

VOICES ISRAEL
GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 2025





VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

NOVEMBER 2025 NEWSLETTER

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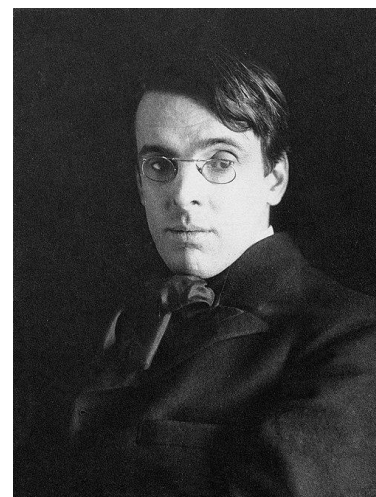
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William Butler Yeats
Photographic Portrait

[Wikipedia]

Save This Date

**Voices Israel Workshop on
Tuesday 9th December at 7pm
on Zoom.**

**See Page 11
For more details**



VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

*No sun — no moon!
No morn — no noon —
No dawn — no dusk — no proper time of day.*

*No warmth, no cheerfulness, no healthful ease,
No comfortable feel in any member —
No shade, no shine, no butterflies, no bees,
No fruits, no flowers, no leaves, no birds! —
November!*

Thomas Hood

Dear Friends,

Another full year of activities for Voices Israel is drawing to a close, and very soon we'll be inviting you to submit your best poems for our 2026 Anthology. The submission period will be from 14th December until 15th March 2026. With that in mind I'm sure you will want to participate in our pre-Chanukah workshop on 'Light' with facilitator Elana Dorfman. See the full announcement on page 11 of this Newsletter.

Reuben Rose Prize

The closing date for submissions to our prestigious competition has now passed and the judges are busy judging the poems.

Bar Sagi Prize

We are now accepting submissions for the Bar Sagi competition for young poets in Israel. Please help us to publicise the competition to your children, grandchildren, and any teachers you may know. Full details are on our website: <https://voicesisrael.com/bar-sagi-prize/>.

2025 Membership Fees

If you haven't yet paid your membership fee for **2025**, please email me as soon as possible at president.voices@gmail.com.

Please continue sending your artwork, photos, essays, letters and, of course, poems to newsletter.voices@gmail.com. Members truly enjoy reading and viewing what you create, and it is wonderful to share the many and varied talents of our community.

Have a great month

Kind regards,



Julian Alper,
President, Voices Israel.

VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

MEETING DATES, TIMES AND PLACES - NOVEMBER 2025

SOUTHERN Meeting via Zoom Sunday, November 23 at 5:00 PM Coordinator: Miriam Green miriamsgreen@gmail.com	TEL AVIV Meeting via Zoom Thursday, November 27 at 7:00 PM Coordinator: Mark L. Levinson Mobile: 054-444-8438 nosnivel@netvision.net.il	JERUSALEM Meeting via Zoom Tuesday, November 25 at 7:30 PM Coordinator: Avril Meallem Tel: 02-567-0998 aemeallem@gmail.com	UPPER GALILEE Wednesday, November 19 at 10:30. at the home of Reuven and Yehudit. 128 Keren HaYesod Artists Quarter, Tzfat Coordinator: Reuven Goldfarb Tel: 04-697-4105 Mobile: 058-414-0262 poetsprogress@gmail.com
HAIFA Tuesday, November 25 at 7:00 PM at Elana Dorfman's home Contact Naomi Yalin for details Coordinator: Naomi Yalin Mobile: 054-794-3738 naomiyalin@gmail.com	NETANYA/SHARON Tuesday, November 25 at 7:00 PM at Susan Olsburgh's home 2/6 Zalman Shazar, 3rd floor Ramat Poleg Coordinator: Susan Olsburgh Mobile: 054-919-3575 olsburgh.susan@gmail.com	GLOBAL GROUP 1 Meeting via Zoom Thursday, November 13 at 19:30 Israel time Coordinator: Shoshana Kent Mobile: +972-52-808-9365 y2nosh@gmail.com	GLOBAL GROUP 2 Meeting via Zoom Sunday, November 16 at 19:00 Israel time Coordinator: Judy Koren Mobile: +972-54-741-7860 koren.judy@gmail.com

Save this date – Tuesday 7th December at 7pm (Israel time) for Voices Israel Workshop on Zoom

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CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR MEMBERS

- To - **Isaac Cohen** for his many successes throughout the month.
- To - **Elana Wolff** whose poem "Don't We Look Marvellous" is published in the fifteenth issue of **Pinhole Poetry** – you can read Elana's poem [here](#). And there is an interview with Elana that can be read [here](#).
- To - **Julian Alper** whose article "A Topsy-Turvy Tale of Etrog Painting" is published by **The Lehrhaus** – you can read Juian's article [here](#).
Also four of his poems were selected for publication in Published in the journal 'All Your Poems – October 2025'. Two of the poems, "Morning Coffee" and "Poppy Fields" are included in the Poet's Corner section of this Newsletter.
- To - **Miriam Arman**, whose video/poem "Awakening" is now on YouTube - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mWJS-7TJiAc>
- To - **Esther Cameron** – whose article "How it has Been for Us since October 7" was published by New English Review – you can read it [here](#).
- To - **Esther Cameron and Mindy Aber Barad** who have just published the latest version of The Deronda Review – see <https://www.derondareview.org/vol11no1.pdf>
- To - **Hayim Abramson, Julian Alper, Mindy Aber Barad, Eli Ben-Joseph, Esther Cameron, Roberta Chester, Larry Lefkowitz and Amos Neufeld**, who have all had poems published in the latest version of The Deronda Review – you can read the poems here: <https://www.derondareview.org/vol11no1.pdf>
- To - **Mara Lee Grayson**, whose poem "My Father the Mixologist" was published by STREETLIGHT Magazine – you can read Mara's poem [here](#).

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

Once again my heartfelt congratulations to the editorial team for this truly all encompassing "Newsletter", now totally misnamed. You have developed a monthly journal that embraces not merely poetry but painting, photography, intimate portraits, interviews....., in addition to essential information, publishing opportunities and so on.

Amazing! Unbelievable!

Perhaps the board should consider changing the title to "Voices Israel Monthly Journal of the Arts".

Yours,

Amiel Schotz

[Editor's reply – interested to hear whether other members feel the title of the Newsletter should be changed. And if so, to what?]

VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

ANNOUNCEMENTS/OFFERS

ESRA Book Shop Haifa - ESRA (English Speaking Residents Association) has opened a SECOND-HAND ENGLISH BOOKSHOP in HAIFA. All are welcome to visit and explore the wonderful collection of books of all genres. Voices poets may like to donate one copy of their collections to expand our poetry shelf. It would draw attention to your great work. Members who have access to Haifa are welcome to donate or just visit. 5 Rehov Kiryat Sefer - adjacent to Kiryat Sefer Circle on Moriah, Ahuza.

