



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Association of Jewish Libraries

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**2022 Sydney Taylor Book, Manuscript, and Body-of-Work Award Winners Announced**

Winners of the annual Sydney Taylor Book Award were announced by the Association of Jewish Libraries today in a livestream from the Youth Media Awards press conference at the American Library Association. Named in memory of Sydney Taylor, author of the classic All-of-a-Kind Family series, the award recognizes books for children and teens that exemplify high literary standards while authentically portraying the Jewish experience.

**GOLD MEDALISTS**

***The Passover Guest*** by Susan Kusel, illustrated by Sean Rubin, published by Neal Porter Books, Holiday House, is the winner in the Picture Book category.

During the Great Depression, Muriel invites a ragged juggler to celebrate Passover with her family. When he arrives, they are stunned to discover a magnificent feast to share with their neighbors. Based on I. L. Peretz's "The Magician" with illustrations influenced by Marc Chagall, Kusel's debut picture book will resonate with readers young and old.

***How to Find What You're Not Looking For*** by Veera Hiranandani, published by Kokila, an imprint of Penguin Random House, is the winner in the Middle Grade category.

It's 1967, and Ariel Goldberg is trying to cope with her older sister's elopement with a man from India and estrangement from the family, the financial troubles of their family-owned bakery, and her own struggles at school. Narrated in the second person, Hiranandani perfectly captures this turbulent period in history through the lens of a sympathetic and compelling preteen Jewish girl.

***The City Beautiful*** by Aden Polydoros, published by Inkyard Press, is the winner in the Young Adult category.

Romanian immigrant Alter Rosen embraces his Jewish identity while trying to adapt to American life. When a friend is murdered, Alter is inhabited by a dybbuk and must find the killer before it consumes him. Masterfully combining fantasy, mystery, LGBTQ romance, and historical fiction, this gripping story is set against the sparkling and lurid façade of the 1893 Chicago World's Fair.

## **SILVER MEDALISTS**

Eight Sydney Taylor Honor Books were recognized for 2022.

For Picture Books, the Honor Books are ***Dear Mr. Dickens*** by Nancy Churnin, illustrated by Bethany Stancliffe, published by Albert Whitman & Company; ***The Christmas Mitzvah*** by Jeff Gottesfeld, illustrated by Michelle Laurentia Agatha, published by Creston Books; and ***Nicky & Vera: A Quiet Hero of the Holocaust and the Children He Rescued*** written and illustrated by Peter Sís, published by Norton Young Readers, an imprint of W.W. Norton & Company.

For Middle Grade, the Honor Books are ***Linked*** by Gordon Korman, published by Scholastic Press, an imprint of Scholastic; and ***The Genius Under the Table: Growing Up Behind the Iron Curtain*** written and illustrated by Eugene Yelchin, published by Candlewick Press.

For Young Adult, the Honor Books are ***Whistle: A New Gotham City Hero*** by E. Lockhart, illustrated by Manuel Preitano, published by DC Comics; ***The Summer of Lost Letters*** by Hannah Reynolds, published by Razorbill, an imprint of Penguin Random House; and ***The Last Words We Said*** by Leah Scheier, published by Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, an imprint of Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing Division.

## **NOTABLE BOOKS**

In addition to the medal winners, the Award Committee designated ten Notable Books of Jewish Content for 2022.

The Notable Picture Books are ***A Queen to the Rescue: The Story of Henrietta Szold, Founder of Hadassah*** by Nancy Churnin, illustrated by Yevgenia Nayberg, published by Creston Books; ***The People's Painter: How Ben Shahn Fought for Justice with Art*** by Cynthia Levinson, illustrated by Evan Turk, published by Abrams Books for Young Readers, an imprint of ABRAMS; and ***Red and Green and Blue and White*** by Lee Wind, illustrated by Paul O. Zelinsky, published by Levine Querido.

The Notable Middle Grade Books are ***The Magical Imperfect*** by Chris Baron, published by Feiwel and Friends, an imprint of Macmillan Publishing Company; ***Sorry For Your Loss*** by Joanne Levy,

published by Orca Book Publishers; and ***Benny Feldman's All-Star Klezmer Band*** by Allison and Wayne Marks, published by Green Bean Books.

