



JUNE 2019 NEWSLETTER

June 2019

Amuta No. 58-019-703-6

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear All

May was indeed so busy and exciting for Voices Israel.

Thanks to our energetic publicity officer Wendy Blumfield there was high level coverage (see separate photo and account) of the 2018 Reuben Rose international poetry competition prize event. A lovely venue, plenty of people and most importantly very fine poetry pleased everyone who came to Ramat Aviv. A huge thank you is due to competition administrator Mark Levinson for all his efforts and for giving an enlightening resume of the competition statistics.

We had the opportunity of welcoming Professor and Mrs Anthony Joseph, grandparents of the late Bar Sagi. A prize in her memory, aimed at teenage poets was launched and many present took the opportunity to buy a copy of Bar's published poetry book "See me soar and spread my wings." Please read separate advertisement for a Bar Sagi Young Poets prize administrator.

Although our American guests of honour were unable to travel because of ill health, the evening's programme featured a wonderful recording of UK winning poet John Gallas reading his poem, readings by Israeli prizewinners and honourable mentions and proxy readings by members on behalf of those unable to travel. In addition, we 'showcased' our judges and enjoyed commentary from overseas judge Peter ThabitJones plus the poetry of Iris Dan and Avril Meallem.

A new development for Voices is the opportunity for winning poets to place recordings of their poems with our webmistress Judy Koren and also new I believe is that many of the proxy readers emailed 'their' poet after the event.

I am delighted that the Haifa group are once again organising a workshop there. A separate announcement gives full details but with a charming hostess and three Voices presenters I urge you to book a place without delay. There will be writing opportunities and probably, as so often recently, a chapbook will emerge.

A very significant new initiative to be announced is the launch on our website of a Voices Israel Directory. Individuals can say as much or as little about themselves as they wish. It is sure to be a useful resource and many thanks indeed webmistress Judy for your tremendous efforts.

Voices member Breindel Lieber Kasher is one of those whose home was destroyed in the recent Mevo Modi'in fire. We all send best wishes for a speedy recovery from the trauma.

Unfortunately, I am ending on a very sad note. Friday morning I learnt of the sudden death of our longstanding dear member Zev Davis, BDE. He was one of the most loyal members I knew and at the recent Reuben Rose event was one of our honoured proxy readers. He will be much missed and I wish all his family Haim Aruchim.

With best wishes for a Shabbat shalom and positive creativity in June.

Susan

Susan Olsburgh, President Voices Israel

[ã06-2019 Voices Israel Newsletter](#)

<http://voicesisrael.com/>



**VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH
JUNE 2019
MEETING DATES, TIMES AND PLACES**

HAIFA

TUESDAY, JUNE 25
WORKSHOP
10:30am – 3:30pm
Susan Rosenberg's
42/46a Leon Blum, Haifa
04-8381218
Workshop Coordinator:
Iris Dan
Tel: 04-833-2472 Mobile:
054-803-2472
medidan@bezeqint.net
**Full details of workshop
To follow**

TEL**AVIV**

SUNDAY, JUNE 16
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

JERUSALEM

TUESDAY, JUNE 11
AT 6:00 PM
Toby Shuster's
5 Aza Street, Rehavia
Jerusalem

Coordinator:
Avril Meallem
Tel: 02-567-0998
aemeallem@gmail.com

UPPER GALILEE

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 12
FROM 5-7 PM
Reuven and Yehudit's
128 Keren HaYesod
Artists Quarter, Tzfat

Coordinator:
Reuven Goldfarb
Tel: 04-6974105 Mobile:
058-414-0266
poetsprogress@gmail.com

BET SHEMESH / MODIIN

NO MEETINGS PLANNED

NETANYA & SHARON

SUNDAY, JUNE 23
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

WESTERN GALILEE

CONTACT PHYLLSIE FOR
INFORMATION
Kibbutz Evron

Coordinator:
Phyllsie Gross Tel:
052-874-6880
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:
05-4667936
maber4kids@yahoo.com

SOUTHERN

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 26
AT 5:00PM

Coordinator:
Miriam Green Tel: 05-
7388640
miriamsgreen@gmail.com

ASHKELON

FOR INFORMATION, PLEASE
CONTACT CHAIM

Coordinator:
Chaim Bezalel Tel:
054-674-5900
bezalel.levy@gmail.com

BERLIN, GERMANY

FOR INFORMATION, PLEASE
CONTACT BRITTA.

