

Voices Newsletter March 2018

MARCH MEETING DATES AND PLACES

HAIFA

Tuesday 13th March
at 7.30 pm.
Iris Dan's
1/9 Stephen Weiss,
French Carmel
Tel: 04-8332472

Coordinator:
Susan Rosenberg
Tel; 04 838 1218
050 933 3804
susanndick@gmail.com

TEL AVIV

Monday, March 19th
at 7.30 pm.
AACI
94 A Allenby Street,
Tel Aviv

Coordinator:
Mark Levinson
Tel; 054-444-8438
nosnivel@netvision.net.il

JERUSALEM

Tuesday, March 13th
at 6pm
Rehov Aza 5/3

Coordinator:
Ruth Fogelman
Tel; 02 628 7359
ruthfogelman@gmail.com

UPPER GALILEE

Wednesday, March 14th
from 5-7 pm.
Reuven and Yehudit's
128 Keren HaYesod
Artists Quarter, Tzfat

Coordinator:
Reuven Goldfarb
Tel; 04-697-4105
058-414-0266
poetsprogress@gmail.com

BET SHEMESH / MODIIN

Wednesday, March 7th
at 8.00pm
Judy Belsky's
Nahar Hayarden 120/4
Floor 2
Bet Shemesh

Coordinator:
Dr Judy Belsky
drjudybelsky@gmail.com

NETANYA & SHARON

Monday, March 26th
at 7.30pm
Susan Olsburgh's
2/6 Zalman Shazar.
(3rd floor) Ramat Poleg

Coordinator:
Susan Olsburgh
Tel; 098855629
olsburgh.susan@gmail.com

WEST GALILEE

Please contact Phyllsie
for details

Coordinator:
Phyllsie Gross
Tel ; 0528746880
phyllsie@hotmail.com

LONDON UK

For information please
contact Esther.

Esther Lipton:
eblipton@talk21.com

GUSH ETZION

Please contact Mindy if you
are interested in the group re-
starting.

Coordinator:
Mindy Aber Barad
Tel; 0524667936
maber4kids@yahoo.com

SOUTHERN

Please contact Miriam
for more details.

Coordinator:
Miriam Green
Tel: 0547388640
miriamsgreen@gmail.com

ASHKELON

Please contact
Chaim for more details

Coordinator:
Chaim Bezalel
bezalel.levy@gmail.com

President
Susan Olsburg
2/6 Zalman Shazar
Ramat Poleg, Netanya
Tel: 098855629
olsburgh.susan@gmail.com

Assistant President
Helen Bar-Lev
3 Hairus St.
Metulla 1029200
Tel: 077 353 5548
helentbarlev@gmail.com

Secretary
Avril Mealem
27/4 Metudela St.
Jerusalem 92305
Tel: 02 567 0998
secretary.voices@gmail.com

Treasurer
Chanita Millman
15 Shachar St.
Jerusalem 96263
Tel: 02 653 6770
millmanm@zahav.net.il

Membership Coordinator
Susan Rosenberg
42/46a Leon Blum
Haifa 33852
Tel: 04 838 1218
susanndick@gmail.com

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT MARCH 2018

Dear All,

The Voices Israel community was saddened to learn of the death of past president Mike Scheidemann. I have written to his wife Lori on behalf of our members. You will find a very fine obituary from Amiel Schotz in this newsletter. Regretfully, I never met Mike but from his poems I can appreciate his creative legacy.

On a happier note I was delighted to visit the nascent Ashkelon group at the home of Chaim Bezalel and Yonah Levy. There is an interesting multi-genre approach.

Only two weeks remain to submit to the Voices Israel 2018 Anthology Volume 44. Please do so by 15 March. Remember entry is free and, of course, your poems if selected will be in the new volume which will be deposited with the NLI, Jerusalem.

The Annual General Meeting of Voices is on 20 March at 6.00 pm. Once again Birgit Talmon has generously offered her home as the venue. It is really a central location in Tel Aviv and I do hope that as many members as possible will be there to show support for our organisation and to have an opportunity to comment or criticize constructively if wished. All the relevant items – notice, financial documents, minutes, have already been emailed to you. Resolutions are welcome as are nominations. Our hardworking secretary Avril Meallem wishes to resign and we most definitely need a replacement. If you are computer literate and wish to offer time and service this may be for you. After the meeting's formalities there will be one of our popular Open Mike sessions. If you wish to read please register with me olsburgh.susan@gmail.com (I already have some requests and these have been noted).

