

# **Singer, Isaac Bashevis (1904-1991)**

## **Encyclopedia Article**

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## Singer, Isaac Bashevis (1904-1991)

Singer is considered almost by unanimous consent to be the greatest postwar writer of Yiddish literature. Born on July 14, 1904 in Leoncin, Poland, child of a Chasidic rabbi and pious mother, Singer first made his mark in Yiddish literature in Poland, having published his first novel, *Satan in Goray*, in serialized form in 1934. The next year Singer moved to America where he began writing for the Yiddish-language newspaper the *Jewish Daily Forward*. His creativity blocked by his relocation, Singer produced little fiction until 1943, when an explosion of short stories and novels erupted from his pen that continued until his death on July 24, 1991. In 1966, he published his first of several well-received children's books, *Zlateh the Goat*. In 1978, Singer received the Nobel prize for literature. Several of his works were filmed, including his novels *The Magician of Lublin* and *Enemies, A Love Story*, as well as his short story "Yentl, the Yeshiva Boy," which formed the basis of the musical *Yentl*, which starred Barbra Streisand in the lead role.

### Further Reading:

Farrell, Grace. *Critical Essays on Isaac Bashevis Singer*. Boston, Twayne, 1996.

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Hadda, Janet. *Isaac Bashevis Singer: A Life*. New York, Oxford University Press, 1997.

Lee, Grace Farrell. *From Exile to Redemption: The Fiction of Isaac Bashevis Singer*. Carbondale, Southern Illinois University Press, 1987.

Miller, David Neal. *Fear of Fiction: Narrative Strategies in the Works of Isaac Bashevis Singer*. Albany, SUNY Press, 1985.