



VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

OCTOBER 2024 NEWSLETTER

Website Address: <https://voicesisrael.com/>

Amuta No. 58-019-703-6

President

Julian Alper

Mobile: 054-307-3587

president.voices@gmail.com

Secretary

Bob Findysz

Mobile: 054-563-7362

secretary.voices@gmail.com

Treasurer

Chanita Millman

Tel: 02-653-6770

millmanm@inter.net.il

Membership Coordinator

Yochanan Zaqantov

Mobile: 053-708-9140

zaqantov@gmail.com

Workshop Coordinator

Elana Dorfman

Mobile: 054-668-6513

elanado@gmail.com

Newsletter Editor

Julian Alper

Mobile: 054-307-3587

newsletter.voices@gmail.com

Webmistress

Judy Koren

Mobile: 054-741-7860

koren.judy@gmail.com

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Art of the month Miriam Webber's Mosaic on page 8



This month's Essay on page 8

Esther Cameron's Poetry and Teshuva (The Return)

Aphorism of the Month

Poetry is a life hack to make
joys deeper and sadnesses
more meaningful.

from Simon Constam,
author of *Daily Ferocity*, on
Instagram



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PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Dear Friends,

This last year has been truly an *annus horribilis*, like no other year most of us have known. Everyone in Israel, and the whole People of Israel has suffered unbearably. Thousands of lives have been lost or changed for ever and as I write, there is no end in sight. Amongst those who were murdered so monstrously were our member Judih Weinstein Haggai and her husband whose *yahrtzeits*, along with many hundreds of others, will be commemorated during this coming month. In tribute to her memory, this Newsletter includes a link to Judih's YouTube Channel where you can hear her reading some of her poems. We hope and pray that all the hostages will be brought home soon, safe and well, and that all our soldiers too will return safely. We also hope and pray for a good and peaceful year for our members together with all the People of Israel, wherever in the world they are.

There's still time to enter the Reuben Rose Competition. The closing date for submissions is **October 15th, 2024**. More details about the competition are in the [Calls for Submissions](#) section of this Newsletter. To date, more than 90 poems have been submitted – **don't forget to submit your poems before the close.**


The launch of the 2024 Anthology was just a week or two ago. This was a hybrid event with 16 members and friends attending in Netanya, and a further 25 connecting via Zoom. Hybrid events are quite difficult to manage and next time we hope to learn from this year's event to make it an equally good experience for those on Zoom and those attending live. That said, it was a wonderful evening – the highlight of which was to hear 30 poets read their poems so beautifully and meaningfully. There are photos from the launch on [page 11](#) – and if you weren't able to participate you can see a recording on our YouTube channel [here](#).

Ahead of the next Anthology there will be a change of Editor-in-Chief – see the announcement in the Newsletter [here](#).

The forthcoming workshop (see details [here](#)) on 30th October is fully subscribed. Anyone who registers now will go onto a 'waiting list' and will be able to attend if there are any cancellations. If you have registered and can't attend for any reason, please e-mail me right away so that someone else can take your place.

Wishing everyone a *Ketiva v'Chatima Tova*, a good, healthy, happy, prosperous and peaceful New Year.

Kind regards,



Julian Alper,
President, Voices Israel.

EDITOR'S NOTES

This month's edition includes artwork from Miriam Webber and a poetry essay from Esther Cameron. We welcome submissions of your art and essays for future Newsletters, please e-mail to newsletter.voices@gmail.com or telephone 054-307-3587 to discuss.

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MEETING DATES, TIMES AND PLACES - OCTOBER 2024

