeking Asylum in Israel: Refugees and the History of the Migration Law*

Gilad Ben-Nun

I.B. Tauris – London

**Young Adult**

**Winner:**

*Refugee*

Alan Gratz

Scholastic