New Books For Children from Israel

SPRING 2016

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Nava Semel / Huan B. Landi

**Flying Girl**  
(*Mercurium Trilogy, 1*)

A fantasy novel  
AGE: 13 UP

Erlinda can’t sleep: the next day, her childhood will be over and she’ll be a fully fledged Flyer. She’ll leave the nest where she’s been raised with her age group, winglets that have sprouted on her ankles will enable her to fly, and she’ll know what her mission is.

Erlinda lives on the planet Mercurium, to which her human forefathers migrated from Earth. They set up a colony, protected by a special dome, and have developed the ability to fly. But not all the migrants joined the colony: outside the dome live the Grounders, those humans who refused to develop winglets and are ground-bound. The Flyers see them as enemies and stay away from them, but they need a spy to go into enemy territory. This is Erlinda’s mission.

Erlinda has always known that she’s different—there’s a rumor that her parents were traitors, and she doesn’t know what happened to them. Now she discovers that only she can be a spy, because she can make her winglets invisible. So, after training, she sets out for the unknown, leaving behind her beloved Omine. Yet Omine, a graduate of a military academy, will lead the attack against the Grounders. Nobody knows about his doubts, or his love and fear for Erlinda.

Although *Flying Girl* takes place in a distant, imaginary galaxy, this clever and gripping novel deals with issues that concern us in the here and now.

Huan B. Landi is the pseudonym that Nava Semel has chosen for her new trilogy—she feels that her new venture as a fantasy writer requires a new authorial identity.

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**Nava Semel** was born in Tel Aviv in 1954 and has an MA in art history. She has worked as a journalist, art critic and TV producer. A prolific writer in many genres, Semel has also written several children’s books. Her work has been adapted for radio, film, TV and the stage in Israel and abroad. Her novel, *And the Rat Laughs*, has been made into an opera. Semel is on the board of governors of Yad Vashem – Israel Holocaust Museum. Among her literary awards: the American National Jewish Book Award for Children’s Literature (1990), the Austrian Best Radio Drama Award (1996), the Rosenblum Prize for Stage Art (2005), Tel Aviv’s “Literary Woman of the Year” (2006), “One of the Best Seven” (German Radio, 2010) and the Educators and Scientists’ Association Award (Germany, 2010). *The Girl in the Gong* was a very successful musical in Israel in 2012.

Semel’s books have been published abroad in 11 languages.
Yael Roseman

Impossible Love?

Tel Aviv, Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 2016. 254 pp.
AGE: 13-16

Annabel, a girl from a village in northern Israel, is spending the summer vacation with her cousin Ayala in Tel Aviv. Annabel’s parents are very busy—her farmer father is teaching an agriculture course in the south, and her mother has gone to the U.S. to complete her doctorate. So she has nowhere to go, even when it isn’t fun being with Ayala, because her parents have rented out their house to a family of French tourists. Annabel likes her cousin, but she also envies her because she is amazingly pretty and all the boys run after her. And then Annabel falls in love with Ayala’s new boyfriend, Evyatar, and finds it hard to hide her feelings.

To make things worse, Ayala’s parents decide to separate. In turmoil and rebellion, she runs away to an area full of foreign laborers in south Tel Aviv to take care of a five-year-old girl. Ayala believes the little girl is her half-sister by her father’s girlfriend, a fashion model who has gone abroad to further her career. Annabel, Evyatar and his peculiar brother, Adam, a gifted but withdrawn teenager, set out to look for Ayala. They are helped by Annabel’s strange ability to see the auras surrounding people in color. These colors express their natures and moods and reveal other invisible things about them.

What are the chances that Evyatar will finally fall in love with Annabel? And who does Adam have feelings for? In order to handle the crisis, Annabel needs far more than being able to see the color of people’s auras. She must understand the meaning of the mess in her and her cousin’s lives. Most important of all, she must believe that love is possible.
**Roni Gelbfish**

Lake of Shadows

AGE: 11 UP

Wild, rebellious Tamar disappears one day, but her sister Ya’ara hears her voice echoing inside her head: “I’m flying!” Tamar yells, and Ya’ara jumps with fright. After all, everyone knows that you’re not allowed to fly, especially when you’re only 13 years old. Ya’ara and Tamar are redheaded twins, daughters of an ancient tribe of winged, human-like beings living by the Sea of Galilee. They keep away from ordinary humans—they call them the “naïve people”—because they can’t see all that is magical and wonderful in the world, and they use whispers to cast spells. But they are forbidden to fly and must obey the rigid laws of their community.

But Tamar is not obedient, and so her sister sets out to look for her only to discover that sometimes the most dangerous thing is to obey the law. The twins get involved in a dizzying adventure with wild animals and magical creatures; they also face the ancient enmity between their tribe and one that lives in the caves of Qumran, near the Dead Sea. The two tribes have a different interpretation of their common history, their role in the world and their obligations to nature and humanity.

Ya’ara and Tamar, daughters of the tribe’s queen, are at the center of a great war that may destroy the world. But they can save it and make peace, if they use their powers properly.

Lake of Shadows is a compelling and poetic fantasy tale that takes place inside gloomy caves and on mountaintops, from the shimmering Sea of Galilee, along the Jordan River, all the way to the shadowy Dead Sea.
Judith Rotem

Until Dad Comes Back

Tel Aviv, Kinneret, Zmora-Bitan, 2015. 251 pp.
AGE: 9-14

It is 1942, and 8-year-old Robby Kastner is looking out from a high window in his home in Bratislava, Slovakia, which has been invaded by the German army. All of a sudden, his slice of cake slips out of his hand and falls onto a Nazi officer’s cap. The scary events that follow change the lives of Robby’s whole family. First, he, his two siblings and their mother escape to his grandparents’ house. During the journey of survival that follows, he moves from town to town, country to country and from one family to another. And in each of his hiding places he has to get used to a different name, to learn new rules to save himself, and to forget everything he knew before. His father stays behind in Bratislava and works as a salesman in a store that until recently belonged to their family. Then he is taken to an unknown place with the other Jewish men, and all trace of him is lost. Robby is also separated from mother, brother and sister when he is smuggled with a group of children from Budapest to the Land of Israel. There, his uncle and aunt take him in and want to adopt him, but he refuses, still hoping that his father will come back, and he is sent to a boarding school. Later, his mother does turn up, but when she marries another Holocaust survivor, their relationship sours, and at age 14 Robby becomes virtually homeless. Must he forget his father in order to survive, or Vera, the girl he met on his journey and liked so much?

Until Dad Comes Back is based on the true story of Judith Rotem’s partner, the author Moshe Bar-Yuda and commemorates the generation of children who survived the Holocaust.

PARTIAL ENGLISH TRANSLATION AVAILABLE

Judith Rotem was born in Budapest, Hungary. As a baby, she was taken on the “Kastner train,” spent several months in Bergen-Belsen and then in a refugee camp in Switzerland. She arrived in pre-state Israel at age 3. Later she married an ultra-Orthodox yeshiva student, and supported the family as a teacher while raising her seven children. In 1983, she divorced her husband and left the ultra-Orthodox community, taking her children with her. She subsequently wrote and edited hi-tech publications, wrote many books and articles, and ghost-wrote a number of autobiographies for Holocaust survivors. Rotem has published novels, short stories, non-fiction and books for children. She has been awarded the Book Publishers Association’s Gold and Platinum Prizes (2001; 2004), the Prime Minister’s Prize (2002), the Ramat Gan Prize (2010) and the Arik Einstein Prize (2014).

Selected books have been published in Italian, German, English and Hungarian.

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Almost as Told: Jewish Festival Tales

Tel Aviv, Kinneret, Zmora-Bitan, 2013. 120 pp.
AGE: 6-8

Why is Yohanan, Nevo’s dad, hiding in a cave? How did Nevo find a small jar of oil in the Temple in Jerusalem, and how is that connected to the candles that we light at Hanukkah? What happens when King Ahasuerus has insomnia, and how was the wicked Haman’s mischief foiled? What did Miriam reveal to Moses by the Nile? What bold plan did Naomi and Ruth devise? And how is the Book of Ruth connected to the festival of Shavuot? Or: why do we turn our pockets inside out on Rosh Hashanah and then feel as light as a feather?

This book tells the beautiful stories of the Jewish festivals as relayed from generation to generation over the centuries. Judith Rotem rewrites these tales in a fresh, up-to-date light and helps her readers to identify with the heroes and the children of that time. “I have tried to bring the past closer to the present through the brave, clever children who are the heroes,” Rotem writes in the introduction. “The stories can be told like this, because the festivals belong to all of us.”

Illustrations: Racheli Shalev
It’s Hard to Be a Lion

AGE: 6-9

This is a fantastic story about a man in Jerusalem who turns into a lion. You can see it as a modern version of The Beauty and the Beast, or a story with a moral something like: “Don’t try to be something you are not.” But above all, it is an amusing adventure story. One day, the hero’s dog turns his master into a lion with a human mind, and this is the start of an adventure that spans three continents. The lion becomes famous in Jerusalem, then he goes to conquer New York and live out the American dream. He makes a lot of money, but he also gets kidnapped by an unscrupulous scientist, after which he goes to Africa to live in the wild with other lions. One day, a beautiful Israeli student of lions comes to Africa, and our hero rescues her from the jaws of a leopard. At that moment, he regains his human form, and the two return to Israel and get married.

Illustrations: Yossi Abolafia

ENGLISH TRANSLATION AVAILABLE

Published in Italian (Salani).

Uri Orlev

Uri Orlev was born in Warsaw, Poland, in 1931 and spent the early years of World War II in the Warsaw Ghetto. His father was captured by the Russians and saw his sons again only in 1954 in Israel; his mother was killed by the Nazis. After being smuggled out of the ghetto and hidden by Polish families, Orlev and his younger brother were sent to Bergen-Belsen. They were freed two years later and immigrated to pre-state Israel.

Orlev has published over 30 highly successful books for children and youth, as well as fiction for adults. He also writes radio and TV scripts, and is a translator from Polish to Hebrew. Orlev has won many literary awards, most notably: the Hans Christian Andersen Author Award (1996), the Yad Vashem Bruno Brandt Award (1997), the Ze’ev Prize for Lifetime Achievement (2002); for Run, Boy, Run: the Andersen Award (Italy, 2003), the Premio Cento (Italy, 2003) and Best Audio Book for Youth (Germany, 2006); the Bialik Prize (2006) and the Devorah Omer Prize (2014). His books have been translated into 39 languages.
Etgar Keret

The Teeny-Tiny Kingdom
Tel Aviv, Kinneret, Zmora-Bitan. Forthcoming.
AGE: 5-9

The teeny-tiny kingdom was really very small. Some say it was the smallest kingdom in the world. And in it lived peacefully a benevolent king, his wise advisor and two humble subjects. But what will happen when one day the longing for friendship changes the balance of power in this teeny-tiny land?

Etgar Keret has written a modern fable about the loneliness of masters and subjects, and the happiness that companionship between equals can bring to human beings.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION AVAILABLE
Etgar Keret

Breaking the Pig

Tel Aviv, Kinneret, Zmora-Bitan, 2015. 28 pp.
AGE: 6 UP

A special illustrated edition of Etgar Keret’s popular story about an endearing young boy and a friendship he strikes with a piggy bank. This is how it begins:

“Dad wouldn’t buy me a Bart Simpson doll. Mom really wanted to, but Dad wouldn’t, he said I was spoiled. ‘Why should we?’ he said to Mom. ‘Why should we buy it for him? He just snaps his fingers and you jump to attention.’ Dad said I had no respect for money and that if I didn’t learn when I was little when was I going to learn? Kids who get Bart Simpson dolls at the drop of a hat turn into punks who steal from convenience stores, cause they wind up thinking they can have whatever they want, just like that. So instead of a Bart doll he bought me an ugly porcelain pig with a slot in its back.

