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“Breathtaking” Debut Novel Garners National Honor

Scott E. Blumenthal’s debut novel *The Kiss* has received the Independent Publisher Book Award’s gold medal for historical fiction.

Blumenthal received the award at the May 28 award ceremony in New York City. Jim Barnes, director of the Independent Publisher Book Awards, said Blumenthal’s Holocaust novel “reminds us that lives can be taken but artistry lives on,” and that “*The Kiss* celebrates the magical spirit that survives.”

Launched in 1996, the IPPY honors the year’s best independently published titles from small publishers around the world.

The Kiss tells the story of Aron Beckman, an extraordinary young Jewish musician living in Poland as Nazi leader Adolf Hitler’s shadow creeps across Europe. After inheriting his family’s secret musical heirloom, Aron discovers his astonishing gift: to awaken his listeners’ sweetest memories, bringing joy and hope at a time of mounting horror (Loose Leaves Publishing, \$18.95).

Blumenthal, a senior editor with an educational publisher, said he was trying to purge his lifelong nightmares about the Holocaust with his love of music. “What came out was a story about the power of the human spirit—of a light in a time of great darkness,” he said

Blumenthal will be reading Tuesday, June 17 at 7 p.m. at the Barnes & Noble in Cary.

Ari L. Goldman, former *New York Times* religion writer and author of *The Search for God at Harvard*, called *The Kiss* a “breathtaking novel, a musical story set against the backdrop of the Holocaust—filled with wonder and surprises—that will stay with you long after you’ve read the last page.”

Elizabeth Volpe, two-time Pushcart Prize nominee and author of *Brewing in Eden*, wrote that the novel was “both brutal and breathtaking. I couldn’t put it down, and when the end came I couldn’t bear to part with it...a stunning, heartbreaking page-turner.”

To request a review copy of *The Kiss* or to schedule a reading, signing, or interview with Blumenthal, please visit www.scotteblumenthal/contact.

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