

VOICES ISRAEL
GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2026





VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

SEPTEMBER 2026 NEWSLETTER

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Emma Lazarus (engraving)

[Wikipedia]

Save these dates:

Workshop
2nd Sep at 7pm

Anthology Launch
14th Oct at 6pm-9pm

EGM/Open Mic
28th Oct at 7:30pm

All times are Israel times



VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

O golden month! How high thy gold is heaped!
The yellow birch-leaves shine like bright coins strung
On wands; the chestnut's yellow pennons tongue
To every wind its harvest challenge....

From September, by Helen Hunt Jackson

Dear Friends,

As I indicated last month our monthly meetings are flourishing and oversubscribed. We have added a ninth group – Global Group 3, which meets on the first Thursday of each month on Zoom.

And, with many thanks to Deborah Golden, we are about to start a Poetry Reading group. We plan to meet on Zoom once every two months, on the first Sunday of every second month, starting on Sunday, 1 November, in the early evening, for an hour.

For each meeting we will decide on a poet in advance and will spend our time together reading and discussing their work. So far, 29 members have registered interest in the Group. Do let us know if you would like to join too.

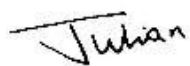
This week (2nd September), we will have a Voices Israel – Zoom Workshop led by Elana Dorfman and Dina Yehuda. It's not too late to register – see the link on page seven of this Newsletter.

Some members still haven't paid their 2026 membership fee. If you haven't already paid, 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.

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.

Wishing all members a Happy New Year with good health, happiness and successful writing.

Kind regards,



Julian Alper,
President, Voices Israel.



ALBERT BIERSTADT – AUTUMN WOODS [WIKIPEDIA]

VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

MEETING DATES, TIMES AND PLACES

September 2026

SOUTHERN	Meeting via Zoom Sunday, October 18 at 5:00 PM	Coordinator: Miriam Green	miriamsgreen@gmail.com
TEL AVIV	Meeting via Zoom Thurs, September 24 at 7:15 PM	Coordinator: Mark L. Levinson Tel: 054-444-8438	nosnivel@netvision.net.il
JERUSALEM	Meeting via Zoom Thursday, Sept 17 at 7:30 PM	Coordinator: Avril Meallem Tel: 02-567-0998	aemeallem@gmail.com
UPPER GALILEE	Wednesday, Sept 9 at 10:30. at the home of Reuven and Yehudit in Tzfat	Coordinator: Reuven Goldfarb Tel: 04-697-4105 or: 058-414-0262	poetsprogress@gmail.com
HAIFA	Tuesday, September 8 at 7:00 PM at Edit Gavriely's home	Coordinator: Naomi Yalin Tel: 054-794-3738	naomiyalin@gmail.com
NETANYA/SHARON	Monday, September 28 at 7:00 PM at Susan Olsburgh's home	Coordinator: Susan Olsburgh Tel: 054-919-3575	olsburgh.susan@gmail.com
GLOBAL GROUP 1	Meeting via Zoom Thurs, September 17 at 19:15 Israel time	Coordinator: Shoshana Kent Tel: +972-52-808-9365	y2nosh@gmail.com
GLOBAL GROUP 2	Meeting via Zoom Sunday, September 6 at 19:30 Israel time	Coordinator: Judy Koren Tel: +972-54-741-7860	koren.judy@gmail.com
GLOBAL GROUP 3	Meeting via Zoom Thursday, September 3 at 19:30 Israel time	Coordinator: Julian Alper Tel: +972-54-307-3587	julian.alper@gmail.com
POETRY READING	Meeting via Zoom Sunday, November 1 Time to be confirmed	Coordinator: Debbie Golden	deborahg@edu.haifa.ac.il

VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

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

- **Mindy Kronenberg** of NY, USA
- **Carolyn Mary Kleefeld** of Big Sur, CA, USA

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR MEMBERS

- To - **Isaac Cohen** for his many successes during the month.
- To - **Judy Koren**, who has had poems selected for publication in *The Deronda Review*
- To - **Ann Bar-Dov, Elana Dorfmann, Judy Koren and Julian Alper** who have had poems selected for inclusion in the forthcoming anthology, *Shelter in Place*, from The Babka Press.
- To - **Bruce Black**, who has had two poems published online by Ritualwell – the two poems can be read by clicking on these two links: <https://ritualwell.org/ritual/god-seems-so-distant-this-year/> and <https://ritualwell.org/ritual/slowly-awakening/>
And Bruce has had a poem published by KIND OVER MATTER – you can read the poem here: <https://kindovermatter.com/the-way-kindness-comes-into-the-world/>
And Bruce has had a poem “What is home?” published in the current issue of Ibbetson Street #59.
See - <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/1F5MLYjS8B/>
- To - **Mara Lee Grayson** whose poem “To the First-Born Daughter on the Fourteenth Floor of the Marlboro Housing Project, 1958” has been published by *The Rumpus* – you can read it here: <https://therumpus.net/2026/08/12/to-the-first-born-daughter-on-the-fourteenth-floor-of-the-marlboro-housing-project-1958ee-poems/>
- To - **Christopher Carter Sanderson** who has a piece coming out in *The Exacting Clam* literary magazine in December. And a piece coming out in the Fall issue of the UK's *Spellbinder* Magazine.
- To - **Mark L. Levinson**, who has had two poems “The Traffic Circle” and “The Fat Thread” published in *Charlie's Fare Literary Journal* – you can read the poems here: <https://charliesfare.substack.com/p/the-traffic-circle>

VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

LETTERS TO EDITOR

I am looking for someone "out there" among the readership of *Voices* who is interested in the poetry of **W. S. Merwin** and would also be willing to help me tackle some of the more obscure passages in his work.

For instance, the following lines from *Island City*:

Around a corner
somebody who's a city
pounds all day on a tin door

and:

Only two houses away
a neighbor
is a piano playing

(from *Island City*, *Feathers From The Hill*, *Flower & Hand*, Copper Canyon Press, p. 86)

Thanks in advance.

