

VOICES ISRAEL
GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

NEWSLETTER

JULY 2026





VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

JULY 2026 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

CONTENTS

Contents.....	2
President’s Letter.....	3
Meeting Dates, Times and Places - July 2026	4
Welcome New Members	5
Congratulations to our Members	5
Events/Announcements.....	6
Competition: Image for the 2026 Anthology	9
Honouring our Nonagenarians	10
A Bit of Fry and Laurie	11
Calls for Submissions.....	12
Art by our Members.....	18
My father Benno Schotz	20
About Walter Gonzalez.....	23
Taking Shelter.....	24
The Wandering Jew.....	25
Roaring Lion - Poem	26
Tapioca - Poem	27
Musée des Beaux Arts / <i>The fall of Icarus</i>	28



Sylvia Plath

[Wikipedia]

**Nonagenarian
Tribute Evening
14th July at
7:30pm (Israel
time)**



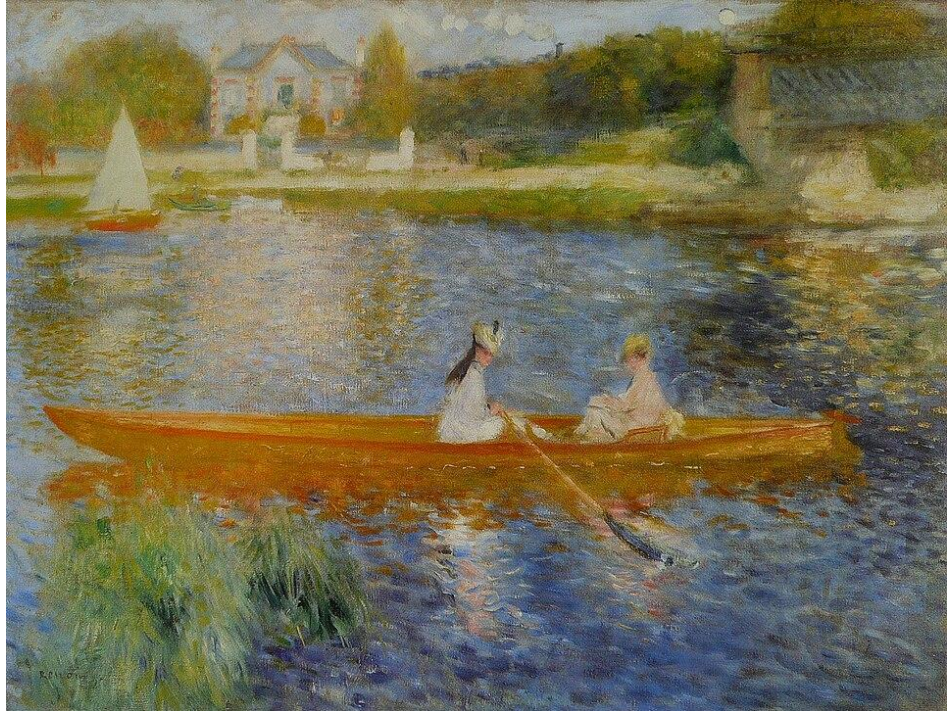
VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

**A boat beneath a sunny sky,
Lingering onward dreamily
In an evening of July
— Lewis Carroll**

Dear Friends,

During these past few years of terrible conflict, Israeli poets and Jewish poets around the world have found it increasingly difficult to get their work published. In this Newsletter, we try to keep you informed of opportunities to publish your work. If you know of any others, please let me know so that we can share this information with all our members.



PIERRE-AUGUSTE RENOIR - LA YOIE [WIKIPEDIA]

On Tuesday, 14 July, there will be a special Zoom evening to honour our nonagenarian members – Ada Aharoni, Amiel Schotz, Judy Foner, Miriam Webber, Ricky Friesem, and Stanley Barkan. Registration details can be found on page 10 of this Newsletter.

Many members still haven't paid their 2026 membership fee. If you haven't already paid, now would be a good time to do so, particularly as the Anthology will soon be sent to all members whose subscriptions are up to date. Please use this link for details of how to pay: <https://voicesisrael.com/about-voices-israel/membership/>, or telephone me for assistance on +972 (0) 54-307-3587.

It has been many years since our membership fees were last increased, and in light of rising costs, particularly for overseas postage, it will be necessary to increase the fees for 2027. Members will have an opportunity to discuss the proposed increase at an EGM; details will follow soon.

Newsletter contributions are always welcome. Please continue sending your artwork, photographs, essays, letters, and, of course, poems to newsletter.voices@gmail.com. Members greatly enjoy reading and viewing your work, and it is wonderful to celebrate the many and varied talents within our community.

Have a wonderful and creative month.

Kind regards,

Julian Alper,
President, Voices Israel.

VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

MEETING DATES, TIMES AND PLACES - JULY 2026

<p>SOUTHERN</p> <p>Meeting via Zoom Sunday, July 19 at 5:00 PM</p> <p>Coordinator: Miriam Green</p> <p>miriamsgreen@gmail.com</p>	<p>TEL AVIV</p> <p>Meeting via Zoom Thursday, July 16 at 7:15 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 Thursday, July 16 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, July 15 at 3pm on Zoom</p> <p>Coordinator: Reuven Goldfarb Tel: 04-697-4105 Mobile: 058-414-0262</p> <p>poetsprogress@gmail.com</p>
<p>HAIFA</p> <p>Tuesday, July 21 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>Tuesday, August 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 Thursday, July 16 at 19:15 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, July 12 at 19:00 Israel time</p> <p>Coordinator: Judy Koren Mobile: +972-54-741-7860</p> <p>koren.judy@gmail.com</p>

VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Voices Israel is pleased to extend a warm welcome to our new member(s):

- **Alyssa Lappen, of Boca Raton, FL**

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR MEMBERS

- To - **Isaac Cohen** for his many successes throughout the month.
- To - **Miriam Green** whose poems "This Life Of Sorrow And Elation" have been published by the Judith Magazine. You can read the poems here:
<https://judithmagazine.substack.com/p/this-life-of-sorrow-and-elation>
- To - **Walter Gonzalez** (writing as W. E. Ticas) whose poem "Do Not Forget Us" was published by the Jewish Literary Journal. You can read the poem here:
<https://jewishliteraryjournal.com/poetry/do-not-forget-us-w-e-ticas/>
- To - **Klarina Priborkin**, whose poem "The Story of a Bouquet" will be published in IAWE's arc32. And Klarina's article has been published in Judith Magazine. Here's a link to the article
<https://judithmagazine.substack.com/p/reading-lion-feuchtwangers-the-war>. In this article Klarina traces a 1965 Soviet edition of the novel from her grandparents' hushed apartment in Uzbekistan to her own safe room under fire in Israel.
- To - **Judy Robinson**, whose painting "Yellow Flowers" was featured in the most recent issue of **Wild Greens**. You can see the painting in the 'Art by our Members' section of this Newsletter. And Judy has a variety of prose and poetry featured in June's edition of the New English Review, which you can read [here](#).
- To - **Miriam Webber**, who has had a poem accepted for publication in The Deronda Review.
- To - **Peter Bernstein**, whose poem "PLEA" was included in Poetry Super Highway's 28th Annual Yom HaShoah (Holocaust Remembrance Day) Poetry Issue – you can read the poem [here](#).
- To - **Esther Cameron**, who has had poems and articles published in the New English Review. Click on the blue hyperlinks: [To Golda, for Mother's Day](#), [Beauty's Rose: A Parable of Israel's Predicament Mutability](#) and [Santmyer's Masterpiece: A Recommendation](#)
- To - **Channah Moshe**, whose poem "Who decides" is printed in the Jewish Literary Journal – you can read it here - <https://jewishliteraryjournal.com/poetry/who-decides-channah-moshe/>.
- To - **Julian Alper**, who has had three poems published in the New English Review, you can read them here: [A Hard Night's Day](#)

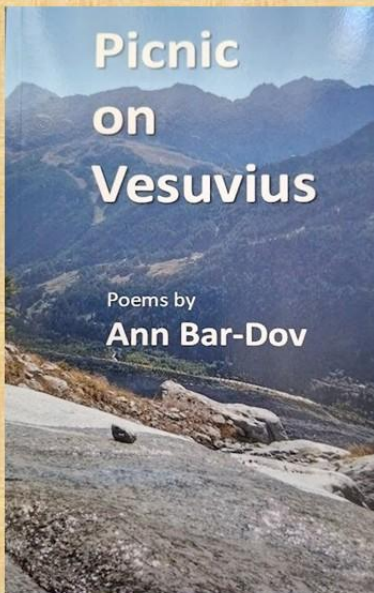
VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

EVENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

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.



For more information: 077-412-3013
annbd454@gmail.com



The English Library
In memory of Edyth Geiger

takes pleasure in inviting you to the launch
of Ann Bar-Dov's latest poetry collection, "Picnic on Vesuvius".



