

Voices Israel Group of Poets in English

Voices Newsletter May 2018

MAY MEETING DATES AND PLACES

HAIFA

**Tuesday, May 15th
at 7:30 pm**
Edit Gabrieli's
11a Sinai Ave.
Tel: 04-825-3939
Mobile: 054-497-2747

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

BET SHEMESH / MODIIN

**Sunday, May 27th
at 8:00pm**
Judy Belsky's
Nahar Hayarden 120/4
Floor 2
Bet Shemesh

Coordinator:
Dr Judy Belsky
drjudybelsky@gmail.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

President

Susan Olsburgh
2/6 Zalman Shazar
Ramat Poleg, Netanya
Tel: 09-885-5629
olsburgh.susan@gmail.com

TEL AVIV

**Monday, May 17th
at 7:30 pm**
AACI
94 A Allenby Street,
Tel Aviv

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

NETANYA & SHARON

**Monday, May 28th
at 7:30pm**
Susan Olsburgh's
2/6 Zalman Shazar.
(3rd floor) Ramat Poleg

Coordinator:
Susan Olsburgh
Tel: 09-885-5629
olsburgh.susan@gmail.com

SOUTHERN

Please contact Miriam
for more details.

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

Assistant President

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

JERUSALEM

**Tuesday, May 29th
at 6pm**
One-time change:
Avril Meallam's
Rehov Metudella, 27/4
Jerusalem

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

WESTERN GALILEE

**Monday, May 28th
At 8:30pm**
Kibbutz Evron

Coordinator:
Phyllsie Gross
Tel: 052-874-6880
phyllsie@hotmail.com

ASHKELON

Please contact
Chaim for more details

Coordinator:
Chaim Bezalel
bezalel.levy@gmail.com

Secretary

Linda Suchy
Haim Laskov 5/7
Netanya 4265605
Tel: 054-497-8812
secretary.voices@gmail.com

Treasurer

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

UPPER GALILEE

**Wednesday, May 23rd
from 5-7pm**
Reuven and Yehudit's
128 Keren HaYesod
Artists Quarter, Tzfat

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

LONDON UK

For information please
contact Esther.

Esther Lipton:
eblipton@talk21.com

Membership Coordinator

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

Voices Israel Group of Poets in English

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT MAY 2018

Dear All,

I hope that our recently retired secretary, Avril Mealem, is enjoying her well-earned rest from the arduous role she held as secretary of Voices Israel. This newsletter has been produced by Linda Suchy and I welcome her in her new role. She has taken up the task with great enthusiasm. I also want to send best wishes for a 'refuah shleimah' to our wonderful treasurer Chanita Millman after a recent eye operation.

You will find an evaluation report by Nicholas Dunne-Lynch elsewhere in the newsletter. It relates to the March Nahariya workshop but it makes interesting reading in relation to Voices Israel general policies about workshops. The online chapbook resulting from Nahariya is now available on our website and a small print run is also being organized by Johnmichael Simon. Most copies are pre-ordered by participants but a few will be available for purchase.

Membership secretary Susan Rosenberg will be contacting members who have not yet paid their membership dues. Having missed the early-bird offer, the amount is now 120 shekels. Please do respond to the appeal so that we can have the 2018 membership complete.

After many years serving as the coordinator in Haifa, Susan Rosenberg has decided to retire. At the May Haifa meeting, Susan will lead the hunt from within the group to find a new coordinator. I know the group will wish me to thank her for the charming and committed way in which she has headed the Haifa group. Of course, she will remain an active member.

For a little while the Jerusalem and Haifa group have often offered two group selections to the newsletter's Poetry Page from their monthly meetings. Both these groups are large ones and so in future all large groups (around ten) will be eligible to offer two poems.

Last month I had a delightful surprise when a group of poets from Liverpool, United Kingdom approached Voices Israel to make a link. The group is led by two Israeli 'schlichim' the Van der Berghs and they have already established a popular resource. I hope they will flourish and send in poems for the poetry pages. After receiving information about Voices, Anna said, "I am totally inspired by the organization and the quality of your members' work."

Finally, and very importantly, our biennial event, Poetry by the Sea, will be held this coming week, Sunday 6 May to Monday 7 May in Netanya. This year it is linked with the 2017 Reuben Rose Poetry competition prizewinners' presentations and a workshop will be led by the winning poet Marc Radzyner. This will be followed by a celebration dinner at the King Solomon Hotel and then the presentation ceremony. The following morning there will be two workshop presentations by Professor Shlomo Sher and Nicholas Dunne-Lynch. (Full details elsewhere in this newsletter). Both residential and non-residential bookings have been very lively but there is a small availability of a few more spaces so please contact me as soon as possible if you still want to take part olsburgh.susan@gmail.com. I am sure we are going to have a very special time.