Coordinator: **Britta
R. Kollberg**
brkollberg@yahoo.de

President

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2/6 Zalman Shazar
Ramat Poleg, Netanya
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secretary.voices@gmail.com

Treasurer

Chanita Millman
15 Shachar St.
Jerusalem 9626323
Tel: 02-653-6770
millmanm@zahav.net.il

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Susan Rosenberg
42/46a Leon Blum
Haifa 3385209
Tel: 04-838-1218
susanndick@gmail.com

Overseas Connections

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



IN MEMORIAM

We mourn the passing of our dear member, **Zev Davis**, of blessed memory.

Here is a recent poem from Zev written about his grandson who was leaving for the Army.

Would-be Generals/Zev Davis
to Moshico

They completed the course, ready to serve
as they sit around the table. They confer, the
world about them turns, continually stirs,
events conspire, a nation to preserve,

lives to defend . . . until they get the call
pizza and coke is there as they await
soldiers at the border, affairs of state, who
will form the government. They install

what is yet to come. They pursue internal
tranquility, establish order, laws and
policies for our betterment because they
know everything. It is theirs to do

when the time comes for them, when they accrue
experience, and take over, correct the flaws of
the elder statesmen, chart a path, renew.

Zev attended our recent Reuben Rose evening in Ramat Aviv, traveling all the way from Nazareth Illit to take part in the event. He always arrived at events with a tasty treat. Thank you for the Pirozhkis, Zev!
Zev was a proxy reader for one of the honorable mention winners, David Ades, of Australia. Here is a photo of Zev accepting the certificate from Mark Levinson on behalf of David.



L-R: Zev Davis, BDE; Mark Levinson
Photo credit Judith Fineberg

We will all miss his presence at our workshops and events. We lost a loyal member and a devoted poet.

May his memory be for a blessing.





VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH



CALLS FOR SUBMISSIONS

REMINDER: From **David Ades** of Australia (**deadline September 1, 2019**): "Poetry on Planes" will be an anthology featuring the work of 99 poets from around the world. We invite you to submit original works that, ideally, were written while you were a passenger on a commercial airliner. Please

visit <http://www.poetryonplanes.com/> for further information. We look forward to reading what you and the muse have to say. Regards, *Gerry Murphy / Peter Frey*

From **Helen Bar-Lev**, new standout poetry, Editors Talk, and the 2019 Industry Prize is Now Open.

Guest judges this year: Jeff Shotts—Executive Editor of Graywolf Press, Kwame Dawes—Editor-in-Chief of Prairie Schooner, and Sarah Gambito—Co-founder of Kundiman. The panel of three judges will collaborate to select a single winning poem from a group of finalists for the \$3000 prize and publication on Frontier. 2nd and 3rd place poems also selected by the judges will receive \$200 / \$100 respectively and publication with Frontier Poetry. The Frontier staff will select the finalists and any honorable mentions. The winner and finalists will be announced Fall 2019. **Fee for submitting is \$20.00 USD. Deadline July 15, 2019. To submit: frontier.submittable.com**

From **Helen Bar-Lev**, *Narrative's* Eleventh Annual Poetry contest runs from May 13 until July 14. Open to all poets for unpublished entries. For all information and guidelines, see www.narrativemagazine.com.

HELP WANTED – JOB OPPORTUNITY

From **Helen Bar-Lev**, there is a job advertised in Janglo which may be of interest to some of you:

Seeking Editor to Review Poetry – Seeking an English-language editor to review poetry prior to publication. Therefore, ideally looking for either a poet or an individual with experience reviewing poetry. For additional details, please contact Chaim Yochanan Cohen, 054-7462874 or at yochi1@actcom.co.il.

CONGRATULATIONS

To **Linda Goldberg**, whose essays have been published in Chabad's magazine. See *Remember to say I Love You before it is too late*,

https://www.chabad.org/theJewishWoman/article_cdo/aid/4264674/jewish/Remember-to-Say-I-Love-You-Before-Its-Too-Late.htm;

The First Time I Lit Candles in Nine Months

https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/4179979/jewish/The-First-Time-I-Lit-Shabbat-Candles-in-NineMonths.htm and

What is it like to ask for help all of the Time

https://www.chabad.org/theJewishWoman/article_cdo/aid/4171781/jewish/What-Its-Like-to-Ask-for-Help-All-the-Time.htm

To **Betsy Ramsay**, whose new book, "*Let Us Go Up*" (the story of her Aliyah) has been published and is available for purchase at www.amazon.com. Betsy also has a website you will enjoy <http://www.betsyramsay.com/>.

To **Rumi Morkin**, whose Limerick has been accepted by Sasson Magazine.