Opening hours:

Sunday to Thursday 10.00 till 12.00 and 16.00 to 18.00 and Friday 10.00 till 12.00.



Israel Association of Writers in English [IAWE] - Literary *Ushpizin* — now on Zoom

Conjuring up literary guests for Sukkot 2025 - For those who missed it, the Zoom is now up on YouTube as a recording: IAWE members present the figures they would like to host — if they could — as *ushpizin* this year: Hillel Schenker invites Arthur Conan Doyle, Mike Stone invites Yeshayahu Leibowitz, Ricky Friesem invites Emma Lazarus, Ann Bar-Dov invites Louise Fitzhugh (author of *Harriet the Spy*), Reuven Goldfarb invites J.D. Salinger, Libi Siporin invites Theodore Roethke, Mark L. Levinson invites Portia (from *Julius Caesar*), Wendy Blumfield invites historian Barnet Litvinoff, and Karen Alkalay-Gut invites Yehuda Amichai.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4OEpn0wM5t4>

WORLDWIDE POETRY (WWP)

- [Tony Harrison saw Britain's "dreadful schism" - New Statesman](#)
- [Poem of the week: Solitude by Peter McDonald | Poetry | The Guardian](#)
- [Reading teenager named as one of Foyle's Young Poets](#)
- [Chava Alberstein talks about love of Yiddish, autobiography at fest | The Times of Israel](#)
- [Former hostage Emily Damari calls on Pulitzer board to rescind prize to Palestinian poet](#)

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CALLS FOR SUBMISSIONS

Judith Magazine, a new online **Journal Of Jewish Letters, Arts & Empowerment** seeks submissions – more information can be found [here](#).

From Judith Magazine - Call for a special poetry folio - Joy & Sorrow - SUSAN COMNINOS

This week, we rejoice at the 20 living hostages released after two years of captivity in Gaza; at the same time, we grieve for those families whose loved ones will never come home. In grappling with such a contradictory moment when, as the Israeli poet Yehuda Amichai once famously wrote, a man has “to laugh and cry with the same eyes,” Judith is putting out a call for a special poetry folio, called Joy & Sorrow. Send us your poetry that addresses one or another of these opposed states of being — or somehow encompasses both. Poems should go to slcomninos@gmail.com. No need to include a bio, author’s photo, or delights. The issue will remain open until filled.

— Susan Comninos, Poetry Editor

The Jewish Literary Journal (a monthly online journal) seeks submissions of up to 5 poems - further details can be found [here](#).

OfTheBook Literary Journal publishes fiction, non-fiction, and poetry from new and established voices welcomes submissions of up to 10 pages of poetry, with one poem per page. Further details can be found [here](#).

Minyan Magazine (<https://www.minyanmag.com/>) publishes poetry and flash fiction written by Jews and their allies alongside one another. Although we like work with a Jewish theme, we also enjoy work with secular themes. Send us your best, regardless of the theme! Please note that we are a journal of tolerance. It would be a great idea to look at our previous issues to get a sense of what we publish, and all of our issues are free to read! Unsolicited submissions containing three to five previously unpublished poems or up to three flash fiction stories are welcome year-round.

Poetry Submissions

- Please make sure that your poetry submission contains only one Word document or .pdf with your 3-5 previously unpublished poems.
- Please include your short bio in your cover letter.
- Work should be submitted using our [Submittable](#) link.
- We provide a free option and a \$5 option for expedited submissions. Using the \$5 option guarantees that we will respond within 10 days. This small contribution goes towards keeping the magazine going.

Submissions to **New English Review** (the monthly magazine) should be sent to kendra@newenglishreview.org. There is no word limit, but please keep in mind that your work will be read online. Submissions for the coming month are due by the 20th of the previous month. (Example, submissions for November must be in by the 20th of October.) Timely or news-relevant pieces will be accepted at any time. If you wish to submit, please click [here](#) for guidelines on submitting.

VAST CHASM, publishes “work that explores the human experience, including flash and short fiction, creative nonfiction, poetry, and other nonconforming work.” They accept submissions “year-round, on a rolling basis, for their quarterly online issues.” No fee to submit.

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The Weekly Poems Contest - All Poets Invited

Weekly Poems invites all poets from everywhere on Earth to submit a *weeklypoem*. Poems must be 15 lines or shorter, written during the current week and submitted by Saturday, with the winner published on Sunday. Submissions are open eight months of the year, for three weeks per month, opening on the first Monday of the month.

Submission & Publication Months

Submissions are open eight months of the year, with issues of *Weekly Poems* published on the first three Sundays following the first Monday of the month.

– Period 1: February, March, April

– Period 2: June, July, August

– Period 3: October, November

More details can be found [here](#).

WRITE-HAUS

Write-haus is an Israeli journal that features writers of all genres and artists/interdisciplinary work every week in their Sunday showcase online feature. It's free to submit examples of your work. <https://write-haus.com/sunday-showcase/>

PALETTE POETRY: "Submissions for our Featured Poetry category are open year-round to poets at any stage of their careers. Featured poems are published online only and will spotlight a number of poems from new authors each month. We highly encourage emerging authors to submit."

Basket Magazine Online Journal seeks submissions. Please submit up to three poems

to editor@basketmagazine.co.uk as a .pdf, .doc or .docx file. Feel free to include a brief cover note/bio, though this will not affect our decision-making — it's just nice to know about people. We will only consider previously unpublished poems — this includes work that has previously appeared online in any form (social media, etc). We do not consider simultaneous submissions.

Under the Radar is a magazine of new contemporary writing and is published twice a year by Nine Arches Press. We welcome submissions of new poetry, please only submit previously unpublished work. Send up to six poems. We accept submissions from anywhere in the world. All submissions must be made online through our [Submittable portal](#). 1st November – December 7th 2025 (Themed issue: 'Outside')

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Writing on the Wall

Calling all Jewish & Israeli Creatives: Submit Your Work for BALAGAN - The Theme: EXHALE

After October 7th, **Writing on the Wall** and **BALAGAN Magazine** were born as creative responses to rising antisemitism as a way to show the world the depth, diversity, and humanity of who we are today.

Our mission is simple: **to tell our own story - as Israelis, as Jews - not the one told about us.**

We're now accepting submissions for **essays, poetry, photography, and art** for our upcoming issue on *Hope*, themed "**Exhale.**"

The theme speaks for itself.

If this speaks to you, we'd love for you to **join our community, share your voice, and be part of this creative conversation.**

Explore past issues and learn more here: <https://writingonthewall.io/>



VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

WORLD POETRY YEARBOOK 2025 (English Edition)

Dear all poets,

Currently, we are compiling *WORLD POETRY YEARBOOK 2025* (English Edition), please send three or five of your excellent poems (in English, each not exceed 60 lines), a short resume of your art experience and achievement (in English, within 200 words; mainly including: name, pen name, sex, date of birth, birthplace, nationality, experience of job, from which year you begin to write or publish your works, main achievements in poetry writing, prizes, major publications of poems, current residence and etc.), and two color photographs or black-and-white photographs, e-mail, Tel, and your postal address, post code to us via e-mail. All of these shall be written in English.

