



## APRIL 2019 NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2019

Amuta No. 58-019-703-6

### LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear All

The Annual General Meeting was a lively event with considerable discussion of resolutions. All has been duly recorded by our capable secretary Linda Suchy and it is the practice of Voices Israel to circulate the minutes a month before the next AGM. However, I have heard comments that it would be better to circulate the minutes not so long after the AGM. I would be interested to hear from members if there is support for the idea of circulating the minutes at a much earlier date in the year. An alternative summary of the Voices AGM has been wittily prepared by Haifa member Rumi Morkin (aka Miriam Webber). (It follows this letter). Thank you, Miriam.

An enjoyable Open Mike followed the formal agenda and once again our hostess Birgit Talmon had organised a very appetising range of refreshments.

Ruth Fogelman was presented with a Steimatsky voucher to mark her completion of ten years as the Jerusalem chapter's coordinator. Avril Meallem has succeeded Ruth. Welcome Avril!

The early bird membership dues offer has ended. The rate is now 120 shekels. Susan Rosenberg, our membership secretary, will be delighted to assist anyone still wishing to join or renew membership. Contact: [susandick@gmail.com](mailto:susandick@gmail.com)

Submissions to the 2019 Voices Israel anthology also closed yesterday. Now the chief Editor Dina Yehuda and the editorial team of Wendy Dickstein, Phella Hirschson and Amiel Schotz, in their second and final year on the editorial team, will deliberate and make decisions about which poems will feature in the 2019 Voices Israel Anthology. All those who have participated will be contacted by the Chief Editor later in the summer.

Please do put Thursday May 16th 18:00 in your diary for the presentation of the 2018 Reuben Rose International Poetry Competition. Full details will be in the May newsletter but the venue is in Ramat Aviv to avoid the Eurovision Song Contest events in central Tel Aviv. We shall have the pleasure of listening to a number of Israeli poets as well as proxy readings of the poems by the 13 prize winners and honourable mentions. In addition, two Californian poetry professors will be joining us to present prizes and later give readings of their own poetry. The winning poet UK poet John Gallas is doing his best to attend.

The evening will also see the launch of a Voices Israel youth poetry prize endowed in memory of a young Israeli poet Bar Sagi. "Poetry makes children feel important, that they're heard" British poet Kate Clanchy said yesterday and I am delighted that our organisation is going to help unleash those young voices in Israel.

Pesach and Spring will be here very soon and I wish everyone an enjoyable time. Hopefully the weather will settle soon. I am writing this newsletter whilst in the UK where unusually it is drier and warmer than Israel at present but I am sure this is a very temporary situation.

Warm best wishes

*Susan*

Susan Olsburgh, President, Voices Israel



## VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH



### APRIL 2019 MEETING DATES, TIMES AND PLACES

#### HAIFA

TUESDAY, APRIL 30  
AT 7:30 PM  
at Naomi Yalin's,  
Kikar David 8,  
Neve Shaanan  
04-8229792

Coordinator:

**Wendy Blumfield**  
Tel: 04-837-6820  
Mobile: 054-524-0412  
[wendybl@netvision.net.il](mailto:wendybl@netvision.net.il)

#### TEL AVIV

SUNDAY, APRIL 14  
AT 7:30 PM  
Beit Ariela (in T.A. main  
library bldg.)  
Conf Room, Floor -1  
25 Shaul HaMelech Blvd.  
Tel Aviv

Coordinator:

**Mark Levinson**  
Tel: 054-444-8438  
[nosnivel@netvision.net.il](mailto:nosnivel@netvision.net.il)

#### JERUSALEM

NO MEETING IN APRIL

Coordinator:

**Ruth Fogelman**  
Tel: 02-628-7359  
[ruthfogelman@gmail.com](mailto:ruthfogelman@gmail.com)

#### UPPER GALILEE

NO MEETING IN APRIL

Coordinator:

