FROM POSSIBILITY TO PRINT: DEMYSTIFYING THE WORLD OF PUBLISHING

Liesa Abrams, Sam Farkas and Rena Rossner

Description: This panel will be a chance to hear how agents and editors, with strong track records of success in mainstream commercial publishing, bring great books to print. Special focus will be paid to the challenges and nuances of publishing Jewish books at large mainstream publishers. Participants will discuss fact-checking vs. sensitivity reading, handling obscure details or controversial topics for wider audiences and more. We will pull back the curtain and give librarians a view of what really goes into creating a book. Everyone has a list of what they’d love to read or what their patrons are requesting: why haven’t we seen those books yet and how can we as readers and librarians let publishers know what we’re looking for?

Liesa Abrams is VP, Editor-in-Chief of the Labyrinth Road imprint at Random House Children’s Books. Prior to creating Labyrinth Road, Liesa worked at other publishers editing middle-grade and YA titles. Authors she launched from debut to bestseller include Rachel Renee Russell (Dork Diaries), Shannon Messenger (Keeper of the Lost Cities), and CSK John Steptoe award winner Tracy Deonn (Legendborn). Liesa also edited bestselling titles from Brandon Mull, Lisa McMann, Jodi Lynn Anderson, Lynn Weingarten and others. Her focus on stories revolving around themes of identity and self-discovery is reflected in the Michael L. Printz honor book, A Heart in a Body in the World from Deb Caletti, the Sydney Taylor honor novel The Last Words We Said by Leah Scheier and in ALA Rainbow List Top Ten selections like Shaun David Hutchinson’s Brave Face and Sarah Gailey’s When We Were Magic.

Sam Farkas is a literary agent at Jill Grinberg Literary Management where she also handles the subsidiary rights for the agency’s entire catalogue. Her list spans categories and genres. Above all, she is drawn to exemplary writing, regardless of whether a project is high fantasy, clever picture book or anything in between. She grew up in Cherry Hill, NJ and graduated from the College of William & Mary in 2015. When not reading, she can be found attempting to try all the food in New York City.

Rena Rossner is a literary agent at The Deborah Harris Agency, based in Jerusalem, Israel. She was born in Miami Beach, FL, is a graduate of Johns Hopkins University’s Writing Seminars Program, studied at Trinity College, Dublin and holds an MA in history from McGill University. She is the author of the cookbook Eating the Bible (Skyhorse, 2014) and the novels, The Sisters of the Winter Wood (Redhook/Orbit, 2018) and The Light of the Midnight Stars (Redhook/Orbit, 2021). Rena represents a wide range of award-winning literary and commercial fiction and non-fiction, in both the children's and adult publishing space. The authors she works with have been New York Times bestsellers, National Book Award Finalists, Sydney Taylor Award Winners, Morris Award, Edgar Award and Corretta Scott King Award winners, and more.