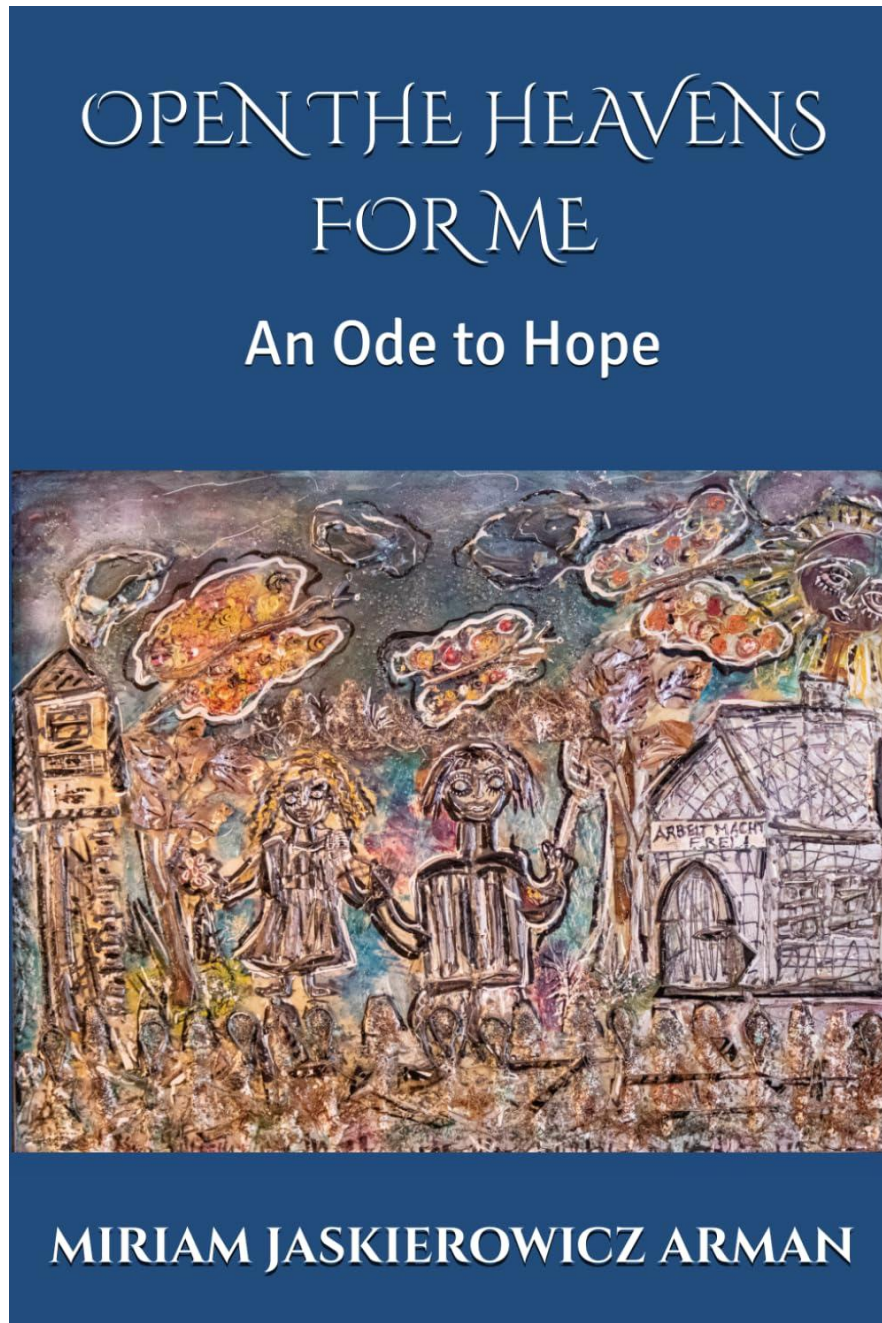
Originally from Brooklyn NY, **Ann Bar-Dov** has lived in Israel since 1976 and in the Galilee since 1983. After 40 years teaching (kindergarten, yoga, Public Health), she has finally retired and is enjoying spending real time writing! Her work has appeared in various anthologies and journals, printed and electronic. Her short essay "Library Memories" won first place in the 2021 Brooklyn Film & Arts non-fiction competition. She has published two collections of poetry (one available on Amazon).

Sunday, July 5th, 2026
17:00

38 Jerusalem Street, Tsfat

VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

Miriam Jaskierowicz Arman's new book is available now from Amazon.
Here is the [link](#).



The cover photo, which is now my Facebook profile picture, is my signature piece and is called "ONLY BUTTERFLIES ARE FREE". It is dedicated to the children of Terezin (*Theresienstadt*). The work, which is in three-dimensional glass fusion and mixed media, weighs about 15 kg. It tells the story of my family and that of 6 million pure souls. MJA

VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH



Three Weeks of Poetry

A Closer Look at the Kinnot

WITH RABBI JAY KELMAN

Dear Friends,

The Three Weeks are not only or even primarily about the past. It is a time to learn the lessons of the past so that we are inspired to live better in the present and shape a greater future.

Please join me for **Three Weeks of Poetry** a daily podcast **from 17 Tammuz through Tisha B'Av**. In each episode (generally between 20–25 minutes) we will explore one of the kinnot, its literary style, themes, historical context, the meaning of and behind the words.

The first kinnot episode will be released on **17 Tammuz**, with a new podcast each day through to **Tisha B'Av**.