<p>SOUTHERN</p> <p>Meeting via Zoom Sunday, October 27 at 5:00 PM</p> <p>Coordinator: Miriam Green</p> <p>miriamsgreen@gmail.com</p>	<p>TEL AVIV</p> <p>Meeting via Zoom Thursday, October 31 at 7:00 PM</p> <p>Coordinator: Mark L. Levinson Mobile: 054-444-8438</p> <p>nosnivel@netvision.net.il</p>	<p>JERUSALEM</p> <p>Meeting via Zoom Tuesday, October 29 At 7:30 PM</p> <p>Coordinator: Avril Meallem Tel: 02-567-0998</p> <p>aemeallem@gmail.com</p>	<p>UPPER GALILEE</p> <p>Wednesday, October 9 at 10:30 AM at the home of Reuven and Yehudit.</p> <p>128 Keren HaYesod Artists Quarter, Tzfat</p> <p>Coordinator: Reuven Goldfarb Tel: 04-697-4105 Mobile: 058-414-0262</p> <p>poetsprogress@gmail.com</p>
<p>HAIFA</p> <p>Tuesday, October 15 at 7:00 PM at Wendy Blumfield's home</p> <p>Contact Naomi Yalin for details</p> <p>Coordinator: Naomi Yalin Mobile: 054-794-3738</p> <p>naomiyalin@gmail.com</p>	<p>NETANYA/SHARON</p> <p>No meeting in October. Next meeting Monday, November 25 at 7:00 PM at Susan Olsburgh's home</p> <p>2/6 Zalman Shazar, 3rd floor Ramat Poleg</p> <p>Coordinator: Susan Olsburgh Mobile: 054-919-3575</p> <p>olsburgh.susan@gmail.com</p>	<p>GLOBAL GROUP 1</p> <p>Meeting via Zoom No meeting in October. Next meeting Thursday, November 7 At 19:30 Israel time</p> <p>Coordinator: Shoshana Kent Mobile: +972-52-808-9365</p> <p>y2nosh@gmail.com</p>	<p>GLOBAL GROUP 2</p> <p>Meeting via Zoom Sunday, October 27 At 19:00 Israel time</p> <p>Coordinator: Judy Koren Mobile: +972-54-741-7860</p> <p>koren.judy@gmail.com</p>

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WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Voices Israel is pleased to extend a warm welcome to our new members:

- **Reuven Hirschman** of Safed
- **Yirmiyahou Levitas** of Safed
- **Mara Lee Grayson** of New Jersey, USA
- **Mark Elber** of Massachusetts, USA
- **Raymond Isakow** of Johannesburg, South Africa

REFUAH SHELEIMAH

We wish a *refuah sheleimah*, best wishes for a full and speedy recovery, to Ruth Fogelman. Please keep Ruth (Rut bat Chana) in your thoughts and prayers.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR MEMBERS

- To - **Hayim Abramson, Julian Alper, Miriam Jaskierowicz Arman, Esther Cameron, Roberta Chester, Bob Findysz, Ruth Fogelman and Miriam Webber (Rumi Morkin)**, whose poems have been included in the Deronda Review Journal that has just been published – you can see it here: <https://www.derondareview.org/vol10no2.pdf>.
- To - **Miriam Webber (Rumi Morkin)**, whose poem was published in the special “Poems for Israel, October 2023” section of The Deronda Review online – you can see it [here](#).
- To - **Judy Koren**, whose poem "The Repairer of Dreams" has been published in *Pulsebeat*, an online magazine of mainly metrical poetry, issue 9, September 2024. You can read Judy's poem [here](#).
- To - **Diane Ray**, whose play “The Man With His Finger In The Door” was published in *Cirque*, a Literary Journal for the North Pacific Rim, volume 14 no 1. Diane's play is on page 74 of the current issue – see [here](#).
- To - **Isaac Cohen**, for his many successes this last month.
- To - **Helen Bar-Lev** – who has been appointed Poetry Ambassador in Israel by Imagine & Poesia.
- To - **Stanley H Barkan** – whose poems “March” and “La Plage Publique” were published in Mediterranean Poetry – you can read Stanley's poems [here](#).
- To - **Ruth Schreiber** – who has had three poems accepted for the October issue of All My Poems. And another by the IAWP for arc31.

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ANTHOLOGY EDITOR

For very many years, Dina Jehuda has served as Editor-in-Chief of the Voices Israel Anthology. Regrettably Dina has decided to stand down from this position. We must thank her (and her husband Yair) for years of dedicated service in judging poems submitted, together with the dedicated editorial board. Dina was also actively involved in the administration and proofreading as well as arranging the Anthology itself. Her hard work and enthusiasm will be sorely missed, but we're sure that she will still play an active role in Voices Israel. And we hope that she will find other suitable challenges to fill the huge hole in her annual schedule.

We currently have one candidate to replace Dina as Chief Editor: Judy Koren, our immediate Past President (who also, as it happens, designs and produces the physical volume of the Anthology). If anyone else would like to be considered for the position, please contact me before the end of this month, October 2024.