To **Larry Lefkowitz**, whose collection of Jewish stories "*Enigmatic Tales*" published by Fomite Press is available in print from Amazon, Barnes & Noble, eBook for most devices. (Not poetry but a worthy accomplishment for congratulations!)

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To **Bernard Mann**, who has won a first-place prize for his historical novel, *David & Avshalom: Life and Death in the Forest of Angels*, in the annual Chaucer Book Awards for Pre-1750's Historical Fiction. This novel was, as many of you already know, published on Amazon in January of last year. Bernard is also a finalist in the Bluelight Poetry contest which received over 300 manuscripts.

To **Lidia Actis Chiarelli**, with our Voices Israel Partner *Imagine & Poesia*, **Helen Bar-Lev**, **Bernard Mann**, **Stanley Barkan** and **Carolyn Kleefeld** for being featured in the E Book 2019 of *Imagine & Poesia* - Special Edition for Lawrence Ferlinghetti's 100th Birthday. The E Book is on line! Free

Download: <https://imaginepoesia.jimdo.com/e-book-2019/>. You can read it also on ISSUU: https://issuu.com/imaginepoesia/docs/imagine_poesia_2019

To **Matthew Anish**, who had three poems published in the May issue of *Mystical Muse*.

To **Esther Cameron**, whose short essay "Pesach Sheni, The Feast of Second Chances" was posted on *Sasson Magazine*. See, SassonMag.com.

Ricky Friesem's new collection: "Gimme Shelter," was reviewed by Wendy Blumfield in the current issue of the *Jerusalem Report*.

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT ABOUT THE WEBSITE!

The Voices Member Directory is now on the website!

Our Webmistress, Judy Koren, asks each of you to please access the website and check your entry –

- Is the information correct?
- Did we spell your name right?
- Did we assign you to the right group?
- Did we not include you when we should have?
- Did you want to include more information (e.g. group attended, contact info or bio/description) but you have not yet sent in the questionnaire we circulated?

Please send any and all corrections to our webmistress, Judy Koren, at webmaster@voicesisrael.com.

To get to the directory, go to our website <https://www.voicesisrael.com/>, point your mouse at "About Us" on the top menu, and choose Member Directory from the sub-menu that opens.

Please read the text at the top of the Directory page carefully especially if you have asked for a reciprocal link from the directory to your website or Facebook page.



REPORT FROM THE REUBEN ROSE PRESENTATION EVENT

The Presentation Event on May 16 was well-attended with 30 poets and guests enjoying a delicious choice of refreshments and liquid nourishment at a very nice venue in Ramat Aviv. We were sorry to receive notice from our US academics, Dr. Martin Nakell and Professor Rebecca Goodman, that Dr. Nakell was ill and they were unable to join us in Israel. We send our wishes for good health and hope to meet at future poetic events.

Our first prizewinner, John Gallas from the UK, could not make it to Israel for the presentation, but he sent in a wonderful recording of himself reading his winning poem. Our second (Donna Bechar) and third (Wendy Dickstein) prizewinners each read her own poem to the gathering. Here are a few pictures (Photo credit to Judith Fineberg):

1. L-R: Mark Levinson, Johnmichael Simon, Dina Jehuda, Donna Bechar, Susan Olsburgh, Celia Merlin and Wendy Dickstein



2. L-R: Janice, Johnmichael Simon and Ricky Friesem enjoying the evening



We were proud to announce at the Reuben Rose Presentation Event the launch of the Bar Sagi Young Poets Prize funded by Bar Sagi's grandparents. See Volunteer opportunity later in this newsletter.



Professor Anthony Joseph, Grandfather of Bar Sagi



Susan Olsburgh, President of Voices Israel, with Bar Sagi's book of poetry.



VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH



JERUSALEM POST ARTICLE ABOUT OUR REUBEN ROSE EVENT!

Thank you to Greer Fay Cashman at the Jerusalem Post for her report on behalf of Voices Israel:

DESPITE FEARS that in a digital age, people will stop reading novels and poetry, not a week goes past in Israel without a book launch, a poetry reading or the announcement of winners of a literary competition. People are writing and reading in numerous languages. Winners of the Voices Israel Poetry in English Society 2018 Reuben Rose International Competition gathered recently in Ramat Aviv together with Voices poets from all over Israel. **Reuben Rose** was one of the founders of a small group that started in Haifa in 1971, dedicated to the promotion of English poetry in Israel. Today there are 10 branches from Safed in Upper Galilee to the Arava, plus one group in Berlin, and another in London, all writing in different genres. Regional groups meet monthly to share their poems and receive friendly critiques. Workshops are organized with local and visiting poets from abroad.

