

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
ATTENTION: BOOKS, ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT EDITORS

Koffler Centre of the Arts Announces the Winners of the 21st Annual Canadian Jewish Book Awards

TORONTO, April 30, 2009 – **Koffler Centre of the Arts** has announced the winners of the 21st annual **Helen and Stan Vine Canadian Jewish Book Awards** celebrating excellence in Canadian writing on Jewish themes and subjects. Eight books in a variety of genres including fiction, non-fiction, poetry, and children's literature will be recognized at the Awards evening in Toronto on **May 25 at 8 PM** at the **AI Green Theatre, Miles Nadal JCC, 750 Spadina Avenue (at Bloor)**.

Among the winners is a biography of the late media magnate Izzy Asper; a study of the life and work of Canadian author Mordecai Richler; and *How Jesus Became Christian*, a book about the Jewish nature of Jesus Christ.

The fiction award winner this year is *The White Space Between*, a novel about the children of Holocaust survivors by Montreal writer, Ami Sands Brodoff. All were published in 2008.

"The Koffler is thrilled to present the Helen and Stan Vine Canadian Jewish Book Awards which celebrate the very best in Canadian Jewish literature," states **Lori Starr**, Executive Director, Koffler Centre of the Arts and Vice President for Culture, UJA Federation of Greater Toronto. "The number of submissions and the quality of work this year was outstanding, and made the award process particularly challenging for our dedicated jury."

"The award-winning books, by authors from every part of Canada, reflect the impact Jewish culture has had on all aspects of Canadian society," said writer **Edward Trapunski**, who chaired the distinguished volunteer judging panel that includes writers, academics, a bookseller and an editor. This year's jury members are Beatrice Fischer, Adam Fuerstenberg, Judith Ghert, Alain Goldschlager, Cynthia Good, Sara Horowitz, Dorothy Shoichet, Judy Stoffman, and Judy Wolfe.

The Awards will be presented by the Koffler at a special ceremony in Toronto on **Monday, May 25 at 8 PM** at the **AI Green Theatre, Miles Nadal JCC, 750 Spadina Avenue (at Bloor)**. This FREE event is open to the public and all are welcome.

Details on the event and all the winners are available at www.kofflerarts.org

The 2009 winners are:

1) BIOGRAPHY & MEMOIR

The Canadian Jewish News Award

Peter C. Newman, *Izzy: the Passionate Life and Turbulent Times of Izzy Asper*
Published by Harper Collins Canada

2) FICTION

The Beatrice and Martin Fischer Award

Ami Sands Brodoff, *The White Space Between*
Published by Second Story Press

3) HISTORY

The Joseph and Faye Tanenbaum Award

Barrie Wilson, *How Jesus Became Christian*
Published by Random House Canada

4) HOLOCAUST LITERATURE

The Canadian Society for Yad Vashem Award

Joseph Kertes, *Gratitude*

Published by Penguin Canada

5) POETRY

The Samuel and Rose Cohen Award

Isa Milman, *Prairie Kaddish*

Published by Coteau Books

6) SCHOLARSHIP ON A JEWISH SUBJECT

The Abe and Fay Bergel Award

Reinhold Kramer, *Mordecai Richler: Leaving St. Urban*

Published by McGill-Queen's University Press

7) YIDDISH LITERATURE

The Abraham and Eve Trapunski Award

David Roskies, *YiddishLands*

Published by Wayne State University Press

8) YOUTH LITERATURE

The Louis L. Lockshin and Brenda Freedman Award

Kathy Kacer, *The Diary of Laura's Twin*

Published by Second Story Press

This year, Canadian crime writer **Howard Engel** is being honoured with a **Lifetime Achievement Award** for his long and distinguished writing career and contribution to the field. Engel is best known for his mystery series whose central character is the internationally recognized Jewish detective Benny Cooperman who has been featured in 12 novels. Engel is the recipient of honours including the Order of Canada, the Arthur Ellis Award for Crime Fiction, the Crime Writers of Canada Derrick Murdoch Award and the Matt Cohen Award.

Support for the Helen and Stan Vine Canadian Jewish Book Awards is provided by the Jewish Foundation of Greater Toronto. Pages Books and Magazines is the exclusive bookseller of the Book Awards. The AI Green Theatre is a Venue Partner for the awards ceremony. Additional support is provided by Judith Ghert in memory of her parents, Frances and Samuel Stein.

Jury citations, jury list and biographies, and author biographies are posted on the Koffler web-site at www.kofflerarts.org

About the Koffler Centre of the Arts

Koffler Centre of the Arts brings people together through arts and culture to create a more civil, global society. By examining the arts across disciplines and cultures, the Koffler strengthens identity and community while fostering an appreciation of difference. Headquartered just north of Sheppard Avenue at 4588 Bathurst Street and serviced by public transportation, the Koffler Centre of the Arts features: the Koffler Gallery with changing contemporary exhibitions (currently programming off-site); the Loggia Gallery with photography exhibitions, student exhibitions and more; fully-equipped studios for ceramics, stone-carving (the only studio in Toronto using pneumatic tools), painting and drawing, dance, and music rehearsals; and the Leah Posluns Theatre. The 2008-2009 season includes major visual arts exhibitions, artist talks, lectures, film, music, dance, and literary performances often presented in partnership with other arts organizations. The Koffler presents the annual Helen and Stan Vine Canadian Jewish Book Awards and the Jewish Book Fair as part of its growing literary repertoire along with over 65 classes for all ages as part of the Koffler Schools of Dance, Visual Arts, and Music. Koffler Centre of the Arts is an affiliate of the UJA Federation of Greater Toronto.

Construction is underway on a brand new 40,000 square foot, architecturally innovative Koffler Centre of the Arts on the present site soon to be known as the Sherman Campus. In July 2009, the Koffler's administrative offices and all classes will open in the new D.H. Gales Family Pavilion of the Prosserman JCC on the Sherman Campus.

More information at <http://tomorrowcampaign.com>

KOFFLER ON THE ROAD!

Watch for Koffler programs off-site around Toronto! As we prepare for our new facility to be completed in 2012, the Koffler Centre of the Arts is continuing to program exhibitions, events and performances both at our current facilities and at various downtown sites in Toronto. Check our website for details and watch out for Koffler events in ***your*** neighbourhood!

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