I hope the merry month of May will be a good one for all our members and I take the opportunity of wishing you a very happy Shavuot.

Susan Olsburgh

President, Voices Israel

Voices Israel Group of Poets in English

REPORT FROM THE WORKSHOP COORDINATOR

Voices Spring Workshop

Report (Ref 20180304)

Held at Emet Ve`Shalom Synagogue, Nahariya, 4 March 2018

This was another extremely popular workshop, attracting no fewer than eighteen participants, though only 65% responded to the evaluation. However, the approval rating was 84% and well in line with previous workshops apart from the record 95% response and approval rating for the Rehovot workshop on fourteen-word sonnets last December. The fact that the evaluation period coincided with Pesach did not help matters.

The workshop featured a double presentation by Eli Ben-Joseph entitled *The Wayfaring Stranger*, followed by Susan Olsburgh with Medieval Hebrew Wine Poetry from Spain, both of which were extremely well received, as evidenced by the evaluation. Writing exercises followed both presentations.

The high number of participants was offset by the displacement of much of their output during and after the workshop work to a Chapbook, which is now available. This seems to be a growing and extremely popular element of workshops, since it removes the hit and run nature of short workshops. Some participants, many of whom had come a long way, indicated that longer workshops might be preferable. The forthcoming workshop at Netanya, will, of course, be two days. Further suggestions for longer workshops and more flexible formats would be welcome.

Reservations came from a few participants not comfortable working in a basement, a shelter, at that. Whether it would be possible to find another suitable venue in the area is a matter for the local chapter. The limitations of using a shelter might be worse with a longer workshop.

Another small criticism came from participants who were not enamored with the limit of free comment to ten words for each comment. We feel sure everyone will understand that concise comments help evaluation and save time. No limit might mean that some participants felt free to expand at great length and, no doubt, with great lyricism, but we do not have the resources to analyze and collate such responses. Of course, conciseness being a virtue among poets, a little practice should harm no one.

As usual, in addition to the boost to their writing and the increased confidence that most participants report, the social element continues to be invaluable.

When I accepted this role, I was convinced that Voices has among its membership enough home-grown talent to run very successful and motivating workshops, and that it is not necessary to bring in outside talent, no matter how renowned. I believe that the responses to our evaluation vindicates this view, and that Voices people are capable of running workshops that might easily be the envy of the creative writing departments of exalted seats of learning.

Nicholas Dunne-Lynch
Voices Workshop Coordinator

n.dunnelynch@gmail.com

Voices Israel Group of Poets in English

A WARM WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBER

Treat Francine - Nahariya

EVENTS

There is still time to register as a non-resident for the Netanya Poetry by the Sea workshop: Sunday 6 May – Monday 7 May 2018. Deadlines have passed but there are a few places remaining for anyone interested. It promises to be a very intriguing workshop. Registration information follows in this Newsletter.

CALLS FOR SUBMISSIONS

Even if a Group does not have a meeting, I encourage Voices members to send in their poems for consideration in the Newsletter. Be sure to indicate the name of the Group. We want to hear from all of you!

CONGRATULATIONS

– to David Adès, whose poem recently appeared in the *Poetry Super Highway* Poets of the Week segment at <http://poetrysuperhighway.com/psh/2018/03/poetry-from-david-ades-and-anthony-watts/>.

He has also had two wonderful reviews of his recent book 'Afloat in Light' appear in the Pittsburgh City Paper (see <https://www.pghcitypaper.com/pittsburgh/david-ades-afloat-in-light/content?oid=6267144>) and in StylusLit (see <https://styluslit.com/reviews/afloat-in-light>).