It is not too early to mark Sunday 6 to Monday 7 May 2018 in your diary. The biennial Poetry by the Sea residential will take place then and it will be a combined event with the presentation of the 2017 Reuben Rose competition awards to winners and honourable mentions. An exciting programme of guest presenters is being prepared. The facilities at the King Solomon hotel in Netanya met with warm approval two years ago and so once again this will be our venue for those who wish to stay overnight or for those who prefer a non-residential package. A separate emailing with full details will follow in about two weeks but I am pleased to say that an increase in costs is minimal.

As I write this letter I am looking forward to the Nahariya workshop, both to being a participant and a presenter with Dr Eli Ben Joseph. We shall be a full house but unfortunately Phyllis Gross, who had done much of the planning, cannot be there.

I hope everyone has had an enjoyable Purim and that much creativity awaits us all in the usually warmer days ahead in March. Please remember that March is the last month for the bargain 100 shekel Voices Israel membership fee. It goes up to 120 shekels on 1 April so if you haven't already done so remember Susan Rosenberg's membership slogan "Dues are due!"

With very best wishes
Susan Olsburgh,
President Voices Israel

A WARM WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Monica Terry, Ashkelon
Akilah Mosley, Ashkelon
Linda Lown-Klein Jerusalem
Esther Schnur-Berlot, USA

EVENTS

– BOOK YOUR PLACE NOW.....SPRING WORKSHOP IN NAHARIYAH VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH WESTERN GALILEE GROUP

NOW FULLY BOOKED, BUT DO CALL TO PUT YOUR NAME ON THE WAITING LIST

Sunday 4th March from 11.30 – 15.30

Emet Ve`Shalom Synagogue,

12 Hameginim. (Miklat 723) Off Kaplan Street, Nahariyah

Programme: 11.30 Buffet lunch and registration

12.00 Eli Ben-Joseph: “The Wayfaring Stranger.”

13.45 Tea break

14.00 Susan Olsburgh: “The Joy of Medieval Hebrew Wine Poems” (with a sample of wine!)

Each presentation will be followed by writing exercises.

Co-ordinator: Phyllsie Gross. Workshop MC: Nicholas Dunne-Lynch

Members: 50 shekels: Non-members: 70 shekels. Please bring correct money

Membership for 2018 can be paid on the day.

Registration essential: Spaces limited. Register with Wendy Blumfield: Wendyb@netvision.net.il 0545-240412

The buffet lunch and drinks will be provided. Participants are asked to bring extra goodies – fruit, nibbles, cookies etc.

CALLS FOR SUBMISSIONS

–VOICES ISRAEL 2018 ANTHOLOGY – REQUEST FOR SUBMISSIONS

Submissions to Vol.44 are accepted from Voices members and non-members alike. There is no fee for submitting poems to the Anthology. Paid up members of Voices Israel will receive a copy of the anthology once it comes out, whether they are published or not, shipping fees included. Non-members may order copies for NIS50 (US\$ 25) each shipping inclusive.

GUIDELINES: Submissions for the Anthology are accepted from December 15th 2017 to March 15th 2018. Poems will then be sent to the editorial board, reviewed, selected, and notices sent out to contributors. The anthology will be printed by October 1st or earlier and distributed to paid-up Voices Israel members and others

Voices Israel Group of Poets in English

who have ordered and paid for copies. Copyright for individual poems is retained by the author of each poem. Copyright for the anthology belongs to Voices Israel Group of Poets in English.

ONLINE SUBMISSIONS: All submissions must be made online via “Submittable”. To submit your poems online please go to <http://www.voicesisrael.com/anthology.htm> on the Voices website and click the **Submit** button in the section On Line Submissions.

