

Voices Newsletter April 2017

APRIL MEETING DATES AND PLACES

HAIFA

Tuesday, April 18th
at 7.30pm
Iris Dan's,
1 Stefan Weiss, Haifa
04-8332472
0548-8032472

Coordinator:

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

TEL AVIV

Wednesday, April 19th
at 7.30 pm.
AACI
94 A Allenby Street,
Tel Aviv v

Coordinator:

Mark Levinson
Tel; 09 955 5720
nosnivel@netvision.net.il

JERUSALEM

No meeting this month.
Next meeting
Thursday, May 18th.
at 6 pm,
Toby Shuster's
5, Aza Street, Rehavia,
Jerusalem

Coordinator:

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

UPPER GALILEE

Tuesday, April 18th
at 7.30pm
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

No details available as yet
for further meetings of this
group

NETANYA & SHARON

Tuesday, April 18th
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

Tuesday, April 25th,
at 8.15pm
Mitoch Halev (formerly
Beit Edna)
Kibbutz Evron

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

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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT APRIL 2017

Dear All,

Many famous poets begin poems with references to April from Chaucer to TS Eliot. My thoughts at the moment are centered on the urgent preparations for Pesach (Passover). In addition this coming month has Yom HaShoah. Our history is very often the theme of poems we write and I wish everyone appropriate creativity.

Two days ago Voices Israel's AGM was held at the home of Birgit Talmon who was a most gracious hostess. Many of our regional groups were represented but not all. I wish we could attract a wider audience. However, those who were there were most attentive to reports of all our activities and there was considerable discussion. Wendy Blumfield had tabled a motion to alter the current rules about submissions to our publications. The resolution was defeated and so I wish to clarify that the current Voices Israel policy continues:

1 Members' poems published in our newsletter are considered internal publications and therefore **can** be submitted to the Voices anthology, the Reuben Rose Poetry competition and other publications.

2 Poems published in a Voices Anthology are **not** eligible for submission to the Reuben Rose Competition.

It was largely felt that this policy protects the prestige and integrity of our anthology and the Reuben Rose Competition.

It was noted that our members should be urged to submit poems both to the anthology and to the international Reuben Rose competition. We have wonderful poets and they certainly rank well in any competitive situation.

After the formal part of the AGM, an Open Mike event was held and we all enjoyed using a new wireless microphone system, purchase approved by our treasurer Chanita Millman. The system is available for any Voices event when needed. Please contact me to arrange this.

Members are urged to send their membership fees to Chanita. The early bird discount offer has now passed but at 120 shekels the annual membership still represents excellent value. The next scheduled national event is on **Wednesday 3 May 6.00pm** at Beit Daniel, Tel Aviv. It is hoped that as many members as possible will come to the newly formatted presentation evening for the Reuben Rose Competition. As well as the prize ceremony and poetry readings, Joanna Chen will facilitate an interactive workshop. Joanna, a long-standing Voices member, is well known to many of us for her fine poetry and skills in guiding our creativity. We have many new members so I hope this evening will be an opportunity for us all to meet, along with applauding the winners and honourable mentions and enhancing our own poetic capabilities, at a pleasant social gathering. An RSVP before May 1st would be much appreciated.

All good wishes for a happy Pesach and Springtime.

Susan Olsburgh President Voices Israel

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A WARM WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Rayna Harman Meshorer, USA
Wendy Dickstein, Jerusalem

The Reuben Rose Award Ceremony

The award ceremony is scheduled for Wednesday, 3rd May 6.00pm at Beit Daniel, 62 Bnai Dan Street in Tel Aviv not far from where Route 2, the coastal highway, crosses the Yarkon River.
(See <http://www.beit-daniel.org.il/en/merkazim/beit-daniel/> for map, phone number, e-mail, etc.)

Highlights will include the reading of the winning poems, plus an interactive event with Joanna Chen, a well know Voices member.
The evening is open to the public. RSVP before May 1st will be appreciated.

