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2018 NATIONAL JEWISH BOOK AWARDS ANNOUNCED

Book of the Year Awarded to
***Hunting the Truth* by Beate and Serge Klarsfeld**
Michael David Lukas Wins Fiction Category for
***The Last Watchman of Old Cairo* and**
Alice Shalvi wins for *Never a Native*

New York, January 9, 2019 – Jewish Book Council announced today the winners of the 2018 National Jewish Book Awards, now in its sixty-eighth year. The winners include the Everett Family Foundation Book of the Year recipients Beate and Serge Klarsfeld for their work *Hunting the Truth* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux).

This year, JBC is pleased to award the inaugural Biography Award in Memory of Sara Berenson Stone. Mrs. Stone was a devoted philanthropist and voracious reader who moved to New Orleans in 1935, where she began her eighty-year long advocacy for Jewish causes. The first winner of the prize is Ariel Burger for his work *Witness: Lessons from Elie Wiesel's Classroom* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt).

Prime Minister Ehud Barak wins the the Krauss Family Autobiography/Memoir Award for *My Country, My Life: Fighting for Israel, Searching for Peace* (St. Martin's Press) and the Barbara Dobkin Award in Women's Studies is given to *Never a Native* by Alice Shalvi (Halban Publishers).

Three novels take top fiction honors. The winners include *The Last Watchman of Old Cairo* (Spiegel & Grau) for the JJ Greenberg Memorial Award Michael for Fiction, Michael David Lukas's first National Jewish Book Award. Ronald Balson's *The Girl from Berlin* (St. Martin's Press) is the recipient of the The Miller Family Book Club Award in Memory of Helen Dunn Weinstein and June Keit Miller. Bram Presser's *The Book of Dirt* (Text Publishing) is the winner of the Goldberg Prize for Debut Fiction.

The winner of the 2018 Holocaust Award in Memory of Ernest W. Michel is Omer Bartov for his work *Anatomy of a Genocide: The Life and Death of a Town Called Buczacz* (Simon & Schuster) and Ronen Bergman is the winner of the Gerrard and Ella Berman Memorial Award for History for his book *Rise and Kill First: The Secret History of Israel's Targeted Assassinations* (Random House).

Holy Moly Carry Me by Erika Meitner (BOA Editions) wins the Berru Award in Memory of Ruth and Bernie Weinflash in the Poetry category.

This year, we are pleased to present the Mentorship Award in Honor of Carolyn Starman Hessel to Susan Shapiro, bestselling author, award-winning writing professor, and journalist who has worked with over 25,000 students throughout her impressive career. This award recognizes her mentorship and support of Jewish authors, a number of whom have participated in the JBC Network.

The American Jewish Studies Celebrate 350 award goes to *The New American Judaism: How Jews Practice Their Religion Today* by Jack Wertheimer (Princeton University Press).

In the Children's Literature category, we are pleased to recognize *All Three Stooges* written by Erica Perl (Knopf Books for Young Readers, an imprint of Random House Children's Books).

In addition to the 2018 National Jewish Book Award winners, Jewish Book Council is proud to acknowledge the first recipient of the Paper Brigade Award for New Israeli Fiction in Honor of Jane Weitzman: Maya Arad for her work *Our Lady of Kazan*, selected by guest judge and translator Jessica Cohen. An excerpt from *Our Lady of Kazan* has been translated into English and appears in the 2019 issue of JBC's literary journal *Paper Brigade*, publishing this month.

A complete list of the 2018 National Jewish Book Award winners and finalists can be found below, and additional information is available at www.JewishBookCouncil.org.

The winners of the 2018 National Jewish Book Awards will be honored on March 5, 2019 at a gala awards dinner and ceremony to be held at the Bohemian National Hall in Manhattan, hosted by Stephanie Butnick of Tablet Magazine's Unorthodox podcast. To purchase tickets, please visit <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/68th-annual-national-jewish-book-awards-dinner-and-ceremony-tickets-53708921831> or call 212-201-2920.