Every morning now I’m supposed to drink a cup of hot cocoa, even though I hate it. With the skin it’s one shekel, without the skin it’s half a shekel, and if I throw up right after I drink it, I don’t get anything. I drop the coins into the slot in the pig’s back, and then, when you shake him you can hear them jingle. Soon as the pig is so full of coins that it doesn’t jingle when you shake it, I get a Bart-Simpson-on-a-skateboard doll. That’s what Dad says, that way it’s educational.”

Illustrations: David Polonsky

TRANSLATED FROM THE HEBREW BY MIRIAM SHLESINGER

Born in Tel Aviv in 1967, Etgar Keret is the most popular writer among Israel’s young generation and his short-short stories, which have received international acclaim, have been published in 40 languages and 42 countries. Keret’s delightful children’s books have also been international successes. Among his many awards: the Ministry of Culture Cinema Prize, the Cannes Film Festival’s “Camera d’Or” Award and Best Director Award for Jellyphish, with Shira Gefen (France, 2007), the Jewish Quarterly Wingate Prize (UK, 2008), the St Petersburg Public Library’s Foreign Favorite Award (2010) and the French Chevalier de l’Ordre des Arts et des Lettres (2010).

A Mouseless Night, with Shira Gefen, has been published in Spanish (Mexico, Fondo de Cultura), French (Ed. de la Balle), German (Fischer) and Polish (WAB). Forthcoming in Spanish (Chile, Fondo de Cultura).

Long Haired Cat-Boy Club has been published in French (Actes Sud), Spanish (Mexico, Alfaguara), Polish (WAB), Bulgarian (Janet 45), Portuguese (Brazil, SM), Italian (Terre di Mezzo) and Korean (Awesome World). Forthcoming in Turkish (Can).

Rights sold for Breaking the Pig in Italian (Feltrinelli); German (Atrium); Spanish (Sexto Piso); Dutch (Podium); Turkish (Siren).

A gift for all admirers of Etgar Keret… Stunning illustrations.

Mako

In the best tradition of Hans Christian Andersen… An optimistic tale… [with] many layers.

Wordpress

A heart-rending story…Superb illustrations.

Saloon

A gem… this new edition [is] a great success.

Ha-Pinkas
In Jerusalem, in the early 20th century, a little girl named Malka—“queen” in Hebrew—dreams of dressing up as Queen Esther. It is the festival of Purim, and all the kids are looking forward to going out in the streets in their costumes. But Malka’s mother doesn’t have time to prepare a Purim costume for her. Feeling sad, Malka wanders around the city until she comes to a big building with a yard, where a man is chiseling a large stone. “You’ve come to the right place!” says the man, Boris Schatz, when he hears her story. He will make Malka’s dream come true: he takes her to the weavery where weavers quickly make her a regal cape, with golden thread. In the metal workers’ hall, the craftsmen make her a scepter and crown, studded with precious stones. And in another room, she sits on a special chair while artists draw her. Then Boris tells Malka about Bezalel, the first art school in the Land of Israel, which he founded in Jerusalem. And when he says goodbye, he adds that he hopes she will be study at his school when she’s older.

Malka, a Queen in Jerusalem is the second in the series Pioneers of Culture (following A Concert in the Sand), and it tells about the sculptor-painter Boris Schatz who, in the early 20th century, founded what is now the Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design.

Illustrations: Avi Ofer

ENGLISH TRANSLATION AVAILABLE

Tami Shem-Tov was born in Kiryat Ono, Israel, in 1969, and lives in Tel Aviv. She worked as a journalist for a number of years; she now teaches creative writing at the University of Haifa and holds meetings with children. Shem-Tov has written several books for children and youth and a children’s play. Her first book received the Ze’ev Prize (1999); Letters from Nowhere was awarded the Yad Vashem Prize (2007), the Ze’ev Prize (2008) and the German Children’s Literature Award (2010). Shem-Tov’s latest book for youth, I’m not a Thief, was awarded the DafDaf Prize (2012), the Lea Goldberg Prize (2013), an Andersen Honor Citation (2014), the Public Libraries Award (2014) and the Bialik Prize (2014).

Her prize winning book, Letters from Nowhere, has been published in Spanish (Planeta; Emece), Catalan (Columna), Dutch (Sirene; MM Boeken); German (Fischer); Italian (Piemme) and Japanese (Iwanami Shoten).

I Am Not a Thief has been published in Japanese (Fukuinkan).

A Concert in the Sand by Tami Shem Tov and Rachella Sandbank is forthcoming in English (Kar-Ben).

Rachella Sandbank was born in Jerusalem. She is the children and YA books editor of Keter Books, one of the leading publishing houses in Israel. She lives in Hod HaSharon.

Click here for Tami Shem-Tov’s books on the ITHL website.

Click here for Rachella Sandbank
Iris Argaman

Bear and Fred
Tel Aviv, Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 2016. 43 pp.
AGE: 6-8

Once upon a time, in a faraway land called Holland, in a city called Delft, I was Fred’s teddy bear.” Thus begins the tale of a teddy bear who was Fred’s best friend. Fred was a little Jewish boy who had to leave his home and his parents, and live in hiding during the Second World War.

The story is told from the point of view of Bear who doesn’t quite grasp what is going on. But he senses that something bad is happening and is scared that Fred will forget him. But Fred never parts from his only friend. First, they go to Grandpa in Amsterdam, where Fred is warned not to tell anyone who he is. Bear doesn’t get it: Has Fred done something wrong? And what is the yellow star that Grandpa has sewn onto his friend’s coat? And then, living with Grandpa also becomes dangerous, and Fred is given to a strange family. He hides out with them until the war is over, and all this time Bear makes sure to look after him. The two do not part even after Fred is reunited with his family and the world isn’t a scary place anymore.

This is the true story of Fred Lessing, who moved with his family to the USA after the war. Even after he grew up and had his own family, he kept Bear as a reminder of what he had been through. Many years later he gave him to the Yad Vashem Holocaust Museum in Jerusalem, so that other children could learn about their story.

Illustrations: Avi Ofer

Iris Argaman was born in 1967 in Ashdod, Israel, and now lives in Givatayim. She has a BA in comparative literature and education from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and an MA in literature from Tel Aviv University. She is director of children’s literature at the Karev Project for Educational Involvement, a nationwide enrichment program for disadvantaged children. Argaman is also a lecturer on children’s literature, holds writing workshops for the young and writes activity books for kids which promote museum education. She has published eight books for children.
Here’s a family that lives in a little house in a little town. And in the branches of the oak tree in their yard lives Sunny the Squirrel. The children love him, feed him and stroke his fur. But Barry the mouse lives deep down in the cellar with his parents, and although he longs to go out and play with the kids, he isn’t allowed to. “People don’t like mice,” his mother tells him. The next day, Barry slips out and meets Sunny anyway, and the two try to understand why people like squirrels but are afraid of mice. After a long discussion they decide that it’s because of the tail. So Sunny suggests an experiment—to swap tails. And yes, when the kids see Barry the mouse with a squirrel’s tail, they stroke him happily, but when Sunny the squirrel turns up with a mouse’s tail, they scream with fear. The two friends are sad that people judge them just by their tail, and decide to prove to the kids how silly that is. But the next day, they see that the kids have realized it on their own—they bring two bowls of food into the yard, one for the squirrel and one for the mouse.

An entertaining fable on prejudice and the similarity between humans and animals.

Illustrations: Michel Kichka

Mishka Ben-David was born in 1952 in Israel. He holds an MA in comparative literature from the University of Wisconsin and a PhD in Hebrew literature from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Ben-David served for 12 years in the Mossad; he has also been the principal of a Jerusalem high school, director of a community center, and a lecturer at the Open University. Ben-David has published four bestselling spy thrillers, as well as novels, short stories and research studies. An Israeli-German-Canadian co-production led by Bavaria Pictures is now adapting his spy novels for an international TV series; Duet in Beirut will be the first in the series. Ben-David has been awarded the Harry Hershon Prize twice (1976; 1977), the Rabinovich Foundation Award (1984), the Prime Minister’s Prize (2002), the Book Publishers Association’s Gold Prize for his thrillers (2010; 2011; 2012) and the Publishers Association’s Platinum Prize for Final Stop, Algiers (2013).

Three of his espionage novels for adults will be published in English translation in the USA (Overlook), UK (Halban) and Turkey (Koton).
Homeward from the Steppes of the Sun

Jerusalem, Keter, 2010. 163 pp
AGE: 8 UP

The fascinating story of Eliusha, age five, from Kostopol (Ukraine) whose family is forced to flee to south Kazakhstan during World War II. While his father joins the Russian army, Eliusha, his mother, twin sisters and baby brother have to adapt to a new way of life. This well-off urban family now lives in a mud hut in a small village, where they have to light the stove with cow dung, fetch drinking water from the river and catch their food. But they adjust well and make friends. When news arrives that father has died, mother decides to leave this “paradise” (as Eliusha calls it) and immigrate to the Land of Israel. Along the way, they have to cope with life in refugee camps and the hardships of illegal immigration, and once they arrive they must adjust to life on a kibbutz.

Inspired by the true story of Eli Paz-Poznik, the experiences in this book will be new to most readers.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION AVAILABLE
Published in German (Beltz & Gelberg), Italian (Salani) and French (Flammarion/Père Castor) and Japanese (Iwanami).

Thoughts of Thirst

AGE: 9 UP

“You know,” he said, “I am in love with this girl.”
I was taken aback. After all, we’d almost never talked before.
He went on: “You know, she drinks lemonade with her eyes closed and thinks thoughts of thirst.”
I closed my eyes and thought to myself that I’d like to meet a girl like that. I’d ask her: ‘Are you thinking thoughts of thirst?’ Then we would both travel from opposite ends of the world to meet up in a certain place, and consumed by our longing, we would drink with our eyes shut.

The boy in this tale is like his friends but also different. Clear, flowing water stirs his imagination and he enjoys drinking it. Unlike his friends, he is able to think thoughts of thirst, and now he discovers that he is not the only one to think such thoughts. But what are thoughts of thirst, what does water symbolize? And how is all this connected to love?

This subtle and poetic story was written in 1952 when Uri Orlev was 21 and living in a kibbutz. It was included in an anthology of his stories that came out in 1968. Now for the first time, it has been published as a book, and although 60 years have passed since it was written, it has retained all its freshness and charm.

Illustrations: Inbal Leitner
ENGLISH TRANSLATION AVAILABLE
Published in Japanese (Komine Shoten; Mitsumura Tesho).

The Sandgame

AGE: 10-15

His autobiography by writer Uri Orlev tells the fascinating story of a Jewish boy who lived through the Holocaust and became a writer. But it is not a horror story portraying a traumatic childhood, in spite of the terrible things the child is forced to see. Instead, Orlev describes a relatively normal childhood, with moments of sadness and pain but also times of joy, adventure and humor. “I saw myself all the time as the hero of a thrilling adventure story; the more people disappeared around me, the more convinced I was that nothing bad could happen to me, and that it would all turn out well.” This is the first line of Orlev’s book, in which the author shows his son the “sandgame” – an allegory in which only a tiny pile of sand remains in the palm of his hand. He and his brother were among the few that remained.

Published in English (The Ghetto Fighters’ House [Israel]; Vikas [India]), German (Elefanten; Beltz & Gelberg), Italian (Salani), Dutch (Fontein), Spanish (SM [Mexico]) and Japanese (Iwasaki Shoten).
Uri Orlev

**WINNER OF THE HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN AWARD (1996)**

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**The Song of the Whales**

AGE: 8 UP

This unique story deals with the special relationship between grandfather and grandson. Michael is a rather solitary only child who loves spending time with his grandfather. Grandfather’s house is very special: it contains all sorts of works of art and antiques, and there are many tools in the basement because Grandfather is good with his hands. When Grandfather becomes frail, he sells his house and moves in with his son’s family. Through the eyes of the boy, we find out about all the unpleasant undercurrents regarding money and inheritance, not to mention details about Grandfather’s housekeeper who, it is rumored, was once his lover.