Jeff Goodman

Yerucham, Israel

Email: goodmnj@gmail.com

Cell phone (Israel): 053-795-6603

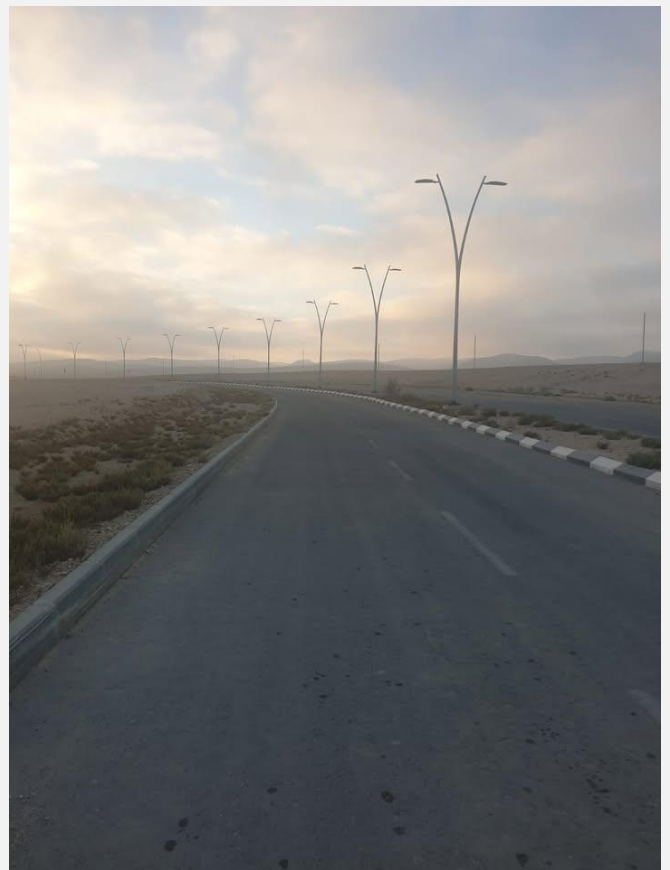
A little background on the above request:

I first encountered W. S. Merwin a few years ago, before the October massacre, during the COVID-19 pandemic. At the time, I had started taking long walks on the desert road that encircles my hometown of Yerucham from the south in an effort to improve my physical health. To occupy my mind during those walks, I listened to talks by a wide variety of speakers.

Somehow I came across Merwin's inaugural lecture at the Library of Congress on YouTube, delivered at the beginning of his term as U.S. Poet Laureate (2010–2011). The cadence of his voice captivated me. It eventually led me to discover Aharon Appelfeld's talks on YouTube as well. There is something strikingly similar in the rhythm and cadence of the two men's voices.

In the meantime, I picked up a second-hand copy of Merwin's *Flower & Hand* at the Jerusalem branch of Sipur Chazer. The book then sat on a shelf in my study until quite recently, when I finally began reading some of the poems.

I have always been especially drawn to short, haiku-like, three-line poems, and I was delighted to discover that the book contains many of them.



VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

EVENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Voices Israel – Zoom Workshop

Some of the oldest and most inspiring poetry comes from Tehillim. Tap into its power. Join us for a Zoom workshop:

**Wednesday September 2nd - 7pm-8:30pm
Israel time.**

Led by Elana Dorfman and Dina Yehuda

To register use the link [here](#).

With many thanks to Ira Director, please check out this Facebook page.
It features poetry and art from our Nonagenarians



Group by Ira Director

90+f by Voices Israel and Gezer Gallery

Use this link - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1096770099345398/>

VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

Voices Israel EGM

Extraordinary General Meeting

In light of rising costs, particularly for overseas postage, we will have to increase the membership fees for 2027. Members will have an opportunity to discuss the proposed increase at an EGM on Zoom on Wednesday 28th October at 7:30pm (Israel time). The EGM will be followed by an open mic poetry reading – further details will follow soon.

Good Poems in Good Company

Voices Israel Poetry Reading Group

There is so much knowledge and love of poetry among our members that we thought it would be a wonderful idea for Voices Israel to set up a **Poetry Reading Group!**

We plan to meet on Zoom once every two months, on the **first Sunday of every second month**, starting on **Sunday, 1 November**, in the early evening, for an hour. For each meeting we will decide on a poet in advance and will spend our time together reading and discussing their work.

If you're interested in taking part, please contact
Debbie Golden - deborahg@edu.haifa.ac.il

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.



Meet The Author – Elana Wolff

🕒 Wednesday, 16 September 2026 at 18:00

📍 ESRA members: ₪20 | Non-members: ₪30

An evening of poetry, conversation and literary insight with an award-winning Canadian author.

Join us for a fascinating evening with **Elana Wolff** as she shares her writing journey, the inspirations behind her work, and her latest poetry collection, *Everybody Knows a Ghost*.

A celebrated poet, essayist and literary editor, Elana has published eight collections of poetry and is widely recognised for her thoughtful exploration of memory, identity, faith and the human experience. During this intimate author event, she will discuss her acclaimed body of work, offer a glimpse into her creative process, and reflect on the themes that have shaped her writing over the years. The evening will conclude with an opportunity to ask questions and meet the author.

Whether you're an avid reader, a poetry enthusiast or simply curious to discover a remarkable literary voice, this promises to be an engaging evening of storytelling, reflection and conversation.

Elana Wolff is the author of eight poetry collections, a collection of essays on poetry, and co-translator of Hebrew poetry into English. A two-time recipient of the Canadian Jewish Literary Award, she has taught at York University and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and now divides her time between writing and literary editing.

Location: ESRA Second Hand English Bookshop

Kiryat Sefer 5, Haifa



To register use this link:

<https://www.esra.org.il/event/meet-the-author/>

VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH



The poster is for the 11th IFLAC World Peace Congress by Zoom. It features a dark blue background with a white dove in flight holding an olive branch, set against a backdrop of a glowing Earth. The text 'INVITATION' is at the top, followed by 'IFLAC' in large, bold, gold letters. Below this, it says 'INTERNATIONAL FORUM FOR THE LITERATURE AND CULTURE OF PEACE' and 'TOGETHER FOR PEACE, HARMONY & HUMANITY'. A photo of Dr. Ada Aharoni, the host, is on the left. The right side contains registration details: 'REGISTER NOW FOR THE 11TH IFLAC WORLD PEACE CONGRESS BY ZOOM', the date 'TUESDAY, 22 SEPTEMBER 2026' at '19:00 (7:00 P.M.) ISRAEL TIME', a 'REGISTER HERE' button with a QR code and a Google Forms link, and two bullet points: 'A PEACE MINISTRY IN EVERY COUNTRY OF THE WORLD' and 'AN ANTI-WAR LAW LIKE IN JAPAN'. At the bottom is a circular seal for the '11th WORLD PEACE CONGRESS by Zoom' with the theme 'Peace through music' and a dedication to Yehudi Menuhin. The seal includes a globe, a dove, and a violin.

INVITATION

IFLAC

INTERNATIONAL FORUM
FOR THE LITERATURE AND CULTURE OF PEACE

TOGETHER FOR PEACE, HARMONY & HUMANITY

REGISTER NOW FOR THE
11TH IFLAC
WORLD PEACE CONGRESS
BY ZOOM

TUESDAY, 22 SEPTEMBER 2026
19:00 (7:00 P.M.) ISRAEL TIME

REGISTER HERE
Scan the QR code
<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1Y1hYtJZO0ypkp4G44opl18ielFue8OonZopbTD5bwVw>

HOSTED BY
DR. ADA AHARONI
FOUNDER & PRESIDENT
IFLAC WORLD PEACE

✓ **A PEACE MINISTRY**
IN EVERY COUNTRY OF THE WORLD

✓ **AN ANTI-WAR LAW**
LIKE IN JAPAN

INTERNATIONAL FORUM FOR THE LITERATURE AND CULTURE OF PEACE

11th WORLD PEACE
CONGRESS
by Zoom

*Peace through
music*

Dedicated to Yehudi Menuhin

IFLAC WORLD

To register click here:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1Y1hYtJZO0ypkp4G44opl18ielFue8OonZopbTD5bwVw>

VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

Miriam Jaskierowicz Arman's incredible artwork is included in this exhibition
See Miriam's website - <https://www.miriamjaskierowiczarmanfineart.com/>



“Jerusalem of Gold”
GROUP EXHIBIT and SALE
at the Jerusalem Theater
“Salon”

JERUSALEM OF GOLD - 003
Oils, Acrylics & Gold Leaves on Canvas

Opening and Vernisage
Thursday September 3rd from 6-7pm
and continuing for the entire month

Meet the artists:
Miriam Jaskierowicz Armon
Danielle Meyer Feder
Maureen Fain
Aaron Krauss
Orit Simchoni

 Gallery talks throughout the month
in English, French, and Hebrew.