If press is interested in attending the awards ceremony, please contact Evie Sapphire-Bernstein at Jewish Book Council (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; 1,600 book clubs; 1,100 events; its annual print publication, [Paper Brigade](#); the National Jewish Book Awards; the Sami Rohr Prize for Jewish Literature; the Natan Book Award; its popular literary series [Unpacking the Book: Jewish Writers](#) in conversation; 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:

Hunting the Truth: Memoirs of Beate and Serge Klarsfeld

Beate and Serge Klarsfeld; Translated from the French by Sam Taylor
Farrar, Straus and Giroux

Mentorship Award in Honor of Carolyn Starman Hessel

Susan Shapiro

Susan Shapiro, an award-winning writing professor who has worked with more than 25,000 students throughout her career, freelances for the NY Times, NY Magazine, WSJ, Washington Post, L.A. Times, Elle & Oprah.com. She's the bestselling author/coauthor of 12 books her family hates including *Five Men Who Broke My Heart*, *Lighting Up*, *Unhooked*, *The Bosnia List* & the new inspiring writing guide *The Byline Bible*. She and her husband, a scriptwriter, live in Greenwich Village, where she teaches her popular "instant gratification takes too long" classes at The New School, NYU and in private workshops & seminars.

American Jewish Studies

Celebrate 350 Award

Winner:

The New American Judaism: How Jews Practice Their Religion Today

Jack Wertheimer

Princeton University Press

Finalists:

On Middle Ground: A History of the Jews of Baltimore

Eric L. Goldstein and Deborah R. Weiner

Johns Hopkins University Press

Pennies for Heaven: The History of American Synagogues and Money

Daniel Judson

Brandeis University Press

Beyond Chrismukkah: The Christian-Jewish Interfaith Family in the United States

Samira K. Mehta

University of North Carolina Press

Autobiography and Memoir

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

Winner:

My Country, My Life: Fighting for Israel, Searching for Peace

Ehud Barak

St. Martin's Press

Finalists:

Sara Berman's Closet

Maira and Alex Kalman

HarperCollins Publishers

The Fox Hunt: A Refugee's Memoir of Coming to America
Mohammed Al Samawi
HarperCollins Publishers

Biography

In Memory of Sara Berenson Stone

Winner:

Witness: Lessons from Elie Wiesel's Classroom
Ariel Burger
Houghton Mifflin Harcourt

Finalists:

Harvey Milk: His Lives and Death
Lillian Faderman
Yale University Press

The Three Escapes of Hannah Arendt
Ken Krimstein
Bloomsbury

The Woman Who Fought an Empire
Gregory J. Wallance
University of Nebraska Press

Book Club

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

Winner:

The Girl from Berlin
Ronald Balson
St. Martin's Press

Finalists:

Letters to My Palestinian Neighbor

Yossi Klein Halevi

HarperCollins Publishers

Promised Land

Martin Fletcher

St. Martin's Press

Children's Literature

Winner:

All Three Stooges

Erica Perl

Knopf Books for Young Readers, an imprint of Random House Children's Books

Finalists:

Sweep

Jonathan Auxier

Abrams Books

All-Of-A-Kind Family Hanukkah

Emily Jenkins and Paul O. Zelinsky

Penguin Random House Children's Books

Regina Persisted: An Untold Story

Sandy Eisenberg Sasso, Margeaux Lucas (Illustrator)

Behrman House

Contemporary Jewish Life and Practice

Myra H. Kraft Memorial Award

Winner:

The Going: A Meditation on Jewish Law

Leon Wiener Dow

Palgrave Macmillan

Finalists:

Recharging Judaism: How Civic Engagement is Good for Synagogues, Jews, and America

Rabbi Judith Schindler and Judy Seldin-Cohen

CCAR Press

The Case of the Sexy Jewess: Dance, Gender and Jewish Joke-work in US Pop Culture

Hannah Schwadron

Oxford University Press

Debut Fiction

Goldberg Prize

Winner:

The Book of Dirt

Bram Presser

Text Publishing

Finalists:

I, Sarah Steinway

Mary E. Carter

Tovah Miriam

The Dream Stitcher

Deborah Gaal

Anchor House Publishing

Ariel Samson: Freelance Rabbi

MaNishtana

Multikosheral Press NYC

Sadness is a White Bird
Moriel Rothman-Zecher
Atria Books (Simon and Schuster)