The bond between Michael and his grandfather veers to the mystical when the elderly man starts taking his grandson along with him at night in his dreams. The two fly off together, sharing strange, wonderful and sometimes frightening experiences. In one dream, two grandfathers appear and Michael does not know who to turn to. Later, Grandfather explains that one is his good side and the other his bad side. Michael is clearly shaken by this dream.

When Grandfather dies, he leaves Michael a mystical legacy which will bind the two forever.

Illustrations: Michel Kishka

Published in French (Gallimard), Italian (Feltrinelli), Spanish (Playco), Dutch (Fontein), English (Houghton Mifflin, USA), Serbian (Book & Marco) and Japanese (Iwanami). Forthcoming in Chinese (Jiangsu Children’s, China).

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**Run, Boy, Run**

AGE: 10 UP

This extraordinary, life-affirming book tells the story of Srulik Freedman. Srulik, a Polish Jewish boy, is five years old when World War II breaks out. After losing his family, he escapes the Warsaw ghetto, surviving in the woods and villages of Poland.

How does a young boy alone get through the war? How does he keep up his will to live in spite of all the hardships? An encounter helps answer this question: one night, as he is fleeing German soldiers, Srulik comes face to face with his father. During the few moments they share, his father gives him this advice: “You must stay alive. You must find someone who will teach you how to behave among the gentiles, how to cross yourself and pray.” These words guide Srulik through the war. Over the next months, Srulik bands together with other Jewish boys in the woods. When he loses these friends, he wanders from farm to farm, searching for work in exchange for food and shelter. Eventually the war ends and Srulik is brought back to Judaism. The reader is left to appreciate the important things that we take for granted – having a family, a home, freedom and, most of all: life.

Illustrations: Michel Kishka

Published in English (Houghton Mifflin, USA), French (Flammarion), German (Beltz & Gelberg), Italian (Salani; Sansoni/RCS), Swedish (Raben & Sjorgen), Spanish (Alfaguara), Portuguese (Ambar), Japanese (Iwanami Shoten), Korean (Prunsoop), Catalan (Alfaguara), Czech (Práh), Chinese (Eastern, Taipei), Chinese (Guangzhou Bright Book, China), Serbian (Zmaj), Russian (Text), Polish (WAB), Croatian (SysPrint). Forthcoming in Turkish (Cizmeli Kedi).

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**The Lead Soldiers**

AGE: 14 UP

This story is set during World War II and is based on fact. But those who balk at what sounds like another Holocaust novel should note that the war is only a backdrop for young Yorik’s life. Through Yorik’s close, almost photographic impressions, we follow the tightening of the German net around the Polish Jews in Warsaw. After their mother’s death, Yorik and his younger brother are cared for by their irrepressible aunt until they are all caught by the Nazis and sent to Bergen-Belsen. The 22 months in the camp are harsh but the boys find relief, as they have all along, in their war games.

At the end of the war, the boys are sent to pre-state Israel. Yorik knows that in order to survive, he must persevere and create a new life for himself.

Published in English (Peter Owen; Taplinger), German (Beltz & Gelberg), Italian (Fabbri; RCS/Bur Ragazzi), Spanish (Bruno) and Dutch (Fontein). Forthcoming in Albanian (Toena), Turkish (Cizmeli Kedi) and Chinese (Guangzhou Bright Book).
The Thing in the Dark

AGE: 8-10

Who hasn’t been afraid of the dark? There is a “Thing” living under the young narrator’s bed and it terrifies him. It shrinks in the daytime, but when his mother turns off the light at night, the Thing grows enormous. One frightening time, the boy begins to talk to the Thing, and it becomes his best friend, his protector, his scapegoat and his confessor. Then tragedy strikes and the boy’s father is killed in the war. The boy can’t talk to his father any more, but he can send the Thing to where his father is. When Shlomo, his father’s friend, becomes a permanent presence in the house, Thing travels to Daddy for the most important advice the boy gets: Daddy is happy that Shlomo can care for the family because Shlomo is a good man.

Illustrations: Milka Cizik

PARTIAL ENGLISH TRANSLATION AVAILABLE

Published in German (Elefanten; Ravensburger, Beltz & Gelberg), Italian (Salani), Spanish (SM, Castillo, Mexico), Portuguese (SM), Dutch (Fontein), Korean (Bir), Slovenian (Mladinska Knjiga) and Albanian (Toena). Forthcoming in Turkish (Gizmeli Kedi).

The Dragon’s Crown

AGE: 13 UP

Uri Orlev asks moral questions in a fantasy tale that is a parable of good and evil.

Princess Mayalila will inherit all she sees, and as far as the eye can see everything belongs to the Eastern Kingdom. This is a land of Good where there are no bad actions or words, no killing, and no death. Peace ends when Prince Akraton, from the evil Western Kingdom, shows the people that there is beauty in evil, and in this way he gains a following. The problem becomes even more complicated when Princess Mayalila is kidnapped by the Silent Ones. The only way to appease the Silent Ones is to offer them a dragon’s crown, and there is only one man who knows how to hunt a dragon: the Black Prince Akraton. And so the king makes a pact with the devil to get his daughter back. Akraton pursues Mayalila, and what follows is a love story in which Uri Orlev expresses his own vision of optimism.

Illustrations: Avner Katz

Published in German (Elefanten; Ravensburger), Dutch (Fontein) and Italian (Salani). Forthcoming in Turkish (Gizmeli Kedi).

Nava Semel

The Girl in the Gong

Tel Aviv, Dani Sfarim, 2015. 78 pp.
AGE: 8-11

Connie is flying to Beijing with her father, a diplomat. But China is so far away, and she’s scared that her friends in Israel will forget her. To distract her, her father gives her a little Chinese gong, and it tells her a magical story inspired by an ancient Chinese folk-tale. Kuan-Yu is the most famous gong maker in China, assisted by his daughter Qong-Gey. But the Empress is terribly jealous and she hatches a plot: the Emperor will order Kuan-Yu to cast a gong with the most beautiful sound ever heard. If he fails, he will be executed. After Kuan-Yu’s first two tries fail, Qong-Gey seeks advice from the Fire Goddess, who tells her that human blood must be added to the metal. As the gong maker prepares the precious metals for his third attempt, Qong-Gey jumps into the furnace and a perfect sound floats out. However, Connie can’t accept this sad ending: she intervenes and changes it, bringing Qong-Gey back to life. Thus the little Israeli girl rescues the Chinese girl!

An enchanting, moving story that brings two cultures together.

Illustrations: Zagny Ormut-Durbin

Rights to Semel’s books have been sold in 11 languages.
Nava Semel

**Becoming Gershona**

AGE: 12 UP

"Out of the blue, they told me Grandpa was coming the next day, and I never even knew I had a grandfather." This is how a young girl's life changes when she starts to discover her family's long-guarded secrets. Life in Tel Aviv in 1958 is full of mysteries for 12-year-old Gershona, beginning with the meaning of her unusual name, and the reason why her grandfather fled to America 35 years before. Gershona spends the hot Israeli summer puzzling out the past, and discovers the lingering impact that the Holocaust has had on her family, in fact on everyone in her community. She soon understands that the Holocaust explains the blue numbers tattooed on her mother's forearm, why she has only two grandparents, and why her grandfather deserted his wife and infant son. Although many of the truths she uncovers are unpleasant, her spirit and vitality make this book hopeful and uplifting.

Published in English (Viking/Penguin; Puffin Books), German (Alibaba; Fischer), Italian (La Casa Usher; Mondadori), Dutch (Fontein), and Romanian (Fiat Lux).

**Love for Beginners**

Tel Aviv, Yedioth Ahronoth, 2006. 97 pp.  
AGE: 12-16

These are bittersweet stories of young love, first kisses and secret dreams. A young Israeli girl falls in love with Mikey from the USA, an Elvis Presley fan. She hides her love and makes fun of him, but he is not ashamed to admit he loves her. In the 1930s, a British paratrooper lands in a Jewish settlement and is injured. Seventeen-year-old Tamara takes care of him. Although he is an “enemy,” Tamara falls in love with him and imagines herself a princess. When Orik's father suddenly dies, his friend Arik goes to his home during the seven-day mourning period. That week, the first man lands on the moon and Orik and Arik imagine they’re the astronauts going into space.

These stories take place at different times—only love is something that never changes.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION AVAILABLE

Published in German (Jacoby & Stuart), Italian (Sonda), Czech (Albatros) and Slovak (Q111).

**Flying Lessons**

Tel Aviv, Am Oved, 1990. 103 pp.  
AGE: 13 UP

In 1955, the small Israeli village where Hadara lives has one of everything: one grocer, one nurse and one junk dealer. Hadara's only distinction is that she's the one child without a mother. Her father is a citrus grower, and he loves his trees as though they were his children. Hadara decides that it's time to distinguish herself and escape from loneliness. Monsieur Maurice, the village shoemaker, has a mysterious past and he sparks Hadara's imagination by telling her about Jews in his homeland who could fly. Hadara cajoles Monsieur Maurice into giving her flying lessons. He tells her to study the birds and practice jumping, and then one day she will fly above the village. But as her lessons go on, Hadara learns that she can't escape from the loneliness of not having a mother. *Flying Lessons* is a poignant coming-of-age story which explores the importance of dreams and reality, and the delicate balance between them.

Published in English (Simon & Schuster), German (Elefanten; Beltz & Gelberg), Italian (Mondadori), Spanish (Loguez), Dutch (Fontein), Czech (Albatros) and Serbian (Book & Marso).  
Forthcoming in Chinese (Jiangsu Children's Press).

**Bride on Paper**

Tel Aviv, Yedioth Ahronoth, 2006. 197 pp.  
AGE: 14 UP

This story takes place 70 years ago during the British Mandate in Palestine and focuses on a romantic triangle between Anna, a young student from Poland, Imri, an idealistic young Jew who lives in a small village, and Major Charles Timothy Parker, a British pilot. The tale begins with a fictitious marriage. Imri is sent to Poland on a Zionist mission. He has agreed to marry a woman he doesn’t know in order to get her a legal immigration certificate. However, his plan goes awry when he falls in love with Anna, his “paper bride.” Since they must divorce, Imri leaves Anna in the care of his spinster aunt and his younger brother Uzik. Uzik has a learning disability and hates books, but he has a passion for the cinema, especially the hero of the Tarzan movies, Johnny Weissmuller. Sixty years later, Uzik looks back on his childhood. Now an elderly film-maker, he is trying to capture this long-forgotten love on film.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION AVAILABLE

Published in German (Beltz & Gelberg), Italian (Mondadori), English (Hybrid, Austr.) and Romanian (Pandora). Forthcoming in Turkish (Cizmeli Kedi).
Yoram Kaniuk

Wasserman

Tel Aviv, Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 1988.
112 pp.
AGE: 12 UP

T his story centers around a dog called Wasserman and a girl called Talia, who has both humor and integrity. Talia’s life changes radically when she finds Wasserman half-dead, an obvious victim of abuse. After his recovery, Wasserman proves to be a fitting addition to Talia’s irregular family: he sings in perfect harmony, and once people hear about the singing dog, they come to hear his Moonlight Sonata too. This circus attracts media attention, but one day Big Mouth Meir, a real mafioso, comes to claim his performing hound. Talia has never before heard threats like, “I wouldn’t want your pretty face to be cut up.” She also didn’t know that the police were in Meir’s pocket. Incredibly, Talia is arrested, but Gidi, an aspiring lawyer who is in love with her, spells out the consequences of police corruption in a tense confrontation. The family is rewarded beyond its wildest dreams, and Wasserman comes home to an extravagant musical party. Wasserman has been made into a film by Zweites Deutsches Fernsehen.