Check Jerusalem Theater website
or call for more information.

Produced by:
Chaya's Place
For information: 050-9290770

 Jerusalem Theater “Salon”
20 Marcus Street, Jerusalem



INVITATION

ART FOR PEACE • CULTURE FOR UNITY

ARTIST
Miriam
JASKIEROWICZ ARMAN

OFFICIAL REPRESENTATIVE & AMBASSADOR FOR PEACE
THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR ARTS AND CULTURE FOR PEACE (IAACP)
UNIVERSAL PEACE FEDERATION (UPF), ISRAEL

28 SEPT 2026
5:00 – 6:00 PM

*“Listening and Connecting
to your Inner Voice”*

SPECIAL GUEST
Hod Ben Zvi
CHAIR OF THE UNIVERSAL PEACE FEDERATION-ISRAEL



JERUSALEM THEATER
Marcus Street 20, Jerusalem
ALL ARE WELCOME

VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

ANTHOLOGY 2026 - LAUNCH

Our beautiful *Voices Israel Anthology 2026* has now been distributed. If you haven't received your copy yet, it should be arriving soon.

Congratulations, and heartfelt thanks, to our Editor-in-Chief and Anthology Producer, Judy Koren, and to the Editorial Board—Deborah Golden, Avril Meallem, and Elana Wolff—for their outstanding work in bringing this anthology to life.

Congratulations, too, to all the poets whose work was selected for inclusion.

The Anthology will be officially launched at a special event on **Wednesday 14th Oct**
At 6pm-9pm in Kiryat Motzkin near Haifa – a 2-minute walk from a train station
And at 7:30pm - 9pm on Zoom

More details soon

Voices Israel Anthology 2026



*Poetry from Israel & Abroad
Volume 52*

VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

POETRY READING WITH HELENA BONHAM CARTER AND STEPHEN COLBERT



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yEkz3jpk4AY>

VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

CALLS FOR SUBMISSIONS

Reuben Rose Memorial Poetry Competition



The 37th annual Reuben Rose Memorial Poetry Competition is open for entries **until October 1st, 2026**.

Entry fees for the 2026 competition:

US\$6.00 for 1 poem; US\$14.00 for 3 poems; US\$19.00 for 6 poems.

Prizes: First prize: \$500; Second prize: \$200; Third prize: \$100. Ten Honourable Mentions will also be awarded.

The judges for the 37th (2026) competition will be:

- Mark Elber and
- Anne Myles: both prize-winning U.S. poets.
- Wendy Blumfield, a British-born Israeli poet and journalist.

For more details about the competition and how to submit, please look at this page:

<https://voicesisrael.com/reuben-rose/submit-to-the-reuben-rose/>

IFLAC The International Forum for the Literature and Culture of Peace

Closing Date 10th September

Dear Writers, Poets, Students, Educators, and Peace Lovers
around the World,

As part of the 11th IFLAC World Peace Congress, IFLAC warmly invites you
to take part in an international Haiku Poetry Competition for Global
Peace.

This special competition invites original haiku poems on one or
more of the following urgent themes:



1. A Global Anti-War Law, like in Japan
A law that declares war illegal and protects humanity from the destruction of future wars.
2. Global Peace Ministries
The creation of governmental Peace Ministries in every country, as strong and influential as Defense Ministries, to educate for peace, prevent wars, and build a culture of peace.
3. IFLAC – The International Forum for the Literature and Culture of Peace – IPLC: The IFLAC International Peace Lovers Community

The peace lovers of the world are the largest community in the world – who doesn't love peace? If we all join together, and declare, as in our IFLAC PEACE PETITION: "We Declare World Peace Now!" we can indeed help humanity arrive at global peace.

A haiku is a short Japanese poem of three lines, traditionally written in the rhythm:

5 syllables

7 syllables

5 syllables

Example:

Japan showed the way

Global law can outlaw war

Children wake in peace

Send up to 6 Haikus. The haiku poems of the three first winners will be read and presented during the 11th IFLAC World Peace Congress. They will also be published on IFLAC's websites and on all social networks.

Please send your haiku poem, your full name, country, WhatsApp telephone and email address to: ada.aharoni06@gmail.com

VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

The Jewish Writing Project - <https://jewishwritingproject.com/>

The Jewish Writing Project was created to give Jews from assorted backgrounds the chance to share their experiences and explore, through their writing, what it means to be Jewish today. It's our hope that through the process of writing and revising, a writer's words can lead the writer (and reader) to a deeper understanding of his or her connection to our Jewish heritage. Here at The Jewish Writing Project, we invite you to tell others about a particular Jewish experience that may have shaped your understanding of what it means to be a Jew. Perhaps you might explore a memory about being Jewish that holds a special place in your heart or you might want to express thoughts about how being Jewish has enriched your life or made your life more difficult. Whatever you decide to write and share with the project—a poem, a story, an essay—please remember to keep the focus on *your* experience of being Jewish. It's our hope that the project can offer both writers and readers new ways of understanding what it means to be Jewish today. Thank you for thinking of The Jewish Writing Project as a home for your work. B'shalom, Bruce Black, Editorial Director *For more information about The Jewish Writing Project, write to Bruce Black at: bruceblack@ymail.com*

The **Poetry Super Highway** Poetry Contest is open to all human beings on planet Earth. (except for the three judges). Enter as many poems as you like. Poems may be of any style, length, or subject matter. Previously published poems are accepted. There is a One Dollar Per Poem (US Funds Only) entry fee.

For more details see <https://www.poetrysuperhighway.com/psh/2026-poetry-contest/>.

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.

VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

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.

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/>

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/>

Superpresent is a quarterly magazine of the arts. *Superpresent* publishes **poems**, short stories, essays, visual art pieces, experimental art, video art, and sound art - online and a limited run of print copies – and accepts submissions from anywhere in the world, with no fee. The theme for the **Fall 2026** issue is **NOT KNOWING**. **Submissions Due** September 15th - up to three poems, one per page. For more details see <https://superpresent.org/call/>.

The Fringe 999 Poetry Forum is a twice-yearly online poetry journal that includes eleven (11) poems selected from eleven (11) different poets on or about the eleventh (11th) day of April and October.