What the position entails: The work of Chief Editor starts well ahead of the opening of the submission period, with the need to "train in" the new members of the editorial board regarding the judging process via Submittable. During the submission period, the Chief Editor both acts as a judge and manages and coordinates the work of the other three judges (the editorial board). His or her work typically continues till the end of April or mid-May - around a month after judging is finalized by the editorial board, after the Chief Editor has established the order of appearance of the accepted poems in the volume.

CALLS FOR SUBMISSIONS

Reuben Rose Competition - The submission period runs from mid-July through mid-October each year.

All poems must be submitted, and entry fees paid via the online submissions service, Submittable. If you find you are unable to use the Submittable.com website, please write to reubenrosepoetrycompetition@gmail.com.

Entry fees for the 2024 competition: US\$6.00 for 1 poem; US\$14.00 for 3 poems; US\$19.00 for 6 poems.

Line limit per poem: 41 lines, including any stanza breaks, dedication, epigraph, etc., but not including the title. Lines that are too long to fit on one page line using a standard 12-pt font will be counted as two lines.

Do not use unconventional formatting (such as tilting words, inserting symbols, mixing font sizes, etc.).

We do not accept illustrations. Any included with the submitted poems will be discarded.

Poems must be in English and previously unpublished, in print or online, and must remain unpublished until the list of winners is e-mailed to the entrants. Inclusion in the monthly Voices Israel newsletter or in a chapbook from Voices Israel workshops is not considered publication.

Poems must have been written by the owner of the Submittable account used to submit them. Do not use someone else's account, e.g. that of a friend or relative, to submit — the submission will be recorded as the work of the account owner.

Poems are judged anonymously, without the poets' names. Please make sure that your name appears only on the Submission page, not anywhere in the file you send or in the file's name. Failure to observe this rule may result in your inability to enter the competition.

No poet may win more than one prize or Honorable Mention in the same year's competition — i.e. among the top 13, no poet will be included more than once.

We retain a non-exclusive right to publish and republish the winning poems and honorable mention winners in all media, while the poet retains copyright and can also publish elsewhere after the winners are announced.

The submission period for the 2024 competition is July 15th through October 15th, 2024. To submit, during the submission period only, please use this link <https://voicesisrael.submittable.com/submit>.

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Extended deadline - The Israel Association of Writers in English (IAWE) - will be accepting submissions from citizens and residents of Israel for the 31st issue of *arc*, its annual literary journal, **until November 16, 2024**. The theme for *arc 31* is "The Phoenix". "The Phoenix" is a theme with a very broad canvas to explore:

- We are looking for poems that make us sit up and take note.
- We are looking for language that is innovative, striking and imaginative.
- We are looking for insight, courage; a step out of your comfort zone to explore experiences that are personal and characterize our zeitgeist.

Please note: the Phoenix theme is entirely optional. Submissions may be off-theme.

The editor, Mike Stone, will consider original, unpublished poetry and short stories in English. You do not have to be a member of IAWE to submit your work.

Submission guidelines can be found [here](#).

The Frogmore Papers, founded in 1983, appear twice a year (March and September) and are edited by Jeremy Page with the assistance of Clare Best, Rachel Playforth, and Peter Stewart. They feature poems, prose, pictures, reviews and publish work by established and unknown writers. The Frogmore Papers operates a system of submission windows. Submissions for the March issue are considered from 1 – 31 October and submissions for the September issue from April 1 – 30. Submission of 4 – 6 poems from overseas may be made by email in a single Word attachment, to: frogmorepress@gmail.com. Full guidelines can be found [here](#).

Poetry London is a leading international magazine, where new names share pages with acclaimed contemporary poets. We also publish a wide range of poetry in translation. The magazine is published in March, June and October. We receive a vast amount of submissions, so reading can take up to three months, and if your work is shortlisted, maybe even longer. We pay poets £30 per poem, though appropriate adjustments may be made for very long poems. Poetry London aims to publish the best, most exciting poetry being written now, and we are always interested in work by unpublished poets, as well as celebrated ones. Submissions are read by Niall Campbell, Poetry Editor. [Submit via Submittable](#).

Deronda Review Seeks Your War Poems

THE DERONDA REVIEW (www.derondareview.org), continues to accept poems for its page "Poems for Israel, October 2023," which now contains the work of more than 40 poets. The page is being updated as new poems come in, so scroll down to find the latest! Poems for posting on this page may be sent to derondareview@gmail.com.