Published in French (Gallimard), German (Alibaba; dtv junior), Italian (Mondadori; Salani), Norwegian (Aschehoug), Swedish (Forum), Danish (Gyldendal), Greek (Psychogios), Spanish (Fondo de Cultura Económica; Siruela) and Serbian (Ruzno). Forthcoming in Croatian (Sysprint).

Yovi, Pebble and the Elephant

Tel Aviv, Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 1993.
95 pp.
AGE: 10 UP

Y ovì, age 14, is a modern Hannibal – he leads an elephant across the desert to freedom, while holding off the full force of the Israeli army.

When his mother buys a new fridge, Yovi sells the old one to a junk dealer who happens to have an elephant on his truck. The elephant locks eyes with Yovi and it’s true love. Yovi acquires Polly (as he calls her), but what can you do with an elephant in Tel Aviv? On the advice of his new friend Pebble, Yovi decides that Polly must go back to Africa. The army is called out. His parents, the chief-of-staff and the prime minister appeal to him over the radio to come home, but Yovi is now on a crusade. The trek is exhausting: extreme heat, thirst and hostile Bedouins nearly break him. Finally, when environmentalists offer to take Polly to Kenya on a boat, he accepts. It is all over; but Yovi, exhausted, has won.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION AVAILABLE

Published in German (Alibaba), Italian (Mondadori) and Chinese (China Juvenile & Children Pub.).

Pierre

Tel Aviv, Yedioth Ahronoth, 2013. 76 pp.
AGE: 9 UP

O ur Pierre wasn’t born. He begat himself in a garbage can in Ramat Gan. My daughter found him. He was about a month old. A gray-black puppy shivering in the garbage can, sitting in the stench and looking out, from the despair that he was born into, through eyes that opened in her honor... She picked him up, stroked him and cried, and her tears—large and hot—washed him for the first time in his life.

Kaniuk wrote this moving novella about his dog Pierre, who enjoyed twenty good years of life. It is a love story—the tale of his love for his best friend, like family, and who knew how to return love as only a dog can. Pierre was no thoroughbred, not the kind of dog you buy in a pet store, yet children loved him and even people who hated dogs loved him. He was wise and amusing, without a single drop of nastiness. But he was also adventurous and didn’t like playing up to people. Kaniuk draws a portrait of his dead dog with humor and sadness.

Pierre is a literary gem, suitable for adults and youngsters.

Illustrations: Keren Lee Vendriger

ENGLISH TRANSLATION AVAILABLE

Forthcoming in Italian (Giuntina).

The House Where the Cockroaches Live to a Ripe Old Age

ALL AGES

B rimming with life and humor, this madcap tale is populated with fleabag cats, donkeys, dogs, a horse called Andromeda, a porcupine and cockroaches who think they’re in paradise.

A week after Naomi was born, Ivanov sat in her crib purring. At three, she got Tempo, her first donkey. Then Abraham the horse called Andromeda, a porcupine and cockroaches who think they’re in paradise.

Kaniuk wrote this moving novella about his dog Pierre, who enjoyed twenty good years of life. It is a love story—the tale of his love for his best friend, like family, and who knew how to return love as only a dog can. Pierre was no thoroughbred, not the kind of dog you buy in a pet store, yet children loved him and even people who hated dogs loved him. He was wise and amusing, without a single drop of nastiness. But he was also adventurous and didn’t like playing up to people. Kaniuk draws a portrait of his dead dog with humor and sadness.

Pierre is a literary gem, suitable for adults and youngsters.

Illustrations: Keren Lee Vendriger

ENGLISH TRANSLATION AVAILABLE

Published in English (Scholastic, India), German (Alibaba), Italian (Mondadori), Chinese (China Juvenile & Children Pub.) and Hindi (Scholastic).
Ruthie Vital Gilad

Fear of Driving in the Fast Lane

Tel Aviv, Keren Pubs, 2014. 102 pp.
AGE: 11 UP

Michal and Alma, friends at high school, set themselves two goals for the summer vacation: to find boyfriends—a priority—and jobs. Michal finds a boyfriend easily, but Alma has neither boyfriend nor job, only arguments with her Mom and the letters her father left her. For it is only now, two years after he died, that Alma finally reads them. And then, after she thought this would be the least fun vacation ever, things change. She meets an extraordinary woman called Metullah, who has shining eyes, owns a café and can always guess what her customers want. Alma starts working in the café, and aside from learning how to chop vegetables, she also discovers how to get to know people—for example Miri, an energetic woman who is scared to drive. “If I could, I’d introduce you to my son Yoav,” says Miri, and Alma thinks that perhaps she has found a boyfriend too. With sensitivity and humor, Vital Gilad writes about a young girl coping with the loss of her father and learning to move ahead without fear.

Hana Livne

The Stamp

Tel Aviv, Massada, 1995. 77 pp.
AGE: 9-14

This beautiful tale touches on a painful subject with sensitivity and humor: Abigail goes to stay with her aunt and uncle because her mother is very ill, and soon after, her mother dies. Very upset, Abigail accidentally swallows the most expensive stamp in her uncle’s collection. But he decides to say nothing, and Abigail soon discovers that her intimidating uncle is in fact warm and understanding. She also finds a friend, Talia, who lives with her bohemian grandmother and has her own problems with her divorced parents. When Talia goes away to visit her father, Abigail is again lonely. But finally, she can go home to her father. There, she gets together with her old friend Likki and makes a fresh start. On her birthday, she is happy because her absentminded father remembered to buy her a birthday present! Then Talia comes over with her mother. And the best gift of all is when her father laughs aloud at something that Talia’s mother said.

Lea Goldberg

Miracles and Wonders

AGE: 7-11

Set in old Tel Aviv, this Israeli classic is narrated by “Nobody’s Auntie.” That’s what the neighborhood kids call her because she has no family. One day, she meets Nissim, a 10-year-old boy whose father has died. He is running from Yihya, a bully in the poor neighborhood where he and his young brother live. Their mother is sick in the hospital, and Nissim has to sell shoeslaces for a living. But then things look up: Nissim moves in with Auntie, and she finds him work with a florist. He makes friends with the neighborhood kids, and with a mischievous lost monkey whom Auntie calls Wonders. They are all planning a circus show, but then Wonders is kidnapped by Yihya the bully. After many adventures, Wonders is brought home, and the show is a big hit. Wonders eventually returns to his real owner, a music professor, but all ends well: Nissim, his Mom—who has recovered—and his little brother move into the professor’s cozy home. Mom works as the housekeeper, and Nissim starts playing the piano.

Illustrations: Michel Kishka

Goldberg’s children’s books have been published in English, French, German, Spanish, Russian, Catalan, Chinese, Korean, Portuguese, and 15 Indian languages.

Deakla Keydar

Simply Complicated

Tel Aviv, Yedioth Ahronoth, 2011. 518 pp.
AGE: 14-17

Shlomtzi is already 17, and that’s no simple matter. It’s actually complicated—by her parents who’ve gotten divorced, by her friends who are too busy with school and final exams. And love is even more complicated, because Shlomtzi wonders if she should love her boyfriend, her unknown admirer or her creative writing teacher who’s much older.

Shlomtzi is learning to write stories, but she understands that sometimes the story writes itself and surprises everyone, especially herself. She’s spellbound by words, books and poems; she also goes through a stormy love and great disasters. She tells her diary about all these things with lots of humor. Through writing, she discovers that growing up is complicated. But in the end, she’ll toughen up, understand some important things and set out on a new road. A story she writes will appear in the newspaper, and a new love will light a flame in her heart.

Simply Complicated is a brave coming-of-age novel that introduces us to a wise, endearing heroine in a way that is amusing and touching.
Orit Uziel

We’ll Meet Again

Tel Aviv, Hakibbutz Hameuchad, Sifriat Poalim, 2010. 219 pp.
AGE: 12 up

In 1935, soon after the Nuremberg Laws were passed, Paul, the son of a German Christian father and a Jewish mother, decides to leave Germany. He travels to Switzerland and there he meets Elsa, a young Jewish refugee. Together, the two cross the border and eventually reach Paris. They face many hardships, but in the meantime the friendship between them blossoms into love. In July 1936, the Spanish Civil War breaks out, Paul, who feels he cannot stand by and watch another democracy trampled by tyranny, joins a group of volunteers from various countries and sets off to fight in Spain. Once there, he also meets volunteers from Palestine. In the meantime, Elsa, who realizes that Paul will not be coming back any time soon, sails to Palestine and settles in Tel Aviv.

When the foreign volunteers are evacuated from the Spanish front, Paul leaves Europe and also makes his way to Palestine, where Elsa is waiting for him.

A moving story about two youngsters who are willing to fight for their ideals and true love.

Alone in Shanghai

AGE: 11-16

This historical novel begins in Berlin in 1938 and continues in Shanghai during World War II. After the Nazi Kristallnacht (Night of Crystal) attacks on German Jewry, 17-year-old Erica and her brother Theo flee their home and sail alone to Shanghai, a safe haven for Jewish refugees. Their mother and grandmother hope to join them later. The two reach the Hongkew slum, filled with poor Chinese and penniless refugees, and move in with Gustav and Charlotte, a Dutch Jewish couple whose two daughters have stayed behind with relatives. Shanghai then was a lively, bustling city with an “international colony” where well-off expats lived—among them Max, a young German Jew. A romance blooms between him and Erica.

Uziel catches the atmosphere of the time and place superbly, weaving historical events into the plot. Her characters experience love and disappointment, hardship, constant anxiety for those left behind, but also courage and friendship. After the war, Erica and Theo learn that their mother and grandmother have not survived. They and Max decide to leave Shanghai and build their future in Palestine.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION AVAILABLE

Abd al-Rahman, the Wandering Prince

AGE: 11-14

In these two novellas about harmony between Jews and Arabs in medieval Spain, Uziel recreates the exotic caliphates of the time with their luxuriant courts, bustling bazaars, and desert bandits. Prince Abd al-Rahman, the heir to the murdered Umayyad Caliph, must flee for his life. Crossing the desert on a camel, he rescues Jewish Rahia and her blind brother. The three become friends, and together they outwit the prince’s pursuers and survive the desert. Finally, in a stunning campaign, Abd al-Rahman’s brains and bravery lead him from the gallows to the seat of the caliphate he had lost. Seventy years later, the Umayyad dynasty has flowered again and is based in Cordoba, the commercial and intellectual center of the day. Yehuda, a rabbinical student, goes to study there and is mesmerized. He eventually becomes a fine physician instead of a rabbi. Well-respected among Jews and Muslims, he saves the Caliph’s son from a rare disease, and becomes famous throughout the Muslim empire.

Young Love in Jerusalem

Tel Aviv, Hakibbutz Hameuchad, Sifriat Poalim, 1993. 94 pp.
AGE: 12 UP

Orit Uziel has taken the age-old theme of love between a poor boy and a rich girl and set it in the Sephardi community in Jerusalem under Ottoman rule. Fleeing a stingy and cruel uncle, Abramo and his younger brother sail from Istanbul to the Land of Israel. From Jaffa port, they then walk to Jerusalem, to the home of Bolisa Mazal, their mother’s elder sister. The two are good, hard-working youths, and Abramo soon gets a job in a grocer’s store. Girls too notice the handsome boy. There is only one problem: he is not a good match for a nice Jewish girl because he has not a cent to his name. But beautiful Blanca falls in love with him anyway. Blanca’s father stops the match in time and Blanca marries her love. Finally, Abramo is not so poor after all: the grocer leaves him half his store.