The Notable Young Adult Books are ***The Light of Days: The Untold Story of Women Resistance Fighters in Hitler's Ghettos (Young Readers' Edition)*** by Judy Batalion, published by Harper, an imprint of HarperCollins Publishers; ***Why We Fly*** by Kimberly Jones and Gilly Segal, published by Sourcebooks Fire, an imprint of Sourcebooks; ***The Seventh Handmaiden*** by Judith Pransky, published by Green Bean Books; and ***Boy From Buchenwald*** by Robbie Waisman and Susan McClelland, published by Bloomsbury Children's Books, part of Bloomsbury Publishing Plc.

More information about the Sydney Taylor Book Award, a complete listing of the award winners and notables, and seals for purchase can be found at [www.sydneytaylorbookawards.org](http://www.sydneytaylorbookawards.org).

### **BODY-OF-WORK AWARD**

The Sydney Taylor Body-of-Work Award, which recognizes an author or entity who has made a substantial contribution over time to the genre of Jewish children's literature, goes to **Jane Yolen**. Jane Yolen has published over 400 books for readers of all ages in a wide variety of genres. Dubbed "The Hans Christian Anderson of Children's Literature" by *Newsweek*, her books have received much acclaim, including Sydney Taylor Honors for *Naming Liberty* in 2009 and *Miriam at the River* in 2021, and two Sydney Taylor Notables. Her middle grade novel, *The Devil's Arithmetic*, won both the National Jewish Book Award and the 1988 Sydney Taylor Book Award.

### **MANUSCRIPT AWARD**

The Sydney Taylor Manuscript Award was established to encourage the publication of outstanding new books in the genre of Jewish children's literature.

The 2022 winner for the Sydney Taylor Manuscript Award is Noah Weisz for *Echo of Light*, a middle grade novel that focuses on Gabby Moskowitz, a Latina girl adopted by a Jewish family as an infant, as she explores faith and identity in the summer after eighth grade. The book deals with issues of family relationships, death, friendship, peer pressure, and community.

### **EVENTS**

Sydney Taylor Award sponsor Jo Taylor Marshall will be honored at an "After Party" on Sunday January 30, 2022 at 12:30pm ET on Zoom. Members of the public may register for this free event [HERE](#).

Winning authors and illustrators will receive their awards at the annual conference of the Association of Jewish Libraries, to be held at the National Museum of American Jewish History in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, from June 26 to June 30, 2022. Gold and silver medalists will participate in a blog tour from February 7 to 11, 2022. For more information about the blog tour,

please visit [www.jewishlibraries.org](http://www.jewishlibraries.org). For an exclusive interview with Sydney Taylor Book Award Committee Chair, please visit *The Book of Life* podcast at [www.bookoflifepodcast.com](http://www.bookoflifepodcast.com).

## **COMMITTEES**

Members of the 2022 Sydney Taylor Book Award committee are Chair Martha Simpson, Stratford Library, Stratford, Connecticut; Judy Ehrenstein, Montgomery County Public Libraries, Bethesda, Maryland; Toby Harris, Temple Beth Am, Seattle, Washington; Carla Kozak, San Francisco Public Library, retired, San Francisco, California; Aviva Rosenberg, Ridgefield Free Public Library, Ridgefield, New Jersey; Talya Sokoll, Putnam Library at the Noble and Greenough School, Dedham, Massachusetts; and Kay Weisman, *Booklist*, Vancouver, British Columbia.

Members of the 2022 Sydney Taylor Manuscript Award committee are Chair Aileen Grossberg, Congregation Shomrei Emunah, Montclair, New Jersey; Rebecca Fox, New Canaan, Connecticut; Ilka Gordon, Beachwood, Ohio; Heather Matthews, Knoxville, Tennessee; Heidi Rabinowitz, Congregation B'nai Israel, Boca Raton, Florida; and Rachel Simon, Newton Free Library, Newton, Massachusetts.

### **About the Association of Jewish Libraries**

The Association of Jewish Libraries is an international, professional organization that fosters access to information and research in all forms of media relating to all things Jewish. The Association promotes Jewish literacy and scholarship and provides a community for peer support and professional development.

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