**Reuven Goldfarb**  
Tel: 04-6974105  
Mobile: 058-414-0266  
[poetsprogress@gmail.com](mailto:poetsprogress@gmail.com)

#### BET SHEMESH / MODIIN

TUESDAY, APRIL 30  
Judy Belsky's  
Nahar Hayarden 120/4  
Floor 2  
Bet Shemesh

Coordinator:

**Dr. Judy Belsky**  
[drjudybelsky@gmail.com](mailto:drjudybelsky@gmail.com)

#### NETANYA & SHARON

MONDAY, APRIL 29  
AT 7:30PM  
Susan Olsburgh's  
2/6 Zalman Shazar.  
(3rd floor) Ramat Poleg

Coordinator:

**Susan Olsburgh**  
Tel: 074-704-2736  
[olsburgh.susan@gmail.com](mailto:olsburgh.susan@gmail.com)

#### WESTERN GALILEE

SUNDAY, APRIL 14  
AT 8:30PM  
Kibbutz Evron

Coordinator:

**Phyllis Gross**  
Tel: 052-874-6880  
[phyllis@hotmail.com](mailto:phyllis@hotmail.com)

#### LONDON UK

FOR INFORMATION, PLEASE  
CONTACT ESTHER.

Coordinator:

**Esther Lipton**  
[eblipton@talk21.com](mailto:eblipton@talk21.com)

#### GUSH ETZION

PLEASE CONTACT MINDY IF  
YOU ARE INTERESTED IN THE  
GROUP RE-STARTING.

Coordinator:

**Mindy Aber Barad**  
Tel: 05-4667936  
[maber4kids@yahoo.com](mailto:maber4kids@yahoo.com)

#### SOUTHERN

NO MEETING IN APRIL

Coordinator:

**Miriam Green**  
Tel: 05-7388640  
[miriamsgreen@gmail.com](mailto:miriamsgreen@gmail.com)

#### ASHKELON

FOR INFORMATION, PLEASE  
CONTACT CHAIM

Coordinator:

**Chaim Bezalel**  
Tel: 054-674-5900  
[bezalel.levy@gmail.com](mailto:bezalel.levy@gmail.com)

#### BERLIN, GERMANY

FOR INFORMATION, PLEASE  
CONTACT BRITTA.

Coordinator:

**Britta R. Kollberg**  
[brkollberg@yahoo.de](mailto:brkollberg@yahoo.de)

#### President

**Susan Olsburgh**  
2/6 Zalman Shazar  
Ramat Poleg, Netanya  
Tel: 074-704-2736  
[olsburgh.susan@gmail.com](mailto:olsburgh.susan@gmail.com)

#### Secretary

**Linda Suchy**  
Haim Laskov 5/7  
Netanya 4265605  
Tel: 054-497-8812  
[secretary.voices@gmail.com](mailto:secretary.voices@gmail.com)

#### Treasurer

**Chanita Millman**  
15 Shachar St.  
Jerusalem 9626323  
Tel: 02-653-6770  
[millmanm@zahav.net.il](mailto:millmanm@zahav.net.il)

#### Membership Coordinator

**Susan Rosenberg**  
42/46a Leon Blum  
Haifa 3385209  
Tel: 04-838-1218  
[susanndick@gmail.com](mailto:susanndick@gmail.com)

#### Overseas Connections

**Coordinator**  
**Helen Bar-Lev**  
3 Hairus St.  
Metulla 1029200  
Tel: 077-353-5548  
[helentbarlev@gmail.com](mailto:helentbarlev@gmail.com)



## A WARM WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBER(S)

**Shira Eliashiv**, Jerusalem group

**Leah Gottesman**, Efrat (returning after a few years!)

**Michael Kagen**, Jerusalem group

## CALLS FOR SUBMISSIONS

From **Wendy Dickstein**: Collecting poems about Jerusalem for an anthology for tour guides and tourists. Send poems to [wendy.dickstein@gmail.com](mailto:wendy.dickstein@gmail.com). Please put "Jerusalem Anthology" in subject line.