A fascinating and colorful tale.

Illustrations: Avi Katz
**Gila Almagor**  
*Aviya's Summer*  
Tel Aviv, Am Oved, 1986. 92 pp.  
AGE: 10 UP

Winner of multiple international awards, Gila Almagor's autobiographical novel is set in Israel of the 1950s. 10-year-old Aviya leaves the kindly children's home where she lives and is reunited with her mother Henya. Henya, a Polish partisan who was tortured by the Nazis, has now returned home after years in institutions. But her distracted mother is unable to show her any affection. She also has a horror of lice—another legacy of the past—so she scrubs Aviya’s head with kerosene and then shaves her hair. The neighborhood ostracizes them both, but Aviya is resourceful and imaginative. She fantasizes about her dead father; she also adores Maya, the beautiful young dancing teacher for whom her mother does laundry. But there are few moments of harmony. Every promise of friendship, warmth or success is poisoned by her mother's illness—playing the piano ends in violence; happiness ends in shame. Henya's love brings no salvation.

Published in English (Collins), French (Nathan), German (Alibaba; dtv junior), Italian (Mondadori), Spanish (Loguez), Dutch (Elzenga), Danish (Forum), Russian (Aliya), Serbian (Bonart), Arabic (Kul-Shee), Spanish (Loguez), Greek (Kedros) and Chinese (Shanghai Juvenile & Children).

**Yona Tepper**  
*David Half-and-Half*  
Tel Aviv, Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 1990. 186 pp.  
AGE: 11-15

Twelve-year-old David has an uncommon problem in Israel: his mother Elli wears a cross, speaks Norwegian and celebrates Christmas. Everyone on the kibbutz has a comment, an insult or a piece of advice. When he reacts, David “half-and-half” is branded a troublemaker. When Elli wants to qualify as a kindergarten teacher, the kibbutz mothers are suspicious. David's father tries to calm him down, still believing they can overcome prejudice. “But it’s been 15 years!” Elli exclaims.

Elli has had enough and wants to try living in Norway. David becomes violent and apathetic, and the family bond is stretched to its limits. The Israeli grandparents hope that a holiday will restore them, but Elli's yearnings grow: she longs for her Norwegian hometown, for acceptance, for her son not to be ashamed of her. In the end, she wins and the family sets out, bruised but together.

A story about intolerance and how it is always the children who suffer most.

Illustrations: Adit Pank

Published in German (Alibaba).

**Gila Almagor**  
*Alex Lerner, Daphna and Me*  
AGE: 12 UP

This is a beautiful story of friendship, love and loss, told by 12-year-old Avner, whose best friend Alex dies of cancer. Life hasn't been kind to Avner. There is growing tension between his parents who eventually split up, and when he follows his father who is often away from home, he discovers he's having an affair. At the same time, Avner tells us about his secret love for Daphna, his classmate. When Alex, an accomplished new immigrant from Russia, joins the class and attracts Daphna's attention, Avner is jealous. But he eventually overcomes his envy, Alex becomes his best friend, and together with Daphna they become a threesome. The bond between them intensifies when Alex is suddenly diagnosed with cancer and has to have painful chemotherapy. Avner’s emotional crisis, both at home and with his friend, lies at the heart of this fine book. Inevitably, the final parting leaves him with an emptiness inside.

Published in German (Carl Hanser).

**Yona Tepper**  
*When Are You Coming Back?*  
AGE: 12-16

After his army service, Hudi left his family and kibbutz to roam the world, ultimately settling in California. His entire family lives in the shadow of his departure. Grandpa Abrasha, among the kibbutz founders, considers him a traitor, while Hudi’s parents wonder where his upbringing went wrong.

Hudi's sister Noga, 16, is disturbed by what Hudi's choice represents. Critical of her mother and unsure of herself, Noga feels comforted when she meets Nitzan, a friend of Hudi's. He is Hudi's opposite: he would never leave the country. When Hudi comes for a visit, the family comes to life. But he has no intention of staying. In the final confrontation, he argues with Abrasha that Israel has changed. Hudi leaves behind the thought that his grandfather's intolerance is worse than his own "betrayal".

In this compelling story, Tepper highlights the tragedy of the generation of pioneer Israeli idealists who unknowingly fostered “indifferent heirs.”

Published in German (Alibaba).
Amalia Rosenblum

The Sheep with a Black Spot

AGE: 12 UP

Lily is gifted at maths, she’s interested in astronomy, literature, art, and is in love with her teacher. But when her parents announce that they are separating, she is deeply distressed. So she adopts an old sheep with a black spot on its forehead; she believes that it understands her and gives her advice. With its help, Lily hopes to get her parents back together and also to impress her teacher. But looking after a sheep becomes complicated, and Lily turns to Zohar, a shifty street kid and tattoo artist, who has secrets of his own. Lily’s life turns downward. She gets caught up in secrets and lies, but her parents are too busy with their own crisis to notice. How far will Lily go with her cover-ups and fantasies before someone notices what is wrong? A brilliant book, full of humor, that tackles the difficulties of adolescence and the problems of outsiders.

PARTIAL ENGLISH TRANSLATION AVAILABLE

Forthcoming in German (Beltz & Gelberg).

Amalia Rosenblum

Where the Village Road Ends

AGE: 12 UP

If your best friend went to live far away, you’d be sad! Goni, a mongrel, is miserable because his golden retriever friend Arthur has left the village with his owners. But a new family come to live in their house, with a dog called Choco. Slowly, Goni and Choco become friends. Together they hatch a plan that leads to the arrest of wild boar hunters, and become village stars. They also learn about the pit bull’s good side, the power of friendship, and the dangerous pride that comes with success. Cats and dogs, jackals and squirrels all live in the village too, and the author tells us about their thoughts with loads of wit and humor. The dogs are interested in haiku, write some poems, and read newspapers. An unforgettable story of friendship and solidarity, and of doggie thoughts on humans who have so little imagination, compared to them!

ENGLISH TRANSLATION AVAILABLE

Published in German (Beltz & Gelberg) and Italian (Salani; La Scuola). Forthcoming in Chinese (Jiangsu Children’s Press).

Avram Kantor

Leading Voice

AGE: 13 UP

This is the story of a special boy who cannot speak. People think he is retarded or autistic. But the boy, now almost 13, is intelligent and self-confident, and as the narrator of this novel, he has a warm, rich voice. As the plot unfolds he faces the turbulence of adolescence, learns to cope with his limitations, and also shows great courage.

The narrator’s older brother, Kobi, is an ordinary youth, but he is troubled. One weekend, Kobi disappears from home and the narrator discovers that he is staying with an ultra-Orthodox sect. After that, Kobi becomes religious, and stays afloat from the family. His secular parents are distressed, but the narrator’s surveillance of his brother turns this into a thrilling adventure story. During the summer, Kobi goes again to stay with the sect and the narrator follows him, hoping to bring him home. He faces a lot of hostility, but his courage serves as an eye-opener to his brother, who finally realizes that one’s family is too important to give up.

Published in German (Carl Hanser).

Avram Kantor

To the Lizards

Tel Aviv, Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 2006. 214 pp.
AGE: 14 UP

“No German will ever enter this house!” Menachem said to his son Yaki when he fell in love with a German girl. For Holocaust survivors Menachem and Nechama, who have made their home in Israel, such a connection is unimaginable. All contact is broken between parents and son: Yaki and his wife Anna move to Munich. But suddenly, years later and after Menacham’s death, Gil, the German grandson, stands at Nechama’s front door, and she asks him in. The two become close – Gil looks just like his grandfather – but the encounter stirs up the whole family. Yaki and Anna come from Germany, and all have to deal with old, repressed emotions. And then there is the fear for Gil’s safety – he is doing his National Service in Israel. But the fear proves to be unfounded – and the family is back together.

Published in German (Carl Hanser).
**Tamar Bergman**

**Sunbirds at My Window**

Tel Aviv, Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 1999. 74 pp.
AGE: 8-11

The life of birds is fascinating and beautiful. This is what young Alon learns from his elderly neighbor, Ina, who has turned her kitchen window into a bird feeding station. Alon, who is particularly fond of the colorful sunbirds, invites his classmates to visit the feeding station and hopes that Galit will be interested in the birds, because he really likes her. Perhaps Galit’s interest will influence her father who wants the feeding station removed from the building because the birds dirty his lawn. The children in the class are very excited, and Galit offers to help Alon care for the birds. It looks as if everything has worked out well and Galit’s father isn’t in a bad mood anymore, but then Ina suddenly falls ill and dies. However, Alon is comforted by her request that he take over the feeding station. Together, Alon and Galit care for birds that come to feed.

Illustrations: Christina Kadmon

**ENGLISH TRANSLATION AVAILABLE**

Published in Japanese (Fuzambo).

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**Tamar Bergman**

**Along the Tracks**

AGE: 12-16

The frightfulness of war is vividly dramatized in this novel about a Polish boy in World War II. Yankele’s family escapes from Lodz before the ghetto is closed off and flees east towards Asia. When their train is bombed, Yankele is separated from his mother, and begins years of wandering in search of his family. Almost unaware of the dangers, he gets through the snowy steppes of central Asia to reach Kazhastan, Bokhara, Tashkent and Uzbekistan. Yasha, as he is now known, teams up with Bokharan street children, befriends prostitutes and helps a young Uzbek girl who has been raped. By the time he is reunited with his family, he is no longer the same boy. Beyond Yankele’s own story of survival, Tamar Bergman has drawn the picture of an entire continent on the move.

*Along the Tracks* was awarded the Ze’ev Prize, nominated a “Notable Children’s Trade Book” by the U.S. Children’s Book Council and was included in the 1991 Bulletin Blue Ribbon list.

Published in English (Houghton Mifflin), German (Alibaba; S. Fischer) and Japanese (Michitani).

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**Tamar Bergman**

**The Boy from Over There**

Tel Aviv, Am Oved, 1983. 130 pp.
AGE: 9-13

The hero of this story is a boy called Avramik, who has spent World War II hiding in a European village with his sick mother. When the Allies liberate Europe, his mother is taken to hospital, and although she never returns, Avramik cannot accept that she’s dead.

The book opens with Avramik’s first day at the kibbutz to which his uncle has brought him. The boy from “over there” slowly integrates into kibbutz life, but he stubbornly guards his secret – his belief that his mother will come back one day. The only person he is close to is Rina, whose father died serving in the Jewish Brigade in Italy and who, like Avramik, cannot accept his death. When the War of Independence starts in 1948, the kibbutz is shelled and all the children have to be evacuated under heavy fire. At the end of the dangerous journey, Avramik finds an answer to the question that has haunted him.

Published in English (Houghton Mifflin), German (Alibaba; Rowohlt), Italian (Bompiani) and Japanese (Michitani).

Forthcoming in Chinese (Jiangsu Children’s Press).

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**Neri Aluma**

**What Would I Do Without Bruno?**

AGE: 11 UP

This is an entertaining and moving story about the love of a 12-year-old boy for a calf. Dor lives with his family in a moshav—a farming village—and he isn’t very good at school. Whenever he can, he plays hooky and goes to his father’s dairy farm, where he enjoys taking care of the cows and calves. He is especially attached to one new-born calf which he saves and calls Bruno. In sub-plots that are delicately woven into the main story line, we also find out about other family members and villagers. Among these is Jamus, a warm man with a sense of humor, but a lonely man. He sends Dor and a friend to look for old graffiti in the village, and the two boys learn of Jamus’ tragic past love. Then they discover other stories of the past that make up the village’s unique mythology. One is about Dor’s great-grandmother, who also raised a calf when she was a girl. The calf followed her around like a shadow, until it was led off to slaughter.

