FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 22, 2024

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2024 Sydney Taylor Book Award Winners Announced

Winners of the annual Sydney Taylor Book Award were announced by the Association of Jewish Libraries today in a virtual livecast at the Youth Media Awards announcement 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

Two New Years by Richard Ho, illustrated by Lynn Scurfield, published by Chronicle Books, is the winner in the Picture Book category. Follow a Chinese Jewish family as they celebrate not one, but two new years: Rosh Hashanah in fall, and Lunar New Year in early spring. With warm illustrations that evoke the paper cutting traditions of both cultures, this thoughtful look at the two celebrations is full of joy and light.

The Dubious Pranks of Shaindy Goodman by Mari Lowe, an Arthur A. Levine book, published by Levine Querido, is the winner in the Middle Grade category. Lonely preteen Shaindy is lured into assisting popular Gayil with a series of pranks targeting students in their all-girls Orthodox Jewish middle school. But as the consequences escalate, Shaindy must decide whether fitting in is worth the cost to her classmates—and herself. A subtly thrilling story of friendship, consequences, and forgiveness.

The Blood Years by Elana K. Arnold, published by Balzer+Bray, an imprint of HarperCollins Publishers, is the winner in the Young Adult category. Growing up in Czernowitz with a protective grandfather and an unstable mother, thirteen-year old Frederieke (Rieke) Teitler and her older sister Astra struggle to survive when war breaks out and their beloved community is invaded by the Russian and German armies. Inspired by the author’s grandmother’s experience in Holocaust-era Romania.
SILVER MEDALISTS

Eleven Sydney Taylor Honor Books were recognized.

For Picture Books, the Honor Books are Afikomen by Tziporah Cohen, illustrated by Yaara Eshet, published by Groundwood Books; Hanukkah Upside Down by Elissa Brent Weissman, illustrated by Omer Hoffmann, published by Abrams Books for Young Readers, an imprint of ABRAMS; and Hidden Hope: How a Toy and a Hero Saved Lives During the Holocaust by Elisa Boxer, illustrated by Amy June Bates, published by Abrams Books for Young Readers, an imprint of ABRAMS.

For Middle Grade, the Honor Books are Don’t Want to Be Your Monster by Deke Moulton, published by Tundra Books, an imprint of Tundra Book Group, a division of Penguin Random House Canada Limited; The Jake Show by Joshua S. Levy, published by Katherine Tegen Books, an imprint of HarperCollins Publishers; Not So Shy by Noa Nimrodi, published by Kar-Ben, an imprint of Lerner Publishing Group; and A Sky Full of Song by Susan Lynn Meyer, published by Union Square Kids, an imprint of Union Square & Co.


In addition to the medal winners, the Award Committee designated three Notable Books of Jewish Content for 2024.

The Notable Picture Books are The Rabbi and His Donkey by Susan Tarcov, illustrated by Diana Renjina, published by Kar-Ben, an imprint of Lerner Publishing Group; and Zhen Yu and the Snake by Erica Lyons, illustrated by Renia Metallinou, published by Kar-Ben, an imprint of Lerner Publishing Group.


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.

SYDNEY TAYLOR 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 Joni Sussman. As publisher at Kar-Ben Publishing, an imprint of the Lerner Publishing Group, for the last twenty years, Joni has greatly increased the reach of Jewish children's literature by producing a significant number of high-quality titles on an ever-expanding variety of Jewish
topics. Her efforts have put Jewish books in the eyes of the public and the hands of children on a new scale.

**SYDNEY TAYLOR MANUSCRIPT AWARD**

The 2024 Winner for the [Sydney Taylor Manuscript Award](#) is Marlaina Cockcroft for *Ava's Golem*, a contemporary middle grade fantasy told in two voices. Ava Lowe creates a golem named Joseph to help her deal with antisemitic incidents in her life and community, but Joseph also tells his own story. Contemporary topics of friendship, family dynamics, neurodiversity, antisemitism, and social dynamics are integrated into the story of the teenaged golem who helps Ava and her friends realize that working together is the best way to solve problems.

**EVENTS**

Winning authors and illustrators will receive their awards at the annual conference of the Association of Jewish Libraries, to be held at the Holiday Inn San Diego Bayside in San Diego, California, from June 24 to 26, 2024. Gold and silver medalists will participate in a blog tour from February 5 to 9, 2024. For more information about the blog tour, please visit [www.sydneytaylorbookawards.org](http://www.sydneytaylorbookawards.org). For an exclusive interview with the 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 2024 Sydney Taylor Book Award committee are Chair Aviva Rosenberg, Ridgefield Free Public Library, Ridgefield, New Jersey; Nat Bension, JCC of Greater Ann Arbor, Michigan; Debra S. Gold, Cuyahoga County Public Library, retired, Beachwood, Ohio; Dr. Annette Y. Goldsmith, Sephardic Temple Tifereth Israel Levy Library, Los Angeles; Eytan Kessler, East Hampton Library, Patchogue, New York; Melanie Koss, Northern Illinois University, Chicago; and Arielle Vishny, author, New York.

Members of the 2024 Sydney Taylor Manuscript Award committee are Chair Aileen Grossberg, Congregation Shomrei Emunah, Montclair, New Jersey, and Oheb Shalom Congregation, South Orange, New Jersey; Ilka Gordon, Title 1 instructor, Beachwood, Ohio; Heather J. Matthews, Assistant Professor of Literacy, Salisbury University, Salisbury, Maryland; Stacy Nockowitz, retired middle school librarian, author and National Jewish Book Award winner, Columbus, Ohio; Talya Sokoll, Putnam Library, Noble and Greenough School, Dedham, Massachusetts; Evan Wolkenstein, Jewish Community High School, San Francisco, California, and Sydney Taylor Book Award winner.

**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. For more information, visit [www.jewishlibraries.org](http://www.jewishlibraries.org).

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