- Submit a maximum of 3 poems on any subject. Poems should not exceed 40 lines including stanza breaks but not including title. **Important: Each poem must be submitted in a separate submission. Do not try to submit 2 or 3 poems at once.**
 - Poems should be previously unpublished. However poems that have been included in the monthly Voices Israel Poetry Page attached to the newsletter or were written at Voices workshops and published on the Voices website are acceptable.
 - Translations of living poets' poems are acceptable as long as the translations have not been previously published. The translator must have the permission of the poet if it is not the same person.
 - Fancy or unconventional formatting is not encouraged.
 - Judging is anonymous and the poems will be forwarded to the editorial board without names. No revisions of poems will be accepted after submission!
 - The editor may be contacted if necessary at: VoicesIsraelPoetryAnthology@gmail.com
- to our Voices women, you may be interested in submitting to writinginawomansvoice@gmail.com - it's sort of a blog but beautifully done. Poems about the moon are especially appreciated but everything is welcome.
- Calls for submissions from **IFLAC** for its 2018 "Anti-War and Peace Anthology" which will contain excellent Anti-War articles, Real Life Stories, Anti-War and Peace Poems, A Contest of Haiku, and Peace, and Anti-War paintings and Art. It will be published on Amazon in three languages: English, Spanish and French, and will be translated into many more languages, including: Russian, Hebrew and Arabic. They hope that this important Anthology will pave the way to banish WAR, TERROR and VIOLENCE from our planet, and bring instead: Bridges of Culture, understanding, creativity, harmony and peace. Please send one of your best: articles, one of your best stories, 3 selected poems and 5 Haikus in English or French to: iflac2013@gmail.com, and in Spanish to the Editor of the Spanish Edition: Maria Cristina Azcona: mcrisazcona@gmail.com
- Please attach your Address and Email, and a good passport photo. To participate in this prestigious IFLAC Anthology, you have to be an IFLAC member, the subscription is free, and you can subscribe by sending an email to: IFLACsubscribe@yahogroups.com
- **The Ekphrastic Review** welcomes submissions from Israel as they haven't received many in the past from here. Info at www.ekphrastic.net and www.mixedupmedia.ca Please send submissions to Lorette Luzajic: theekphrasticreview@gmail.com

CONGRATULATIONS

- to Ruth Fogelman on the publication of her new book of poetry, “**Leaving the Garden**” which is available in Israel from Ruth: ruthfogelman@yahoo.com and outside of Israel: <https://www.amazon.com/dp/1979980187>
- to Matthew Anish who had 3 poems published in the February edition of “**It's Beyond ME**” which is the Newsletter of the American Mensa Tolkien Special Interest Group and also a poem in the March issue of the “**Spontaneous Spirits**” magazine.
- to Hayim Abramson, Mindy Aber Barad, Judy Belsky, Zev Davis, Ruth Fogelman, Esther Lixenberg-Bloch, Miriam Weber, Michael Stone, Pesach Rotem and Birgit Talmon on the publication of their poems in the latest issue of “The Deronda Review.” : <http://www.derondareview.org/vol7no2.pdf>
- to Pesach Rotem whose poem “The First Jewish President” was published in “**Poets Reading the News**”: <http://www.poetsreadingthenews.com/2018/02/the-first-jewish-president/>
- to Bernard Mann on the publication of his historical novel, “**David & Avshalom, Life and Death in the Forest of Angels**”, now available as an Amazon paperback.

MAZEL TOV

- to Rena Navon on the wedding of a granddaughter.

CONDOLENCES

With great sadness we heard of the death of Mike Scheidemann, a former president of Voices Israel for over 15 years. Our condolences go to his wife Lori and her family.

OBITUARY by Amiel Sholtz

“Mike Scheidemann was born in Johannesburg, South Africa and raised in Southern Rhodesia (present-day Zimbabwe). He read French & English Literature at Cape Town University, before devoting himself to poetry and socialism on Kibbutz Yizre'el in northern Israel. For many years, he served as president of Voices: Israel - the Israel English Poetry Association. Besides co- editing two books on Peace through Culture and Literature; he has published four anthologies of poetry and a collection of short stories entitled ‘Human Encounters’.”

This is Mike’s mini-bio, in the introduction to his last book, *Bushveld Boyhood: poems about living*: Cyclamen & Swords Publishing, 2015. It gives us the dry details, but none of the delight and complexity of the man, husband, humanist, father, enthusiast, poet, socialist, and above all, lover of life. He wrote of the artist:

*“ He gathers the waste and splinters of the world
And fashions them into patterns richly unfurled.”*

Yes! That was the essence of the man. To be in his company was to share in his unique blend of forthright pronouncements, imaginative flights of fancy, and idiosyncrasies, his grasp, not only of the suddenly revealed yet essential paths, but the hidden pots of gold to which they could lead. When he spoke, he had a slight

tendency to waffle, but that was part of his charm, because it stemmed from the many wonders constantly bursting in his head, so you waited eagerly for the next revelation and the next. Thus his presidency was a time of innovation, for example, bringing eminent poets from abroad to lead workshops and judge the Reuben Rose competition.