– to Seymour Mayne, whose essay on the great Yiddish poet and Holocaust survivor, Abraham Sutzkever, appeared in *PRISM: An Interdisciplinary Journal for Holocaust Educators*, Vol. 10, p. 12. Several of Abraham Sutzkever poems appear in the article, translated by Seymour from Yiddish to English. Seymour's own poem, "Abraham Sutzkever, A Portrait Poem," is also published along with the essay. <http://www.yu.edu/azrieli/faculty/prism-journal>

– to Pesach Rotem whose poem "The Female Became Deceased in the Alley" was published in "The Broken Plate" online: <http://thebrokenplate.org/online-issue-2018/>

– to Helen Bar Lev, Stanley Barkan, Rifkah Goldberg, Susan Olsburgh and Judith Robinson, whose poems appeared in the *Poetry Super Highway* 20th issue of Shoah poems. <http://poetrysuperhighway.com/psh/2018/04/20th-annual-yom-hashoah-holocaust-remembrance-day-poetry-issue/>

– to Linda Goldberg, who has two stories published this month in Chabad.org.

https://www.chabad.org/theJewishWoman/article_cdo/aid/3923486/jewish/Seder-Full-Circle-My-Husbands-Memory-Takes-a-Seat-at-the-Table.htm and

https://www.chabad.org/theJewishWoman/article_cdo/aid/3913547/jewish/A-Little-Prayer-for-You-My-Husband.htm

Voices Israel Group of Poets in English

NETANYA WORKSHOP REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Poetry by the Sea 2018 Voices Israel Registration Form

King Solomon Hotel 18 Hamapaalim Street Netanya 42264
 Sunday 6 May – Monday 7 May 2018

Prices are inclusive of VAT, Dinner, Bed and Breakfast, Tea & Coffee Breaks, Conference Facilities

Requirements (Please circle your room choice)

Per person in shared double room 410+ total workshop fee 50 = 460 shekels Yes/No Deposit 120 shekels

Per person in shared triple room 343 + total workshop fee 50 = 393 Yes/No Deposit 110 shekel

Per person in single room 710 + total workshop fee 50 = 760 Yes/No Deposit 230 shekels

(Spouses of participants sharing double room will be counted as members and workshop fees will only be charged where appropriate)

Form to be completed by Residents and Non-residents please

Name..... Member Voices Israel Yes/No

Address.....

Tel: Home..... Mobile.....

Email address.....

Please register **asap** with an email to Susan Olsburgh (0549193575) olsburgh.susan@gmail.com

Form can be scanned, completed and emailed or essential information copied and emailed.

Deposit to be paid by **10 April 2018** by cheque made payable to Voices Israel to be sent to Chanita Millman 15 Shachar St Jerusalem 96263 millmanm@zahav.net.il.

The balance to be paid to a Voices representative in the lobby on arrival at the King Solomon Hotel on 6 May 2018.

NON RESIDENT CHARGES

- **Non-Resident Voices Members**
 Price for Sunday and Monday Workshops Total 100 shekels (Conference facilities and coffees included).
- **Non- Resident Non- member**
 Price for Sunday and Monday Workshops Total 130 shekels (Conference facilities and coffees included).

Note: Non-Residents please register with Susan and pay **deposit** of 50 shekels by 1 April to either Susan or Chanita
 Dinner available on Sunday evening at 120 shekels (To be paid directly to hotel) **Dietary requirements: Please indicate any Vegetarian/ Vegan requests**

Voices Israel Group of Poets in English

PROGRAMME

Sunday 6 May

- **Registration**
15.30 - 16.00

- **Workshop 1**
16.15 - 18.00
Marc Radyzner
An exploration of the short poems of American poet A.R. Ammons. “Anything looked at closely becomes wonderful.” A writing exercise will be included

- **Dinner**
19.00 - 20.00

- **2017 REUBEN ROSE POETRY COMPETITION PRESENTATIONS**
20.15 onwards

Monday 7 May

- **Workshop 2**
9.30 - 11.15
Nicholas Dunne-Lynch
'But song only dropped!': Two Jewish poets of World War 1.
The First World War is outstanding for the quality of the English poetry it inspired. Among the very finest were two Jewish poets, one a very English gentleman of Sephardi origin, the other of East European descent and much lower in the social order. Nicholas Dunne-Lynch will tell their story and perform some of their most touching works, which display humour and irony that shines above the horrors of war. A writing exercise will follow.

- **Coffee Break**
11.15 - 11.30

- **Workshop 3**
11.30 - 13.15
Shlomo Sher
Reconciling the ‘private’ and the ‘public’ in our poetry (in an era of “identity politics”): Some observers of contemporary poetry have criticized the predominance of first person, self-directed, autobiographical poems. While poets aren’t about to stop writing the familiar (personal) poem, many believe that other genres are better suited to accommodate political or social commentary. Yet we continue to see a steady diet of these ‘public’ poems. The best of them are a seamless mix of the private and the public. Yet how do these co-exist successfully within a poem? We will explore this fundamental concern from point of inspiration to content and development of a poem. The workshop will include discussion of craft and style, writing exercises and drafting, as well as examination of sample poems.