The 2018 competition was judged by Welsh poet **Peter Thabit-Jones**, and Israeli poets **Mark Radzyner**, **Iris Dan** and **Avril Meallam**. The three winning poets were **John Gallas** of the UK, and two Israeli poets, **Donna Bechar** and **Wendy Dickstein**. Honorary mentions included Israeli members **Celia Merlin**, **Johnmichael Simon** and **Dina Yehuda**, a veteran member who is chief editor of the annual Voices Anthology. Other honorary mentions were awarded *in absentia* to poets from the UK, USA and Australia. greerfc@gmail.com

Attached at the end of the newsletter is the program schedule for the Presentation evening.

Volunteer Opportunity **Bar Sagi Young Poets Prize**

This new prize will be administered by Voices Israel.

Required: An enthusiastic volunteer from our Voices Israel membership to help administer and develop this exciting new project. Must be able or willing to be trained to use Submittable software

The Israeli Ministry of Education will help promote the competition to teenagers.

Annual monetary prize awards available to successful young poet and runners up.

Please contact Susan Olsburgh asap if you are interested in being involved in this responsible new post reaching out to young poets. olsburgh.susan@gmail.com

WORKSHOP ANNOUNCEMENT – NEW DATE

Since the Haifa workshop previously scheduled for May 21, 2019 had to be cancelled, Haifa has scheduled another workshop for **Tuesday, June 25, 10:30am to 3:30pm**. We will meet at Susan Rosenberg's lovely home at 42/46a Leon Blum in Haifa. Susan's telephone number is 04-8381218. **Finalised details of presentations to follow shortly.**



GROUP POETRY SELECTIONS

I NEVER IMAGINED

How much stretching can an eighty-seven year old
handle and still retain
the carefree primrose freshness
that once was her gain?

In days now gone as I beheld
crumpled old women shuffle past
I never imagined I, too,
would grow old. Never did guess.

Now I fail to keep appointments
that truly mean a lot
and bend over double to untie
a shoelace knot.

I still make mercy visits
to old-timers like I am
but how long that will last
I cannot envision.

Even now I'm puffing and panting
when I reach my destination
and if I should fumble and tumble
it would be a bad situation.

How much stretching can an old lady
handle and yet retain
that carefree primrose freshness,
once her happy refrain?

Betsy Ramsay
Jerusalem selection

Amnesia

They said it couldn't happen
anymore, at least not here,
and then: it never will again
the stunned survivors swear.

For perhaps a generation this is true
then the many-headed hydra springs
to life anew
or never dead, awakens and its heads
deny:
our people never did it, it's a lie...
others have done it, even on
our soil, but never us;
we were too weak to prevent,
we are the innocent.

Poland, Cambodia, Japan
Turkey, Serbia, Pakistan:
amnesia saves the soul of man.

Judy Koren, Haifa selection



Death sentence

My laundry was left inadvertently hanging
outside on the line overnight
and the weather was fast building up for a storm -
Nimbus clouds moving darkly in sight,

leaving no other choice but to quickly rush out
in my thin morning state of undress
with a strong cold wind blowing that buffeted trees
swirling twigs and dead leaves in a mess,

forcing branches to sway and creak loud in the air
scaring all the birds out of the trees
as I ran up the path with my open gown flapping,
as fast as I could, not to freeze,

grabbing item by item as rain started falling
and clothing slipped out of my hand,
getting soaked as the deluge fell heavy and hard
flooding already water-logged land,

encouraging weeds to grow healthy and lush
in a manner I've not seen before
due to change in the climate that alters the planet,
a change that we cannot ignore

because fast-melting icebergs make sea levels rise
and the brown bears in Russia now try
to reach fish, but the water's become far too deep
so they starve and then finally die,

like South African penguins that live on an island -
all starving and dying as well;
two severe consequences of man's heedless acts
that will lead to our planet's death knell

if continued, a tragedy hard to perceive
when this planet is all that we've got,
though there might be another one light years beyond us,
a small insignificant dot

that the scientists say has conditions for life,
to be reached at some vague future date
when technology masters the problem of travel
and tickets will wait at the gate

for my grownup great-grandkids and millions of others
all signed up, packed, ready to go
to that far away planet to start a new life
and there'll be no-one left here to know.