CALLS FOR SUBMISSIONS

2017 Mizmor L'David Anthology is now open for submissions.
Please visit the Poetica website for the complete guidelines. www.PoeticaMagazine.com

CONGRATULATIONS

– to Pesach Rotem whose poem “**A Dangerous Business**” was published in *The Cape*.

OF INTEREST

– From Reuven Goldfarb re an article that appears in *Tablet*
The author Jake Marmer, was a friend of late member Adam Schonbrun z'l who came to Tzfat at Adam's invitation . Together with Reuven, the three of them gave a joint reading at the Zefat Academic College eight years ago.
www.tabletmag.com/jewish-arts-and-culture/228391/israels-new-literary-currency

– Please find attached an article by our overseas member Seymour Mayne that appeared in the winter issue of the *Jewish Quarterly* (London, U.K) on his memories of his friend Leonard Cohen z'l.

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MARCH 2016 Poetry Selections

It Can't Happen Here

A slow drip of hate
drew its swastika eastward
rock solid America
like a noose closing in
fliers at campuses
harassment
assault
a mezuzah torn from a door
San Francisco
St. Louis
Charlotte

across the riverbanks of the Delaware
a bomb threat
in suburban Cherry Hill
a Community Center
near Aunt Sylvie's old house

Say it isn't so

another scare
at the Jewish center on City Line Avenue
half a mile from Cousin Paula

Say it isn't so

one hundred tombstones toppled
at Mt. Carmel cemetery
northeast Philly
fifteen minutes from my childhood home

Say it isn't so

in the very city of Brotherly Love
cradle of liberty
my hometown

Please - say it isn't so

Phyllsie Gross, Western Galilee selection

Forsaken

*Soroka Hospital, Eye Department
3rd March 2017, 11.35pm.*

I'm trying to get some rest before my surgery.
Suddenly I hear the old Russian patient
speaking loudly, again!
I cover my head with the pillow
yet I can still hear her strong baritone.
Seated on her bed,
both her eyes bandaged, blind,
she talks angrily and groans.
Her hands move strongly in the air.
She is alone.
Whom does she address?
No one comes to visit her.

*

Her endless speech
gives me unbearable headache.
I go to the nurse's station
to ask for paracetamol.
I pass near her, she smells bad.
The nurses don't bother
to wash the poor woman,
the cleaner washes the floor
around her with chlorine.
I wish I knew Russian, we could talk.
Suddenly she cries.
I gently place my hand on her shoulder.
She is startled.
"Why do you cry?"
I ask tenderly in Hebrew.
She is silent.
I pray silently
"Do not cast me off in time of old age
when my strength fails, forsake me not." *

*Psalm 71:9

Shulamit Bat Or, Southern selection

An Invitation to an Art Exhibit

I receive an invitation to an art exhibit every day.
I have to come on time,
Because the painting will dissolve in short order.

It is the painting of the sky at dusk,
And it is always different.

Today, it is a present to a baby,
In light pink and blue,
Gentle setting of the sun,
Quiet in its calm, and soft shades.

Yesterday it was
Speckled bursts of brightness,
Brilliant oranges and reds,
Exploding the sky with majesty.

Tomorrow I await the surprise,
Of the changing of guards at sunset
From day to night,
As the heavens invite me to marvel,
At the artistry that lasts minutes,
But haunts me ever after.

Yocheved Miriam Zemel, Jerusalem selection

Gehakte leber (*Ottava Rima*)

Today I chopped onions, popped them in the pan
To make chopped liver, letting them gently fry.
The smell brought my long dead mother, who began
Complaining: "Gevalt – in oil? Not in schmaltz? Why?"
"No schmaltz and no gribenes," her griping ran;
She watched, judgmental. The onions made me cry?
Disapproving, she vanished, but had her say:
"Zol zein azoy, clever dick - do it your way!"

Zol zein azoy = let it be so

Ottava Rima – an Italian poem made up of eight lines that rhyme.

Each line consists of eleven syllables.

The rhyme pattern is: ab ab ab cc.

Rumi Morkin (Miriam Webber), Haifa selection

The City

A flowing river,
Keeper of life.
Mud huts giving way
to wood, then stone and brick.
Smelling the baker's feast
amongst the animal dung.