From **Helen Bar-Lev**: \$4000 Palette Prize, Spring Poetry and More: Monthly Deadlines – March & April. Every 15<sup>th</sup> of the month there are new deadlines, new contests, and new opportunities for your voice to find the world. See, [new deadlines](#)

From **Helen Bar-Lev**: Vol 18 Issue 6 The Poetry Market Ezine. Many contests although many are March deadline. There are others with May deadlines. See [Poetry Market Ezine](#)

## CONGRATULATIONS

To - **Ruth Fogelman** for so ably organizing the Jerusalem group each month for **ten** years! Thank you!

To - **Avril Meallem** who will take over in May as coordinator of the Jerusalem group meetings. Thank you, Avril!

**Poetica Publishing Company**, 2018 ADRP Award - **Winners Announced**:

To - **Esther Schnur-Berlot** - 3rd Honourable Mention \$75.00, *Arguing with the Deceased* and 4th Honourable Mention \$75.00, *Everything is Broken*.

To - **Helen Bar-Lev** Finalist, *Who Knows?*



## VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH



To - **Yocheved Zemel** whose entire poem, *Desert and Rebirth*, will be published on the Deronda Review homepage. (*It was too long for the print edition.*) Her poem *Reaching for the Heavens*, will be published in the print edition. In addition, four of **Yocheved's** poems will be published in the arc26 2019 edition: *The Attic*, *Freedom*, *Flight*, and *Love in a War Zone*. (See, additional notice regarding arc26 below.)

To – (in alphabetical order) **Hayim Abramson, Ada Aharoni, Ann Bar-Dov, Helen Bar-Lev, Dr. Judy Belsky, Chaim Bezalel, Lilian Cohen, Wendy Dickstein, Ira Director, Bob Findysz, Ricky Rapoport Friesem, Reuven Goldfarb, Miriam Green, Britta Kollberg, Mark L. Levinson, Celia Merlin, Helen Schary Motro, Pesach Rotem, Shlomo Sher, Johnmichael Simon, Yocheved Zemel**, whose works were chosen by Editor Dr. Shawn Edrei for IAWE's arc26. The launch will be April 4, 2019, 18:30-21:30, Mazeh 9 Center, Tel Aviv

To - **Lidia Chiarelli** of our Affiliate, Immagine & Poesia, whose book *Sunset in Cup* won First Prize at Premio Letterario Internazionale "Cinque Terre – Golfo dei Poeti" PORTOVENERE. Lidia will go to Portovenere on April 7 for the Prize Ceremony.

To - **Matthew Anish** who had two poems published in the recent anthology "Leisure" - which publishes poems of the Green Pavilion reading taking place the last Wednesday of each month.

To – **Esther** Cameron whose poem, *In the Inner Court: A Purim Monodrama* was published in Sasson Magazine. See, [In the Inner Court: A Purim Monodrama](#).

From **Judy Belsky**: Here is a link to the video from the pre-Purim poetry reading last week at the Israel Center. <https://youtu.be/dk6o3wg8G8w>

## GET WELL WISHES

To **Kaila Shabbat** we send love and prayers for a speedy recovery and return to your friends at Voices Israel!



**A SPECIAL REPORT FROM THE AGM**

**Voices AGM** (*Annual General Meeting*)

*By Rumi Morkin*

*14.03.19*

I traveled to the AGM  
on Tuesday last, by train,  
but wondered why I'm going there  
and what I hope to gain.  
On board, I met with Judy, Wendy –  
they had saved a seat;  
we shouted conversation in  
the din – no easy feat.

I'm sure there will be dry reports,  
financial calculations,  
much bureaucratic protocol  
with future implications;  
then hopefully, right at the end  
with all the business done,  
I'll read two of my poems  
(if there's time for more than one).