- **Closure of Poetry by the Sea and Book Sales**
13.15 - 13.30

Voices Israel Group of Poets in English

MAY 2018 GROUP POETRY SELECTIONS

In the Necklace of Life

Bubbles of memories
effervesce in my mind,
joys, wonders, hardships, pains,
all meshed into one history -
a walking bundle of timeless energy.

A tiniest bead in the necklace of life
breathing dancing loving,
I attempt to find my way to the Light
in harmony with the angel's laughter.

Avril Mealem

Jerusalem selection

Beyond The Garden Wall

I'm digging dry roots
from cultivated soil,
making room
for new support systems
-- pansies, daffodils,
phlox, petunias
inside the wall.
Beyond the crude, stone barrier
morning doves
are coo-coo-cooing.
What are they saying?
Something I need to know?
Or just repeating
the ancient adage
that old, dead life
gives place to new?
Replenishing
faded memories
and vacant garden holes
after acquaintances
that have slipped away...
The cooing
lends gentleness
to the morning air.

Betsy Ramsay

Jerusalem selection

Pickling Cucumbers

Is
a simple procedure
large ones thin or fat
expensive or cheap

Spices – garlic bay leaves
and whole pepper seeds
with vinegar as preserver, salt to taste.

When to stop the pickling fermentation
how long will they keep?

And
can a batch be saved
too salty,
not enough- yes!
But not soft cukes - soft?
Too bad!

In what to pickle
Glass? Plastic?
A lid on tight, or loose?
The latter, let out fermentation gases.

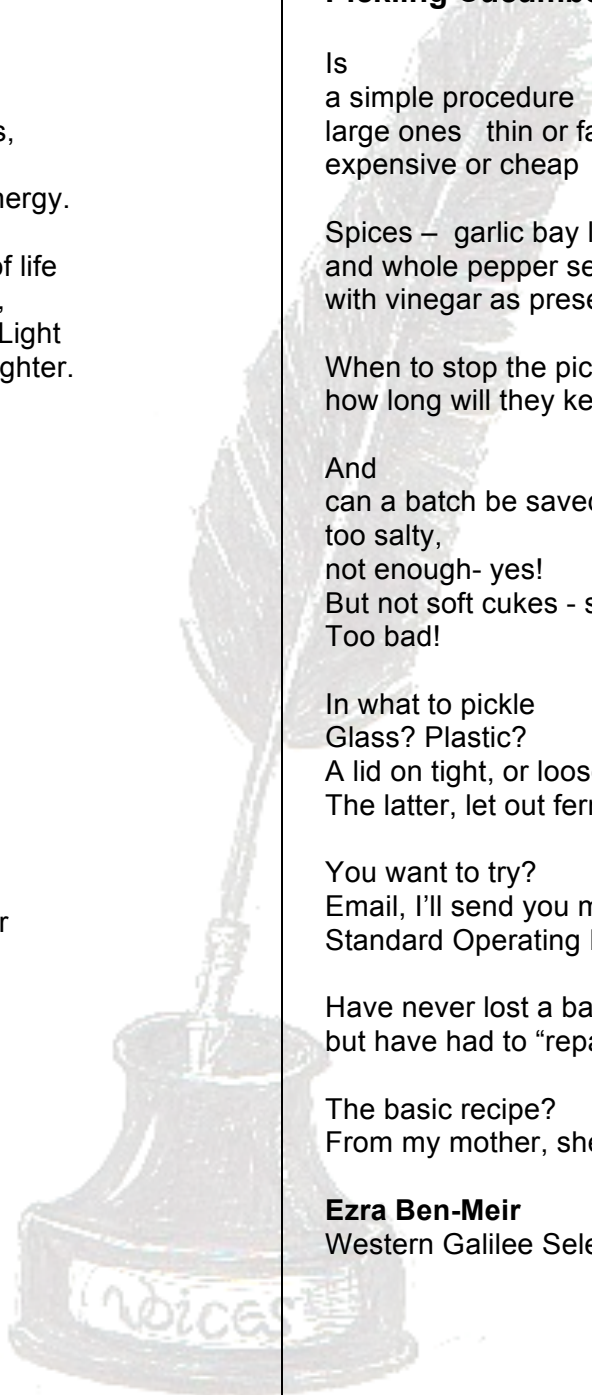
You want to try?
Email, I'll send you my
Standard Operating Procedure #203.

Have never lost a batch
but have had to "repair" one ... or two.

