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#### MEDIA RELEASE

### **2011 SYDNEY TAYLOR BOOK AWARDS ANNOUNCED BY THE ASSOCIATION OF JEWISH LIBRARIES**

(Los Angeles — January 2011) **Howard Schwartz** and **Kristina Swarner**, author and illustrator of ***Gathering Sparks***, **Barry Deutsch**, author and illustrator of ***Hereville: How Mirka Got Her Sword***, and **Dana Reinhardt**, author of ***The Things a Brother Knows*** are the 2011 winners of the prestigious Sydney Taylor Book Award.

The Sydney Taylor Book Award honors new books for children and teens that exemplify the highest literary standards while authentically portraying the Jewish experience. The award memorializes Sydney Taylor, author of the classic *All-of-a-Kind Family* series. The winners will receive their awards at the Association of Jewish Libraries convention in Montreal this June.

Schwartz and Swarner will receive the 2011 gold medal in the Sydney Taylor Book Award's Younger Readers Category for ***Gathering Sparks***, published by **Roaring Brook Press, an imprint of Macmillan Children's Publishing**. Both are second time winners. In 1992, Schwartz received the Sydney Taylor Book Award for *The Diamond Tree: Jewish Tales from Around the World*. Swarner earned the 2008 Sydney Taylor Book Award for her illustrations in *The Bedtime Sh'ma: A Goodnight Book* by Sarah Gershman.

***Gathering Sparks*** is based on a sixteenth century teaching of "tikkun olam," or "repairing the world." Committee member Debbie Colodny commented, "Schwartz spins a calming tale that suggests that the way to bring peace and well-being to our world is by doing good deeds and loving one another... Swarner's art and Schwartz's poetic words interpret the concept of the vessel as a fleet of ships outlined in the night sky by millions of starry points of light."

Deutsch will receive the 2011 gold medal in the Sydney Taylor Book Award's Older Readers Category for ***Hereville: How Mirka Got Her Sword***, published by **Amulet Books, an imprint of Abrams**. This is the first graphic novel to win the Award. Committee member Aimee Lurie noted, "Mirka is a clever, headstrong and imaginative heroine who will appeal to a wide audience. Teens who feel like they don't fit in will have no trouble relating to her balancing what is best for her family versus her desire to fight dragons. Grounded in her religious beliefs, she is willing to put her fantasies aside to celebrate Shabbat. The illustrations strike the perfect balance of showing a realistic Orthodox community, while creating the perfect backdrop for a fairytale."

Reinhardt will receive the 2011 gold medal in the Sydney Taylor Book Award's Teen Readers Category for ***The Things a Brother Knows***, published by **Wendy Lamb Books, an imprint of Random House Children's Books**. Levi's older brother Boaz is a military hero, and Levi has always lived in his shadow. Now Boaz is returning from war and it seems everyone thinks Levi is the luckiest boy in town. When Boaz refuses to engage with his family and barely leaves his room, Levi wonders if his brother will ever be normal. Committee member Rita Soltan said, "Reinhardt creates a moving portrayal of teen characters ... She provides balance through Levi and Boaz's Israeli grandfather, who served in Israel and has experienced war and suicide bombings. Realistic and subtle, her story unfolds with enough suspense, sardonic humor and pathos to keep readers focused until a conclusion that leaves room for pondering interpretation." In 2007, Reinhardt earned a Sydney Taylor Honor Award for *A Brief Chapter in My Impossible Life*.

Nine Sydney Taylor Honor Books were named for 2011. For Younger Readers, the Honor Award Winners are: ***Modeh Ani: A Good Morning Book*** by Sarah Gershman with illustrations by Kristina Swarner (EKS Publishing), ***Emma's Poem: The Voice of the Statue of Liberty*** by Linda Glaser with illustrations by Claire A. Nivola (Houghton Mifflin Books for Children), and ***Cakes and Miracles: A Purim Tale*** by Barbara Diamond Goldin with illustrations by Jaime Zollars (Marshall Cavendish Children). Sydney Taylor Honor Award Winners for Older Readers include: ***Resistance*** by Carla Jablonski with art by Leland Purvis (First Second, an imprint of Macmillan Children's Publishing Group), ***One Is Not a Lonely Number*** by Evelyn Krieger (YM Books), and ***Black Radishes*** by Susan Lynn Meyer (Delacorte Press, an imprint of Random House Children's Books). For Teen readers, the Honor Award Winners are: ***Hush*** by Eishes Chayil (Walker & Company, a division of Bloomsbury Publishing), ***Once*** by Morris Gleitzman (Henry Holt and Company), and ***Life, After*** by Sarah Darer Littman (Scholastic Press, an imprint of Scholastic, Inc.).

In addition to the medal-winners, the Award Committee designated twenty-seven Notable Books of Jewish Content for 2011: thirteen in the Younger Readers Category, seven in the Older Readers Category, and seven for Teens. Notable titles, and more information about the Sydney Taylor Book Award, may be found online at [www.SydneyTaylorBookAward.org](http://www.SydneyTaylorBookAward.org).

A blog tour, featuring interviews with winning authors and illustrators, will take place in early February, with participation from a wide range of children's literature, family interest, and Jewish blogs. The blog tour schedule will appear on the Association of Jewish Libraries' blog "People of the Books" at [JewishLibraries.org/blog](http://JewishLibraries.org/blog).