Use this link:

[Three Weeks of Poetry: A Closer Look at the Kinnot | Torah In Motion](#)

VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

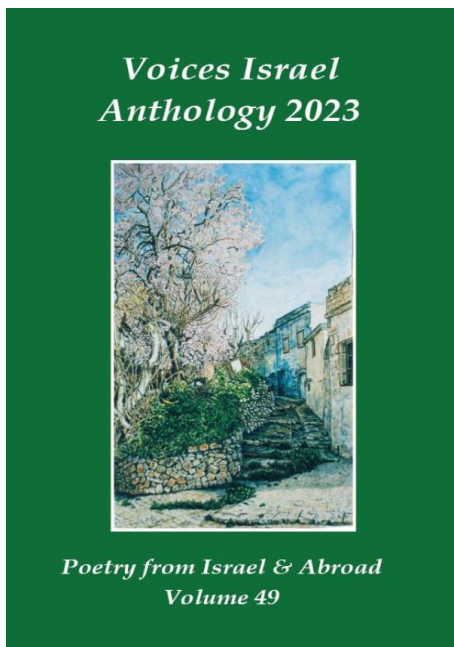
COMPETITION: IMAGE FOR THE 2026 ANTHOLOGY

Following a great set of submissions, we have chosen Isaac Cohen's picture for the front of the 2026 Anthology.

Congratulations, Isaac!!!!

There could be only one winner.

But there are no losers – we hope to be able to include some of the pictures submitted in forthcoming Newsletters.



Painting by Helen Bar-Lev

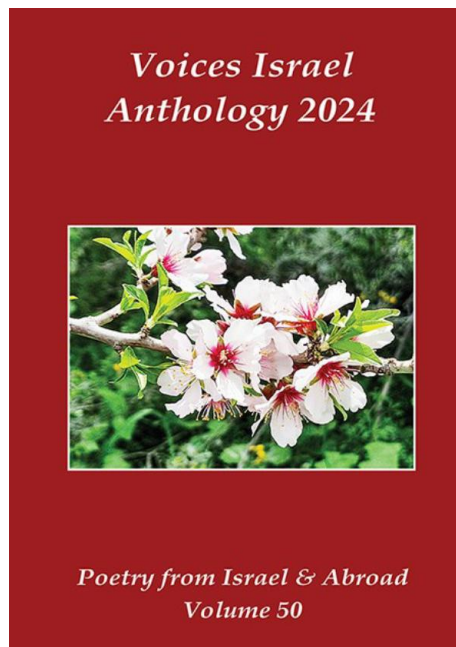
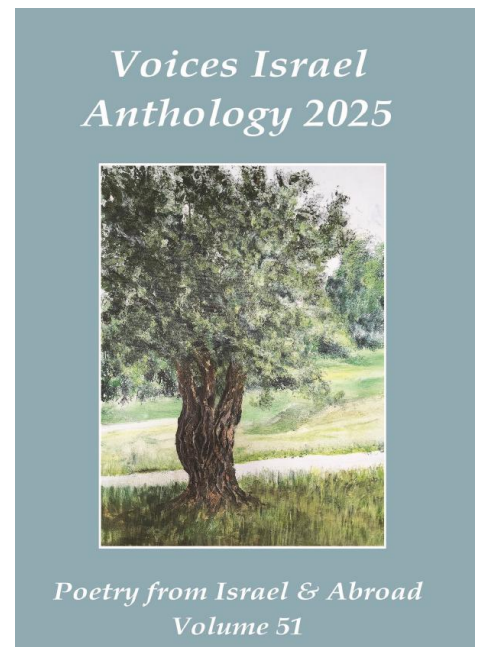


Photo by Julian Alper



Painting by Malka Keleter

**The anthology is now with the printer and
we hope to be able to distribute it early to
mid-July**

VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

HONOURING OUR NONAGENARIANS

We are delighted to announce that there will be a special Zoom evening to celebrate our nonagenarian poets and their wonderful poetry.

The evening will be hosted by Naomi Yalin.

We will be honouring six wonderful poets, six remarkable people:

**Ada Aharoni, Amiel Schotz,
Judy Foner, Miriam Webber,
Ricky Frisem and Stanley Barkan**

Date – Tuesday, 14th July at 7:30pm (Israel time) on Zoom

Please register as soon as you can using this link: <https://forms.gle/CoDkbHbpEwoXj3nL7>

You can send the link to family and friends who might wish to watch the poetry readings. But please ask them to indicate on the form who invited them.

VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

A BIT OF FRY AND LAURIE



Suitable Poetry Sketch | A Bit of Fry and Laurie

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DjUmG3d0ntE>

VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

CALLS FOR SUBMISSIONS



Call for Poetry Submissions

Babka Press's goal is to publish poetry anthologies on specific Jewish experiences. We want to discover new voices, and celebrate emerging and seasoned poets. Jews and our Allies are welcome to submit. It is our belief that themed collections provide a cohesive reading experience, and an emotional outlet for our collective trauma. We welcome poetry of the sacred and the profane.