We also welcome you to send the important poetry review article (in English, not exceed 2,400 words) and information about poetry (in English, not exceed 400 words).

In addition, we also welcome you to recommend your country or other countries' poets who are alive, thank you so much.

Any poet or poetry critic with influence, achievement and capability in poetry writing or poetry criticism, in any country, any language, any nation, any religion, age and sex, is welcome to send his/her works to us.

Your poems, biography and a photo, will be included in *WORLD POETRY YEARBOOK 2025* (English Edition). After the publication, each poet or poetry critic whose works have been anthologized will get a free PDF electronic version, and part of the copies will be presented to the UN Library, UNESCO, Nobel Prize Committee, NDL of the important countries, libraries of famous universities, major literary newspapers, periodicals and outstanding literary research specialists all over the world.

Due to the magnitude of the project and the limitation of time and manpower, all contributions (as an attachment) are to be sent to: wupm2023@126.com, via e-mail, please indicate the subject of your email: WPY 2025.

The deadline is November 15, 2025,

The date of publication: February 2026.

Address: P. O. Box 031, [Guanyinqiao](#) Post Office, Jiangbei District, Chongqing City 400020, P. R. CHINA

All the best!

International Poetry Translation and Research Centre

The Center for Globalization of Chinese Poetry, Nankai University

World Union of Poetry Magazines

VOICES ISRAEL WORKSHOP



VOICES ISRAEL PRESENTS:

A POETRY WORKSHOP ON LIGHT

FACILITATOR: ELANA DORFMAN

SPONSORED BY: VOICES ISRAEL

Join us for a poetic exploration of light — the miracle that surrounds and sustains us. Together, we'll reflect on the many forms of light in our lives — the light of insight, love, and spirit — and the essential role of darkness that helps it shine.

During this interactive workshop, we will:

- ✓ Read and discuss selected poems about light
- ✓ Spend time writing our own poems celebrating light in all its meanings

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 9TH AT 19:00

 ON ZOOM

Registration Details will be sent soon

VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

EVENTS

Poems as Invitations – **until November 14, 2025**



מייטדאד אליהו / Meydad Eliyahu

שרה בנינגה / Sara Benninga



Poems as Invitations

Historical poems of Jerusalem extend
an invitation—contemporary local
artists respond.

Artists

Sara Benninga & Meydad Eliyahu

Poets

Robert Friend, Shirley Kaufman, Dennis Silk

Curator: Lonnie Monka

שירים בהזמנות

שירים היסטוריים של ירושלים
מגישים הזמנה - אמנים עכשוויים
מקומיים עונים.

משוררים

רוברט פרנד, שירלי קאופמן, דניס סילק

אמנים

שרה בנינגה ומייטד אליהו

אוצר: לוני מונקה



Opening | פתיחה
19:00 04.09
גלריית הביאנלה
The Biennale Gallery
רחוב יפו 161 ירושלים
Jaffo Street, Jerusalem 161



Haifa English Theatre presents "Lost in Translation"

SAVE THE DATE !!! Please SHARE !!!

The Haifa English Theatre invites you
to "LOST IN TRANSLATION"
an evening of Playback Theatre

Thursday 27 November from 19:30 to 21:30.

It's improvisation at its best, based on experiences
shared by participants. Perhaps you will choose to
share one of your own stories!

Most of all, we invite you to join us in an evening of
fun, community and laughter.

Thursday, 27 November from 19:30 - 21:30
Beit Hagefen Community Centre, 33 Hatzionut, Haifa

Tickets: 75 NIS
Arrive early to complete registration.
RSVP: h.e.theatre@gmail.com

Haifa English Theatre
registered amuta 580117646
<http://www.h-e-t.org>
h.e.theatre@gmail.com
Facebook: [HAIFA ENGLISH THEATRE](#)

VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

The IAWE invites you to register for an evening with distinguished poet Owen Lewis, at the home of Karen Alkalay-Gut in Afeka, Tel Aviv, also featuring a limited number of brief readings from the audience. Details are below (or attached). Registration is by e-mail to gut22@tauex.tau.ac.il.



We are honored to host an evening with

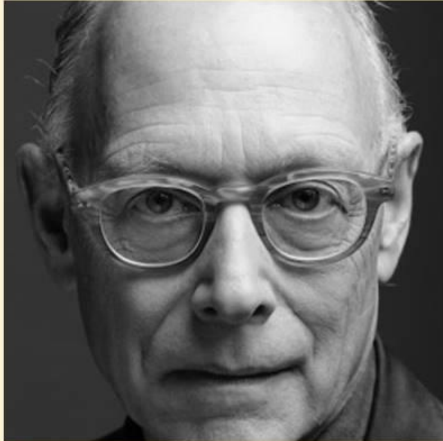
Owen Lewis

Owen Lewis is the author of four collections of poetry and three chapbooks. Honors include the 2024 E.E. Cummings Prize, the 2023 Guernsey International Poetry Prize, the 2023 Rumi Prize for Poetry, the International Hippocrates Prize for Poetry and Medicine, and the Jean Pedrick Chapbook Award. At Columbia University, he is professor of Psychiatry in the Department of Medical Humanities and Ethics and teaches Narrative Medicine

**November 9, 2025
8 PM**

Join us at the home of Karen Alkalay-Gut
15 Manya and Yisrael Street, Tel Aviv (Apartment 4)

Please sign up for attendance and an open reading for the first eight people: gut22@tauex.tau.ac.il



Francesco Barasciutti

VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

OUR MEMBERS' ART

Front Cover – Helen Bar-Lev's painting "Poppies in Metulla"