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Green Golem: The Zionist Literary Magazine

Green Golem is a new online Zionist literary magazine that is now open for submissions. Visit the Golem at <https://greengolemmag.com/>.



We're calling the project *Green Golem: The Zionist Literary Magazine*. The golem, a stone creature from Jewish mythology, is a symbol of Jewish innovation and self-defense. The color green represents Israel's farmers and kibbutzniks; Israel's green energy advancements; and the green uniforms of the IDF, who protect Israel today.

Green Golem will consider quality fiction, nonfiction, and poetry of any kind, but with special preference to works that include Jewish or Zionist elements; works that are set in the State of Israel; works by Jewish authors; works by Israeli authors of any faith; and works by U.S. and international authors who support Israel. Besides writing, we will also ask for submissions from painters, drawers, and other visual artists.

E-MAIL FROM MALKA KELTER TO LINDA SUCHY

This email is published with permission of both Malka Kelter and Linda Suchy

Dear Linda,

I'm in the Jerusalem Voices group, and I watched the Anthology Launch on Zoom.

I was very interested when you read your poem "The Green Door". You wrote about the house on Rehov Hanevi'im 50. That was the house where I had seudah mafseket on Erev Yom Kippur, 1973. I had made aliyah in August of that year, and a friend of mine connected me with some relatives of hers, and they invited me for dinner. So after I heard your poem, I contacted one of the granddaughters of that family, whom I still know. She told me that the house was very big, and it was divided into two halves. Her grandparents and their three daughters lived in one half of the house, and she remembers that the other family was Tzuchy, which must be Suchy. I told her about your poem, and she said she would love to read it, and share the memories with her family. Is it OK if I forward your poem to her?

Kol tuv

Malka Kelter

[Editor's Note – as well as being in the 2024 Anthology (page 39), Linda's poem, "The Green Door" is posted on the Voices Israel Facebook page].

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MIRIAM WEBBER'S MOSAIC

These "Ten green bottles," are indeed hanging on my wall. The mosaic is constructed from broken tiles, plates, bowls, cups - anything remotely green, surrounded by ditto in white. The pieces are cemented onto a large tile 60 x 30 cm, and finished with a dark grey grout. I enjoyed the challenge of imposing the shapes on each other.



POETRY AND TESHUVA (THE RETURN) - ESTHER CAMERON

*How great are Your works, HaShem;
Your thoughts are very deep.
Psalms 92:6*

A few days before Yom Kippur, I read that the Nobel Prize in physics was being awarded to three scientists who had discovered that the universe, which started expanding from the Big Bang, is not being pulled back together but it expanding at an increasing rate because of "dark energy." This provoked the following:

The world
Flying apart
Much faster than we thought
Due to dark energy. What else
Is new?

This scientific news item brought me back to an idea that has haunted me as a writer for many years.

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It just so happens that this discovery about the nature of physical reality mirrors what many of us feel is happening to the human community. "Things fall apart, the center cannot hold" – I'm probably not the only one who would consider this line by Yeats to be the prize line of the 20th century. If this is a coincidence, it is a very big coincidence. A saying by Kafka also comes to mind: "The fact that there is only a spiritual world takes away our hope and gives us certainty."

But Judaism has always had this intuition! One Kabbalistic term for this world (I read it in the Tanya) is "*'alma de-peruda*," the world of separation. Israel's historic exile is a *diaspora*, a scattering. The related concept of entropy, the direction of time's arrow, is known to the tradition as "*yeridat ha-dorot*", the decline of generations. Opposed to these is the concept of *teshuvah*, the return from separateness into oneness, from eccentric willfulness into the Will of the Creator, which is to culminate in the re-gathering of exiles, the rebuilding of the Temple as the center of the world. And surely the central statement of Judaism – "Hear, O Israel," the Lord our G-d, the Lord is One" – is meant to exert a counterforce to the outward momentum of time.

Poetry, also, is intrinsically opposed to the "dark energy" of separation, insofar as it struggles to pull disparate ideas and images together, and to create intimacy among strangers. Poetry has always had a quarrel with Time, that is not just the poet's desire for "immortality." In the past century poets have felt the accelerating alienation most keenly, and poetry has been more endangered by it than any other human faculty (unless, indeed, the simple ability to love). Rabbi Ahron Batt z"l once quoted another rabbi to the effect that "*yeridat ha-dorot*" is not a matter of what we know, but of what we are able to feel for one another. Unfortunately, in recent generations poetry has been infected with the general dissipation of feeling (as manifest in postmodern "irony," the automatic deflation of pathos, and also in the abandonment of form which often makes it difficult to distinguish between poetry and diffuse rambling). Perhaps these developments are part of what has inhibited poetry from transmitting the call to return that still goes out from the Source.