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**THE 2011 SYDNEY TAYLOR BOOK AWARDS  
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**The Sydney Taylor Book Award Winner for Younger Readers:**

*Gathering Sparks* by Howard Schwartz with illustrations by Kristina Swarner  
(Roaring Brook Press, an imprint of Macmillan Children's Publishing Group)

**The Sydney Taylor Book Award Winner for Older Readers:**

*Hereville: How Mirka Got Her Sword* by Barry Deutsch  
(Amulet Books, an imprint of Abrams)

**The Sydney Taylor Book Award Winner for Teen Readers:**

*The Things a Brother Knows* by Dana Reinhardt  
(Wendy Lamb Books, an imprint of Random House Children's Books)

**Sydney Taylor Honor Award Winners for Younger Readers:**

*Modeh Ani: A Good Morning Book* by Sarah Gershman with illustrations by Kristina Swarner  
(EKS Publishing)

*Emma's Poem: The Voice of the Statue of Liberty* by Linda Glaser with illustrations by Claire A. Nivola  
(Houghton Mifflin Books for Children)

*Cakes and Miracles: A Purim Tale* by Barbara Diamond Goldin with illustrations by Jaime Zollars  
(Marshall Cavendish Children)

**Sydney Taylor Honor Award Winners for Older Readers:**

*Resistance* by Carla Jablonski with illustrations by Leland Purvis  
(First Second, an imprint of Macmillan Children's Publishing Group)

*One Is Not a Lonely Number* by Evelyn Krieger  
(YM Books)

*Black Radishes* by Susan Lynn Meyer  
(Delacorte Press, an imprint of Random House Children's Books)

**Sydney Taylor Honor Award Winners for Teen Readers:**

*Hush* by Eishes Chayil  
(Walker & Company, a division of Bloomsbury Publishing)

*Once* by Morris Gleitzman  
(Henry Holt and Company)

*Life, After* by Sarah Darer Littman  
(Scholastic Press, an imprint of Scholastic, Inc.)

### **Notable Books for Younger Readers:**

- Engineer Ari and the Sukkah Express* by Deborah Bodin Cohen with illustrations by Shahar Kober  
(Kar-Ben, an imprint of Lerner)
- Feivel's Flying Horses* by Heidi Smith Hyde with illustrations by Johanna van der Sterre  
(Kar-Ben, an imprint of Lerner)
- Miriam in the Desert* by Jacqueline Jules with illustrations by Natascia Ugliano  
(Kar-Ben, an imprint of Lerner)
- The Little Red Hen and the Passover Matzah* by Leslie Kimmelman with illustrations by Paul Meisel  
(Holiday House)
- Say Hello, Lily* by Deborah Lakritz with illustrations by Martha Aviles  
(Kar-Ben, an imprint of Lerner)
- Beautiful Yetta, The Yiddish Chicken* by Daniel Pinkwater with illustrations by Jill Pinkwater  
(Feiwel and Friends, an imprint of Macmillan Children's Publishing Group)
- A Tale of Two Seders* by Mindy Avra Portnoy with illustrations by Valeria Cis  
(Kar-Ben, an imprint of Lerner)
- Jackie's Gift* by Sharon Robinson with illustrations by E.B. Lewis  
(The Viking Press, an imprint of Penguin)
- Zishe the Strong Man* by Robert Rubenstein with illustrations by Woody Miller  
(Kar-Ben, an imprint of Lerner)
- Sara Finds a Mitzva* by Rebeka Simhaee with illustrations by Michael Weber  
(Hachai Publishing)
- Baxter, the Pig Who Wanted to be Kosher* by Laurel Snyder with illustrations by David Goldin  
(Tricycle Press, an imprint of The Crown Trade Group/Random House)
- The Rooster Prince of Breslov* by Ann Stampler with illustrations by Eugene Yelchin  
(Clarion, an imprint of Houghton Mifflin Harcourt)
- Dear Tree* by Doba Rivka Weber with illustrations by Phyllis Saroff  
(Hachai Publishing)

### **Notable Books for Older Readers:**

- Is It Night or Day?* by Fern Schumer Chapman  
(Farrar Straus Giroux, an imprint of Macmillan Children's Publishing Group)
- Kings and Carpenters: One Hundred Bible Land Jobs You Might Have Praised or Panned*  
by Laurie Coulter with illustrations by Mary Newbigging  
(Annick Press)
- Hot Pursuit: Murder in Mississippi* by Stacia Deutsch and Rhody Cohon  
with illustrations by Craig Orback  
(Kar-Ben, an imprint of Lerner)
- The Orphan Rescue* by Anne Dublin with illustrations by Qin Leng  
(Second Story Press)
- The Year of Goodbyes* by Debbie Levy  
(Hyperion Books, an imprint of Disney Book Group)
- Sharing Our Homeland: Palestinian and Jewish Children at Summer Peace Camp* by Trisha Marx  
with photographs by Cindy Karp  
(Lee & Low Books)
- Mitzvah the Mutt* by Sylvia Rouss with illustrations by Martha Rast  
(Yaldah Publishing)

**Notable Books for Teen Readers:**

*An Unspeakable Crime: The Prosecution and Persecution of Leo Frank* by Elaine Marie Alphin  
(Carolrhoda Books, an imprint of Lerner)

*Annexed* by Sharon Dogar  
(Houghton Mifflin Books for Children)

*Inconvenient* by Margie Gelbwasser  
(Flux, an imprint of Llewellyn Worldwide Ltd.)

*Anne Frank: The Anne Frank House Authorized Graphic Biography* by Sid Jacobson and Ernie Colon  
(Hill and Wang)

*Queen of Secrets* by Jenny Meyerhoff  
(Farrar Straus Giroux, an imprint of Macmillan)

*Under a Red Sky: Memoir of a Childhood in Communist Romania* by Haya Leah Molnar  
(Farrar Straus Giroux, an imprint of Macmillan)

*Cry of the Giraffe* by Judie Oron  
(Annick Press)

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