Will this also be Bruno’s fate? With great resourcefulness, Dor manages to rescue the young bull; his success bolsters his self confidence and uncovers his hidden talents.

Illustrations: Danny Kerman
### Daniella Carmi

#### Samir and Yonatan on Planet Mars

Tel Aviv, Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 1994. 124 pp. AGE: 10-14

During the Intifada, Samir, an Arab child, is taken to an Israeli hospital for a special operation. He arrives grieving for his dead brother and traumatized by the disintegration of his family life. Too shy to speak, he watches the four children in his ward: Razia, emotionally disturbed, is being stitched up after her father's last drunken binge; Ludmilla, a Russian girl, is catatonically withdrawn; Yonatan is fascinated by the planets; and Tzakhi frightens him. It is Yonatan who calms Samir, offers him friendship and tells him about the world of the stars and planets. Eventually there is also an unexpected bond between Samir and Tzakhi who go on a spree through the hospital. When Samir returns home, he knows he has seen the impossible happen: he has made friends with the enemy.

*Samir and Yonatan on Planet Mars* won prizes in Germany, USA and Italy. Published in English (Scholastic/Arthur Levine), French (Hachette Jeunesse), German (Carl Hanser; dtv), Italian (Mondadori; Salani), Spanish (Loguez; Castillo), Portuguese (Ambar), Greek (Kastaniotis), Dutch (Fontein), Chinese (Eastern Pub., Taipei), Japanese (Ca et La), Slovenian (Ucila), Serbian (Zmaj), Korean (Yewon Media), Thai (Bliss), Turkish (Pena) and Arabic (Kul Shee). Forthcoming in Chinese (Jiangsu Children's Press, China) and Azeri (Alatoran).

### Daniella Carmi

#### The Explosion on Ahalan Street


Who caused the explosion in Ahalan Street? The police have no clues and no witnesses. The newspapers have some theories but nothing to justify the daily discussions in the press. This is the bleak story of 12-year-old Natasha Marouan, whose Jewish mother and Arab father struggle to protect the love and unity that keep their small family together in the face of social prejudice and bigotry.

With Samir Marouan in jail after the explosion, the family’s world is torn apart. Natasha’s mother is rejected by one lawyer after another and Natasha herself is snubbed by her neighbors. When Samir Marouan is finally released, Natasha understands that justice won’t easily mend the broken pieces of her home. Natasha describes her father’s imprisonment with a puzzled innocence that is heartbreaking. In fact, Natasha is Daniella Carmi’s greatest success in this book, and her voice continues to sound long after readers have put the book down.

Published in French (Hachette Jeunesse), German (Alibaba; dtv junior) and Spanish (Loguez). Forthcoming in Turkish (Pena).

### Daniella Carmi

#### To Be the Daughter of a Gypsy

Tel Aviv, Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 1996. 143 pp. AGE: 10-14

Amid the harsh reality of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, a warm and affectionate relationship starts up between two Israeli girls and a young Palestinian man. The narrator of this extraordinary story is Taliah, a problem girl who is sent to a home for special children. The children she meets there are a collection of misfits, but many of them have brilliant fantasies. By far the greatest dreamer is Becky, a strong-willed girl whose fiery imagination charms narrator and readers alike. Becky’s ambition is to have a “permanent father,” and when she hears gypsy music coming from Kami’s ice-cream van, she latches onto the young Arab man from the Gaza Strip. Becky imagines that Kami will rescue her but he himself is lonely and trapped, sleeping in the locked van at night, far from his family and home.

The girls lose Kami twice: first when he says goodbye and returns to Gaza, and then when he is killed in a terrorist incident.

Illustrations: Hilla Havkin

Published in French (Gallimard), German (Carl Hanser), Italian (Mondadori) and Dutch (Fontein).

### Shulamit Lapid

#### Shpitz

Tel Aviv, Massada, 1973. 79 pp. AGE: 7-10

The joys of having a dog are depicted in this perky story about three children, their silly Aunt Shpitz and her dog, also called Shpitz. The dog is on loan to Michal, Mickey and Yair for a day or two, then for a whole glorious week. In fact, Shpitz is a smelly, quirky old dog that has whistling holes in his teeth. Unattractive to anyone not blinded by love, the dog is nevertheless a constant source of merriment for the children as he trips up policemen and cavorts around the circus. When Michal decides they must do something about the dog’s sorry appearance, Shpitz gets a haircut with disastrous results.

There is a happy, ongoing disarray that will be especially appealing to those who live in doggy homes, and to those who always wanted to.

Illustrations: Sarah Barkai

Published in German (Omnibus).
Galila Ron-Feder-Amit

**To Myself**

_Zion Series; Nir Sharoni Series; Batya Series (30 books)_
Tel Aviv, Milo, 1976-2002.
AGE: 11-14

After his parents abandoned him, teenage Tzion grew up with his grandmother in a poor neighborhood and started going round with young delinquents. Now he's been placed in foster-care with the Sharoni family, and he tells his story. At first, Tzion behaves badly. He finds the Sharoni's middle-class life strange, and he sneers at their studious, musical son Nir. But slowly he grows to like and admire their cultivated life. A visit home sets him back, because his old friends make fun of him. Finally, he runs away and meets Batya, a free spirit who offers him comfort and friendship.

The screen adaptation of _To Myself_ won first prize at both the Frankfurt and Vienna Children's Film Festivals.

**ENGLISH TRANSLATION AVAILABLE**

Published in English (_Adama_), French (_Flammarion_), German (_Beltz & Gelberg_), Italian (_Piemme_), Spanish (_SM_), Chinese (_China Juvenile & Children_), Japanese (_Ca et La_) and Korean (_Kyelim_) and Serbian (_Book & Marco_).

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Galila Ron-Feder-Amit

**Living on the Edge**

Tel Aviv, Adam, 1994. 151 pp.
AGE: 8-14

This novel portrays the Arab-Israeli conflict during the Oslo peace process from a teenager's point of view.

Yair and Dotan are best friends and are training together for a youth marathon. One day Yair is stabbed to death by an Arab. Dotan responds by turning from a contented teenager into a delinquent. He begins going to demonstrations of the far right, where the most extreme anti-Arab and anti-Rabin slogans are heard; he also participates in a raid on a neighboring Arab village. Although Dotan does little more than assist an old Arab woman who falls to the ground, the police arrest the entire gang. Dotan is released, but only his grandmother believes him, and she helps him progress from revenge to a desire for peace and security.

Published in French (_Flammarion_) and German (_Beltz & Gelberg_).

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Tami Shem-Tov

**I’m Not a Thief**

Tel Aviv, Kinneret, Zmora-Bitan, 2012.
203 pp. AGE: 10-14

Winner of 5 Prizes & Awards in Israel!

Yanek Wolf, a Jewish orphan, petty thief and outstanding athlete, lives with his older sister in Warsaw. After her marriage, she sends him to a children’s home, where he is beaten for stealing – so badly that his dream of going to the Olympic Games is shattered.

Closed and defiant, he arrives at the famous orphanage of Janus Korczak and there he experiences love, solidarity and democracy. Slowly, he changes and becomes expressive. He learns to love life, and becomes a reporter for the children's newspaper. This lovely book ends before World War II, when Yanek leaves Poland.

Yanek is a fictional character, but the plot is based on actual people and events in Korczak's orphanage in the mid-1930s. When the children were later deported by the Nazis to Treblinka, Korczak chose to accompany them, and died in the camp. But this is not part of the story.

**ENGLISH TRANSLATION AVAILABLE**

Published in Japanese (_Fukuinkan_).

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Tami Shem-Tov

**Letters from Nowhere**

Tel Aviv, Dvir, 2007. 274 pp.
CROSSOVER

Lieneke is in hiding in Nazi-occupied Holland. Her father, a brilliant scientist who is in hiding somewhere else, fills his letters with love and laughter, animals and flowers, and allusions to a different time. He illustrates them and binds them into colorful booklets which the Dutch underground delivers to Lieneke. And each one is accompanied by the order: “Destroy after reading.” _Letters from Nowhere_ is the story of an extraordinary little girl, who finds shelter in the home of a village doctor and his wife, and conceals her true identity from her schoolmates, her neighbors, the farmers, even from other Jews in hiding. And, of course, from the German soldiers. Throughout this time she waits for her father’s letters, which give her hope that she and her family will soon be free to return to their home.


**ENGLISH TRANSLATION AVAILABLE**

This prize winning book has been published in Spanish (_Planeta_; _Emece_), Catalan (_Columna_), Dutch (_Sirene_; _MM Boeken_); German (_Fischer_), Italian (_Piemme_) and Japanese (_Iwanami_).
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New BookS From ISraeL • 2016

Dorit Orgad

Under a Dark Shadow

Tel Aviv, Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 2014. 423 pp.
AGE: 11 UP

Misha, a talented 14-year-old boy, has a dark secret: his father Vladek, a violent criminal who has done time in jail, couldn’t find a job and has returned to crime. Misha’s mother Yana works in a café and Misha himself works after school for a history professor, who has become a father figure to him. After the family moves to Netanya, the situation deteriorates: Vladek beats his wife, who falls into depression and is hospitalized. Vladek himself is involved in a violent robbery and escapes to Russia. Misha holds on by teaming up with charming Mika, but she is not good for him. Then his energetic grandmother arrives from Russia to help out. Misha joins her in Jerusalem and starts work again with the professor; his mother’s condition improves and he finds a true soul-mate in Ayellet, a lovely and sensitive girl. Now he can reveal his terrible secret and leave behind the shadow that has been haunting him.

The more one gets into this surprising, moving book, the more one identifies with and admires Misha.

Dorit Orgad’s books have been published abroad in 11 languages.

The Day of the Grasshopper and Other Days

AGE: 10-15

It’s hard to be an immigrant in a new country, harder still for an immigrant who is black and may face hostility and prejudice because of the color of his/her skin. Osnat comes to Israel from Ethiopia. Her parents often quarrel because her father can’t find suitable work, and they eventually get divorced. While out for a walk one day, Osnat catches a grasshopper and gives it to a friendly boy who wants it for his collection. But from her classmates, Osnat only gets hostility. The adults, too, are unfriendly towards her and there are even some violent incidents. But the situation slowly begins to improve. Osnat’s mother finds a male friend, and Osnat takes the entrance exam to a boarding school for gifted children. There, she meets the boy to whom she gave the grasshopper when she was still a newcomer.

Illustrations: Nurit Zarfaty

ENGLISH TRANSLATION AVAILABLE

Forthcoming in Chinese (Jiangsu Children’s Press).

A Friend Not a Friend

Tel Aviv, Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 2013. 247 pp.
AGE: 9-12

Ro’i lives with his mother—his father died before he was born. He is popular at school until the arrival of a new boy, Kishi, who at first is friendly. During the Passover vacation, Ro’i flies to London to meet his ultra-Orthodox grandparents—years ago, they rejected his parents’ marriage, but now they want to meet him. When Ro’i gets home, Kishi has turned the class against him, and bullies him. So Ro’i has to cope with social isolation, with being bullied, and with his grandparents who want him to live with them in London. But Ro’i is strong and manages to overcome it all. He regains confidence and finds a true friend, a boy of Ethiopian origin. He also finds a girlfriend who loves animals just like him. And finally he meets a father figure—a kindly veterinarian who befriends his mother and gives new meaning to both her and Ro’i’s lives.

Illustrations: Avi Katz

The Teenager from Bordeaux

AGE: 11-16

Jacques, the son of an art dealer in Bordeaux, discovers that his family had to flee Spain. His father considers himself a Christian, but his uncle’s family observe Jewish customs in secret. When his uncle and aunt set sail for Brazil, Jacques, who came to see them off, becomes a stowaway. The journey is filled with breathtaking adventures. Muslim pirates seize the vessel, Jacques is wounded, loses his memory and later joins the ship’s crew. Then Corsican pirates attack and take over after a bloody battle. Jacques is sold into slavery and ends up on the island of Malta, where he becomes a groom in a knighthly order. And here he meets up with a Jewish girl, and when he sees her lighting Sabbath candles, his memory returns. Now he knows who he is, who his parents are, and what people he belongs to.