Jewish Education and Identity
In Memory of Dorothy Kripke

Winner:

The Talmud: A Biography
Barry Scott Wimpfheimer
Princeton University Press

Finalists:

Mavericks, Mystics & False Messiahs: Episodes from the Margins of Jewish History
Pini Dunner
Toby Press

The Talmud of Relationships, Volume 1 & 2
Rabbi Amy Scheinerman
The Jewish Publication Society

In Good Faith: Questioning Religion and Atheism
Scott A. Shay
Post Hill Press

Fiction

JJ Greenberg Memorial Award

Winner:

The Last Watchman of Old Cairo
Michael David Lukas
Spiegel & Grau

Finalists:

The Mandela Plot

Kenneth Bonert

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt

Mother India: A Novel

Tova Reich

Syracuse University Press

Lake Success

Gary Shteyngart

Random House

History

Gerrard and Ella Berman Memorial Award

Winner:

Rise and Kill First: The Secret History of Israel's Targeted Assassinations

Ronen Bergman

Random House

Finalists:

In Search of Israel: The History of an Idea

Michael Brenner

Princeton University Press

Italy's Jews from Emancipation to Fascism

Shira Klein

Cambridge University Press

Pogrom: Kishinev and the Tilt of History

Steven J. Zipperstein

Liveright/W. W. Norton & Company

Holocaust

In Memory of Ernest W. Michel

Winner:

Anatomy of a Genocide: The Life and Death of a Town Called Buczacz

Omer Bartov

Simon & Schuster

Modern Jewish Thought and Experience

Dorot Foundation Award in Memory of Joy Ungerleider Mayerson

Winner:

Does Judaism Condone Violence? Holiness and Ethics in the Jewish Tradition

Alan L. Mittleman

Princeton University Press

Finalists:

Martin Buber's Theopolitics

Samuel Hayim Brody

Indiana University Press

Dear Zealots

Amos Oz

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt

A Rich Brew: How Cafes Created Modern Jewish Culture

Shahar M. Pinsker

New York University Press

Poetry

Berru Award in Memory of Ruth and Bernie Weinflash

Winner:

Holy Moly Carry Me

Erika Meitner

BOA Editions, LTD

Finalists:

Years I Walked at Your Side: Selected Poems

Mordechai Goldman, translated by Tsipi Keller

SUNY Press

Fruit Geode

Alicia Jo Rabins

Augury Books

Scholarship

Nahum M. Sarna Memorial Award

Winner:

Historical Atlas of Hasidism

Marcin Wodziński

Cartography by Waldemar Spallek

Princeton University Press

Finalists:

Time in the Babylonian Talmud: Natural and Imaged Times in Jewish Law and Narrative

Lynn Kaye

Cambridge University Press

Shifting Images of the Hasmoneans: Second Temple Legends and Their Reception in Josephus and Rabbinic Literature

Vered Noam

Oxford University Press

Hasidic Commentary on the Torah
Ora Wiskind–Elper
Littman Library of Jewish Civilization

Sephardic Culture

Mimi S. Frank Award in Memory of Becky Levy

Winner:

Dominion Built of Praise: Panegyric and Legitimacy Among Jews in the Medieval Mediterranean

Jonathan Decter
University of Pennsylvania Press

Finalist:

The Holocaust and North Africa
Aomar Boum and Sarah Abrevaya Stein
Stanford University Press

Women Studies

Barbara Dobkin Award

Winner:

Never a Native
Alice Shalvi
Halban Publishers

Finalists:

The Obligated Self
Mara H. Benjamin
Indiana University Press

Braided: A Journey of A Thousand Challahs
Beth Ricanati
She Writes Press

Writing Based on Archival Material

The JDC-Herbert Katzki Award

Winner:

Rescue Board: The Untold Story of America's Efforts to Save the Jews of Europe

Rebecca Erbelding

Penguin Random House - Doubleday

Finalist:

Italy's Jews from Emancipation to Fascism

Shira Klein

Cambridge University Press