<><><><>

But afterwards, back on the train,  
recalling the event,  
I came to the conclusion that  
my time had been well-spent.  
Those disembodied names on paper  
came alive and real,  
I spoke with them, discussed and listened,  
soon began to feel  
that Voices isn't just a list of  
names, emails and phones;

these people all have built-in  
inspiration in their bones –  
all part of an established and  
successful institution,  
where each, with different thoughts, ideas,  
can make his contribution.  
First Susan read reports of all the  
branches, from her notes,  
then questions, resolutions –  
done by democratic votes;  
a show of hands accepted some,  
while others met rejection.  
To those continuing in their posts:  
no need for re-election.

As Susan O, with charm and patience  
chaired us through the meet,  
The wails and honks of ambulances,  
taxis, filled the street  
below the windows of the room,  
soft-lit, in which we sat  
enjoying food and poetry  
in Birgit's pleasant flat.

To Judy and to Wendy, thanks  
for knowing where to go –  
through crowded streets, on lurching bus,  
a cityscape tableau.  
To Susan and to Birgit, thanks  
for organizing this:  
a well-conducted evening  
that I'm glad I didn't miss.



## GROUP POETRY SELECTIONS

### Modesty

There were two friends.  
One a rich man and hedonist.  
The other a poor man and modest.  
The rich man said to the poor man:  
"You will stay forever poor!"  
The poor man answered: "What  
God decided will occur."  
One day the stock market fell.  
The rich man went bankrupt.  
The poor man patented an invention  
and earned a lot of money.  
He established a company.  
He gave the rich man a place to work  
and invited him to eat  
at the directors' table.  
One day the rich man asked:  
"I laughed at you, and you  
treated me well?"  
The poor man answered: "I  
wanted the changes in your behavior  
to come from within yourself."

Isaac Cohen, Tel Aviv selection

\*\*\*\*\*

### Chava

My Hebrew name is Chava  
and I am sure that I too  
would have eaten that fruit  
from the Tree of Knowledge.

Temptation of the forbidden,  
almost impossible to resist.  
A force that blinds wisdom,  
overtakes self-control.

An inner voice tells me "Why not?  
Another biscuit can't hurt!"  
I reach out - and then;  
two.. three... four....  
I've finished the lot!

Oh how sick I now feel!  
Ashamed that I gave in so easily, lost control.

That serpent in my mind again deceives me  
in its concern for my well-being!

Avril Meallem, Jerusalem selection

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### BROAD SMILES

Just the feel  
of wet garden soil  
on my hand  
births hope  
and so do  
the pansies  
who've weathered  
a Jerusalem winter  
and are sporting  
broad smiles!

Betsy Ramsey, Jerusalem selection



### In It for the Long-Haul

Courage -*writ large*-  
emerges instinctively  
under whopping pressure  
in a dazzling flash  
the stuff of battlefields  
ephemeral

unbidden,  
this Courage sojourns deep  
in the heart of its holder,  
enmeshed with the muscular fibers  
of those pulsating chambers  
suffused in life fluid's urgent flow  
waiting  
for the one extraordinary beat to call it forth

mostly,  
our days are sung with the rhythm  
of small, modest plucks of courage  
an obstacle, fear, or memory to overcome?  
rarely played out in a single measure...or single score  
soul's log may cry out in black notes of lamentation  
hold fast! these shall fade slowly, slowly  
as if from old, flimsy fax paper  
until one day imperceptible  
or a page of white  
or recomposed as  
an enduring, joyous ode to resilience  
embossed on museum quality stock;  
*long-haul* courage is humbly reaped  
by each dogged beat  
of the ordinary heart

**Judith Fineberg**  
Netanya/Sharon selection

### Haiku

such thunder  
flyback to childhood  
return with the birds

window slides open  
newly sprouted leaves  
a spring choir

daffodil spotting  
beauty takeover  
may time stand still

**Judih Weinstein**, Voices South  
selection



**Magic**

the art of magic  
would, if able  
wave a wand and transform  
a bare land  
un-ploughing its rocks and boulders  
from their thousands and millions of years of rest  
to a land of trees  
branches and leaves undulating motion of life  
and giving life to others

there are none here on Earth  
so able to do  
but only by sweat and striving  
against deserts' and swamps' opposition to fertility  
did this happen  
creating a land flowing with milk and honey  
water from the air  
life from salt water  
in a land of such small area  
maps print its name  
beyond its borders

its rocket now nearing the moon

not magic  
just magical  
Israel.