Unconcerned with outward show, his facial expression would reveal much of his inner life—a quizzical half-smile, a penetrating yet veiled gaze, looking outward and inward at the same time, always questioning—never for him the arrogance of certainty. His fantasies he said,

*“...burst forth after dark to liven up the twilight.....
Even as they faded like coals and fireflies...
Even now my dreams and memories erupt and bloom,
Yet no sooner sown, they spell out their own doom.”*

In almost all his considerable body of work, we are confronted by this constant inner conflict that, far from suppressing his creativity, sparked it to new heights. Talking of his childhood, he wrote,

*“I exulted through a dark sound where fishes stirred up their reflections
And unveiled themselves in a ballet of brightness.....”* and

*‘In my dreams I was a giant of the impossible!
That is why I climbed trees and roof-tops
To brush the clouds and to seize the birds....’*

Later, he entitled his third volume of verse, *Singing in my Mind: A Didactic Dance*, and, truly, in his “crowded imagery”, his “tireless search, for new and magic combinations” he does convey the timeless message of allowing the romantic and the sensual to roam free. But never at random, ultimately controlled by humanism, intellect, and experience. Throughout his work there shines his love of the power of words to flash like lightening, to inspire, and to challenge. Therein lies his legacy—art, not just for art’s sake but in the service of enlightenment and love. Here, he writes his own fitting epitaph:

*“Cried Mike, ‘a hero should convert his desires
Into concrete realities that everyone conspires
To emulate and postulate; blessed by deities,
Then the wildest dreams become possibilities.’”*

Mike, we shall miss you always and turn back to your poetry again and again to remember your enduring, invigorating spirit.

FEBRUARY 2018 Group Poetry Selections

Turkey, 1910

in the photo of three sisters
Louna is the regal one
the tilt of her head
the touch of gold on the border
of her sleeves
a lute rests in her hands
a gift from her mother
who lost two small children
before Louna was born
a mother should know
where her children are
late afternoons the lute lessons
in the parlor
her daughter's hands are fixed on chords
she is not weaving in and out of nimbus clouds
her face is not appearing and disappearing
over two small headstones
romansas* keep her rotating
on the axis of love
Tuesdays the embroidery lessons
chain stitch
French knots
stem stitch
fasten her to her mother's tapestry

**Ladino Ballads some dating back to Sixteenth Century*
Judy Belsky, Bet Shemesh selection

Bones of the Earth

My hoe cuts through the soil, flesh of the earth
Exposing large stones, bones of the earth
Stubborn, they refuse to move or break
Will not conform to human plans
Instead my hoe bends in submission
Its edge curves back, it cannot hack through
Or pry loose these stubborn stones.

A week later the neighbor's jackhammer
Pounds and shatters the stones
Flattens the surface, no longer will
The knees and elbows of the earth poke out
Forced to submit to human plans.

Miriam Davis, Haifa group selection

Stand and Behold- The Mystery of Sunset

Stripes of brilliant rosy cotton balls
encompass the heavens,
Above them, a sky of pale slate blue.
Beneath, a thick expanse of gentle turquoise,
Followed by another pink puffy ribbon
Blending into the bluish greenish sky below.

We watch as the scene changes--
Another image emerges.
The slate heavens blacken.
The lines of blush become vibrant lavender,
Melting into an opalescence of baby blue beneath.

Dusk descends into the darkness of evening
And a brushstroke of rosy haze
borders the gloaming sky.

Suddenly, a red ball emerges and disappears---
A last hurrah.
Then the grand black- blue curtain covers the heavens.

The grandeur of a moment of time
Lingers with the soul,
But melts into time and space.

Sometimes before darkness descends,
A glimmer of brilliance pervades,
Only to be eclipsed by the supremacy of the shadows.