Submission is open until Sep 11, 2026, for the Oct 11, 2026 edition

Submission is open to any poet writing in English from anywhere in the world.

Submit up to three poems, free of charge.

For more details see <https://thefringe999.substack.com/p/submission-guidelines>

Check out Erika Dreifus’ Jewish Literary Links

See - <https://www.erikadreifus.com/2026/08/jewish-literary-links-306/>

VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

ART BY OUR MEMBERS

Cover Picture by Channah Moshe

A sunset on Bat-Yam beach which my husband and I often frequent in the summer months.



From Channah's poem "The Voice of the Waves"

Waves unify into a vast expanse
casting a magic spell
on our subconscious
until we lose ourselves
in mazes of contemplation

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Lime Butterfly

Photographed by Julian Alper



Stay near me -do not take thy flight!
A little longer stay in sight!

From "To a Butterfly" by William Wordsworth.

VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

“COROT AND THE MET” & “FOR COROT”

Poems By Helen Bar-Lev and Paintings by Jean-Baptiste Camille Corot

Corot has always been one of my favourite painters

Corot and the Met

O Corot,
did you know
they've finally given you
a room of your own
at the Metropolitan Museum
in New York

the city which is the antithesis
to your gentleness
to your artistic expression
the city which would wither
any further inspiration
which would make you cringe
in the midst of the din of its rhythm

How incongruent,
you and these brick giants,
the peace of your paintings
juxtaposed against the incessant clatter

What matter Corot?
The Met has given you
a room of your own
perhaps your paintings will penetrate
this city's indifferent membrane
with a measure of beauty
otherwise unseen

2005



A LANE THROUGH THE TREES [WIKIPEDIA]

VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

For Corot

You, Corot, my hero,
of course you know
I bought a book of your drawings
thirty years ago
and slept with it under my pillow
for a year or more
slowly absorbing your soul
into my own

You, Corot, sometimes so somber
often I wonder
how you capture
that leafy silver
in your gossamer trees

How do you control the brush
to form the contours
of the rocks and pines
of forest and countryside?
Your compositions are mine

I am with you as you sit at your easel
in the fields, painting shepherds
and their flocks of sheep
capturing peace

I breathe your air and see with your eyes
the ease with which your brush
strokes rapidly
as you stroll through nature
ever the observer

I walk down your shadowy paths
in the near night of the twilight
of your canvases
and hear birds sing lullabies
from your ethereal trees

I know your need
to be alone in the forest
and feel your oneness
with the cosmos

Your portraits haunt me
your landscapes enchant me
Am I, are you, part of the same soul?
Are you now me? Was I once you?

2004



SEINE AND OLD BRIDGE AT LIMAY

VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

QUANTUM DIVA

Poem and Painting by Carolyn Mary Kleefeld



OIL ON CANVAS, 36" X 24"

Carolyn's poem "An Instrument of the Unknown" to accompany this painting is on the next page

**An Instrument of the Unknown
by Carolyn Mary Kleefeld**

Lawless in the ebony night,
I merge into darkness,
into the stars,
the galactic splendor.

I become an instrument
of the Mystery,
of the unnamed worlds.

My spirit roams, lawless,
in the boundless freedom,
exploring the unseen,
the trembling of shadow.

Lawless in the ebony night,
I merge into darkness,
into the dome of galactic light.

My spirit roams lawless,
in boundless freedom,
embracing the unseen,
the trembling shadow.

I go beyond selves
and wed the night,
the untamed glory
of my soul in flight.

VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

@ THE WEIZMANN

For decades, The Weizmann Institute of Science in Rehovot has been known worldwide for its scientific contributions to the good of humanity. On June 15th 2025, many of the Institute's buildings suffered direct hits from Iranian missiles. The results of years of painstaking, priceless research were vaporized along with the buildings and the equipment therein. Almost immediately, work began to rebuild and moveable barriers were placed around (re)construction sites. The Institute has a policy of adorning construction barriers with artwork and poems. Ann Bar-Dov's poem "Magnets" was chosen, together with Ricky Friesem's poem "Vacation Thought's and Wendy Dickstein's poem "Tourists in Heraklion"

The poems are on the following three pages of the Newsletter.

[ABD]

Ann - I have had work published in many different forums, both online and in print, but this was the first time I ever had anything out in the open, out there for anyone to see as they walked by. I absolutely love this! I can imagine a passer-by checking out my poem & thinking about the contrasts portrayed in it as they make their way to a class or a lab. Very cool, no?

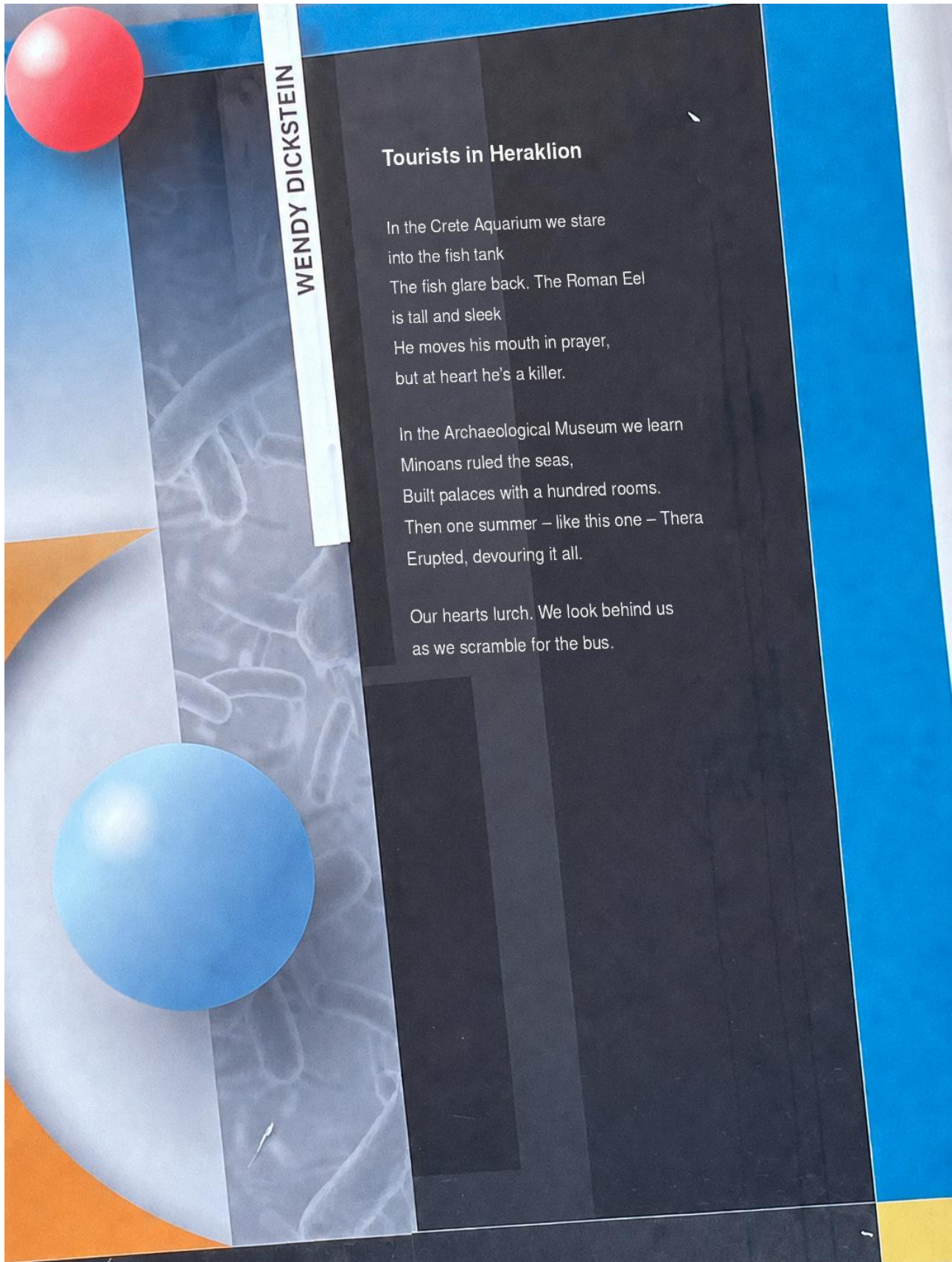
Wendy - Reasserting Life in the Face of Tragedy - Colorful posters and poems on walls surround the buildings of the Weizmann Institute damaged by two ballistic missiles fired from Iran on 15 June 2025. Although vital research was lost and 60 labs and several buildings were destroyed, thanks to the initiative of Ricky Friesem, some of our Voices poets were included in the exuberant display of life reasserting itself.

VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH



VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH





WENDY DICKSTEIN

Tourists in Heraklion

In the Crete Aquarium we stare
into the fish tank
The fish glare back. The Roman Eel
is tall and sleek
He moves his mouth in prayer,
but at heart he's a killer.

In the Archaeological Museum we learn
Minoans ruled the seas,
Built palaces with a hundred rooms.
Then one summer – like this one – Thera
Erupted, devouring it all.

Our hearts lurch. We look behind us
as we scramble for the bus.

VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

MARA LEE'S POETRY

Dina Yehuda interviewed

Mara Lee Grayson

on Zoom on Sunday August 23rd

Their discussion focussed on Mara Lee's life, work and poetry.

The five poems that she read can be found on the following pages and a video of the interview can be found on our YouTube channel – here:

<https://youtu.be/w0Qip998T6c?si=c4Vyt8PV9hDOha7y>



VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

published in Radar Poetry, 2023 Pushcart Prize nomination

For the Red-Brown Cow Whose Eyes I Caught from the Backseat of My Mother's Chevy Nova, 1993

Some of us were honed like knives in butcher shop back rooms
and some of us were strung like meat,

preserved in purgatory chill, a waiting room just cold enough
to kill what wasn't dead already. Our parts,

precise and patient, as we never had the chance to be.
I remember how

we played with tangram shapes
in Mrs. Hoffman's first-grade class and in junior high school

hypnotized ourselves with Tetris squares.
I see them sometimes when I cannot sleep

and sometimes driving, pixelated
raindrops floating upward on the windshield,

pieces of a wave that crashes backward in slow motion.
This is all to say the parts of me

have never fit quite right. Now I know that
some of us were free-

range kinds, traipsing out
beyond the fences built to keep us grounded.

I've thought of you for years.
If some mouths depend on your destruction for survival,

if the sound of truck tires bouncing off the interstate
sets your skin on edge and makes you bare your bottom teeth,

if you hopscotched past the cattle guard and hitched your way
right back into a row of stock, staring out

as little girls in cars flew by, their eyes
as moony-wide as yours, maybe you can tell me

why the hooks grow sharp.
And maybe we have met before, our futures dangling out ahead,

more violent
and colder than we'd hoped that they would be.

VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

published in CutBank

Listening to “America,” I Find Myself Feeling Homesick for a World that Never Existed

There is no falling out
of the picture because there is
no picture, there was
no frame to fall out from,
but the moon rose over one
thousand blurred red lamps
freckling the hills, doubling back
east after midnight.
Oh, she holstered her arsenal
upon my ankle, left
her language on my shoulder blade, a knife
that sounded almost like a voice
in an open field. When it rains
in Southern California,
the doors lock by themselves.
Stoned,
I look at the scenery:
a desert, wrangled, bound
a tree that so
consumed with thirst
will fell itself
palms, filled with meal
a mouth that does not open
when set free.

VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

I am running out of ways
to language about palm trees.
(If only I had known I'd need
a different tongue,
one that could
predict the weather.)
It was over before
the plane touched down in JFK.
No, there is no back
to turn back to,
instead one thousand red lamps
in a line, sitting
stoned and still, counting
the cars on the New Jersey Turnpike.

VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

published in Slippery Elm, 2021 Pushcart Prize nomination

Kettle of Fish

I.

The heavy-lidded Kettle cover hovers at my head,
the photo frame that frames a storm:
every jacket photo poet is my father.
My father was not a poet; he breathed
the bottomless, dreamt in jazz, poured
spontaneous across the country.
These men pour from pictures,
graveyard-risen, great unwritten,
bottle-fisted blue-eyed beat men.
These men blow deep, these men
of contours, men who speak
in pictures. Painters at the Cedar, once.
Jack outside the West End, once.
My father (at the Half Note, gone),
once rapt and kept by trumpet tolls.

II.

We've awoken half past six
to key teeth poised and catching,
turning inhalation over exhalation, catching
on to shadows slipping out.
There is always somewhere else
to sleep, from someone else
to borrow. We work. We break
the fasts of eight wage hours,
at half past six, unbuttoned down.
Cold beers in hand, with heels to kick
at night we dance in cold beer puddles,
cold floor skidding, cold and willing,
cold hard women.
We uneven pinstriped women,
stripping off the vestiges we're born to bear.

III.

Jack's blue eyes now drain like dust clouds,
pouring puddles on the tabletop.
You know what it's like
inside a place like this: the fish are breathing
air too thick for swallows. Birds can't fly
through shuttered windows.
In spilled beer puddles, we are small
shoes sliding toward each other,
meeting at the conversation middles.
These great unwritten,
good gone wild woken women – *these*
women, they're emasculating.
Shrill peak pitches carry
while a deeper voice resounds. Both
arms open, standing still between the ghost
men, this sleepwalk worship spills across my
hands.

VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

published in The Good Life Review, 2026 Honeybee Prize winner

How to Be a Jewish Woman in Amerikkka while Your Friends Sleep Fitfully in War Zones

"I saw in my mind's eye the fleeting image of a tiger, poised for attack... Unlike the impala, though, we tend to have trouble returning to normal after being in this state." – Peter Levine

Arrange your body on the dais. Be the script
of Sunday's sermon: wrath & fear, &
their
belief
that G-d & mortal beings chose this
world for you.

