



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Home, family, and finding a place to belong: Koffler Centre of the Arts announces the Winners of the 2019 Vine Awards

Honouring the best Canadian Jewish literature in five categories,
each with a prize of \$10,000

Toronto, ON, October 23, 2019 – The Koffler Centre of the Arts is proud to announce the winners of the 2019 [Vine Awards for Canadian Jewish Literature](#).

The Vine Awards honour exceptional Canadian Jewish writers and Canadian authors exploring Jewish subjects in five categories: Fiction, Non-Fiction, Poetry, History and Children's/Young Adult, each with a prize of **\$10,000**.

"We are thrilled to present the 2019 Vine Awards to five exceptional authors who embrace literary excellence and embody the best of contemporary Jewish Canadian literature," said Koffler Executive Director, **Karen Tisch**. "We are deeply grateful to our lead donors, **Lillian and Norman Glowinsky**, for providing vital support and recognition to these writers, who are making an indelible mark on the Canadian literary landscape."

The Awards were handed out at a luncheon ceremony on October 23, 2019 at the Windsor Arms Hotel, Toronto.

The 2019 Vine Awards Winners

Fiction: Claire Holden Rothman, *Lear's Shadow* (Penguin Canada)

"The writer's command of the elements of the novel – setting, character, pace – are what distinguish this revision of Shakespeare by way of contemporary Montréal." – The Vine Awards Jury

Non-Fiction: Anne Michaels, *Infinite Gradation* (Exile Editions)

"*Infinite Gradation* is grounded and informative as any non-fiction book but charged by high-flying contemplations that lift the mood and thoughts of the reader." The Vine Awards Jury

Poetry: Linda Frank, *Divided* (Wolsak and Wynn Publishers)

"*Divided* uses the power of poetry to analyse the relationship between humankind and nature in often devastatingly clear language. It documents with both beauty and dispassion the complexity of the animal world – including human beings – in a way that will resonate for a long time to come." – The Vine Awards Jury

History: Benjamin Carter Hett, *The Death of Democracy* (Allen Lane Canada/Penguin Canada)

"*The Death of Democracy*, a briskly written history of the not-at-all inevitable transition from the Weimar Republic to fascist Germany, focuses on individuals in order to tell the story but also to remind us that it is the choices of individuals that make history." – The Vine Awards Jury

Children's/Young Adult: Jonathan Auxier, *Sweep* (Puffin Canada/Penguin Random House Canada Young Readers)

"Blending fantasy, folklore and history, Jonathan Auxier's *Sweep: The Story of a Girl and Her Monster* is a vivid re-imagining of the golem story set in Victorian London." – The Vine Awards Jury

The 2019 Jury – poet **Ayesha Chatterjee**, children's author **Melanie J. Fishbane**, and author **Eric Beck Rubin** – reviewed 84 entries.

This year's winning titles embody "the diversity of Canadian Jewish writing, characterized by the universal themes of home, family, and finding a place to belong," said juror **Melanie J. Fishbane**. "These authors dive deep into generational trauma, challenge popular historical narratives, and ask the difficult questions about not only what it means to be Jewish, but to be human."

"There were books whose style, authority and reach were outstanding," added juror **Eric Beck Rubin**. "In all cases the jury's consensus was based on a book's impact and effects on a reader, no matter how they were achieved."

ABOUT THE VINE AWARDS

The Vine Awards for Canadian Jewish Literature are made possible by a generous donation by the Lillian and Norman Glowinsky Family Foundation with the goal of cultivating and perpetuating Canadian Jewish literature. Originally founded in 1988 by Adam Fuerstenberg, the Awards were rebranded in 2004, as a loving tribute to Lillian Glowinsky's parents – Helen and Stan Vine – who were passionate about the arts and the Jewish community throughout their lives.

ABOUT THE KOFFLER CENTRE OF THE ARTS

The Koffler Centre of the Arts is a cultural platform that explores critical ideas and concerns of our time through exhibitions, publications, performances, literary events and digital initiatives. We examine complex issues through transformative art experiences that stimulate intercultural dialogue and position Jewish identity in conversation with diverse perspectives and global voices. The Koffler Gallery and its administrative offices are located at Artscape Youngplace, in Toronto's vibrant West Queen West art and design district. Visit <http://kofflerarts.org/>

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For further information, author and book cover images for media use, contact:

Tony Hewer

Director of Marketing, Communications and Archives

Koffler Centre of the Arts

180 Shaw Street, Suite 104-105, Toronto M6J 2W5

647.925.0643 x224 | E-MAIL: thewer@kofflerarts.org | WEB: kofflerarts.org | koffler.digital