

# HERITAGE

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## Author's work on stage in NYC

By Lyn Payne  
Assistant Editor

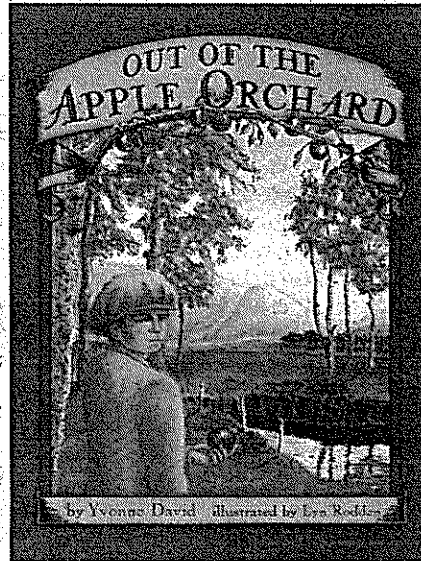
Not only did Yvonne David's children's book "Out of the Apple Orchard" recently win an honorable mention in the category of "Multicultural Children's Fiction" at the Independent Publisher Book Awards, now it's going to be staged as a play reading put on by New York City's Mesaper Theatre on Sept. 17.

Ellen Kaplan, professor at Smith College, has adapted the work for the stage. "Out of the Apple Orchard" is a charming book, which presents a story of heart and hope, with humor, action, and very human characters," says Kaplan. "It's a story we can all relate to, perfect for children of course, and perfect for the holidays. The process of bringing this rich and remarkable story to the stage was pure pleasure, and I am thrilled to see it come to life in production with Mesaper Theatre."

Not bad for a book that began as an idea sparked by David's son's teacher at Congregation of Reform Judaism. Elana Walzer found out David was a writer and asked her if she'd like to write a High Holi-

day book. David at first thought, "I was the wrong person" to write such a book. But the idea took hold, and one day the image of a boy wearing an old-fashioned cap and fashioning in an apple tree appeared in her head. That boy became Adam, the hero of the story, who learns to make things right when hunger drives him to steal apples from a neighbor. But David still needed the setting, and it took some time before she settled on the Catskill Mountains, circa 1910. Once she did, the research took off, and the story came together.

David, originally from England, knew little about the famed American Jewish resorts in the Catskills. She did extensive research to get the historical and cultural background exactly right, consulting with scholars and forming a relationship with the current leaders of the



Central Florida resident Yvonne David's book "Out of the Apple Orchard" appeals to readers of all ages.

town of Mountainview, N.Y., where her story is set.

"I see 'Out of the Apple Orchard' ... as a play produced annually right before the Jewish High Holidays, in order for all Jews to come together in preparation for Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year and Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement," says Mesaper Theatre's artistic

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## Author

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director Nicole Raphael. "The story is a reminder of forgiveness, which is a timeless lesson worthy of being retold year after year for the whole family and for children of all ages."

David is currently at work on a new book that continues the story of Adam Bierman and his family to 1938, the year of the infamous Kristallnacht in Europe that reached across the ocean to touch the lives of American Jews as well. That book will be the second in a projected series of four, each set during one of the Jewish holidays.

"Anger that people hold in their heart is just destructive," says David. She hopes

that her story can convey the High Holiday message that "when things are wrong, you make amends." David says of that lesson, "It's not just for children, but for adults and for all ethnic groups." And in acknowledgement of the hunger felt by real families living today, David and her publisher donate at least 5 percent of each book's retail price to Jewish Family Services' Pearlman Food Pantry.

Over the last year, David and her book have been the featured attraction at events and book signings throughout Central Florida synagogues and schools, and as a part of the 2006 Jewish Arts Week. In addition to her own writing, David is a board member of the Jack Kerouac Writers in Residence Project

of Orlando, Inc., and is active in the Central Florida Jewish community.

"Out of the Apple Orchard" will be staged as a reading with a question-and-answer session with the author on Sunday, Sept. 17, at 1:30 p.m. at Aish NY, 313 W. 83rd St. in Manhattan. The cost is \$10 per adult, and \$15 per family. To RSVP, call 212-414-7698.

For more information about Yvonne David and "Out of the Apple Orchard," or to order, e-mail outoftheappleorchard@earthlink.net. The book is also available online through Amazon.com and BarnesandNoble.com, at Scott Laurent Gallery in Winter Park, and at synagogue gift shops. The book is published by Arbiter Press, Orlando and New York.