

Miami Book Fair to include authors presenting Holocaust-themed works

Ellen G. Friedman will present her book "The Seven, A Family Holocaust Story" on Nov. 18 during the 2018 Miami Book Fair. (Sara McCrane/Courtesy)



Sergio Carmona - Contact Reporter Florida Jewish Journal

Authors will present Jewish-themed books during the 2018 Miami Book Fair this month at Miami-Dade College's Wolfson Campus.

During the book fair, a presentation called "Jewish Lives: A Reading from Nonfictions" takes place on Nov. 18 at 2:30 p.m in Room 1365 with authors Ellen G. Friedman and Meri-Jane Rochelson presenting their books.

Friedman will present her book, "The Seven, A Family Holocaust Story," which is an account of the displacement of Polish Jews in the aftermath of World War II. Most Polish Jews who survived the war did not go to concentration camps, but were banished by Stalin to the remote prison settlements and Gulags of the Soviet Union.

Friedman, who was born to Polish Jews on the run from the Nazis, said, "Whenever people hear about the Holocaust, they think of barbed wires, train tracks, concentration and death camps, and I think what people don't know is

that the 10 percent of Eastern European Jews who survived the war survived it the way my family survived, which was in the USSR."

Friedman said there are two things she hopes the attendees can take away from her presentation on this book, which is based on primary interviews and told in a blending of past and present experiences.

"One is this story of Jewish survival, which adds to the whole Holocaust story. The second thing I'd like them to take away is sympathy for immigrants and people who have been exiled from their country. I think the central thesis of my book is the condition of immigration and exile, which I think is the condition of our times."

Rochelson will present the biography "Eli's Story: A Twentieth-Century Jewish Life," which tells the story of her father, a Jewish doctor from Lithuania whose life and memory spanned two world wars, several migrations, an educational odyssey and the disruption of the Holocaust.

Rochelson mentioned a few things she hopes people take away from her presentation, first and foremost learning the story of her father, who was born in 1907 and died in 1984.

"He had quite a full life before the Holocaust and then the Holocaust just completely disrupted that and he had to rebuild everything. He lost his wife and his son who were both killed, he went through the ghetto and Dachau Concentration Camp and he came to the United States without his diploma in hand and had to re-establish his medical credentials, which he did, and he married my mother, started a new family, became part of her family and reconnected with family of his that lived in the other parts of the United States."

Rochelson's book includes her father's own words taken from an interview he did with her brother in the 1970s.

"I printed the interview in its entirety as an appendix to the text, but I also printed it substantially throughout the narrative so that wherever my father can tell the story best, he tells the story."

The book fair also includes American-born Israeli entrepreneur financier Tal Keinan presenting his book, "God is in the Crowd: Twenty-First Century Judaism" at 11 a.m. on Nov. 18 on Room 8303. This book is presented through the lens of Keinan's personal story and is analysis of the threat to Jewish continuity.

There will also be a presentation for teenagers in grades ninth through 12th later that day called "We Must Bear Witness: Remembering the Holocaust" at 4 p.m. at **MDC** Live Arts Lab. Presenters for this program will be John Hendrix, who will present his book "The Faithful Spy," the true story of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who made the ultimate sacrifice to free the German people from Hitler's Nazi agenda; Tara Lynn Masih who will present "My Real Name is Hanna," about a group of Ukrainian Jews who are forced to flee to underground caves as a girl must keep them all alive; and Jennifer A. Nielsen who will present "Resistance," about a teenager who joins a Jewish resistance cell in Nazi-occupied Poland as she is determined to save as many lives as possible.

Call 305-237-3258 or visit miamibookfair.com for more information, including full schedule with times, building locations and prices. MDC's Wolfson Campus is located at 300 NE 2nd Ave. in Miami.

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