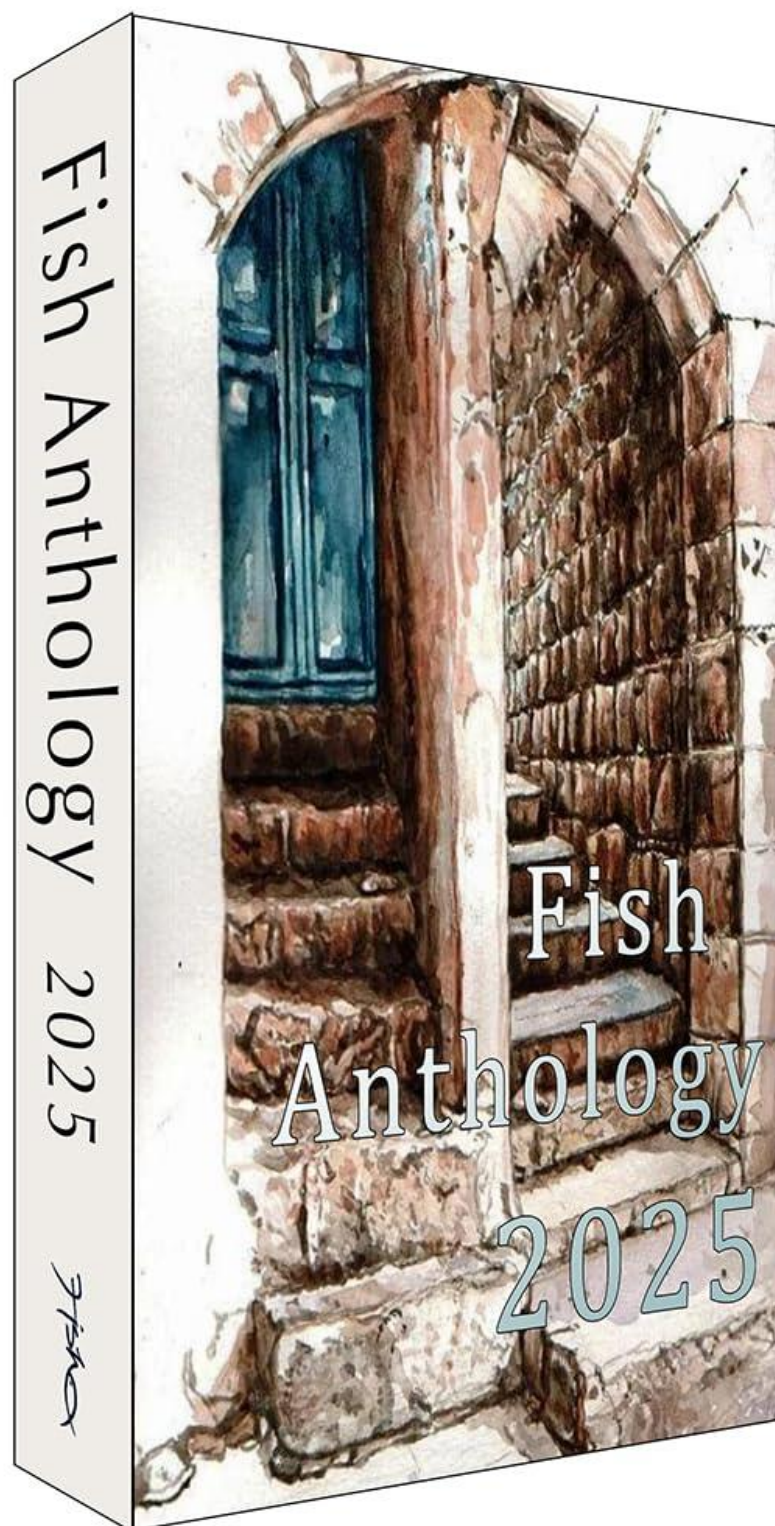


Poppies

The street I lived on continues up till you get to Mitzpe Dado. If you continue a bit further on a narrow and not-much-used road, and if you happen to stop and look down a bit, you will see these wonderful poppies, in the late Spring of course.

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Helen Bar-Lev's painting selected for the front cover of Fish Anthology 2025



VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

Lisa Aigen's watercolor painting "Lillies"



VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

AN INTERVIEW WITH RUTH SCHREIBER

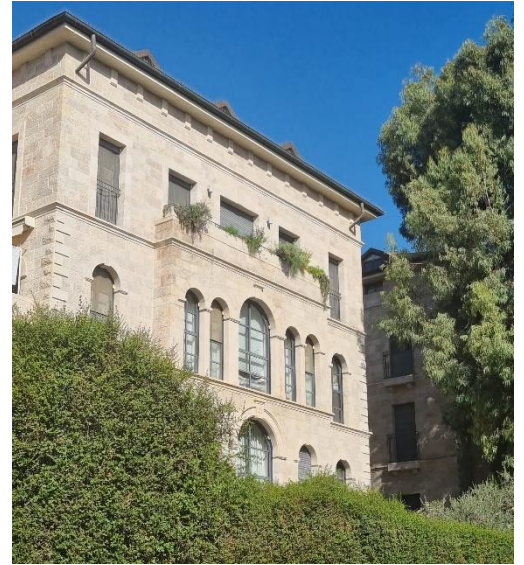
By Bob Findysz

Under a pristine, post-war, cloudless, powder sky, on a splendid, sunny if slightly hot early autumn morning, I departed my still verdant garden, with touches of crimson and gold of the season, to drive into Jerusalem for a meeting with Ruth at her home and studio in the city's German Colony neighborhood. As I cruised carefully along its narrow, shady, winding lanes searching for a spare parking space, on the car radio I heard an American political scientist and commentator saying to Ilana Dayan that in today's Middle East "tomorrow is yesterday". What an apt description of the manner in which this fine old quarter of the "new" city is gradually reinventing itself using traditional lines



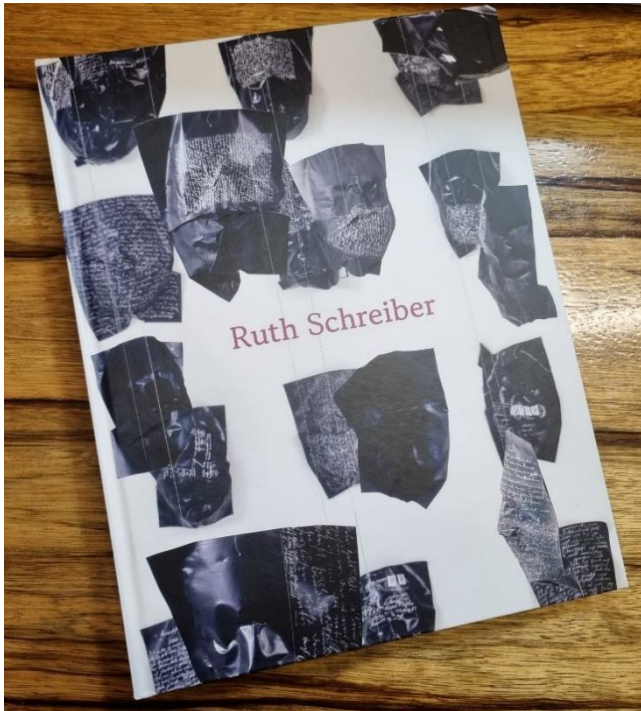
and construction materials to bring many of its structures into the 21st century.

Ruth's handsome home (which showcases some of her artwork like an installation entitled "*Gan Eden MiKedem*" pictured to the left) is in such a building on Ruth Street -- as she so cleverly retorted to my observation, in order to make it easier for her husband to remember their relatively new address. We sat in her sunlit, well-appointed studio, complete with a small kiln for firing what she creates in clay, often along with her grandchildren. Here are two of the many pieces Ruth has fired in that kiln, entitled. "*Aguna*" (Chained Woman) and "*Freudian Self-Portrait, Condensed*" (boxes).



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Following are the questions I asked Ruth with an accurate if not exact account of her answers. I must add that it was a distinct pleasure getting to know this extremely talented fellow member of Voices Israel and I appreciate the time she dedicated to our conversation.