Call for submissions to our inaugural anthology: **Sheltering in Place**

We want poems from those who have experienced the barrage of missiles in Israel. Whether crouched on a roadside, staying in an underground garage, huddled in a safe room, or with kids at a playground in tubular concrete structures, we want your poetry. We are particularly interested in the resilience of the absurd, the 'only in Israel' stories.

Deadline extended to July 15th!

While we work on our website, please submit up to 3 poems to Haya Pomrenze at babkاپress@gmail.com

Please include your **name** and **title of poems** in subject line
PDF or Word Doc

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

BALAGAN's next issue

LOVE



We are looking for essays,
poetry, photographs, visual art,
and hybrid work that explore LOVE
and its consequences.

Up to 1000 words

Deadline August 1



Email info@writingonthewall.io

VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH



*******CALL FOR SUBMISSION FOR A SPECIAL FOLIO*******

Calul Journal: An Anniversary Folio

**A call for poems and art that hold connections despite
difference.**

Calul Journal is turning one year old.

In that year we have published poems and poets from across the globe, everywhere the Jewish and the human story have landed and taken root. We have opened the door each week and said: come in. There is room. You belong here. Everyone belongs here.

**For our anniversary folio we are asking for work
in the theme of HaKol Calul (Everything and everyone is included)**

Send us poems that hold two things that seem impossible to hold together, connections across the diverse. Send poems that are both elegy and celebration, both witness and song. Send the poem that looks around at the living and the dead and the grieving and the surviving and says – in whatever language the body offers – we are all here, and none of it will be left out.

We welcome poems in any form from poets at every stage of their writing life.

We welcome the poem you were afraid to send us.

Hakol Calul. Everything is included. We are all here.

**Send 3-5 original unpublished poems as a word document attachment to
caluljournal@gmail.com by July 6th.**

In the subject line write: Anniversary Folio followed by your name.

We can't wait to read your poems!

For more information see here - <https://calul.substack.com/p/submit-to-calul-today>

VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

The Deronda Review seeks submissions of up to five poems, either in ONE Word document or in the body of the email. **Reading period extended until 15 July 2026**. Send to Esther Cameron, derondareview at g mail, or to Mindy Aber Barad, maber4kids at yahoo period com.

For the 2026 issue, we will continue the theme of Will (see our most recent call for submissions, below) and add the theme of Birth. Poems on other themes, especially nature and the seasons and any of our past themes (see the Archives), will also be considered.

For more information see <https://www.derondareview.org/submit.htm>.

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

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 January must be in by the 20th of December.) 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.

VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

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.

Thimble Literary Magazine is open for submissions February, March, May, June, **August**, September, November, and December. In other words, all months except January, April, July, and October. For more information see <https://www.thimblelitmag.com/submissions/>

Cypress Review seeks submissions – more details can be found here: <https://duotrope.com/duosuma/submit/cypress-review-d5WzQ>

New York Quarterly seeks submissions: <https://www.nyq.org/magazine/submissions.php>

Better Than Starbucks Journal is accepting submissions for the Sep 2026 Autumn Issue. <https://www.betterthanstarbucks.org/submission-guidelines>

Persimmon Tree is accepting submissions from women over sixty. <https://persimmontree.org/submissions/>

Life and Legends is now accepting submissions on Submittable. We welcome submissions in Poetry, Poetry in Translation, Book Reviews, Interviews, and Essays from writers and translators worldwide. Submit your work at: <https://silentrivier.submittable.com/submit>

Rawhead is currently accepting Poetry, Visual Art, Fiction, Creative Nonfiction, & Hybrid submissions – for more details see <https://rawheadjournal.org/submit-to-rawhead/>

Tiny Spoon is seeking submissions until July 31st. We are moving through a time that feels unfamiliar and all too familiar. Our bodies ache, uprooted. Our souls search, severed. We are tossed in the cyclone, yearning. For **Issue 15**, we invite you to submit your original work on the theme **Weathering**. This moment demands resilience. This moment beckons us back to the communal earthbody. We are in constant motion, constant change, unable to return to our past states. For more information click here -[Tiny Spoon Issue 15 Submissions: Weathering](#).

VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

Central Texas Writers Society accepts submissions of short stories, comedy, song lyrics, poetry, art, prose, and more! If it fits our current theme and we like it we will make space for it.



*Theme of our CTWS 2026 Anthology:
“unspoken truths beneath the surface of
things.”*

*Please send art or any type of writing that
pertains to all or part of our chosen theme.
centraltexaswriterssociety@outlook.com*

Stories may be no longer than 2000 words.

- There is no fee to enter and we are not a paying market at this time.
- All rights revert back to the author and you must have the rights to your work.
- Please send no more than 3 items in any category to centraltexaswriterssociety@outlook.com as an attachment in 12-point Times Roman.
- All writers may participate **from anywhere in the world** but, all work must be in English.
- Please submit work starting June 1st **until August 1st**. All authors to be published will be notified in August or before and our book is typically published by October.
- Please send no more than **three poems**.