**Ezra Ben-Meir**

Western Galilee selection

**ALMOST BEAUTIFUL**

She had full lips  
painted bright red,  
sometimes pouting  
sometimes surrounding  
a white, bright smile;  
had dark hair  
piled high  
and a sense  
of style  
yet her  
compelling green-blue  
eyes did not show warmth  
would not respond to  
messages from another  
as if doubting kind thoughts  
challenging sincerity  
or expecting derision

**Susan Rosenberg**

Haifa selection





## Handy Man

His hands, pudgy from pooling fluid and swelling  
Bruised from blood thinners and bloodsucking needle-poking  
Hold his cards, as with still-twinkly eyes and impish grin  
He announces, "Gin!"

After flicking the motor switch, his right hand cajoles the steering  
Stick, as he maneuvers his wheelchair away from the table  
I walk by his side while he rolls cautiously down the corridor  
To Brandywine's dining room for dinner

I remember those hands, when their veins were like rivers flowing  
Down mighty mountains, when their muscles flexed strong at his will:  
Fix-it-man hands, makeshift-inventor hands, science-project-making  
Hands, lift-me-up-pedestal hands, everything's-alright hands

I used to draw hands, as if I could dissect their beauty  
By the shadings of bones and veins, fingertips and nails  
My left hand posing for my right, an artist's hands, laboring hands  
My father's hands my muse for what a man's hands ought to be

I remember the two-wheeler-balance-teaching hands  
His left on left handlebar, his right gripping the back of the seat  
As he ran alongside me down the street  
Holding me up as I pedaled

Another day, holding only the back of my seat  
Then, just the carrier over the back wheel, as he ran behind  
And I, confident that I felt his touch on my bike, pedaled onward  
Stopping to turn around at the end of the street

There he was, far away from me  
It was a revelation, this hands-off moment  
His wide smile at one end of the street  
Mine at the other

## Donna Bechar

Netanya/Sharon selection



ארצי, ארצי, למה עזבתני

***My country, my country***

My country, my country, why have you forsaken me?  
why have you bred a generation of thugs  
why have you spread murderers on stolen hills

why do you let hooligans spit on your judges  
threaten your scholars, mock your heroes  
turn your children into bone-breaking beasts

why is the stranger seeking sanctuary  
seen as cancer in your flesh? Are you not here  
to make sure the wrongs we have endured

are not inflicted on anyone else? Never again,  
it was said, and now you stand silent  
as the fishwife screeches, drunken with hatred

as the poisonous snake sprays fascism around  
from a perfume vial. Your greedy rulers  
shake the hands of the skinhead descendants

of my grandfather's murderers. Me they branded  
a traitor. I walk through the city that was mine  
bent on the twisted cane of the exile.

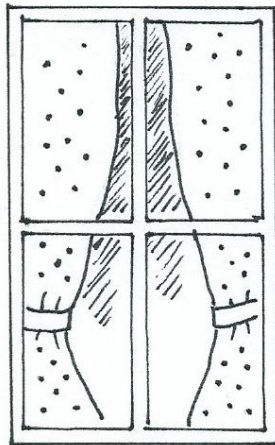
My country, why have you forsaken yourself?

**Iris Dan**, Haifa selection



**Crytoscophilia\***

My grand-daughter  
family are living in  
under my house,  
until their new  
in the extension  
and every time I  
their window on the  
I keep my face  
resisting the  
to take just a teensy



and her little  
the room  
temporarily,  
house is built  
neighborhood,  
go past  
way to my car,  
forward  
temptation  
peek...