From what I have gathered about you on Google, you were born and educated in London, completing a BSc in Economics & International Relations there; then you moved to California. There you audited art history courses while your husband was a student at Stanford University's business school, before moving to Israel, where you completed another bachelor's degree, in Psychology. Then you returned to the UK for quite a few years, during which time you took painting and sculpture classes and also received a diploma in art history from the University of London. And after you returned to Israel, in the late 1990s, you completed an MA in Museum Studies via Distance Learning at Leicester University and you studied ceramics and glass design at Bezalel. You spent 25 years raising a family while involved in art and design at the same time before beginning to work in 1996 as a docent at the Israel Museum, where today you continue volunteering. In the process, you have developed your own art, creating sculpture, painting, video art, photography and installation pieces. You have exhibited your work in North America, Europe and Israel. And, you have been writing poetry, which you have seen published in various

journals and collections including the VOICES Israel anthology.

1. *With so many possible distractions/ demands on your time and focus, are you currently writing poetry? If so, do have any new poems in the drawer which you would like to share with us here? Do you ever write in Hebrew? How would you characterize the poetry you write?*

I don't write in Hebrew. I don't feel I have the necessary depth in the language to do so. I would characterize my poetry as the writing of a Jewish woman alive and aging in Israel. Since the war broke out, I haven't been writing much, though I have written a bit of poetry relating to the war. Too pre-occupied. Aside from all of the obvious distractions, I have been busy with a new book which I just finished and is freshly off the press: Entitled **Ruth Schreiber**. I have a copy for you. It is a catalogue of sorts, but neither comprehensive nor retrospective. Organized around themes like Community, Family, Midlife. Interspersed among the reproductions of my sculptures, photographs, installations, etc. are off-sized pages of my poetry. *(Afterwards, when I had time to browse through this rich volume of Ruth's work, I selected a few poems to share in an addendum at the end of this interview. BF)*



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- *Do you remember when you started writing poetry? If so, how/ where/ why did you begin?*

As a young mother, after the birth of my firstborn, I began writing poetry. In the 1970s and 1980s. I started submitting pieces to the VOICES Israel anthology during the early 80s. While we were living in London, between 1984-1995, I didn't write at all. Too busy with young children and other family matters. In the early 2000s, I started writing again; there was simply more space in my head for it.

- *Are there times of the day/ week, a special place and/ or other conditions which you find are conducive to writing, poetry today?*

Depending on other demands and commitments, I prefer working in the mornings. Here, in my upstairs studio where we are now sitting. A room of my own, as in Virginia Woolf, where I am free to be. (See the photo of Ruth's studio below, BF)

2. *Is there one poet(ess) or more whom you particularly enjoy reading? If so, who? Why do you like their writing?*

Oh, my. There are many: Yehuda Amichai, in both Hebrew and English, Taha Muhamad Ali, W.H. Auden, Raymond Carver, Paul Celan, T.S. Eliot, Beth Ann Fennelly, Robert Frost, Gerard Manley Hopkins, Jackie Kay, Shirley Kaufman, Philip Larkin, Ada Limon, Sylvia Plath, Wisława Szymborska. I just got a copy of a book called *Poetry in the Parasha* by Richard Shavei-Tzion (who was recently interviewed here in this VOICES Israel newsletter. BF). However, I haven't read it yet. There is no common thread. But, they all speak to me.

3. *Have you studied/ collaborated with other writers of poetry and/ or prose? If so, who? When? Where?*



About 8 years ago, I took a creative writing course with Annie Kantar at Emunah in the city. Since then, I meet with her occasionally to read my poetry together and discuss other poets. I consider Annie my poetry mentor.

4. *On a more personal note, you were raised in the U.K. At what point in your life did you move to the U.S.? Were you alone or with other family members? If so, who? What brought you to leave London to go to California?*

My husband, David, and I lived in California between 1972-1974 with our first two children, while he was a student at Stanford. Our third child was born shortly after returning to London.

- *When did you first arrive in Israel? Alone or with others? Whom? Where did you start out living here? When did you return to the U.K.? Was there some trigger that caused you to relocate at that time?*

David, our three young children and I immigrated to Israel in December 1976. We lived in Jerusalem until 1984. Two more of our children were born during this period of our lives. After my father-in-law took ill, we returned to London to help sort out the family business. There our youngest child was born.

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- *How long have you been back in Israel? Always in Jerusalem? With whom?*

In 1995, all of us moved back to Jerusalem. We have lived in the German Colony since then, in one house or another. We have been in our new home since 2013. I have lots of extended family in Israel. A sister also lives here. Today, four of our children live in Jerusalem and two are abroad, in Britain and the States. They are all married with children; so, we have been blessed with many grandchildren. And, several great-grandchildren already.

5. *When you aren't pursuing one/ some of your many fields of artistic expression, how do you spend your time? Family? Community? VOICES/ Israel? Other, personal pursuits?*

Besides family, I am involved in my synagogue. No leadership responsibilities, but engaged. I have tutored English one-on-one, with Ethiopian young women and, during the war, children of families evacuated from the Gaza "Envelope", Sderot in particular. Occasionally I have also served as a matchmaker. Together with partners, I have made 13 *shidduchim*!

6. *Anything else you would like to add?*



If anyone is interested in more information about my art and me, you are invited to consult my website: <https://www.ruthschreiber.com/>. Or, to contact me via email: ruth@schreibers.com.



VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

An Addendum:

Following are some poems I chose from Ruth's recently published book.

To My Twenties

Cheat, liar, traitor
you promised sweetness and light
but like 9/11
or October 7th
you terminally recalibrated me,
thrust me down an
unwelcome fork in the road

Where did you go
when you abandoned me?
on whom did you spill all your sunshine?
you demanded a language
I could not hazard,
smothered me
in a sticky black fog
and catapulted me
directly
into my 40s

Gifts

I gave you for your fingers
thick warm strong steady,
fine leather gloves size 9
soft, flexible, on sale
inky black like a starlet's red lips,
a robin's path of sturdy stitching,
the cashmere lining- a baby's cuddle,

to keep you warm
in the Chicago wind
the Jerusalem snow

my icy heart

I baked you a honey cake
a plum crumble
some carrot muffins,
for your sweet tooth
and tricky fingers

to dispel your frown
slow your pace

soothe my night terrors

Migrating

Seeking the pumping station
we missed our road
and found ourselves in a citrus grove
lush grapefruit and clementine trees
weighed down by heavy fruit
ripe for harvest

And then we noticed the birds.
Wave upon wave of migrating birds
flying south in arrow-shaped formations
thousands upon thousands
and still they kept coming
flying overhead
following the lead bird
all moving steadily
down a passage in the sky
heeding the weather's warning
for tomorrow it will rain
and rain is a hazard for birds
or so my son tells me
and it makes sense

for it clogs their feathers
and weighs down their wings,
flying to sunshine and safety
ahead of the storm.
And so we witnessed
the orderly migration
of hundreds of thousands,
there's strength in numbers,
and we marveled.