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Rumi Morkin, Haifa selection



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Catalysts

“We're drinking the best beers now because ancient brewers were smart enough to start breeding yeast before they knew what they were doing.”
— Kevin Verstrepen, Vlaams Instituut voor Biotechnologie

Before we knew what it was doing, yeast
had become our invisible ally
while watching its work from above itself,
buoyed in the medium it shares with bees
whose craft we've always recognized and whose
invisible but deadly enemy
we are uncertain, in our slow panic,
how to identify and counteract.
Worst are the invisible slayers of
vital but unidentified allies.
What wiped out the muses of rock and roll,
of friendly argument, of book reading?
What were those muses? What was the substrate
of Western childhood made of? What shrank it?

Mark L. Levinson, Tel Aviv selection



Agora (Hypatia to Davus)*

You lovingly fit my neck to the crook of your elbow
Squeezing gently stronger and stronger
Narrowing the space between breath and death

You killed me to save me
From pain misery betrayal of my stoning peers
Or so you said

The warm breeze of your exhale tinged with mint
Your whispered melodic cadences
Careening down corridors of my dying ear

You disappointed my audience
Enemies students friends
My stoners

In the lovely agora
Refuge solace and muse in past times
In a heap I lay

And they thinking me in a faint
Drew scant sustenance from their
Impotent throws

Which elicited no screams no cringes no cries
Of anguished disbelief or terror-plunged eyes
No blood

I will remember that sun-infested generous space
Become darkest skinflint alley
And how you my savior my killer

Gave me
More space
Than I have ever known

Donna Bechar
Netanya/Sharon selection

*Inspired by the film "Agora".
Hypatia is historical. Davus is fictional for the film.

Spaces

Reading a book,
but in the space
between the end
of one sentence
and the beginning
of the next
a tiny black fly
alighted.
Perfect in its lacquered
shininess
articulated construction
carefully rubbing together
antennae,
the beauty of its being,
its fly world concentration
enchanted.

How easy to swipe away
in unthinking irritation
wonders. Compared to this
ancient genetic
artwork,
casually sprucing up,
the printed story
seemed trivial.
I dared not move;
a frozen clumsy giant

Then it was gone

Mali Joy Livingstone,
Netanya/Sharon selection



POEMS FROM OUR OVERSEAS MEMBERS

Untitled

People who dance
People who love
People who taste
All those people want riches
But true riches
do not come from wealth
True riches lie deep inside one
You must train yourself
To love your fellow man
and woman!
or face
Shadows

Matthew Anish, US

Re Birth

I saw a
 Holocaust survivor
A while back
Told tales of his
family
dying
 I was messed up
for about two weeks
My eyes filled with tears
So I try to keep it
together
 these days
Hate is something rising
these days
And who is the catalyst?
 People will disagree
But I know what I think
 but will keep it to
myself for a while
(in the interest of safety)

Matthew Anish, USA



Voices Israel

Reuben Rose Poetry Competition

Presentations Evening Thursday 16 May 2019 18.00pm

Mercaz Avivim Ramat Aviv

Judges: Peter Thabit-Jones, UK; Mark Radzyner, Israel; Iris Dan, Israel; and Avril Meallem, Israel.

Introduction by Susan Olsburgh President Voices Israel

Comments by Mark Levinson, Reuben Rose administrator including a message from Peter Thabit-Jones, Overseas Judge

Readings of Winning Poems 2018 by the poets and by proxy readers

First prize - John Gallas, UK: *at the funeral of a ploughman*

Poet's own recording

Poet's commentary read by Susan Bell

Second prize - Donna Bechar, Israel: *Pencil Me In*

Third prize - Wendy Dickstein, Israel: *Alexander Pope in India*

Honourable Mentions (in alphabetical order of poem title)

Auschwitz - by John Ling, UK

proxy David Fellerman

Bougainvillea - by E.D. Watson, USA

proxy Phella Hirschson

Flamenco - by Celia Merlin, Israel

Puppets and Cotton Candy - by Johnmichael Simon, Israel

Rembrandt's Saul Listening to David - by Dina Yehuda, Israel

Something is Always Arriving at its End - by David Adès, Australia

proxy Zev Davis

The Night You Ran Out the Door - by Sophia Luna, USA

proxy Linda Suchy

The Numbers - by Patti Tana, USA

proxy Wendy Blumfield

The Tower - by Esther B. Lipton, UK

proxy Kaila Shabat

Tilting at Windmills - by Jennifer Lagier, USA

xxxxx

proxy Ricky Friesem

Showcasing Our Judges

Poems from Peter Thabit-Jones, Iris Dan, Avril Meallem and Marc Radzyner

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Launching the Bar Sagi Young Poets Prize to be administered by Voices Israel

Remarks by Professor Anthony Joseph, grandfather of Bar Sagi

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ã Voices Israel Group of Poets in English June
2019 Newsletter

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