Pathways, alleys, boulevards.
Fires' destruction outside
and in the sweatshops.
Shipping, buildings,
a myriad of architecture.

People from the countryside,
layers of immigrant populations
all seeking a better life.

Carts, carriages, bicycles.
Cars, trains, above and below,
polluting the air.

Sauntering, rushing, conversing
on the phone.
Parks and gardens,
if you seek them out.

Harsh lighting at night.
Change always happening.
The existing urban carnival.

Joyce Serlin, Netanya selection

An Encounter with an Aftertaste

The setting was just fine. The very first spring day,
the sun played hide and seek with rare clouds.
A weekday. Very quiet at the beach
but for two groups of women
who swam and splashed rejoicing in the water.
Too far to hear them talk but their full white bodies
and round Slavic faces made me think they were Russian.
When they were dressed and ready to depart,
out of curiosity I went to say hello.
Well, yes, from Novgorod, a Pilgrim tour.
The town's near Moscow, Orthodox. I went there once.
They were pleased I knew of their whereabouts.
And yes, they liked it here, very much.
By way of farewell I said,
"Please pray for us to stay in peace".
The unexpected happened.
As if a door slammed in my face,
the thin lips stiffened into silence.
So I left.
And just in case of a misinterpretation on my part
I did it with the second group.
The same brief unprepared script,
remarks and answers, and the same request,
although no surprise at the non-phrased refusal.
So much for rapport. The Holy Land's one thing
while Jews are quite another.
So be it then. You go. We stay, for now.

Anna Krakovich. Haifa selection

The Motherhood

*To my mother, Mazal Cohen,
of blessed memory*

The wolf Luna observed,
Three days and three nights,
The cervidae family.
Suddenly she jumped.
The family spread everywhere.
One newborn fawn
Was left behind.
She wanted to catch him.
The voice called to her:
"Do you remember the day
That the lion ate your cub?"
She grabbed him
And patted his head.
She told him: "I adopt you."
She gave him her udders.
Luna decided to be a vegetarian,
They ate grass in the field.
The angels cried and light of crystal
Wrapped the meadow of Eden.

Isaac Cohen, Tel Aviv selection



Poems From Our Overseas Members

Compatible Shades of Grey

He asks a question, too authoritatively,
his intonation ominous,
then she replies, sounding defensive.

He is conversational ebony to her ivory,
she, emotional day to his night.

Long married, intensely interdependent,
they dwell at different psychological poles,
the Arctic and Antarctic
of their insular domestic planet.

*...whenever I ask about something? •
It's your tone...”, she replies,
“...it reveals the expectation of a wrong answer”.*

And he knows that she's right,
but also that he is, for having asked.
Over the years, their opinions,
and expressions, have assumed intense hues,
have become too saturated
with their respective, separate colours.

And they flail around, mentally weighing options,
in search of a pacifying equator of equilibrium,
panning for civility, for compatible shades of grey,
while still clinging tenaciously to the life-belt,
the safe sanctum, the birthright, of individuality.

Don Mulcahy, Canada

Identity

here, on this planetary fragment
diversity is the badge of nationality;
look at the map, name any location
and we are from there, there, and there...
even America's aboriginals having migrated
from some polar Cathay

we migrants arrive, our cardboard luggage
bulging with irrelevancies, bedazzled
by the *Americanness* of this New World,
as we embrace the (North) American dream,
our specificity fading too slowly,
retreating only glacially

time, the renovator, taking over then,
sculpting us into these hybrid masses,
creating more questions than answers,
inspiring myriad *whos, whats, whys*

and penultimately, a confrontation
between what we were and now are,
and confusion, and more queries,
the new *us* challenging, mocking even
virtualities of our earlier selves
in yellowing photo albums

in the end however, as was obvious,
origin and ethnicity may count for little;
unique characteristics within these skins
presumed indelible, will embrace oblivion

and only the intentions which we undertook,
which shaped our humanity relative to others,
which wrote the metaphors for our existence,
will ever matter, or persist to outlive us

Don Mulcahy, Canada