Jews do not migrate like birds,
we do not heed the weather's warning,
we do not fly in freedom to safety;
weighed down by possessions
and wishful thinking
we let the appointed time pass by,
millions of us,
there's weakness in numbers,
and the storm drives us
to Treblinka.

SAILING TO BYZANTIUM BY WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS

Analysis by Eli Ben-Joseph

Sailing to Byzantium

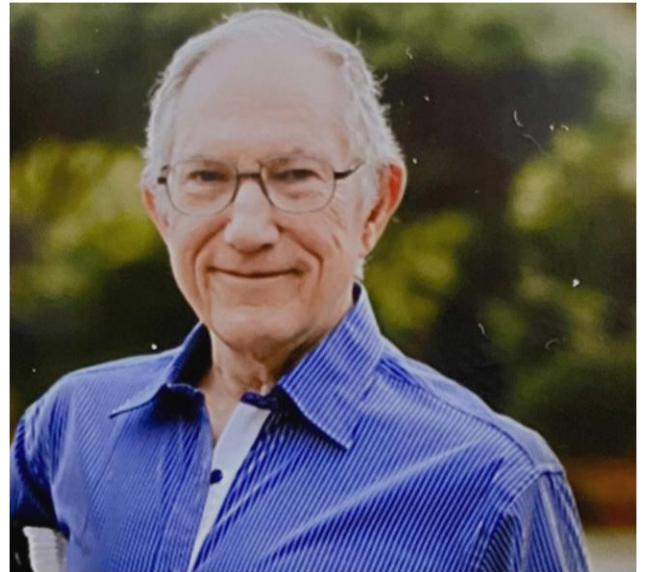
That is no country for old men. The young
in one another's arms, birds in the trees,
--Those dying generations--at their song,
The salmon-falls, the mackerel crowded seas,
Fish, flesh, or fowl, commend all summer long
Whatever is begotten, born, and dies.
Caught in that sensual music all neglect
Monuments of unaging intellect.

An aged man is but a paltry thing,
A tattered coat upon a stick, unless
Soul clap its hands and sing, and louder sing
For every tatter in its mortal dress,
Nor is there singing school but studying
Monuments of its own magnificence;
And therefore I have sailed the seas and come
To the holy city of Byzantium.

O sages standing in God's holy fire
As in the gold mosaic of a wall,
Come from the holy fire, perne in a gyre,
And be the singing-masters of my soul.
Consume my heart away; sick with desire
And fastened to a dying animal
It knows not what it is; and gather me
Into the artifice of eternity.

Once out of nature I shall never take
My bodily form from any natural thing,
But such a form as Grecian goldsmiths make
Of hammered gold and gold enamelling
To keep a drowsy Emperor awake;
Or set upon a golden bough to sing
To lords and ladies of Byzantium
Of what is past, or passing, or to come.

William Butler Yeats



This is a poem that I first read when I was in high school. It seemed strange to me then, probably because I wasn't old enough to come to an understanding of it, but now I would like to present my reading. Getting on in years, I surmise the persona begins by complaining that the booming world around him is no place for old folks whose lives are more concerned with thought than activity. In the next stanza, he goes on to specify that redemption for him as an aged man lies in the ability to 'clap and sing,' which I take to mean to create art. He sees the contemporary world as concerned with its own great matters, perhaps war and politics (specified in Yeats's 'Politics,' 1938), and so he has turned his attention to reaching 'Byzantium,' whose worth is sacred to him for its art. Thus, Byzantium takes on the meaning of a state of creativity. In the face of ever encroaching mortality, the poet-persona turns for inspiration to the sages, who, in context, are masters of art. He calls on them to 'perne in a gyre,' that is, to spin out of the spiral of history, to fetch him into limitless artistry. The final stanza appears to be an intentional paradox. On the one hand, the poet desires to become a set work of art. On the other, he wishes to chirrup to the elite about the old, the new and the foreseeable, perhaps ironically depicting the bustling young. Banally put, the poet seeks immortality through his craft.

-- Eli Ben-Joseph, October, 2025

VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

BREAKFAST

A Short Story by Peter Brav

You are meeting Drew for breakfast. Drew is the kind of guy you could have been. Drew is a contender; no, strike that, a champion. Drew has arrived.

He is ten years younger than you, so you didn't share a childhood. You know exactly what he would have been like if you had though. A leader. Someone who did well in school and on the playground. Someone who didn't ask himself a whole lot of questions. A 12-year-old moving forward. Quiet, calm, self-assured, not like the rest of the Wall Street crowd which must at all times let the whole world know it is self-anointed royalty. That must be why he's eschewed the Perrine Hotel this morning for your meeting. No 88 dollars for two plates of eggs, two cups of herbal tea and bagels with marmalade. No maître d' to pretend so successfully that there is absolutely no other place in the city to have a simple breakfast.

You're meeting in the Perrine's shadow in a diner on East 60th Street, Manny's Coffee Shop, that kind of New York City place. Windows so dirty you lie to yourself that it's some type of condensation, a form of indoor fog. Ketchup-stained menu on the inside glass, black marker covering last year's prices, taken down and put back up so many times it's hanging illegibly from years-old clear tape. A standing sign on the floor in big black and red letters posting the two-egg special for \$4.25. You remember college days when you washed down eggs, toast, bacon, and hash browns six or seven times a week with impunity and without knowledge of why cholesterol could be both good and bad.

To your left, you see the grill and the two sweating men attending to it. To your right, you view the grumpy man at the register you assume is Manny. Straight ahead are the counters, four semicircles filled almost to capacity with scant more than the tops of foreheads visible above smartphone screens. Everyone here seems to be a regular except you. And Drew. You don't care one wit because you know breakfast will be irrelevant. Drew wants to meet with you and this should be big.

There he is, way in the back, saving your seat at the last counter. He's waving you over, ignoring the annoyed, mole-expanding smirk from the heavysset bleached-blond woman in the fire engine red outfit with the brooch of a yellow school bus atop her bosom. You smile and wave back and head that way.

"Don't get up," you say. You put your briefcase down, shake hands and ease into the empty seat. "How the hell are you, man? It's been way too long."

And it has been too. You met Drew when you were both lawyers at the same firm. You were a permanent associate, a term of art in New York legal circles that gained currency decades ago when law firms found their greed levels approaching those of the corporate clients they represented. Firms like yours would make fewer partners but they still needed assholes like you to sling paper around.

Drew was a young associate at the firm, a fresh-faced bachelor with the same kind of top six law school pedigree that landed you at the place ten years earlier. But he was different than you, from a different generation. He didn't hang openly with a gang of lawyer malcontents, complain about billable hours, talk about buying a Dunkin' Donuts franchise or making an independent feature film in the same conversation. He never once was heard to lament how law school had sprung from a deadly cocktail of indecision and fear. Drew carried the briefcases, did the 2,200 billables a year, attended the firm's Christmas parties in the financial district, schmoozed the corporate clients and managed to dress as well as they did. For four years, halfway to what seemed like a certain partnership.