Hide your father's star between your breasts; wear Mother's
white fur stole like skin. Tie yourself in knots,

undo
the binds,
embrace the dissonance (or don't)
Then drive
alone to Monticello, pace the grounds,
trod-down
by unpaid sweat & violence. Cross the country, slow
through sovereign lands& sundown towns

(knuckle-grey your grip, keep the music
low) where liminality, intangible

distinguishes geography from place,
and women
like you know the steps from door to shelter,
there, they huddle close
until the sirens cease, at least tonight

so visit Rushmore, mount its face
& smile! (unnatural as eight eyes, four
mouths of stone.)

Go!!
Climb the crown of Lady Liberty to set
her torch on fire.
Become your own panopticon,

project yourself in all directions, spiral in
& look around: No tiger in the corner now.

The tiger's in your ribcage, scraping at your lungs.

VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

published in Variant, 2025 Best of the Net nomination

How to Be the Mother of a Missing Daughter

I.

Don't cry, but make sure that your eyes are wet
when reporters ask about hers: doleful,
pupil-stained, and haunted. Don't get upset
when politicians call her beautiful.
Listen to publicists; ignore the pull
to read stories about other missing
women. Stand rigid as a pinstripe. Bring
tissues; don't use them. Proclaim innocence
if tables turn. Wear blue, not black, and cling
to hope; bear the blanket of her absence.

II.

Somebody will ask: What type of woman
lets her daughter disappear? Do they think
you closed your eyes or gave your permission,
or that she'd come to you at all? You'll sink
into whirlpools of guilt and shame that tinker
with you then toss you back out alone.
You'll wonder how long her blonde hair has grown,
if she's changed her name by now, if maybe
you *did* close your eyes, if only you'd known
better, if she'll always be your baby.

III.

But whatever you do, don't cry; they'll say
you're unstable, that of course you could kill
your own child; rodents do it every day.
The public will vilify you. And still,
you shouldn't cry. A woman writer will
do an exposé on lingering post-
partum depression; *The Washington Post*
will publish it online. Twitter users
will suggest therapy; a few, not most,
will warn that doesn't work for abusers.

IV.

Start to notice things you've never noticed
before, like how girls hold their fathers' hands
differently from their mothers'. Make a list
of everything you see: the narrow bands
of light that stripe out as the sun expands
across the bedroom wall. The trapezoid
of your husband's shoulders, how he avoids
answering the most benign of queries,
and offers no words to describe the void
you notice between the fronds of palm trees.

VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

V.

Returning from another press conference,
notice the web of rockfall mesh along
the freeway. Crane your neck in reverence
as you drive past, knowing however strong
or thick the netting that contains the long
stretch of rock wall, there is no chance
it won't come down eventually. Fits
of rage and impotence swell and give birth
behind your eyes. Don't try to quell them; it's
futile, this trying to hold back the earth.

MY BAPTISM

An Essay/Memoir by Ricky Rapoport Friesem

Rivkele Rapoport had no chance of surviving.

A Rivkele Rapoport is a child with two long braids and large brown eyes who comes home after school to a modest little house where a *Bobeh* is baking challah for Shabbat and a *Mameh* is pushing pieces of shiny raw carp through the grinder for the gefilte fish. In a Rivkele house, the polished brass Shabbat candlesticks occupy a prominent place on the sideboard, even in the middle of the week. And on Shabbat eve, a *Bobeh*, a *Mameh* and a cluster of daughters-- *Rivkelach*, *Dvoralach*, and *Sheindelach*--gather in an anticipatory hush as a *Bobeh*, lights the candles, tracing circles over the halo of light, drawing her ancestors into the timeless tableau. In a Rivkele house, this moment is holy. Cynicism is suspended. Commitment is total. That's how I saw it when I was nine. And oh, how I longed to be part of that tableau, to be drawn in, enclosed in the comfort of that circle of faith.

Instead I was a Rivkele in a house of contradictions. The daughter of freethinking immigrant parents who aspired to transcend the everyday ordinariness of a bland gray Canadian city and the grind of making a living as secular Jewish educators by deifying the milestones of peoplehood. Theirs' was a self-conscious secularism whose fuzzy edges obscured their own disillusionment with the direction their life had taken in a land they could appreciate but never truly love. And where I would never feel that I belonged.

So when Darlene McLean invited me to come with her to her church after school one day, I was ready, and scared. I passed that church every day on my way to school. A gray brick, single-spired edifice that stood on the corner where I turned left on my way to the Huron St. Public School. There were countless others like it, staking out the borders of Presbyterianism in Toronto in the forties. And every one of them filled me with dread. I had listened to my parents' stories. I knew that church bells signaled a pogrom, an orgy of bloodletting where the victims were always Jews. I knew and yet I wanted to enter their inner sanctum. I knew and yet I wanted to pretend, to feel, to pass as one of them. Maybe then I would be safe. Maybe then I would find myself in the circle of comfortable faith. I knew and my knees trembled as I left the schoolyard and walked with



Darlene along the damp sidewalks of Huron Street. It was late fall. Dusk came early with the approach of winter.

"Come on, slow poke, hurry up," Darlene summoned me. She was striding several steps ahead, her shiny black rubber boots splashing through the puddles of muddy water left by a recent rain. "Reverend Oster will be waiting. We always start on time."

"Start what?" I wondered. "What were they going to do?"

"It's a club," was what Darlene had told me. "In the church. It's really great. Come. You'll see."

Truth is, I didn't ask any more questions. I would have followed her anywhere. I was in love with Darlene McLean. In love the way a little girl loves her favorite doll, combing the springy hair, watching the blue eyes open and close as she tilts the rosy-cheeked head, running her fingers over the perfect rosebud mouth. Darlene had light brown hair that faded into pale blonde at the tips. I was in love with the idea of a Darlene. Of a confidant, good-looking being whose existence seemed so securely anchored. Darlene radiated a sense of belonging---and I wanted desperately to belong, to be like her. And now she had

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invited me, Rivkele Rapoport, to join her club. This was my chance.

I took a deep breath and steadied my trembling knees and followed Darlene down the gray marble steps that led to the church basement. The smell of Lysol disinfectant filled the air. I had expected heavy incense, totally ignorant as I was then of the subtleties of the various branches of Christian worship. From what seemed the bowels of the earth, a girlish chatter rose to greet us. I shrank with shyness at the prospect. Twenty or so girls looked up from the pages they were coloring as we entered the room, and stared.

"I see you've brought your friend," boomed the voice of the bald, youngish reverend in his dark suit and turned around collar.

"Brought your friend?" what was going on here? They were expecting me! A lump of fear, that had been poised somewhere in my gut, rose to my throat. I looked around for a way to disappear.

Behind me, Darlene blocked the way to the long dark staircase that led outdoors. There was no other way out. It was a trap. I had fallen into a trap. Love-smitten, foolish me. I looked back at my captor. The spell broken. She had been planning this all along. Why else would she have asked me to join her? What could she possibly

see in me? A dumpy Jewish girl with a funny name. A girl apart. A girl who didn't hang around with the others after school. Who rushed home to go to Hebrew school? A strange bookish kid who always did her

homework and raised her hand to answer questions without being prompted. A pupil who was absent from school for all the Jewish holidays. What could Darleen McLean possibly see in me--except maybe my yearning?

