



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## A powerful exploration of what it means to be human: Koffler Centre of the Arts announces the 2019 Vine Awards Shortlist

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

**Toronto, ON, September 26, 2019** – The Koffler Centre of the Arts is proud to announce the shortlist for the 2019 [Vine Awards for Canadian Jewish Literature](#). Winners will be announced on October 23 at an Award Luncheon at the Windsor Arms Hotel, Toronto.

**The Vine Awards** honour both the best Canadian Jewish writers and Canadian authors who deal with Jewish subjects in five categories; Fiction, Non-Fiction, Poetry, History and Children’s/Young Adult literature; each with a prize of **\$10,000**. The 2019 Jury – poet **Ayesha Chatterjee**, children’s author **Melanie J. Fishbane**, and author **Eric Beck Rubin** – reviewed 84 entries.

“This year’s Vine Awards shortlist embodies the diversity of Canadian Jewish writing, characterized by the universal themes of home, family, and finding a place to belong,” said 2019 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.”

“It was an absolute pleasure to read the submissions for the 2019 Vine Awards for Canadian-Jewish Literature. The sheer range of deeply compelling voices was extraordinary,” said 2019 Juror Ayesha Chatterjee. “Each of these books, regardless of category, was a powerful exploration of what it means to be human. Survival, belonging, identity, place: these were recurring themes, tackled with intelligence, courage, deep eloquence. The best books are those that change the reader in some way, open them up to new worlds and new ways of thinking. The submissions for this year’s awards did exactly that.”

“The Koffler Centre of the Arts is thrilled to present another exciting edition of the Vine Awards, highlighting the best of contemporary Jewish writing for Canadian readers and celebrating exceptional literary talent, as evidenced by this year’s shortlist,” said Koffler Centre Executive Director, Karen Tisch. “We are deeply grateful to our lead donors, Lillian and Norman Glowinsky, for supporting these awards and the cash prizes that accompany them. Their generosity provides vital support and recognition to writers exploring Jewish perspectives and themes within the context of broader Canadian narratives.”

### **The 2019 Vine Awards Shortlist**

Fiction:

**Claire Holden Rothman, *Lear’s Shadow*** (Penguin Random House Canada)  
**Aaron Kreuter, *You and Me, Belonging*** (Tightrope Books)  
**Natalie Morrill, *The Ghost Keeper*** (HarperCollins Publishers Ltd.)

Non-Fiction:

**Anne Michaels, *Infinite Gradation*** (Exile Editions)  
**Sarah Weinman, *The Real Lolita*** (Knopf Canada)  
**Lezli Rubin-Kunda, *At Home: Talks with Canadian Artists about Place and Practice*** (Goose Lane Editions)

Poetry:

**Linda Frank, *Divided*** (Wolsak and Wynn Publishers)  
**Anne Michaels, *All We Saw*** (McClelland & Stewart)  
**Suzannah Showler, *Thing Is*** (McClelland & Stewart)

History:

**Benjamin Carter Hett, *The Death of Democracy*** (Allen Lane Canada/Penguin Random House Canada)  
**Robert Harris, *Song of a Nation: The Untold Story of Canada’s National Anthem*** (McClelland & Stewart)  
**Sarah Wobick-Segev, *Homes Away from Home: Jewish Belonging in Twentieth Century Paris, Berlin and St. Petersburg*** (Stanford University Press)

Children’s/Young Adult:

**Jonathan Auxier, *Sweep*** (Penguin Random House Canada Young Readers)  
**Cary Fagan, *Wolfie and Fly: Band on the Run*** (Penguin Random House Canada Young Readers)  
**Ellen Schwartz, *Princess Dolls*** (Tradewind Books)

**The Vine Awards for Canadian Jewish Literature** are made possible by a generous donation by the Lillian and Norman Glowinsky Family Foundation to support Canadian Jewish literature, a tradition they established with the original awards in 2004, building on the Canadian Jewish Book Awards founded in 1988 by Adam Fuerstenberg. The Vine Awards are a loving tribute to Lillian’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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