Check out Erika Dreifus’ Jewish Literary Links

See - <https://www.erikadreifus.com/2026/06/jewish-books-and-writing-4/>

VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

ART BY OUR MEMBERS

Cover Picture by Amir Coosner, photographed at Dado Beach, Haifa



Photographed on one of the first outings after my recent operation. So, as you can imagine, I wasn't feeling very strong at the time. Sitting on an uncomfortable slatted wooden bench, I wrote the two haiku below:

Hard promenade bench
Viewing beach and quiet sea
Still too weak to walk

Lifeguard post on piles
Ripples shushing in and out
Dado Beach Haifa

VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

Yellow Flowers by Judy Robinson



After October 7, 2023

Witless Tikvah spread
her naiveté eagerly as a child
butters bread.

This may be about having had enough.

This may be about wanting
the world to come.

VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

MY FATHER BENNO SCHOTZ

By Amiel Schotz



BENNO SCHOTZ - SELF-PORTRAIT

Dad was born in Estonia in 1891. Unable to study engineering there due to the *numerus clausus* that limited the number of Jews admitted to college, he studied for a year in Darmstadt, and in summer 1912, went to visit his brother Schachno in Glasgow, Scotland (How Schachno got there is a story for another occasion.)

He persuaded my father to stay and transfer to the local Technical College, where he duly graduated in 1914, and worked in a shipyard drawing office for 9 years. During that time he found and developed his true vocation as a sculptor. A long and highly distinguished career culminated in his appointment as *Sculptor to the Queen*. His list of honours (among others, an LLD from the Hebrew University) is too long to be included here.

He died: still active, at 93 in 1984 and is buried in Jerusalem—he said he'd had enough of Glasgow rain and looked forward to the sunshine. He was a lifelong Zionist. Looking through his papers after his death we found a drawer full of poems he had written, unbeknown to anyone. This was quite a feat given that English was the last of 5 languages he had spoken during his life, Estonian, Yiddish, Russian, German and finally English learned from scratch in Glasgow over that first summer. I'd like to offer some of his efforts here.

VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

These two sonnets speak to his all-consuming concern for feeling and truth in Art.

Truth and Beauty

a sonnet

Say not that Truth is Beauty, Beauty, Truth,
for seasoned Truth bestrides the mountain range,
and Beauty, elfin-wise and wondrous strange
bears witness to a never-ending youth.
The mind that stays a flash of flaming time
the eye that etches emblems out of thought—
for these there is but Beauty, true or not,
as fragrance of a rose in ink or lime.
May it not be that likewise, gaining naught,
drab sordidness in truth an untruth is?
Or if it be truth, then consider this—
can Beauty dwell where grace and love do not?
Then heed, lest in our search for Truth in Art
we miss the Beauty that can scald the heart.

Thrice Blessed is the Man

a sonnet

Thrice blessed is he whom fortune has befriended,
but greater he who shapes his own domain.
For 'spite the magnitude of toil and pain,
he carves the rock of fate till, truly blended,
are happy accident and studied aim.
For inspiration plucks the strings of Art
to soothe the raging tempest of the heart,
or wing to extract a soul aflame.
The alchemy of Art distills to lift
manifest ugliness to the sublime
and, giving shape defies corroding time.
Then sevenfold is blessed with secret gift
the one who seeks and marks the sacred line
to transmute mundane into the divine.

Continued on next page

VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

But the next two, show a playful, loving side that as children, my sister and I rarely saw.

April Fool

One day in April, after rain,
while walking in the street,,
I glimpsed a little bit of heaven
right there at my feet.

The pavement still was glistening,
in the burnished spring day sun,
how the raindrops danced for joy,
a sweet jewel every one.
As on my way I blithely strode,
twixt puddles gleaming wet,
before me suddenly there blazed
a sapphire nobly set.

I stopped and gazed in wonder
at that vision from the sky,
it seemed to smile and wink at me
and all the passers by.

And when I bent to touch its face,
and lift it from the pool,
I heard a laughing whisper,
“Oh, you dear, April Fool.”

To Amiel at Four

When I'll be big and you'll be small
I won't be cross with you at all.
You'll see I'll be so good to you,
I will, my lad, it's really true,
Because you're just a little boy
Who wants to find the world a joy.

I shall not make you drink your milk
Or say you *must* eat up your crust,
Or if you will not eat your dinner,
I shall not scold, “You're getting thinner”.
I think I'll simply pat your head
And ask you what you'd like instead.

I'll let you draw with coloured chalk
Upon the wall and on the walk.
I'll even let you drum a lot
Upon the kettle or the pot.
We'll have such fun with all the toys
Like cars and guns one gives to boys.

When walking with me in the street,
You will not need to watch your feet.
I'll hold your hand with steady grip,
And never let you trip or slip,
When looking up at sky or steeple,
Or just at things or all the people.

