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## The Sami Rohr Prize for Jewish Literature Announces Finalists

**New York, NY**– The **Sami Rohr Prize for Jewish Literature**, a program of the Jewish Book Council, has announced the five Fellows who are eligible for the 2018 Prize of \$100,000, the largest award of its kind. In addition, the second prize of \$18,000 and three remaining presentations of \$5,000 each will be announced in July 2018.

Established in 2007, The Sami Rohr Prize for Jewish Literature honors emerging writers who explore the Jewish experience and demonstrate the potential for continued contribution to Jewish literature.

The five finalists for the 2018 Sami Rohr Prize in the area of non-fiction are:

**Sara Yael Hirschhorn**, author of *City On A Hilltop* (Harvard University Press, 2017), a fascinating and well documented history of American Jews and their role in the Israeli settler movement.

**Ilana Kurshan**, author of *If All the Seas Were Ink* (St. Martin's Press, 2017), a moving memoir that follows the author's seven year journey studying the Talmud, charting its ancient wisdom and modern day application for living one's best life.

**Yair Mintzker**, author of *The Many Deaths of Jew Suss*, (Princeton University Press, 2017), a compelling new account of the trial of Joseph Suss Oppenheimer for unspecified "misdeeds" in the small German state of Wurtemberg; and the conflicting versions of his life and death.

**Shari Rabin**, author of *Jews on the Frontier* (New York University Press, 2017), a religious history that recounts the journey of Jews who ventured into the American West and South during the nineteenth century.

**Chanan Tigay**, author of *The Lost Book of Moses* (Ecco, 2016) a gripping account of the quest to find the world's oldest Bible, and to solve the riddle of the man accused of forging it.

"The five 2018 Fellows will join our growing Sami Rohr Prize literary community of authors who are the current and future voices of Jewish literature. We welcome them and look forward to nurturing their growth," says Carolyn Starman Hessel, Director

Emeritus of the Jewish Book Council and now Director of its Sami Rohr Prize for Jewish Literature.

“Our family is delighted to see that The Sami Rohr Prize is serving as the provider of much needed “oxygen” to outstanding emerging writers who might otherwise not have been able to move on to their next work, and as a catalyst for the development of a vibrant, growing Jewish literary community,” says George Rohr.

This year's Fellows were selected by an independent jury that included journalists, academics, religious leaders and historians. The authors will be celebrated in a ceremony to be held in Jerusalem, Israel this summer.

**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.