The basic recipe?
From my mother, she from hers!!

Ezra Ben-Meir

Western Galilee Selection



Voices Israel Group of Poets in English

Temple

And can we build a temple strong
And can we build a temple high?
And can we yet know right from wrong?
And can we look God in the eye?

Or have we so far lost our way
That there is no way to return?
Have we dismissed to whom we pray?
We mar, despise, condemn, and spurn.

How can we fight merely to live?
For what is life without an aim?
We take, we use, but do we give?
Who cares, when death comes just the same?

Are we too weak? Is it too late
To redress harm, to combat guilt?
Have we no power to challenge hate?
Can the temple ever be rebuilt?

Amiel Schotz

Southern Group selection

Blockade

We, who love him
cannot get through
the impenetrable portal
a carefully constructed
unyielding
immovable
means of defense
against what?
against all of us who love him
and wish to enter?

let us stop pushing and kicking
let us knock gently, softly
and if the barrier opens a crack
perhaps, in time
we'll be allowed
admittance.

Susan Rosenberg

Haifa Selection

The Vegetables' Story

Many the tale of vagrant vegetables,
broccoli abandoned, asparagus compromised,
parsley pursued by ravaging avocados
dropping death-like out of the trees.
The parable of squash, corn husked,
the rinsing of the lettuce
washed of its flaws, drowned in the splash
of an everyday faucet. And everywhere, always,
simple eggplants posing as aubergines. Amen.

Susan Nordell

Tel Aviv selection

Voices Israel Group of Poets in English

The Carpet Seller

Age has not dealt with him kindly, I observe
as he approaches – no doubt tall and strong
once, he is now just big and overweight:
beer-belly, flabby arms and full round face,
grey hair; but gentle eyes and gentle smile
and gentle liquid accent when he speaks.
It's from Iran, he says: decades ago
a refugee from threats and revolution
he fled to the Land of Promise, bringing with him
echoes of his language, and a love of carpets.
(Also a love of manners, sadly lacking
in the Promised Land, he says, shaking his head
as a loud lady insists he come and help her
disregarding the lady that he's with).
For thirty years he owned a carpet store
handling Persian heirlooms worth tens of
thousands
but expecting honesty, fell easy prey
to fraud, and now once more a refugee
cast from the promise of the Promised Land,
at its barred gates he gazes from afar.
No, Life has not been kind to him at all.
Now in Home Center, in the carpet section
he is the lord of all that he surveys:
small rugs and bathroom mats, samples and
remnants.
Gently he folds back each of a stacked pile
because the one I like is at the bottom.
You need to work methodically, he says,
you need a system (carefully rolling it out)
but most of all, you need a feel for carpets.
He handles all these cheap machine-made scraps
lovingly, with the tenderness and care
befitting Persian antiques worth tens of thousands:
he can still dream.

Judy Koren
Haifa selection

Chance Seating

At 2018 remembrance evening to the memory of
fallen soldiers.
I found myself seated next to the aunt of Major
Roie Klein
Heroic soldier who saved his comrades by
throwing himself on a grenade.
At one point the song 'Eretz Hatzvi' was sung with
audience participating.
The song to which Yahoram Gaon added a verse
in memory of Roie.
His aunt sang also and I sat with head rigid,
So as not to look at her.
My hands clasped equally rigidly.
In front of me sat a young woman
Weeping so hard her shoulders shook,
Weeping for Roie or another fallen soldier.
Israel 2018.
Tomorrow is Independence Day
Celebrating 70 years of independence.
Price: 'Everything included.'

Larry Lefkowitz
Modi'in

Voices Israel Group of Poets in English

Bread

Close cropped and hungry
 We sat in a train
 We were free
 The war was over
 The Russians had come
 But hunger remained
 I think the train was bound for Prague
 But all I thought of was bread.
 Magda my aunt
 Only a few years older
 Than my six years
 Had three slices
 She gave me one
 My sister two years older than I
 The second
 And herself the last.
 In a few seconds my slice was gone.
 I watched my sister
 She held her bread
 Clutched in both hands
 To her breast
 And with bowed head
 Slowly oh so slowly
 Took one bite
 And just as slowly
 Meditatively she chewed
 I only watched the bread
 With its half- moon bay
 Heidi bowed her head once more
 But just before she took a bite
 She felt my eyes
 Stopped
 Looked up slowly
 Looked at me
 I saw an equal hunger in her eyes
 And bowed my head
 She sat on the seat opposite to me
 Gently something was pressed
 Into my lap
 A slice of dry stale bread
 With a half moon bay.

