

# Recent Jewish Novels

## Bibliography compiled for the Contemporary Jewish Writing Class at Congregation Beth Ami in April-May 2015

by Gabor Por - April 16, 2015

Available online at <http://JewishBookWorld.org/tag/cjw/>

### 2013 and 2014 National Jewish Book Award Winners and Finalists

- **Between Friends** by *Amos Oz* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2013); Sondra Silverston translator, 192 pages, **SCL**\*  
These eight interconnected stories, set in the fictitious Kibbutz Yekhat, draw masterly profiles of idealistic men and women enduring personal hardships in the shadow of one of the greatest collective dreams of the twentieth century. - <http://amzn.to/1HbZTqR>  
Excerpt: <http://www.hmhco.com/shop/books/Between-Friends/9780547985589>
- **In The Courtyard of the Kabbalist** by *Ruchama King Feuerman* (New York Review Books, 2014); 208 pages  
As these characters—immigrants and natives; Muslim and Jewish; prophets and lost souls—move through their world, they are never sure if they will fall prey to the cruel tricks of luck or be sheltered by a higher power. - <http://amzn.to/1liLQ1C>  
Excerpt: <http://timesofisrael.com/in-the-courtyard-of-the-kabbalist-by-ruchama-king-feuerman/>
- **Forgiving Maximo Rothman** by *A.J. Sidransky* (Berwick Court Publishing, 2013); 316 pages  
On a chilly autumn night in New York, the lives of two men born decades and continents apart collide when Max Redmond is found bludgeoned in his Washington Heights apartment. While investigating the crime, Detective Tolya Kurchenko comes across the dead man's diaries, written by Redmond over four decades. - <http://amzn.to/1GPJFoR>
- **The Golem and the Jinni** by *Helene Wecker* (Harper, 2013); 512 pages, **SCL**\*  
Chava, a golem brought to life by a disgraced rabbi, and Ahmad, a jinni made of fire, form an unlikely friendship on the streets of New York until a fateful choice changes everything. - <http://amzn.to/1D9c7ei>  
Excerpt: <http://www.helenewecker.com/the-golem-and-the-jinni-by-helene-wecker/excerpt/>
- **Jacob's Folly** by *Rebecca Miller* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2013); 384 pages, **SCL**\*  
An eighteenth-century Jewish peddler is reincarnated as a fly in present-day Long Island, and becomes involved in the lives of two residents. - <http://amzn.to/1Ojqhzx>  
Excerpt: <http://www.npr.org/books/titles/173256462/jacobs-folly?tab=excerpt#excerpt>
- **The Lion Seeker** by *Kenneth Bonert* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2013); 576 pages, **SCL**\*  
The Lion Seeker is a glorious reinvention of the classic family and coming-of-age sagas. We are caught--hearts open and wrecked--between the urgent ambitions of a mother who knows what it takes to survive and a son straining against the responsibilities of the old world, even as he is endowed with the freedoms of the new. - <http://amzn.to/1liMvjB>
- **My Mother's Secret** by *J.L. Witterick* (Berkley, 2014); 208 pages  
A captivating and ultimately uplifting tale intertwining the lives of two Jewish families in hiding from the Nazis, a fleeing German soldier, and the mother and daughter who team up to save them all. - <http://amzn.to/1FPboAz>