Yocheved Miriam Zemel, Jerusalem selection

Infinite Doodle

In the classroom
floating chalk particles
saturate the space
the compressed hour
crushes it under its weight

I draw intersecting circles.
When completing one
I stab the compass
into its circumference
and draw another

upwards, downwards,
to the right, to the left -
and soon the pattern
covers the page
ready to overflow

onto the desk, onto the floor
up the walls and beyond
yet never really filling –
as some emptiness
always remains

I unwittingly learn
what the infinite is
this eternal openness
this frustrating
lack of a closure

In another dimension
a bored divinity
idly probes
the limits of its universe
while waiting for the Big Bang

Iris Dan, Haifa selection

The Cup of Coffee

There was a cup of coffee
on the bus seat.
Does this belong to you?
Yours? Maybe yours?
“No”, “No”, “No”.
Maybe it’s for Elijah the prophet?
“No he didn’t drink coffee,
he drank only fine wine.”
So, what can we do?
I take the cup of coffee
and put it in a trash basket,
like a civilized man.

Isaac Cohen, Tel Aviv selection

Pipeline

It’s in the pipeline.
I’ll get it to you soon.
That makes it sound so easy
but like arteries blocked and furred
plaques keep getting in the way,
stacks of things ‘to do’
add painful pressure .

The pipeline is a sluggish conduit
until, later than planned,
after patience patches are applied,
fluidity finally flows through, and
it’s in the pipeline for you.

Susan Olsburgh Netanya/Sharon

In Between

There is a place in between
a glance around
a breath taken in
a moment
the question is out
where am I now?
where have I been?

Halfway point I would say
how fast it flew
a reassembling is needed
a looking forth
courage must displace
enthusiasm of youth

Wisdom must compensate
as the leaves drop
in the fall, turning red
in transition
so life is given the
opportunity to fulfill
its call
there is a winter of
watching and waiting
before spring and
new life bursts into green!

Yonnah Ben Levy, Ashkelon selection

note: This poem will be published in a book, *Autumn Scrolls - landscapes, townscapes & cityscapes* published by Dekel Press in 2018. The book consists of collaborative paintings by Chaim Bezalel and Yonnah Ben Levy and writing by each of them.

The Jet Lag Flu

Jiggled in a jet to visit far-flung family

Three flights until we reach their home town.
There, while I see the sunrise glow,
Those in the Old Country
Watch the sun set.
That's how far away I am.
But on return
It's not so simple
For my body to reacclimate,
To readapt to the correct clock.
Discombobulated.
Topsy-turvy time.
Lying wide awake after midnight
Napping at noon or whenever
Not really alert in between
No vaccine available for this dis-ease.
I flew again, and got it -
The Jetlag Flu.

Malka Kelter, Jerusalem selection

Voices Israel Group of Poets in English
Poems From Our Overseas Members

Listen to the Silence

Silence surrounds us
Between our very words
We find those spaces
That fleetingly vanish
Dissolve into fringes of sound
Sounds that merge into music
Beautiful and soothing
Uplifting without words
That would interrupt
Silence. Silence.
So fragile. So transient.

Esther Lipton, UK

Burnt Offering

The voices
 are heard
yet they are almost
 drowned out in the din
Bravely the chanting
 continues
a thousand unfortunate odes
 dissolve in
haze
Our hearts are lifted
 up by the
ancient winds
we feel free
 have made our peace with
existence
The smoke of our
 offerings
 rises heavenward
We still dare
 to seek joy
in these troubled days
 the world is changing
But for now we can
 rest easy
 and wait for
 a new era
to rise from the ashes

Matthew Anish USA

A Refutation of Nothingness

'*nothing*' must be a paradox
a contradiction in terminology
an abortive physical concept
or just another vicious rumour
circulated by failed scientists
or by literary anarchists;
hard science has spoken often
in the perpetual dialectic
on content and composition
and everything that *is*
is of some other thing or things
other than its pure self;
that H and O in H₂O
that nurturing molecule
melding its atoms, even they
having individual and unique
identities and complexities
which defy true homogeneity
and the sacrifice of self;
even nothing contains air
an invisible gaseous universe
of chemical and physical specks
unseen, but working to act or react
always with compatible others;
so, nothing is always something
some mass of things
if only a quantum of invisible space
teeming with floating
elements and substances
and a microscopic population
of, what?... early pre-organisms maybe
from whence Darwinism grew?
no thing on earth then or in universe
is nothing...consisting of no *thing*
not even the air we gulp
which unswervingly fuels us
and hopefully always will

Don Mulcahy, Canada