Then when it's time for beddy-bye
When story's told and lullaby,
You're tucked in snugly with your Teddy,
Warm and comfy in your beddy,
I'll hug you tight, but not too sore,
When I am Dad and you are four.

VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

ABOUT WALTER GONZALEZ

Our new member, Walter Gonzalez, has written a short autobiographical sketch to introduce himself to Voices Israel members.



Walter Estever Gonzalez, writing as W. E. Ticas, was born in San Jorge, El Salvador, and immigrated to the United States in 1992. Growing up during the Salvadoran Civil War shaped much of his writing, which explores memory, displacement, survival, faith, and the ways history continues to live within individuals long after events have passed.

Based on Long Island, New York, he writes poetry, essays, and literary fiction. His work has appeared in *The Times of Israel*, *The Jewish Literary Journal*, *Dark Poets Club*, and the *Voices in Verse 2026* anthology. His poem *Do Not Forget Us* was recently published in *The Jewish Literary Journal*, and he is also a contributor to the *Voices Israel Newsletter*. Much of his recent writing reflects on the intersection of personal memory, historical trauma, identity, and belonging.

In recent years, questions of Jewish identity, heritage, and collective memory have become central to his personal and literary journey. These themes have influenced much of his recent work, which explores the relationship between history, belonging, and remembrance.

Through poetry and prose, he seeks to preserve stories that might otherwise be forgotten and to explore how people carry both loss and hope across generations.

He lives on Long Island, New York, where he continues to write while working in the field of pest management.

His blog at the Times of Israel is here:

<https://blogs.timesofisrael.com/author/walter-estever-gonzalez/>

And his website is here: <https://weticas.com/>

Walter's poem "Under the Ceiba Tree" is in the Poet's Corner section of this Newsletter.

VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

TAKING SHELTER

By Susan Braun Svorai

“Come here darling, the sirens have started again. Come to the safe room.” Amanda prods her twelve-year-old daughter as Janine sits, seemingly in a world of her own, EarPods in her ears, nodding her head to some beat that only she can hear.

Amanda looks at the brown curls framing Janine's face, amused at how they bounce to the bass notes she imagines blare into Janine's ears. She wonders how Janine can bear to listen to the screeches of what passes for music these days. What they call Rap in her mind, is just endless angry shouting, and every other verse spits out the *F* word. When did fuck come to mean *really*? Even quiet soul songs have Ariana Grande singing, *I'm so fucking grateful*. Is it that hard to say *very grateful*? Amanda's shoulders drop in resignation- she knows that this is a battle she will never win. Best to choose one's battles carefully, her mother used to say.

The siren continues to undulate, scratching at Amanda's nerves, doing its job in creating a sense of urgency. She catches a glance at Charlie, their new rescue dog as he slinks under the couch. She wouldn't bring him into the safe room shelter anyway, she can't face the claustrophobic concrete room with shedded hair. *He'll survive*; she reassures herself. *Will I?*

“Janine, please don't fight me on this, just come on. Don't be so...” she almost says the *F* word, “stubborn! We have to go to the *mamad* now!” Amanda's voice rises in hysteria.

Janine finally deigns to look at Amanda, as if she has just become aware of her presence. She doesn't remove her EarPods, but inclines her head toward Amanda, gazes calmly into her eyes.

“What's up mom?”

Such an innocent face, Amanda thinks. “I'm trying to get you to put that stupid music out of your head and come with me into the safe room. I don't know who it is this time... *Hezbollah, Hamas, Houthis*...It doesn't matter, we've got to go!”

“I'm not worried mom', Janine smiles. 'Can't you chill? We've been through this every other night. It is what it is.”

Amanda grits her teeth, hisses, “What it *is*, sucks! I'm so tired of it all. When will it end? When can I relax and live my life like a normal person?”

She hears Amanda snort, “You said the *S* word mom. That's so cool. And when were you ever relaxed?”

Ten minutes have now passed since the siren first sounded, and after ten minutes, Israeli citizens are allowed to exit their *mamads*, their safe rooms. Now that the danger is over, Charlie emerges from his hiding place. He sends a guilty look to Janine, as if embarrassed that he lacked courage to stay in place.

Janine slowly uncurls her EarPods, careful not to tangle them in her small hoop earrings. At twelve years old she still has a layer of baby fat, and to Amanda she looks like a tiny Buddah.

“Do you know what I was listening to mom?” Janine stares at Amanda intently.

“*Metallica? Megadeath?* Stuff I can't bear to listen to?” Amanda guesses.

Janine shakes her head. “I just wanted to be in a safe space. I always want to be in a safe space. This is what I hear, take these mom.” She places her phone in her mother's hands.

Amanda gingerly places the pods in her ears, wincing in advance at the cacophony of beats and swear words she expects to hear assaulting her ears.

“So what do you hear mom?” Janine smiles.