Now it all made sense. She didn't really like me. She didn't want me to be her friend. She didn't really care about me at all. No. Now it was clear. Darlene had invited me because this bland, nondescript-looking reverend with the booming voice and the crow-black suit had told her to bring him a Jew. A specimen for their club. They'd probably never seen a Jew before. These Smiths, Browns, McKenzie and McLean girls. They'd heard about the horns on our heads, about our hands stained with the

blood of their God, about our long noses and humped backs. But to see one, to touch one, to run their hands through the hair and feel the stubby knobs of the devil. That's what their reverend had promised them. And I, smitten with the idea of Darlene, had fallen into their trap.



PHOTO OF RICKY WITH HER PARENTS

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The coven of girls gathered around me. Darlene stepped closer. The Reverend Oster was saying something. My name, he wanted to know my name.

"Please introduce yourself," he boomed.

"Jane," I thought in desperation. "Mary, Virginia, Colleen, Alice, Peggy. Peggy. Peggy Smith."

"Rivkele Rapoport" I muttered.

In the stunned silence that followed my public confession, I broke free, stormed up the marble steps and burst through the heavy door into the gathering darkness. I looked up at the familiar church tower clock that set my daily pace to school. It was already five o'clock. I'd never come home so late from school. *Mameh* would be frantic with worry. Maybe she'd have called the police. Poor *Mamishee*. What was I going to tell her? Would there be a policeman waiting for me?

I took a deep breath and opened the front door with the key that hung around my neck. My mother was sitting in the circle of yellow light given off by the shaded lamp on the telephone table. She looked up wearily. Shadows filled the hollows of her deep-set eyes and her cheeks, making my mother look suddenly very old, and very tired.

"Where have you been?" she whispered. I saw that she was clenching and unclenching her fists. "For God's

sake, Rivkele, where have you been?" she repeated. At last she was shouting. "Do you realize how worried I was?"

"I'm sorry, *Mamishee*. I'm so sorry. I'll never do it again. I promise, I promise."

"Where were you? For God's sake, where were you?"

"At Darlene's, Darlene McLean's house", I lied. "And guess what, *Mamishee*? You know what happened at school today?" Without giving her a chance to interrupt, I launched into a desperate attempt to change the subject. "I got a 100 in grammar." That part was true. "And Miss Young called out my name," I was lying again. "And she called me Ricky." From now on, she said, Ricky would be my name. Not Rivki or Rivkele. It'll be easier for everyone to remember, Miss Young says. Ricky. "I kind of like it, *Mamishee*, don't you?" I rattled on, trying to sound nonchalant.

"*Red nisht kein narishkeitin*, Rivkele," *Mamishee* responded. "Don't talk nonsense."

With her face still frozen in a mask of sadness, she wiped her tears with the back of her hand, rose from the circle of light, turned her back on me and walked into the kitchen.

I, Ricky, stood in silence and watched as Rivkele's mother disappeared from sight.

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MY FATHER

Leo Horwich (Horovitz) by Judy Koren

I was inspired by Amiel Schotz's portrait of his father in the July newsletter to suggest to Julian that the membership might be interested in the story of my own. Like Amiel's he was a fervent Zionist, from Russia, speaking several languages but ending up in English-speaking countries where he had to learn the language from scratch. His adventures as a Zionist activist in Russia in the early 20th century remind us of the turmoil of those times. Julian agreed, I hope our readers will too.

My father, Leo, was born in 1889 in the Ukraine, one of six children in a family with 37 generations of rabbis behind it; and grew up in Gomel, now in Belarus: back then Belarus and the Ukraine were both just part of the Russian Empire. Aged 14, he lived through the Gomel pogrom of 1903, which probably influenced his fervent embrace of Zionism. From his teenage years he and an older brother were actively involved in the Zionist movement.

Unable to enter Moscow University because of the quota against Jews, he studied medicine in Vienna. In the summer of 1914 he finished the degree course and went home for a month, prior to returning to sit the final exams. During the 3-day train journey, the heir to the throne of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Archduke Franz Ferdinand, was assassinated. Everyone knew that this meant war – they just didn't know when it would break out. So he didn't return to sit the exams. This apparently enabled him to get a deferment from military service as being still a student, and in 1917, when the Tsarist government fell (the February Revolution) and the quota system was abolished, he enrolled at Moscow University in order to take the final exams, and qualified as a doctor.

During those years he continued his Zionist activities, becoming in 1917 the head of the Zionist organization for the whole of Southern Russia and therefore very well-known; but he resigned after six months, saying it took too much time from his studies. He did, however, find time to organise, with four others, "Hehaver", a Zionist Jewish students' organization: Jewish students had flocked to Moscow University the moment the quota system was abolished. In October 1917 the



Communists seized power (the October Revolution) and the Gymnasium (Jewish high school) was closed. He took it on and kept it going in secret. They had no money for food so he opened a co-operative restaurant. I don't know where the money to start it came from – perhaps Zionist Organisation funds?

There followed several years of civil war between the Communists (the Red army) and the Tsarist forces (White army). In late 1918 the White army started forced conscription. It was a time of chaos, with no overall army command, and the conscripts "demobilising themselves" whenever they could. My father had returned to Gomel by 1918 and married; was apparently drafted into the White army as a frontline doctor soon after; managed to get back to Gomel for a month (feigning sickness) in 1919, and was back in the army when he heard that his wife, Dvorah, was pregnant. He deserted in 1920 to get back to her in time for the birth, but since he was wanted both by the Whites (for desertion and as a Zionist) and the Reds (as a Zionist) and had many times to hide and trek around army units, it took too long. He arrived six weeks after the birth to find that Dvorah had died of post-partum sepsis and he had a baby daughter, Rachel, who was being cared for by his wife's parents.

Because of the chaos in Russia, Lithuania passed a law allowing Russians of Lithuanian parentage to "return" and claim Lithuanian citizenship. The test was whether

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they could speak Lithuanian: they figured only people with Lithuanian parents would know the language. My father, who had a flair for languages, happened to have learnt Lithuanian from a friend – I assume not perfectly, but enough to pass the test. He obtained false documents for his family (parents, several siblings and their families) and, still in 1920, managed to get them all by freight train to the Russian-Lithuanian border – a journey that took a week. He himself, a wanted Zionist “criminal,” couldn’t pass a Russian border check. So he went on ahead by express train, left it before the border, and came to the border by night, when the captain in charge of the border post was away. His forged papers were flimsy but everything was in chaos and the soldier on duty passed him. He then waited at the border till his family’s freight train arrived. Their false papers got them through the Russian side; his knowledge of Lithuanian could get him but not them through the Lithuanian side; he solved the problem by a variety of tricks, one of which was smuggling them across in the baggage carts. (No, I wouldn’t have dared to make this up!)

