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ATTENTION: BOOKS, ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT EDITORS

## **Koffler Centre of the Arts' Toronto Jewish Book Festival announces its full schedule, featuring Shalom Auslander, Michele Landsberg, Bernie Finkelstein and Steven Gimbel**

**Toronto, Ontario, April 19, 2012** – The **Toronto Jewish Book Festival** has announced its full schedule of events. Over 35 international and Canadian authors will give a wide-range of talks exploring contemporary Jewish life, big ideas, politics, and current affairs.

The Toronto Jewish Book Festival is presented by the **Koffler Centre of the Arts**. The Festival runs **June 4 to 7, 2012** at the **Bram and Bluma Appel Salon, Toronto Reference Library, 789 Yonge Street**.

American author, essayist and rising literary star **Shalom Auslander** will present the Opening Night talk at the new Festival. Auslander will speak on his first novel, the critically acclaimed, darkly humorous ***Hope: A Tragedy***. Called "staggeringly nervy" by the *New York Times*, the novel features an elderly and foul-mouthed Anne Frank hiding in the attic of an upstate New Yorker's farmhouse.

Auslander – who grew up an Orthodox Jew in New York and has been compared to David Sedaris, Woody Allen and Joseph Heller – is the author of the short story collection *Beware of God* (2006), the memoir *Foreskin's Lament* (2007) and was a finalist for the Koret Jewish Book Award in 2003-04. Auslander will be featured in conversation with author **Michael Wex** on **Monday, June 4 at 8 PM**.

Joining Auslander at the Festival is award-winning Canadian author, feminist and social activist **Michele Landsberg**, who will speak on her new collection of essays, ***Writing the Revolution***. Author of three books, a former columnist for the *Toronto Star*, and an Officer of the Order of Canada, Landsberg will speak on her life on the front lines of the Women's Movement on **Tuesday, June 5 at 8 PM**.

**Steven Gimbel**, author of *Einstein's Jewish Science* which generates debate on the nature of Judaism and science, will speak on **Wednesday, June 6 at 8 PM**.

Other highlights include True North Records founder **Bernie Finkelstein** – in conversation with *Canadian Idol's* **Jake Gold** – on his new memoir *True North: A Life Inside the Music Business*; a tribute to Canadian cultural icons Celia Franca and John Hirsch by authors **Carol Bishop-Gwyn** and **Fraidie Martz**; 'New Takes on Montreal' with **Seymour Mayne**, **B. Glen Rotchin** and **Sara Tauben**; 'Jewish Fiction on the Net' with **Morley Torgov**, **George Jonas** and **Nora Gold**; as well as authors **David Berlin**, **Richard Brody**, and **Lilian Nattel**, and more. The Festival also features ***Writing the New Toronto***, co-presented by **Diaspora Dialogues**, a special spotlight on the **Azrieli Foundation** films ***Holocaust Survivor Memoirs***, and free daytime children and school programs featuring **Karen Levine** on the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the international bestselling ***Hana's Suitcase***, **Aubrey Davis**, **Anne Dublin**, and **Lesley Simpson**.

The **Toronto Jewish Book Festival** is a literary festival celebrating Jewish books and authors uniting the two biggest Jewish literary events in Canada under one roof.

The Festival succeeds the Jewish Book Fair – which for 34 years was one of the largest of its kind in North America. The new Toronto Jewish Book Festival features author talks, readings, panels, exclusive book launches, musical events, films and slideshows, student programs, and hundreds of books for sale.

The Festival culminates in the 24<sup>th</sup> annual **Helen and Stan Vine Canadian Jewish Book Awards** celebrating excellence in Canadian writing on Jewish themes and subjects on **June 7 at 8 PM**.

The Toronto Jewish Book Festival is presented by the **Koffler Centre of the Arts**.

Full event details now online at [www.kofflerarts.org](http://www.kofflerarts.org)

#### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

**What:** Toronto Jewish Book Festival

**When:** June 4 to 7, 2012

**Where:** Bram and Bluma Appel Salon, Toronto Reference Library, 789 Yonge Street (at Bloor), Toronto

**Tickets:** Admission to the Fair is FREE and open to the public. Tickets for 8 PM author talks can be purchased by phone at **416.638.1881 x4281** or e-mail at [hredner@kofflerarts.org](mailto:hredner@kofflerarts.org). Tickets for all other events can be purchased at the door.

**Toronto Jewish Book Festival supporters:** Canadian Friends of Hebrew University, ShaRna Foundation, Jewish Genealogy Society of Canada -Toronto, Kulanu Toronto, Committee for Yiddish, UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, Tyrus Reiman Memorial Fund for Children's Program, Ronald P. Frye & Co, Vered Jewish Canadian Studies Program, University of Ottawa.

#### **About the Koffler Centre of the Arts**

Koffler Centre of the Arts is Canada's only cutting-edge contemporary, multidisciplinary Jewish cultural institution. It has a broad mandate to serve all, and present a wide range of artistic programs through a global lens in a specifically Canadian context.

The Koffler Centre of the Arts is an agency of the **UJA Federation of Greater Toronto**.

Planning is underway on a brand new, architecturally innovative Koffler Centre of the Arts on the Sherman Campus at Bathurst and Sheppard. In July 2009, the Koffler's administrative offices and all classes opened in the Prosserman JCC on the Sherman Campus. Starting in early 2013, Koffler Gallery exhibitions and related programs will be based at Artscape YOUNGplace in downtown Toronto. Koffler programs will continue at the Prosserman JCC on Sherman Campus and will debut at the new Schwartz/Reisman Centre on Lebovic Campus in Vaughan also in fall 2012.

Koffler Centre of the Arts acknowledges the support of Cultural Season Sponsor **CIBC Wood Gundy**, Media Partner **National Post**, the **Ontario Arts Council** through the Community and Multidisciplinary Arts Organizations Program, our patrons and members. The Koffler Gallery gratefully acknowledges the support the City of Toronto through the **Toronto Arts Council**, the **Ontario Arts Council** and the **Canada Council for the Arts**.

#### **KOFFLER ON THE ROAD!**

Watch for Koffler programs off-site around Toronto! As it prepares for its new facility to be completed, the Koffler Centre of the Arts continues to program exhibitions, events, performances, classes and workshops at the Prosserman JCC on Sherman Campus, the Schwartz/Reisman Centre on Lebovic Campus and at various downtown sites in Toronto. Go to [www.kofflerarts.org](http://www.kofflerarts.org) for details and watch for Koffler events in *your* neighbourhood!

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