Amanda finally gets it. She feels her shoulders relax as her ears cradle the broken EarPods.

Silence.



VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

THE WANDERING JEW

By Amos Giles

For forty years, my closest companion has been the Wandering Jew.

We have wrestled together with questions of faith and belonging, identity and exile. His perspective has always been broader than mine. After all, two thousand years is a long time to spend wandering.

I became rather obsessed with him. He did not seem to mind. So I continued writing songs and poems, building stories and screenplays around his character, including my upcoming novel "The Wandering Jewboy" (in the process of publication).

Although I have lived in Israel for many years, I rarely met anyone else who shared that fascination. I assumed it was because the figure carries so much Christian baggage. So despite decades of reading, writing and creating around the Wandering Jew, I never really went looking for fellow travellers.

That changed recently when I discovered that one of the world's leading experts on this elusive companion of mine lives right here in Jerusalem: Professor Galit Hasan-Rokem.



MARCH CHAGALL – THE WANDERING JEW - WIKIART.ORG



Together with Eli, my writing partner on a screen adaptation of the Wandering Jew legend, we went to meet her like two excited schoolboys.

The real surprise was discovering someone who may be even more obsessed with the Wandering Jew than I am.

For more than fifty years Galit has been collecting, researching and writing about this elusive figure. Standing in front of shelves packed with Wandering Jew books and artwork, I felt like an apprentice who had just discovered how large the library really was. I arrived feeling like a veteran and left feeling like a novice.

What struck me most was not how much there is still to learn about the Wandering Jew, but how relevant he feels at this particular moment.

He tends to appear whenever questions of Jewish belonging become unsettled. He walks through periods of exile, uncertainty and reinvention. He emerges when Jews begin asking familiar questions: Are we at home? Are we secure? What does belonging actually mean?

Perhaps that is why he refuses to disappear.

After forty years of following his footprints, I still find myself returning to him. Not because he provides answers, but because he keeps asking questions.

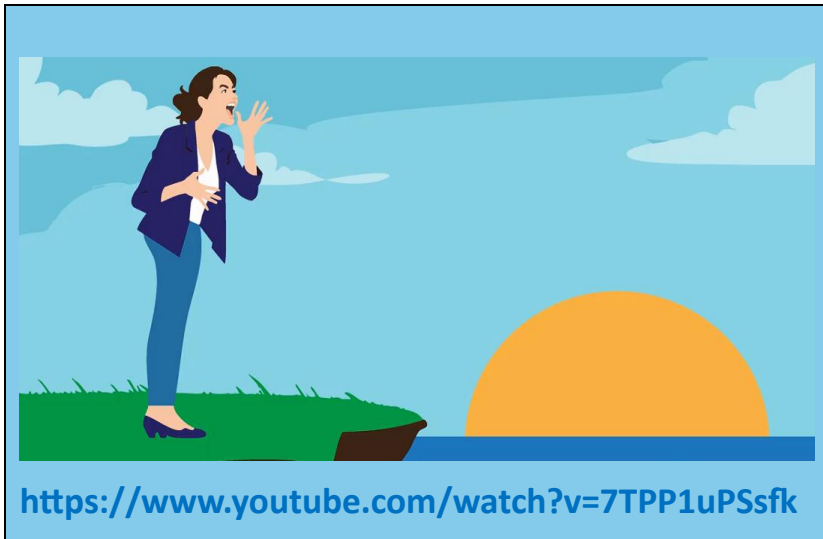
Galit helped me see more clearly some of the questions that any retelling of his legend must confront in the twenty-first century.

I suspect this meeting is only the beginning of a conversation. Galit and I have two thousand years of catching up to do.

VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

ROARING LION - POEM

Roaring Lion by Ricky Friesem



**There are more of Ricky's video poems on her
YouTube Channel:**

<https://www.youtube.com/@rickyfriesem>

VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

TAPIOCA - POEM

Elana Wolff reads her poem, Tapioca

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1699275827949476>



VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

MUSÉE DES BEAUX ARTS / *THE FALL OF ICARUS*

Pieter Bruegel the Elder, Landscape with the Fall of Icarus



Musée des Beaux Arts
By W. H. Auden

In Brueghel's *Icarus*, for instance: how everything turns away
Quite leisurely from the disaster; the ploughman may
Have heard the splash, the forsaken cry,
But for him it was not an important failure; the sun shone
As it had to on the white legs disappearing into the green
Water; and the expensive delicate ship that must have seen
Something amazing, a boy falling out of the sky,
Had somewhere to get to and sailed calmly on.

Painting from Wikipedia / poem
(selected by the editor)

Contributions published in this Voices Israel newsletter and files linked to it, including in our workshop chapbooks, are the sole copyright of the contributors themselves.

Any of the opinions in the content published in this newsletter are the sole opinions of the individual contributors and do not represent the views or opinions of Voices Israel Group of Poets in English.