My father’s elder brother, Gershon, was not with them – he was imprisoned in Kiev for Zionist activities. We have family tales of how my father obtained forged documents for him too; persuaded both the Lithuanian Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Minister for the Interior to sign them; went to Moscow, and with the help a friend of Gershon’s, who was one of the heads of the Central Bolshevik Committee and hadn’t heard that Gershon was in prison, got him released, finding him half starved and in terrible health after six months in prison. I think that if all this shows anything, it’s that my father must have had incredible powers of persuasion.

Meanwhile his in-laws, still caring for baby Rachel, had emigrated to British Mandate Palestine and were living in Tel Aviv. He went there early in 1922 and spent 18 months as a doctor in the Galil, based in kibbutz Deganya Aleph. He intended to remain and resume the care of Rachel once established, but his in-laws wanted him to marry his late wife’s sister, which he refused to do (he told me once “she was a shrew, always nagging, not at all like Dvorah!”). Eventually, to avoid their constant pressure, he pleaded family problems that required his return.

Soon after returning to Lithuania, late in 1923, he emigrated to America and within a week got a job at Bellevue Hospital, which was looking for staff who spoke Yiddish due to the great influx of Jewish, especially Russian, refugees. They couldn’t employ him as a doctor: a 1917 degree from pre-Communist Russia *might* have been recognised in the States but he also needed to pass the NY State Medical Board’s exam and he didn’t know English; so they employed him as a radiographer (X-ray technician). It was then common practice for hospitals to circumvent State medical boards by giving foreign doctors titles such as technician or lab assistant. He now earned

enough to send money back to the family in Lithuania, all of whom emigrated to British Mandate Palestine in the early 1930s except for two nephews who hadn’t wanted to go – they ended up sent by Stalin to Siberia.

After seven years, in 1930, my father qualified for American citizenship, which enabled him to get a passport and travel. In 1932 Bellevue Hospital sent him on an exchange program to St. Mary’s Hospital in London. He was anxious to go because his youngest brother, Ben, then in his mid-20s, was studying British law in London and had contracted TB. And in London he

Check Mate

Sic transit gloria mundi

I open the hinged box, set in a row
the king and queen, all pieces in their places.
They’re broken now, but ninety years ago
stood straight and tall, with bright expectant faces.

I run my finger over the engraved
name of Emmanuel Lasker, champion
of all the world – my father’s friend, who gave
him this in memory of days now gone –

thinking: he took this set when forced to flee
his homeland, and through hardships without end,
through famine, war, three times a refugee
preserved it, and the memory of his friend.

My grandsons have it now; they never knew
my father. Lasker is forgotten too.

In addition to a photo of my father (see
next page) I’ve included this poem I wrote
reflecting on his history as reflected in a
'family heirloom'.

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met my mother. They married in 1934. She was 21 and he was 45. (Her take on this was that she liked the look of him and offered to coach him in English – his was still bad – in order to get to know him. Mother was a practical-minded, problem-solving type of person.)

Once the exchange program finished he couldn't practise as a doctor in England either, so they took on the management of a small guest house at Ventnor on the Isle of Wight. This was almost certainly because of the need to get Ben out of London into clean air: there was no other treatment for TB. Ventnor's micro-climate was uniquely suited to TB patients; it housed a world-famous TB sanatorium and was full of guest houses, boarding homes, and private houses hosting "convalescents"—people who couldn't afford the main sanatorium but needed to live in Ventnor for their health. (Eventually Ben had an operation which removed one lung, and lived, rather wheezily, to be 90).

When WW2 broke out, the U.S. embassy ordered its citizens back to America, so my father, fearing they'd annul his citizenship if he disobeyed, spent the war years back at Bellevue, as a Resident in the Diagnostic Radiation division.

Before leaving for the U.S., they had managed to get Rachel, now 18 and sent to study at the Sorbonne in Paris for a year (the wrong year!), out of France by

declaring to the British authorities that she was my mother's daughter and so had right of residence in England. She was all of eight years younger than my mother. The official who stamped the papers was a *mensh*. But that is another story. She went with them to the U.S. and settled there.

They delayed having children, at first because my mother was young and they were poor, later because they figured there was no point in having Jewish children until they were sure Hitler wouldn't win the war. My sister was born in 1946 and I in 1948.

After the war, when the British government was trying to revive the tourist industry and selling bombed-out hotels for low prices, Ben bought one in Bournemouth using a government mortgage and private loans, only to discover that he had no idea how to run it. This brought them back to England to help him out, and they spent the rest of their working lives as hotel managers, taking most of those years to pay off their creditors: my father always wanted to go to Israel but they managed it only when they retired. I had immigrated alone in 1970 after finishing a BA in England; they arrived a month before my marriage, in the summer of 1972. By then my father

had already had several heart attacks and found he couldn't manage the hills in Jerusalem, where I and my husband were graduate students at the Hebrew University. So they moved to Ashkelon. He passed away in 1976 at the age of 87.



VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

BOOK REVIEW BY MIRIAM ALPER

The Artist by Lucy Steeds

I recently picked up a book on impulse at the UK's main bookseller, and though that usually signals disappointment to come in the reading of it, this book was marvellous from start to finish - well, there's a first time for everything! It's a debut novel by Lucy Steeds, called 'The Artist', and it reads like a future classic - beautifully and thoughtfully written, with several plot-threads, which are cleverly intertwined. It's set in Provence, 1920. A London arts' magazine's young journalist, Joseph, is invited to a remote French farmhouse, ostensibly to interview a famous painter, erstwhile friend of Cezanne before their big bust-up. The mysteries swirl around the reclusive master artist, his dead sister, his niece, who navigates her uncle's control mania, the lasting angst of Joseph's guilt as having been a conscientious objector in WW1, while his brother comes home from the trenches a complete mental and physical wreck....and just why did the great Edouard Tartuffe leave the glittering salons of Cezanne's Paris, to hide away from every living soul bar his niece? Occasionally a little racy, perhaps, it is not in the least sleazy or gratuitous, and is a real page-turner, with the author's ingenious twist at the end. I would thoroughly recommend it.

To purchase this book, see:

<https://www.amazon.com/Artist-Feast-Lucy-Steeds/dp/145496054X/>

NB – in USA title is The Artist and the Feast

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LADY LILITH

Painting and Poem by Dante Gabriel Rossetti



Body's Beauty

Of Adam's first wife, Lilith, it is told
(The witch he loved before the gift of Eve,)
That, ere the snake's, her sweet tongue could deceive,
And her enchanted hair was the first gold.
And still she sits, young while the earth is old,
And, subtly of herself contemplative,
Draws men to watch the bright web she can weave,
Till heart and body and life are in its hold.

The rose and poppy are her flowers; for where
Is he not found, O Lilith, whom shed scent
And soft-shed kisses and soft sleep shall snare?
Lo! as that youth's eyes burned at thine, so went
Thy spell through him, and left his straight neck bent
And round his heart one strangling golden hair.

Painting and poem from Wikipedia (selected by the editor)

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