And then Drew did something you unfortunately had not done. He departed. Disappeared. Without warning, without



VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

notice, without a trace. You alone knew where he was though because he'd singled you out for communication. He popped into your small office under a cloak of confidentiality to tell you he was leaving to do deals with another youngster from a wealthy New York Wall Street dynasty and to remind you that you were too good for the shitheads in the corner offices. He didn't actually ask you to come along but you recall that the air had been heavy with the possibility. The irony was apparent immediately back then and it remains fixed in your mind now. You, the malcontented, were still at the firm, capably and whiningly doing whatever was asked of you. Drew, the contented, was gone five years now.

"Whaddaya want?" Drew asks, calling your attention to the gray-haired waitress standing before you. "The eggs are good."

"I'll have eggs and rye toast," you say.

You are distracted by Drew's appearance and his slurred slang and you momentarily forget that there are more ways to cook eggs than there are types of toast. They both look at you strangely. You add over medium and the placated waitress heads off towards the kitchen.

Drew looks away, maybe because he knows that you're puzzled, maybe because he's setting you up for the dramatic delivery. His hair has thinned from mane to mosaic, his face unshaven. His eyes have the kind of deep circles around them that only twenty more years of living or a metal press should have been able to create. No muscles ripple under his suit for he has neither muscles nor suit. He is clad in torn plaid Dockers, beaten brown leather sandals and a dirty white Izod shirt with the alligator's head obliterated. His voice is shaky, his demeanor similar. It seems that the only thing that hasn't changed is his height.

"Still at Buckley Warren?" he mouths, shaking his head. "You must be going on your third lifetime there now."

"Seems like it."

You sip at the black coffee before you. You wonder about Drew. You were expecting him to talk about high technology deals that he might be able to bring you in on. At 45, with your last kid almost through high school, with your 15-year loan on the last legs of its amortization schedule and your wife still working, you have begun fantasizing anew about leaving the third floor at 1110 Avenue of the Americas. And your fantasies have given you a renewed energy, if not the courage that still seems absent. Give me a reason, any reason, you have told yourself lately. It is your last chance at adventure or, if not adventure, good old-fashioned novelty.

The waitress has put down your plate and you are ignoring your eggs. The food is as secondary to a true power breakfast as the ballgame is when taking a client to Yankee Stadium.

"I don't want to waste a lot of your time," Drew says. You find yourself hoping he won't be so quick to come to the point. "I've asked you here today because I'm looking for money."

Your eyes light up, internally at least, because you are prepared for this time in your life. You have been prudent with your investments all your life. Your self-directed pension has blossomed to over 350 thousand dollars, courtesy of Cisco, Microsoft, Amazon, and a technology-laden mutual fund, and your retirement seems assured. It's these next twenty years that are tricky. You've known for a long time that there would come a day you when you might no longer be able to respond judiciously to an assignment memorandum from a partner at the firm. For most of the last year you have known that day is near. That's why you've kept your other monies, three hundred thousand dollars of it, as liquid as liquid gets. You've been waiting for the call from someone like Drew. Your money's good and you're ready for your first taste of real equity. The fact that Drew looks and smells like he's spent the last two weeks in a stable with a case of whiskey is sobering but probably explainable.

"I'm not looking for big money," he continues as the waitress slaps the check down and you swear to yourself that he appears to have pushed it under your water glass. "And you'll be paid back two or three times over. You can count on it."

VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

You've done a lot of work on the kinds of deals Drew left to do. There were some early oil and gas and shopping center ventures but lately they've been all alternative energy, biotech and artificial intelligence. You've heard the verbal come-ons of your promoter clients and their coterie describing the 10-bagger and 20-bagger returns of their last five deals. Then you've drafted the lists of risk factors in the offering memoranda explaining in the first ten pages why the investments are all likely headed for the toilet. You're not an idiot and you know your money will be at risk. But you're willing to take that risk, for the right deal with the right partner, because you so desperately want to be a promoter, a player. You, the risk-averse permanent associate, want to step up to the plate with your three hundred thou and make it three hundred mil. Finally, at long last, you are ready to step out from behind the desk and piles of paperwork and become the client. Drew, ten years your junior, is going to take you there.

"Just what kind of deal are we talking about?" you hear yourself ask as you pick up your water glass, leaving the check exposed.

"Deal?" Drew mumbles. "The deal is this. My wife left me six months ago. Took the baby and the apartment at Park and 95th. I did get the Carrera. But I wrecked it on the BQE in a week."

He shook his head and looked around the restaurant, then back at me intently.

"Look, I made a ton of money on wireless deals a couple of years ago and rolled it all with the rest of my partners into some Indian Internet stuff. The guy running the show was a freaking genius. I spent six months running back and forth to Mumbai every week. You know what kind of flight that is? And the food sucks, it really does, but it all would have been worth it of course. If the guy was a freaking lucky genius. But he wasn't, and we weren't, and the market tanked in the beginning of the year and the bank called in the line and we couldn't do a secondary. Hell, you know the rest of the story, don't you?"

You say nothing, just take the deepest breath you can without showing it.

"You were the best damn lawyer at the place," he continued. "I never understood why you stayed or why the sonsofbitches never made you partner."

He is talking so fast now that you can't possibly interrupt. The woman with the mole slides a few feet away to a now empty seat.

"That's it, my man, I'm nowhere. My wife left ten minutes after the money did. I can't go back. I can't go forward. I've got a wife who hates me, a kid who doesn't know me and I need two thousand dollars by tonight or I'm going to have my legs broken. Like I said, I'll pay you back in spades when and if I can. Am I making any sense?"

You know just what you have to do.

First, you pay for breakfast with a twenty. Second, you remove your checkbook from your breast pocket. After all the risk factors you've drafted for years, you know that the only true risk is doing nothing, then dying. You write Drew a check for three, not two, thousand dollars. After all, it isn't all that much more than breakfast at the Perrine. You have a certain feeling that he's the kind of guy who will be close shaving again soon. And when he does, you want in on it this time.

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PETER BRAV is the author of the novels ZAPPY I'M NOT, THE OTHER SIDE OF LOSING, SNEAKING IN, and 331 INNINGS, as well as numerous plays. His short stories, essays and poetry have appeared in Assignment Literary Magazine, Black Fork Review, GreenPrints Magazine, Saranac Review, Kelsey Review, Mortal Mag, Bookends Review, Monarch Review, Echo Magazine, US1 Magazine, South Florida Poetry Journal, and other publications. He is a 1977 graduate of Cornell University and 1980 graduate of Harvard Law School.

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EVERYTHING WILL BE FINE

Growing through grief: childhood memories, family pictures and music

By Klarina Priborkin

Staring at an old, black-and-white fading photo of my dad and me, I'm surprised to discover that since he has passed away, I'm strangely fascinated by the image of a plump, curly, six-year-old kindergarten girl in a polka dot dress and her young, yet balding, father sitting at the edge of the city fountain smiling at the camera. In the Soviet Uzbekistan of the 80's, pictures were taken on rare occasions since it took some money and patience to develop them, and my parents had neither.