Illustrations: Avi Katz
Edna Kaplan-Hagler

**Nama’s Adventures**

Tel Aviv, Kinneret, 2009. 150 pp. AGE: 7 UP

Nama the ant is 11 years old and all her friends in the ant colony come to celebrate her birthday. For them, this party is just like any other, but to Nama it means that she is finally old enough to solve the mystery of her parents’ disappearance. In the famine after the Great Flood, Nama’s father volunteered to join a group that set out to search for food, and when he didn’t return her mother went to find him. But no one never returned. The rest of the colony were sure they had drowned or been captured by the Yellow Ants, but Nama never lost faith.

With courage, resourcefulness and a kind heart too, Nama manages to infiltrate the Yellow Kingdom and find her exhausted parents. She learns that peace is possible even between the fiercest enemies, that in times of need enemies sometimes turn out to be real friends. And that, however small, she can play an important part in changing the course of history.

Illustrations: David Gerstein

**PARTIAL ENGLISH TRANSLATION AVAILABLE**

Edna Kaplan-Hagler

**Didi Is a Temporary Name**

Tel Aviv, Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 2012. 103 pp. AGE: 8-12

A heart-warming tale of love between dog and man, and of the bond between dogs and wild foxes.

An injured dog is brought to an animal shelter, and Dalia and Yoram, who look after the animals, call her Didi. Of course, all the animals there have relationships, just like people. And each dog has its own personality, but they all long for the same thing—to find a warm and loving home.

Now Didi wants to find out where she comes from. With the help of tough, pessimistic Jerry and naïve, optimistic Muki, she steals out one night to the hills where she meets a fox. As she replies to its wails, something stirs inside her. So she joins the pack of foxes, and they all set out to search for her family—who are delighted to find her alive! Finally, with Jerry and Muki and a whole escort of foxes, Didi goes home and all three dogs get a loving family.

Illustrations: Zagny Ormut-Durbin

**PARTIAL ENGLISH TRANSLATION AVAILABLE**

Dorit Orgad

**The Boy from Seville**

Jerusalem, Zalman Shazar Center, 1984. 151 pp. AGE: 11-16

Manuel Nuñez, the teenage narrator, describes Jewish life during the Spanish Inquisition in 17th-century Seville. Manuel’s life changes dramatically when he learns his family’s secret: they are Jews. Especially afraid of their servants, the family has ways of secretly following Jewish tradition. Life in Seville is a minefield for secret Jews, but the family has experience in leading this double life. Later, Manuel falls in love with Violante whose sister Leore, suspected of being a witch, has been imprisoned. Unfortunately, his relationship with Violante brings his family closer to the Inquisitors. The family’s escape to Amsterdam by sea is a satisfying resolution to the story. But it is the novel’s realistic portrayal of the period and the family’s struggles that make the strongest impression.

The book was awarded the Ze’ev Prize in 1987.

Illustrations: Avi Katz

**ENGLISH TRANSLATION AVAILABLE**

Published in English (Kar-Ben), French (Hachette Jeunesse), German (Alibaba; dtv junior), Italian (Mondadori), Spanish (Loguez), Russian (Aliya) and Serbian (Book & Marco).

Dorit Orgad

**Leaving Cordoba**


Leaving Cordoba follows a Jewish boy’s perilous escape from the Spanish Inquisition. In 1640, Carlos Ferrera’s parents are arrested by the Inquisition, and 13-year-old Carlos understands that they are secret Jews. His mother is sentenced to life in prison; his father is to die, and Carlos himself escapes to Uncle Carmelo in Malaga.

Uncle and nephew decide to risk the dangerous flight to Antwerp, which has become a haven for secret Jews fleeing from the Inquisition. After experiencing a rotting, leaky boat, brutal pirates and life-threatening storms, the crew that arrives in Antwerp is destitute. But Carlos cannot give up the absurd idea of rescuing his mother. Using his recently discovered artistic talent to his advantage, he brings a famous French art collector to Bordeaux, not far from the Spanish border. He reaches the fortress where his mother is imprisoned and, in a hair-raising climax, the two escape Cordoba for good.

Dorit Orgad has produced a powerful evocation of time and place.

Illustrations: Avi Katz

**ENGLISH TRANSLATION AVAILABLE**

Published in Japanese (Ca et La Shobo).
Dalya B. Cohen

**Uri and Sami**

Tel Aviv, Massada, 1981. 89 pp.  
AGE: 9-14

Uri is a dreamer. On a class trip to the mountains he lies back in a warm, sunny spot and dreams until he loses his class. He finds a cave to shelter him from the heavy rain, until he can find his way back. During the stormy night Uri is joined by a strange, shy waif named Sami who knows how to survive the elements. Sami is an Arab from nearby. The two boys' fear decreases when they realize that they have more in common than separates them. And their connection grows when they join forces to avoid the soldiers who are searching for Uri – because Uri wants to stay a bit longer with his new friend.

Again and again, the boys' growing friendship is threatened by their deep-rooted mistrust but they overcome it. When Uri is attacked by a wolf, Sami carries his bleeding friend across the border into an enemy Arab country where his own family nurses Uri back to health.

**ENGLISH TRANSLATION AVAILABLE**

Published in French (Hachette Jeunesse), German (Alibaba; dtv junior), Japanese (Yugaku-Sha) and Italian (Giunti).

Tsuya Lahav

**André’s Wooden Clogs**

Tel Aviv, Kinneret, 2002. 239 pp.  
AGE: 12 UP

Based on the memories of Arie Ben-Peli

André is six years old in 1942 when his family is endangered by Nazi persecution. Separated from his parents and his little brother, he is taken in by a farming family who look after him devotedly for two years as if he were their own child. Unexpectedly for a novel of this sort, the chapters overflow with joie de vivre as we watch the city child's adjustment to village life, his warm relationship with the family, his love of animals and the way he adapts to farmwork. During this time, the dramatic separation from his parents heals. At the end of the war André's parents, survivors, return to take their child and André again experiences the pain of separation. It will take time – all the family is reunited, but he will never forget his Dutch father, mother, brother and sister.

**ENGLISH TRANSLATION AVAILABLE**

Published in Dutch (van Waveren) and Italian (El). Forthcoming in Chinese (Jiangsu Children’s Press).

Ruth Almog

**The Silver Ball**

Tel Aviv, Am Oved, 1986. 79 pp.  
AGE: 8-12

Pnina lives in a small Jewish town in the 1940s, under the British Mandate. The story of the silver ball begins when Pnina changes her name to Julie and her scary old neighbor, Daylight, refuses to use it. Conflict ensues, and when Pnina finds a beautiful silver ball – made of tin foil – in the orchard, she suspects that Daylight wants her to be accused of stealing. At the same time, Pnina-Julie meets Rivka, a mute pianist who plays Chopin waltzes beautifully. Even though Rivka snubs her, Pnina still hangs around her door, hoping to catch a few notes.

One day, Daylight calls Pnina to his house. Inside, she finds the weakest, palest boy she has ever seen – Yariv, Daylight's grandson. When Yariv and his grandfather disappear for over a week, she realizes that Yariv has died. At that crucial moment, Rivka hands Pnina a second silver ball. The kindness reaches her through her shock and Pnina begins to sob.

**ENGLISH TRANSLATION AVAILABLE**

Published in German (St. Gabriel; Beltz), Italian (Mondadori), Dutch (Ploegsma) and Chinese (China Juvenile & Children).

Ruth Almog

**My Journey with Alex**

AGE: 11-16

The story of brothers Erwin and Alex is similar to that of many children who lost their parents during the Holocaust and wandered from place to place, hiding all the time and suffering in body and soul. This story is told by Erwin, who lived in the German city, Worms. His physician father is taken away by the Nazis, and his mother decides to send her two sons alone by train to their uncle Marcus in Strasbourg where he lives as a Christian. The children are warned not to reveal their Jewish identity. When the Germans invade Strasbourg, Marcus and his wife take Alex and flee to Montpellier. Erwin is sent to stay with a French peasant family. After the war, Erwin returns to Montpellier to look after his brother, as he had promised his mother. He and Alex emigrate to the Land of Israel, where his mother's sister lives in a cooperative village. Alex gradually overcomes the trauma of those years and finds comfort in horses.

**ENGLISH TRANSLATION AVAILABLE**

Published in German (Sauerlander) and Serbian (Book & Marco). Forthcoming in Chinese (Jiangsu Children’s Press).
**Jonathan Yavin**

**Anti**

AGE: 12-15

Dror, nicknamed Anti, is a rebellious 14-year-old going through a personal crisis – he's aggressive towards adults, doesn't study, and feels that no one understands him. Until, at a music store, he meets Arad and Lisa, who started “Rapture,” a teenage rap group. They bring him into the group – he's very talented – and this helps him escape his worries. He also falls in love with Lisa.

But all is not well: Arad, the charismatic leader, is a tyrant and forces everyone to shoplift. Dror decides to rebel: he does battle-raps with some of the others and eventually leaves the group with Lisa. The two start a new group and prepare for the national rap contest. We follow the contest with bated breath, and the results are very surprising.

*Anti* is a quick, angry and touching book for young adults. It is uniquely written in rap rhythm, and is narrated in Dror's very honest voice. Rap music saves him – he learns to love and is inspired to make his way as a young artist.

**Miriam Akavia**

**An End to Childhood**

1975; Jerusalem, Yad Vashem, 1998; 2000
AGE: 13 UP

Yurik, 17, and his sister Anya belong to a wealthy Jewish family in Cracow. When the Germans invade Poland in 1939, the family loses everything and are moved to the ghetto, living in squalid conditions with three other families.

When the *Aktion* start, their father buys them false papers and sends them to Lvov. Yurik makes contact with the Polish underground. But it is hard to find work or lodging – their papers are bad forgeries and discovery is only a matter of time. Then Yurek falls into the hands of the Gestapo and is sent to jail. For a time he does hard labor outside the jail, but one of the labor groups escapes and they all expect to die. Yurik manages to escape to the alleys of the ghetto, and at this point, as he stands between life and death, the story ends.

A riveting, touching story narrated by Yurik, the author's brother. He did not survive – hence the open ending of the story.

Published in Dutch (*Strengholts*), English (*Vallentine Mitchell*), Swedish (*Prisma*), German (*Guetersloher*), Polish (*Wydawnictwo; Muzeum Oswiecim*), Hungarian (*Belvarosi*), Russian (*Gesharim/Mosti Kulturi*).

**Eli Amir**

**Scapegoat**

AGE: 13 UP

Have you ever been in a culture different from the one you came from? This colorful story, based on the author’s own life, tells of 13-year-old Nuri, originally from Iraq, and a group of immigrant youngsters from Iraq, Romania, Morocco and Poland who came to Israel in the 1950s. Living and studying in a kibbutz, their shocking encounters with this new way of life cause a conflict between two cultures, East and West. We follow Nuri's experiences and see the lives of the other youngsters, who respond to the new reality each in his or her own way. Nuri is torn between his old world and the charms of the new. But although he longs to be part of Israeli society, he doesn't want to become estranged from his family and the culture that bred him. Readers who have moved from one country or society to another, or have ever felt like outsiders, will find themselves in this novel.

A bestseller in Israel, *Scapegoat* has received the Youth Aliya Prize (Israel) and the Jewish World Literature Prize (Mexico).

Published in English (*Weidenfeld & Nicholson; Am Oved*), German (*Alibaba*), Russian (*Am Oved*), Turkish (*Apollon*), Azeri (*Alatoran*), Italian (*Giuntina*) and Macedonian (*Goten*).