\* Books marked with SCL are available at the Sonoma County Library

## Recommended Novels

- **After Birth** by *Elisa Albert* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2015); 208 pages, **SCL\***  
A widely acclaimed young writer's fierce new novel, in which childbirth and new motherhood are as high stakes a proving ground as any combat zone. - <http://amzn.to/1EN64BJ>
- **The Disappearance of Daniel Klein** by *Cynthia Hagan* (Preston, 2015); 298 pages  
A story about the bonds of childhood friendship and the transcending power of belief. More, it begs us to ask the question... is there life beyond life as we know it? - <http://amzn.to/1J8icvT>
- **The Empire of the Senses** by *Alexis Landau* (Pantheon, 2014); 496 pages, **SCL\***  
A novel of duty to family and country, the dictates of passion, and blood ties unraveling in the charged political climate of Berlin between the world wars. - <http://amzn.to/1PTEBCr>
- **Fields of Exile** by *Nora Gold* (Dundurn, 2014); 424 pages  
Judith was a peace activist in Israel, yet in graduate school she discovers that vilifying Israel is the norm. Judith protests the hypocrisy and her life begins to unravel. - <http://amzn.to/1E6GbOf>
- **Holy Cow: A Modern-Day Dairy Tale** by *David Duchovny* (Farrar, 2015); 221 pages, **SCL\***  
A motley crew: Elsie Bovary is a pretty happy cow; Jerry--excuse me, Shalom--a cranky, Torah-reading pig who's recently converted to Judaism... - <http://amzn.to/1aBrTbh>
- **The Ice Cream Queen of Orchard Street** by *Susan Jane Gilman* (Grand Central, 214); 512 pages, **SCL\***  
Lillian's rise to fame and fortune spans seventy years and is inextricably linked to the course of American history itself, from Prohibition to the disco days of Studio 54. - <http://amzn.to/1OIACXZ>
- **The Last Flight of Poxl** by *Daniel Torday* (St. Martin's Press, 2015); 302 pages, **SCL\***  
Intensely magnetic, cultured and brilliant, Poxl takes Elijah under his wing, introducing him to opera and art and literature. - <http://amzn.to/1Hy0kMN>
- **Lies, First Person** by *Gail Hareven* (Open Letter, 2015); 375 pages, **SCL\***  
A harrowing, controversial novel about a woman's revenge, Jewish identity, and how to talk about Adolf Hitler in today's world. - <http://amzn.to/1J8g4V3>
- **Ostland** by *David Thomas* (Quercus, 2015); 400 pages  
A crime thriller that combines a police procedural, courtroom thriller, and a fast-paced war-time narrative. - <http://amzn.to/1OI4IR>
- **A Replacement Life** by *Boris Fishman* (Harper, 214); 352 pages, **SCL\***  
A provocative, and sometimes hilarious story of a failed journalist asked to do the unthinkable: Forge Holocaust-restitution claims for old Russian Jews in Brooklyn. - <http://amzn.to/1lj8y9M>
- **A Reunion of Ghosts** by *Judith Claire Mitchell* (Harper, 2015); 400 pages, **SCL\***  
Three wickedly funny sisters. One family's extraordinary legacy. A single suicide note that spans a century ... - <http://amzn.to/1PTKjEw>
- **To Rise Again at a Decent Hour** by *Joshua Ferris* (Little, Brown and Company, 2014); 352 pages, **SCL\***  
Shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize, this big, brilliant, profoundly observed novel explores the absurdities of modern life and one man's search for meaning. - <http://amzn.to/1b7xKpr>
- **Visible City** by *Tova Mirvis* (Mariner, 2015); 256 pages  
A graceful yet vigorous New York novel is about the half-inadvertent window-peeping that city life enables, and where it can lead. - <http://amzn.to/1DosWoN>

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### Further Novels

- **A Bintel Brief: Love and Longing in Old New York** by *Liana Finck* (Ecco, 2014); 128 pages
- **Cowgirl** by *Java Davis* (CreateSpace, 2014); 140 pages
- **Happy are the Happy** by *Yasmina Reza* (Other Press, 2015); 160 pages
- **Hope for the Holy Land** by *Mona Pastroff Goldstein* (CreateSpace, 2014); 256 pages
- **How Sweet It Is!** by *Thane Rosenbaum* (Mandel Vilar, 2015); 208 pages
- **The Jewish Ninja** by *Allegra Coleman* (CreateSpace, 2015); 216 pages
- **The Marrying of Chani Kaufman** by *Eve Harris* (Grove Press, 2014); 384 pages
- **The Moon Taker: A Jewish Regency Mystery** by *Libi Astaire* (CreateSpace, 2015); 266 pages
- **The Nightingale** by *Kristin Hannah* (St. Martin's Press, 2015); 448 pages

### Upcoming Novels:

- **Hotel Moscow** by *Talia Carner* (William Morrow, 2015); 464 pages
- **Safekeeping** by *Jessamyn Hope* (Fig Tree, 2015); 371 pages