I vaguely remember the occasion of posing for this picture thinking I'm a big girl already soon to become a student and an elder sister — a status that implied a lot of responsibility. I was expected to hold myself together, avoid bothering the elders and preferably act like an adult. My parents did not accept much wining or weakness on my part.

The only time I was allowed to be a child was during bedtime. I would not fall asleep on my own and my parents would take turns singing songs to me until I fell asleep. Each had a different repertoire which I remember to this day.

My mom sang the songs of her teenage years, but always finished with a more contemporary one from the closing ceremony of the Olympic Games which the USSR hosted in 1980, the year in which I was born. This song was my cue that the late-night concert will soon come to an end. These were rare moments in which a gentle bridge of emotion was weaved between us. When it was dad's turn to sing to me, he mainly chose the Russian bard songs that I somewhat disliked because they were too sad and contained long, complicated words. But sometimes, after I washed and dried my hair, he also brushed it against the pillow saying I'm his sunshine. Lying there, I imagined having a halo around my head

— looking like a glowing saint.

Since dad passed away from cancer seven years ago, I came across these old, bard songs that drift me back to my childhood channeling my father's strong arms holding me across his chest as my head peacefully lies on his shoulder. This image evokes a deluge of longing, but after the sobs evaporate, I call my mom, and she confirms that the song I found was indeed dad's favorite.

I listen to more songs by Russian bards trying to unravel dad's experiences as a young man in the former USSR. I understand his yearning for freedom and economic stability, a life where one



KLARINA WITH HER FATHER

could raise his family without fear. Words and music which become transparent threads that allow me to connect to dad's memory bridging over time and space. One of the songs sounds like a prophecy in hindsight: "there's only a fleeting moment between the past and the present, and it is the moment that we call a life."



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This realization was so hard to bear seven years ago. I was constantly spotting bald, tall men around me thinking that maybe, just maybe, if one of them turns around, I'll wake up and see him alive. Even when my daughter pointed at a light blue Skoda that looked just like dad's car, my heart would jump out for one treacherous moment thinking that it was him. Gradually, I would remember to unscramble myself and explain to my five-year-old that her grandfather is in a good place, but he is not coming back.

"He is looking at us from above, and he's always in our hearts," I would mutter half believing my own words. In a park we regularly visit, someone stepped into white paint and left a trail of tracks on the pavement. "Look!" my daughter exclaims pointing at the trail: "these are grandad's — he came here for a walk too!" I hold her hand even tighter and promise myself to leave a mark both for my own and her sake.

My legacy will be typed in bold, black letters on snow-white pages. I start recording my thoughts in diaries and these entries eventually turn into poems which I keep mostly to myself at first. I feel they capture a fraction of dad's physical existence on this planet extending his life through the text. I write about the way he drank his tea dipping his bagels in honey, how he fathered and worked, how he danced at my wedding and finally how he said goodbye. Every image, simile and metaphor bring us closer bridging life and death, longing and belonging, separation and encounter.

I write poems about his old things whenever I come across a meaningful item. Mom still keeps some of his clothes covered in plastic bags. I imagine his shoulders in the silhouette of his old jacket, and we find his gloves that still smell like his favorite after-shave. Holding the empty glove, I realize how light it is against my palm; it becomes an empty shell that was once warmed by dad's hands, and yet, its presence somehow makes my dead father more tangible. I wonder if dad's absence is the hole around which the whole family is now expected to build its life.

When he was alive, I would reproach him for his addiction to cigarettes and to his work by simply repeating my mom's mantras who in turn repeated what she heard from her own mother and mother-in-law. I thought I was manifesting my love this way. Once, after we discovered he went back to smoking after yet another heart attack, I threatened he won't see his grandchildren if he doesn't quit. He sat in his La-Z-Boy rocking armchair sinking in thoughts then raised his eyebrows and looked at me for a few long moments. He did not protest, but it was obvious to both of us I won't be able to keep my word. So, he just said: "I won't smoke, I promise." I knew it was a lie, but decided to leave it at that.

Dr. Klarina Priborkin is a teacher trainer and a poet writing in English and Hebrew. She teaches Creative Writing, English Proficiency and Literature courses.

VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

ON WRITING

By Susan Braun Svorai

I write because I have many thoughts in my head. In the morning, I set them free and move beyond the mundane worries of the day.

I write because I see an image that inspires me, or I hear a sentence that entrances me. By writing I connect the past with the present, trying to make my family abroad understand what it's like living in Israel, recording the ironies of everyday life. With pen on paper, I can show how interesting my life is.

When I started writing, there was no Facebook to post on, and I still write because I like the feel of the paper. Writing soothes me when I am afraid and helps me know that I am alive. I am writing because Julie Cameron, author of *The Artist's Way*, tells me that I should. I write, and then I don't write.



Sometimes I think I am too busy or do not see an end result of my work.

I write to finish a wonderful sentence that was given to me by the universe. I write to honor my ancestors and to connect with parts of me that would otherwise scatter. I write to hold myself together. I write to let my kids get to know the part of me they never see, the pre-Israel Susan, the sixteen-year-old me, the little girl I once was.

I write to keep the spark in me alive.

I write to stay alive forever.

Susan Braun Svorai was born in Buffalo, New York and made aliyah to Israel in 1984. She worked as an occupational therapist until 1996 when she discovered the joy of the English language, leading workshops and teaching courses in writing at Oranim and Gordon Academic Colleges. She has participated in Voices workshops, and continues to write and share her poems and stories with her twice monthly writing group.

VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

MEMBER'S PHOTO

Helen Bar Lev's Photo and Poem

There on the Northern Border

You know the place,
everyone's been there –
rural and beautiful
apple trees and waterfalls,
jackal howls, close-by trout
avocados, sometimes snow

There on the Northern Border
where migrating crane-flocks
meet up above my house,
circle, pirouette, greet, form a V,
then take off, to return next Spring

There in my garden
were two pomegranate trees,
fruit always sour –
I should have recognized it as a sign –
yet I in my optimism –
saw only the beauty
of the villages in Lebanon

The house, missile-hit,
last winter's drought,
the pear tree, the walnut,
the orange, the roses,
the irises, dead

Of the cats, I know not
The pomegranate trees
Did not survive

There on the Northern Border
this sun-filled September
we are humbled,
plant, rebuild

Now the new year is with us
honey will sweeten the bitterness
rain will wash away the anguish



VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

THE INSPIRATION OF THE POET BY NICOLAS POUSSIN



*"Spirit of Beauty, that dost consecrate
With thine own hues all thou dost shine upon
Of human thought or form - where art thou gone?"
From Percy Bysshe Shelley's, "Hymn to Intellectual Beauty"*

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Inspiration_of_the_Poet#/media/File:L'Inspiration_du_po%C3%A8te_-_circa_1629_-_Nicolas_Poussin_-_Louvre_-_RF_1774.jpg

[Painting and poem, selected by the editor]

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