But -- poetry also bears *in itself* the impulse toward separation. The poem after all seeks individuation, wants to separate itself from the body of the language. Moreover, Rav Dessler has suggested that Adam and Eve ate from the Tree of Knowledge out of a desire to be "creative" on their own! And this suggestion is unknowingly echoed by Harold Bloom, in *The Anxiety of Influence* and *A Map of Misreading*, when he documents poets' tendency to conceal their sources and to "disunderstand" (a word coined by poet Eva Shaltiel) one another, the better to lay claim to "originality." For a contrast to this habit, Bloom briefly invokes Pirkei Avot and Rabbi Tarfon's saying, "You are not required to complete the work, neither are you free to desist from it" – the tradition as a single work, to which all contribute but in which there are no "strong" poets in Bloom's sense of seeming to stand alone, and in which acknowledgment of one's sources is of prime importance.

I cannot claim to understand fully the paradox of poetry, its ambiguous commitment to both oneness and separation. Yet my own experience as reader-and-poet has suggested to me that, despite Bloom's strictures, it is possible to create without

deafening oneself to other creators. Hence my dream -- and, yes, hope -- that by pledging to *hear* and acknowledge one another, poets could find a united strength, and could make a contribution toward the Great Return which may yet transform human society --- perhaps even, who knows, our vision of the physical universe.

First published in The Deronda Review - <https://www.derondareview.org/>

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OCTOBER 7 – POETRY BY JUDIH WEINSTEIN HAGGAI ז"ל



From Judy Koren's introduction to Voices Israel's chapbook 'Light thru Trees' published in memory of Judih:

Our long-time Voices Israel member, Judih Weinstein Haggai, and her husband Gadi Haggai, were out on their regular early-morning walk in the fields around their kibbutz, Nir Oz on the border with the Gaza Strip, when Hamas attacked on October 7, 2023. Wounded by the terrorists, Gadi seriously, they lay in a field and Judih called for help. An ambulance was sent but failed to get through to them. After the attack, IDF soldiers and volunteers searched the area but there was no trace of them. For many weeks we assumed that they had been captured alive and were hostages in Gaza.

Upon hearing the news, Voices Israel opened a "[war blog](#)" on its website to update our members with any information we could find about Judih and Gadi. Judih loved haikus, so we invited members to write haikus about her and in hopes for their safe return; several did and we put these poems too into a section of the blog. During this time we were all still hoping and praying for their release alive.

At the end of December kibbutz Nir Oz received confirmation that they had in fact been murdered on October 7 and their bodies were, and at the time of writing still are, held in the Gaza Strip.

You can hear Judih reading some of her poems that she recorded in August 2022 [here on her YouTube Channel](#).

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PHOTOS FROM THE 2024 ANTHOLOGY LAUNCH



Party Games

I was looking at our photo.
Me, brown haired (after so many years
any kind of hair
would have been impressive)
looking at the camera
smiling so broadly
it almost fills the photo.

You, strawberry blond
and gold. Your hair



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EVENTS

- The next **Voices Israel workshop** is scheduled for **Wednesday 30th October in Netanya**.



You are invited to a unique workshop.
We will work on **one poem** throughout the day. **We will learn:** to develop a free flow of writing to create raw content, to recognize overly used phrases, how to add imagery and improve the structure of our poems

Place: Susan Olsburgh's house:
2/6 Zalman Shazar St, Netanya

When: October 30th, 2024

Time: Ten AM to Four PM

Fee: 60 NIS includes **A Light kosher lunch**

Poem Under Construction

See you there

The workshop is fully subscribed. Anyone who registers now will go onto a 'waiting list' and will be able to attend if there are any cancellations. If you have registered and can't attend, for any reason, please e-mail me right away so that someone else can take your place.

SPECIAL OFFERS

Johnmichael Simon is offering his **chapbook design services** to Voices Israel members and friends.

If you would like to possess a beautifully presented and published collection of your own favorite poems, please contact Johnmichael for details of this special offer at johnmichaelsimon@gmail.com.

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