Rumi Morkin  
28.1.19

*\*Crytoscophilia: an urge to look through the windows of the homes you pass.*



## POEMS FROM OUR OVERSEAS MEMBERS

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### Everything is Broken

Telephone is on the fritz  
static voices interrupt calls  
toilet not flushing  
termites gnash at window frames  
while swarms of mosquitoes nip at ankles  
my gut spews bitter pained poetry

My body parts -  
wrists, elbows, knees, hips and back  
are all wrecked

I fret lifting myself out of a frayed  
sagging second hand couch onto  
my Lincoln rocker where weight  
bears down on a broken peg  
limping along

Our new normal pay-to-stay alive  
are concierge doctors listening  
to weary broken hearts

Urgent Care centers sprout about  
in vanished retail stores  
Will ten minutes be enough time  
for stethoscopes  
to hear my concerns

My pain pales to a broken body politic  
of weasel-word prayers

for our dead and wounded children  
caught in a crossfire  
of school shooting galleries  
NRA's solution –  
more guns for teachers

Everything is broken – on the border  
Sophie's Choice is revisited  
children pulled from mothers arms

With everything broken  
I cannot find answers  
Blow in the wind

### What's in a Name

Old folks loved saying *Esther My Shvester*  
I hated being saddled with an old fashioned name  
Esther Williams had become passé  
and that other Esther, Estee Lauder,  
changed her name to be in Vogue.

As a child I spun about the Purim-shpiel  
wearing a cardboard crayon crown  
with shoulders draped in a queenly cape  
of blue crepe paper.

After gorging myself on Hamentash I'd nod off  
to the Rebbe's sing-song Megilla  
Awakened by wicked Hamen's name  
wild boos set my noisemaker a twirl

Leaving Hebrew School days behind  
fabled Queen Esther is seen anew

Esther's beauty satiated  
the ancient King's vanity  
who feasted on deflowering  
young virgins  
Who she was – remained hidden  
until Queen Esther reveals Hamen's plot  
to kill her and her kin.

For all those Esthers whose charred ashes –  
litter the landscape of Europe  
I now wear that old-fashioned name  
without shame

**Esther Schnur-Berlot, USA**



**Peace to All Out There in the Darkness**

I send this  
     work  
 to all of you  
     out  
     there  
         in the shadows  
 A light will come  
     to you  
 if you want it to  
 The great teachers and masters  
 of the past  
     were not deceived  
 by this mortal  
     coil  
     They knew we  
 could overcome  
     it  
 If - and only if  
 we hold fast to our poetry and our love

**Matthew Anish**  
 USA

\*\*\*\*\*

**The Room (Holocaust Memorial, Berlin)**

End of a long bleak concrete corridor  
 Is the grey concrete room  
 Door shuts fast, inside there are no handles.  
 Empty, no windows, acute triangular floor area  
 Smooth tapering walls disappear into the lofty narrow vortex  
 From which the dim light of day, drips into the space below  
 Metal ladders secured against the walls,  
 First rung too high, last too short to reach the top.  
 Horrible humour, hangs around  
 The room is empty, full of departed souls  
 The room is silent, filled with anguished cries  
 No way out, trapped in terror, hope fades  
 Fear grows, enclosing walls,  
 Catatonic, light dust of ashes  
 Falls and the heat intensifies.  
 The door opens, I come out alive.

**Esther B Lipton, London**

**Paternal Love**

He feeds her apple piece by piece  
 She kicks her little legs at each bite  
 Flings her arms around his bowed neck  
 With a wordless love he entwines  
 His arms tightly around her body  
 And infusing affection, holds her still  
 Renewing their unbroken bond  
 Kisses the crown of her troubled head  
 As she sits trapped in her wheelchair.

**Esther B Lipton, London**

\*\*\*\*\*

**A Brief look at Opium**

There is a perfume named opium  
 And Coleridge and Berlioz used it  
 Kipling wrote about it too  
 It is good to dream  
 And it is great to write poetry  
 One does not need intoxicants to write  
 The election in NYC is on Tuesday

**Matthew Anish, USA**



## VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH



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April 2019 Newsletter

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