Fritz Zvi Friedmann

Jerusalem
 (March 2018 Selection)

A Minyan* Forever

The waters tumbled
 through unknown paths
 thrusting their way where before
 were silent stones and rocks
 to plunge through a narrow crevice
 seeking the wide crying soils and meadows
 where once were singing of future springs
 of life
 now receiving the shouts and tears
 that now will ceaselessly delve
 into the hubris of those who even dare ask
 "is it safe"
 to question the future verdict of G-d's weather.

Tornados and whirlwinds will wind around
 thoughts and wails that must storm and explore
 but fail to understand.

*Minyan - a quorum of ten required for mourners to
 say the special prayer asking forgiveness of the
 dead.

Ezra Ben-Meir

Nahariya
 April 2018. #884

Voices Israel Group of Poets in English

(Editor's Format Change)

White Doves

a sight to see! our new eighth floor pad provides a bird's eye view
of a well-worn, beloved neighborhood park, just completing a
major facelift: newly landscaped paths bordered by plants,
shady spaces, traditional and innovative playground
equipment; now, with merry music wafting aloft
families are streaming into a grand opening
complete with welcome speeches and characters
on tall stilts; a rapturous release of white doves! up they fly
past dark green tree tops into a cerulean sky; two lovebirds,
septuagenarians, overlook the scene from a kitchen perch on high

drive a few hours north from this park
scan beyond a tense, precarious border
to the domain of a man long known for self
indulgence in earthly comforts; a thug who avidly
pampers a trophy wife, one sharing his extravagant
tastes, so becoming accessory to his odious acts; a brute,
encrusted, self-wrapped in vice, emerged having metamorphosed
into evil's heinous apprentice; a loathsome goon, too weak to
stand alone without the self-serving support of two
rotten struts; a cocky monster, confident that
a desensitized world expects from him not
a scintilla of conscience, nor flinches as
wanton slaughter of innocents
mounts; mouths frothing
limp children

a place emptied out
even of *language* for
swings, white doves

two realms stand
worlds apart
sharing a border

Judith Fineberg
Netanya/Sharon Selection

Voices Israel Group of Poets in English

POEMS FROM OUR OVERSEAS MEMBERS

Israel Is Forever!

O enemies of Israel, hate to thy heart's content!
But here's the warning; it is thou that shall lament!
Hast thou not heard? Hast thou not read?
Thy rockets shall return, and thou wilt perish instead!
Thy craft and thy cunning shall not deliver
For Israel shall prevail! Israel is forever!

O Israel, thou art loved with an everlasting love!
The Iron Dome of God shields thee from above!
Thy enemies flee from before thee with trembling!
Ashkelon shall not crumble, His hand defending!
The Man of War shall tear their flesh altogether!
Israel shall be preserved! Israel is forever!

Ye that despise freedom, and abhor liberty
Ye that oppress with fear and unspeakable cruelty
Your prophet is a loss, and your god a lifeless idol
Ye that esteem The Apple of His Eye your rival
Melchizedek shall smite you, though ye endeavor
Israel is prince with God! Israel is forever!

O bless'd Jerusalem, thy foes dwell amidst thee
Within and without thy gates, and beyond the Sea
But thou art cradled by the Sun of Righteousness!
Thou shalt go upon thy cobbled streets in quietness!
The Star of David brightly burns without measure!
Israel is the preeminent! Israel is forever!

Rev./Ms. Sabina Rakia Pradhmelina
Canada

Dream Song #1

Imagination – a force to be reckoned with
when contemplating
the human condition
Theatrical stardom, erotic, athletic and political
fantasies
capture the minds of the multitude
People need to escape the dullness of the daily grind
So our psyche
Leads the inhabitants of this earth
to flights of fancy
Dreams come lit up like Roman Candles
The mind and spirit of man
is an uncharted territory
where poets, painters, musicians and writers
paint with glorious strokes made from stardust
“Perchance to dream” as the bard has it
Praise the dreamers!
Praise our ability to fantasize!
We are the glorious shards of a star
which shattered
many millennium ago

Matthew Anish
USA

Waltzing With the Wind

The clouds are waltzing with the wind
Formless, restless moisture filled pillows
That coalesce, come together as family
Then from the bulging white billows
Break away, independent offspring
Float aimlessly drifting dreamlike
Across a grey, light laden sky
Hover above seas, trees, hilltops
And disappear into the distance
Never to return.

Esther Lipton UK