**Yael Roseman**

**Strange Girl with Earrings**

AGE: 11-13

For Marianna Huberman and her father, arriving from Eastern Europe, Israel is not the promised land they had hoped. They are housed in an unwelcoming immigrant project, where Marianna's appearance marks her out as an oddity: “She had two thick black braids wrapped around her head like a basket” and she clutches a teddy bear with glass eyes. The children watching her couldn't know that this bear was all she had to remind her of her mother. Or that years ago, Marianna's sick mother was sent to Israel, because of the warmer climate, but that since then, she has been missing.

Dr. Huberman and his daughter follow up every clue relating to Marianna's mother, every small lead. Her father despairs, but Marianna does not give up. This book has become a classic about the immigrant experience, with Marianna as the resilient newcomer. It has been serialized on Israel TV.

Published in German (*Alibaba; pb Rowohlt*).
Ran Cohen
Harounoff

Hanneke and Fiet

AGE: 6-9

Amsterdam, World War II: Hanneke, age three, is separated from her parents and sent into hiding. At first she is moved from place to place and is frightened. But when she comes to the home of Fiet, a little Dutch girl, she finds a friend and gets the warmth she missed so much. Fiet’s parents treat Hanneke like their own and promise that when the war is over her parents will come and get her.

Around them the war rages on, and they see soldiers through the windows. But inside the house, Fiet plays with Hanneke and tells her stories so she won’t be scared. Finally, three years later, Hanneke’s parents come and fetch her.

This is a story about good, brave people, and about friendship in the midst of misery. Hanneke is actually the writer’s mother, and he tells the story of her survival with love and sensitivity.

Illustrations: Vali Mintzi

ENGLISH TRANSLATION AVAILABLE

Yuval Elbashan

Unfinished

Tel Aviv, Yedioth Ahronoth, 2011. 120 pp.
AGE: 8-12

Ten-year-old Eylam finds an unfinished story on his grandfather’s desk, about a book and two brothers in Warsaw in the 1930s. The older brother had given it to the younger, and written inside: “Take care of this book and it will take care of you.” Eylam loves books too, and he pushes his grandpa to finish the story. His grandpa gives in, describing how the younger brother is separated from his favorite book when the Nazis invade Poland. Thus Eylam learns that his Polish-born grandfather had a brother who disappeared in the Holocaust.

The book is published and is a success; it is even exhibited at the Warsaw Book Fair. And there, a boy named Philip is amazed to see that the youth on the cover looks exactly like him! He gets a copy; the dedication says: “To my grandson Eylam – take care of this book and it will take care of you.” The next day, Philip’s grandfather comes to visit. When he sees the familiar dedication, he faints. He is the brother who was thought dead! Soon after, the two grandfathers aremovingly reunited.

Illustrations: Ruth Gwily

Sarit Goren

Gili and the Little Witch

AGE: 7-11

Matilda is a cheeky little-witch, the size of a Barbie doll. After five years as an apprentice, it’s time for her final test: if she passes, she’ll be a qualified, self-employed witch! But when she opens her notebook with all the spells for the exam, everything that she’s written in magic ink is gone. The only solution is to cover the pages with a special pink ink. So Matilda gets on her broomstick with her personal turtle and sets off. At Yossi’s store in town, she sees a fabulous dolls’ house and gets inside. Just then, Auntie Mimi comes in to buy it for her niece Gili! And that’s how Gili gets to meet a real witch and a clever, speaking turtle. Now, she has someone to tell about her troubles at school.

Two days later, after being teased again at school, she can’t resist the temptation—using Matilda’s magic wand, she turns her tormentors into a mouse and a frog. Then she’s sorry, but how will she turn them back into girls before it’s too late?

Illustrations: Cristina Kadmon

Nava Macmel-Atir

Transparent

Tel Aviv, Yedioth Ahronoth, 2012. 239 pp.
AGE: 13 up

The girls in Dariah’s class don’t accept her, and only talk to her when they need something. Dariah thinks that she isn’t pretty and after school she sits in her room, playing music, singing, and creating a private world where she is beautiful and loved. One day, she finds out about a “dirty” secret that will harm Michal, the queen of the class, and wants to warn her. But her classmates’ nastiness causes her even greater pain. However, a popular musician discovers her musical talent, and she starts to feel better.

Dariah’s story is interwoven with that of Emma, a mysterious girl from Berlin who is trying to solve a family secret linked to World War II. One day, they meet by chance at Dariah’s mother’s bridal store. There, Emma finds the special wedding dress that she had been looking for. And it turns out to be special to Dariah’s mother too. The wedding dress is a catalyst: from one thing to another, the two girls find threads from the past that bind them together.
**Miron C. Izakson**

*Priorities – Letter to a Teacher*

Tel Aviv, Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 2013. 104 pp.
AGE: 9 UP

Avi’s homeroom teacher has asked all the kids to list the things that they are interested in, in order of priority, and to write them in the form of a letter—like in the olden days. So 12-year-old Avi writes to his teacher, telling her his thoughts and what is important to him, like his search for identity, his relationship with his Mom and Dad and his feelings for Nili, who’s in his class and thinks he’s a little weird. He also writes about the dreams that he has at night, and his fears, about the nature of time, the role of numbers in the world, and the pleasure of writing. Through Avi’s letter, the book explores questions that people often think about, from the vantage point of an intelligent, sensitive adolescent with a sense of humor, who looks at the world around and tries to understand his innermost thoughts and feelings.

Illustrations: Danny Kerman

ENGLISH TRANSLATION AVAILABLE

Published in Chinese (Harbin Pub, Nanjang). His books of poetry and fiction have been published in French, English, Norwegian, Russian.

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**Nira Harel**

*One Too Many*

Tel Aviv, Am Oved, 1993. 83 pp.
AGE: 13-15

Merav, a girl from an average Israeli family with three children, tells us about her family’s adoption of Ronnie, an abandoned baby girl with Down’s Syndrome. When Mother decides to bring Ronnie home, a wave of hostile reactions surges through the family. Merav hates the idea, but can’t stop wondering: “If I’d been born retarded, would they have taken me home or not?” Eventually, Merav learns to accept the change and Ronnie becomes part of the family. “I used to think,” Merav muses, “that parents love a problem child less. But in our family it’s the other way round. Ronnie is the center of everything.”

ENGLISH TRANSLATION AVAILABLE

Published in German (Alibaba; Omnibus) and Chinese (China Juvenile & Children Pub.).

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**Nira Harel**

*A New Hat*

AGE: 10-12

Grandpa Ze’ev is ill in hospital, but Noam, age 13, doesn’t really know why. He is used to not being told anything and gets most of his information by eavesdropping. When Noam finally convinces his mother to take him to visit, Grandpa Ze’ev’s weakness is painful to see. He asks Noam to take home his new hat so that it won’t get damaged. Grandpa Ze’ev’s ex-wife – Noam’s Grandma – arrives from America and Noam understands that his grandpa is very ill. Although he sees his father cry for the first time, no one actually tells him anything – and they don’t tell him when Grandpa Ze’ev dies. But Noam is given Grandpa Ze’ev’s new hat and he clutches it as a symbol of new times. He has encountered mortality and learned that there are problems that have no solution.

Illustrations: Avner Katz

Published in German (Alibaba).

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**Nira Harel**

*Frontal Collision*

AGE: 12-14

Fifteen-year-old Anat comes from a good home. Her journalist mother is a strong, warm, modern woman. Her father, a university lecturer, provides well for his family, but he doesn’t have much time and accepts his family as a given. The story centers around a serious road accident in which Anat’s mother is injured. The book does not deal with the accident itself but rather with its effect on the family, their mutual relationships, the changes that occur as a result of the accident, and on adolescent Anat in particular. The collision between the two cars in the accident is only one of several collisions that occur in the family during the time of Anat’s sexual and mental development.

PARTIAL ENGLISH TRANSLATION AVAILABLE

Published in German (Alibaba; Rowohlt).
Nurit Zarchi

**A Feel for Business**
Tel Aviv, Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 1998. 43 pp.  
AGE: 8-10

Ma’ayan is not one of those sweet little girls who spend their time playing with dolls. She is practical, and she thinks young girls have a role to play in the adult world. Ma’ayan is proud of the business sense she has inherited from her father. Recently, her father has been having financial problems. “How can I help him?” Ma’ayan wonders. Then she comes up with an original plan. She’ll sell their most valuable possession, her younger sister, who everyone likes so much… No need to worry, the potential buyers are family friends but no one can believe that Ma’ayan is serious. In the meantime, her mother also thinks of a plan. She will sell all the antiques that her grandmother brought to Israel from Germany. But Ma’ayan’s “business sense” tells her to save a small chest, and in one of the drawers she finds a book, listing all of the family members and their birth dates. Ma’ayan understands that family members are not to be sold.

Published in French (L’École des Loisirs), Spanish (SM Spain; SM Peru) and Portuguese (SM, Brazil).

**Wolfinea Momi Bloom**
Tel Aviv, Massada, 1986. 68 pp.  
AGE: 9-11

The story is told through the letters that 10-year-old Momi writes to his elderly neighbor, Aliza Sahaf. Momi walks Aliza’s dog for her while she is in America. He also waters her plants, guards a nest of goslings and helps to birth puppies. When Momi starts growing orchids, he puts them in Aliza’s bathtub, and it’s his prize bloom that gives the book its title. Momi and Aliza become close through their letters and, in between daily news, Momi tells her about his divorced parents – his mother’s irritable boyfriend and his father’s greedy fiancée. Momi’s deadpan descriptions poke fun at the absurdity of adults and make for sparkling amusement.

Illustrations: Avi Katz

Published in Spanish (Sudamericana).

**Don’t Banish Nanny**
Tel Aviv, Sifriat Poalim, 1979. 93 pp.  
AGE: 8-11

After Dori’s parents get divorced, the family dog, Nanny, becomes even more precious to her. And when her mother brings her “new man” home, Nanny is the one constant factor in a changing household. Gabi, the new man, dislikes dogs, especially the ones that chew shoes and can’t be taught to be good. Nanny’s future is uncertain, and Dori is made responsible for the dog’s behavior. Perhaps Gabi won’t tolerate little girls either? Dori is resentful and afraid for Nanny, despite the adults’ efforts to win her round. Gabi will have to prove that he accepts the dog before Dori can relax and feel secure. And prove it he does. When Nanny is injured in a car accident, it is the new man who is sensitive and encouraging, and his honest concern for the dog wins Dori’s trust.

*Don’t Banish Nanny* received an Andersen Citation and the 1979 Bernstein Prize for Children’s Literature.

Illustrations: Avner Katz

Published in German (Loewes) and Spanish (Loguez).

**Ronit Matalon**

**A Story that Begins with a Snake’s Funeral**
Tel Aviv, Dvir, 1979; 1994. 168 pp.  
AGE: 12 UP

This lovely story has three spirited and entertaining heroes. First, there is Benjamin, who saves his schoolmate from a poisonous snake and becomes a legend in his small town. He also jumps off the water tower and makes a four-person bicycle. Then, his 11-year-old sister Margalit who is tempestuous and writes rhapsodies to her cousin signed “your loving and ever-loyal cousin.” And finally, there is their grandmother, Madame Rachelle, who is the star of this story. It is largely to her – the way she gives her hand to be kissed when she meets a gentleman at an ice-cream parlor, and the North-African French she speaks – that the book owes its piquant Mediterranean charm. With her endless store of aphorisms and stories, Madame Rachelle is ready for any challenge, and her grandchildren’s escapades show that they take after her. From her they learn to deal with loss and how imagination can turn any dilemma into an adventure.

Illustrations: Ruth Tzarfati

Published in German (Hanser).