



VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

ה' עֵז לְעַמּוֹ יְיָ; ה' יְבָרֵךְ אֶת עַמּוֹ בְּשָׁלוֹם

The Lord will give strength to His people; the Lord will bless His people with peace. Psalm 29

DECEMBER 2023 NEWSLETTER

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KIDNAPPED



Gad Haggai
73 years old,
Judih Lynne
Weinstein
70 years old
Israelis

Kidnapped from
their home by Hamas

On October 7th, more than 200 Innocent civilians were abducted from Israel into the Gaza Strip. Their whereabouts remain unknown.

More than 4,500 women, men, and children, ranging in age from 3 months to 85 years old, were wounded, murdered, beaten, raped, and brutally separated from loved ones by Hamas.

Take a photo of this poster and share it



Please help bring them home alive.

#KidnappedFromIsrael

SCAN TO
JOIN THE
GLOBAL
EFFORTS



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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Poets,

Since my last President's Letter I've tried to keep updated about our Southern Group member, Judih Weinstein, and her husband Gad Haggai. Both were wounded in the Hamas attack, Gad seriously. At first they were both declared missing, then Gad was said to have been taken hostage. Recently a November 28th news article (<https://www.thedailybeast.com/no-americans-among-12-hamas-hostages-released-to-israel-from-gaza-on-tuesday>) said that Judih was one of two American women the US counted as among the hostages and were trying to get information about from Hamas, and a CBC news article from November 29 (Judith holds joint Canadian and US citizenship) reported (<https://www.cbc.ca/news/world/weinstein-haggai-canadian-hamas-hostage-1.7043397>) that her family fear Gad is probably dead, and Judih's whereabouts are unknown. While rejoicing for the hostages who have returned to us, we continue to hope and pray for her safety.

Other news: our secretary, Pesach Rotem, will be "retiring" at the next AGM. And we've decided it's time to separate the functions of secretary and newsletter producer, which call for two quite different skill sets that isn't always easy to find in one person. Our long-term member **Bob Findysz** from the Jerusalem group has volunteered to take over as our next secretary. This has to be formally approved by a vote at the AGM, but meanwhile Bob will start to "learn the ropes" from Pesach. And our relatively new but very active member, **Julian Alper** from Tiberias, has enthusiastically agreed to take on on the newly-created position of Newsletter Editor. Julian is perhaps best known for his Nature of Israel blog (<https://natureofisrael.blogspot.com/>). Like Bob, he'll overlap with Pesach for two or three months. We extend a warm welcome to both of them, and much as I lament losing Pesach as secretary, I look forward to working with his successors.

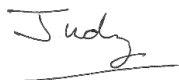
The judging of the Reuben Rose competition is still ongoing; Mark will announce the results as soon as they're known. Meanwhile the submission period for the 2024 Anthology opens on December 17th. As usual it will run for three months. So if none of the poems you submitted to the Reuben Rose competition won a prize or Honourable Mention, submit the best three of them to the Anthology!

On December 4th we're offering another Zoom mini-workshop, "Broken Things," led by last year's Reuben Rose first-prize winner, Iris Dan. If anyone didn't yet sign up and wants to: now is your last chance! See the notice in the last newsletter and no doubt also in this one.

The chapbook from our October 18 workshop, "Write At This Moment," has been produced and sent to all participants. If anyone attended that workshop and didn't get their copy, do let me know!

The submission period for the Bar Sagi Prize opened on November 15th. Last year's judges have agreed to judge this year too: many thanks to Amiel Schotz, Susan Bell and Itamar Blumfield, and of course to its administrator, Michele Bustin, who is busy publicizing it to her network of English teachers. But we need more publicity efforts! **Please everyone who has any connection to English teacher or to teenagers who might want to enter, get the word out!** It's open till the end of February 2024.

We still have no Publicity Officer. I'm therefore appealing to all our members: please publicize our events – e.g. now, the Bar Sagi Prize – in your Facebook pages, blogs, and other social media accounts. Spread the word!



Judy Koren,
President, Voices Israel.

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DECEMBER 2023

MEETING DATES, TIMES AND PLACES

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| <p>SOUTHERN</p> <p>Meeting via Zoom Sunday, December 17 at 5:00 PM</p> <p>Coordinator: Miriam Green Tel: 05-738-8640</p> <p>miriamsgreen@gmail.com</p> | <p>TEL AVIV</p> <p>Meeting via Zoom Thursday, December 28 at 7:00 PM</p> <p>Coordinator: Mark Levinson Mobile: 054-444-8438</p> <p>nosnivel@netvision.net.il</p> | <p>JERUSALEM</p> <p>Meeting via Zoom Wednesday, December 27 at 7:30 PM</p> <p>Coordinator: Avril Meallem Tel: 02-567-0998</p> <p>aemeallem@gmail.com</p> | <p>WESTERN GALILEE</p> <p>No meetings scheduled. Contact Phyllsie for details.</p> <p>Coordinator: Phyllsie Gross Mobile: 052-874-6880</p> <p>phyllsie@hotmail.com</p> |
| <p>HAIFA</p> <p>Wednesday, December 27 at 19:00 at the home of Wendy Blumfield</p> <p>Contact Naomi Yalin for details</p> <p>Coordinator: Naomi Yalin Mobile: 054-794-3738</p> <p>naomiyalin@gmail.com</p> | <p>NETANYA/SHARON</p> <p>Monday, 25 December at 7:00 PM</p> <p>Venue (Zoom or Susan's place) to be determined nearer the time.</p> <p>Coordinator: Susan Olsburgh Mobile: 054-919-3575</p> <p>olsburgh.susan@gmail.com</p> | <p>UPPER GALILEE</p> <p>Wednesday, December 6 at 10:30 AM at the home of Reuven and Yehudit.</p> <p>128 Keren HaYesod Artists Quarter, Tzfat</p> <p>Coordinator: Reuven Goldfarb Tel: 04-697-4105 Mobile: 058-414-0262</p> <p>poetsprogress@gmail.com</p> | <p>GLOBAL GROUP</p> <p>Meeting via Zoom Thursday, December 21 at 19:15 Israel time</p> <p>Coordinator: Shoshana Kent Mobile: 052-808-9365</p> <p>y2nosh@gmail.com</p> |

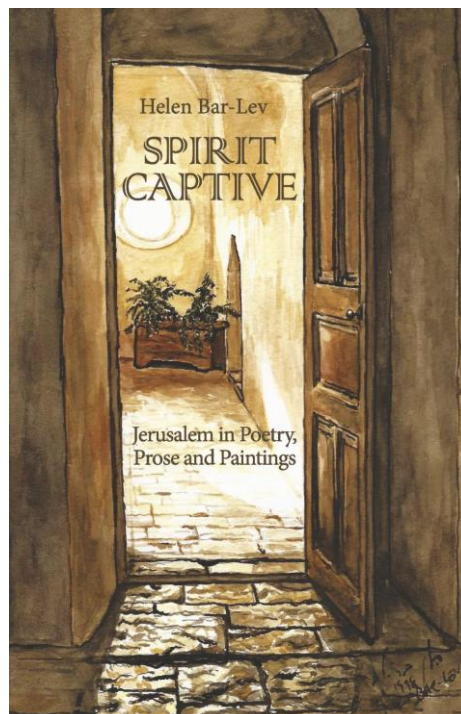
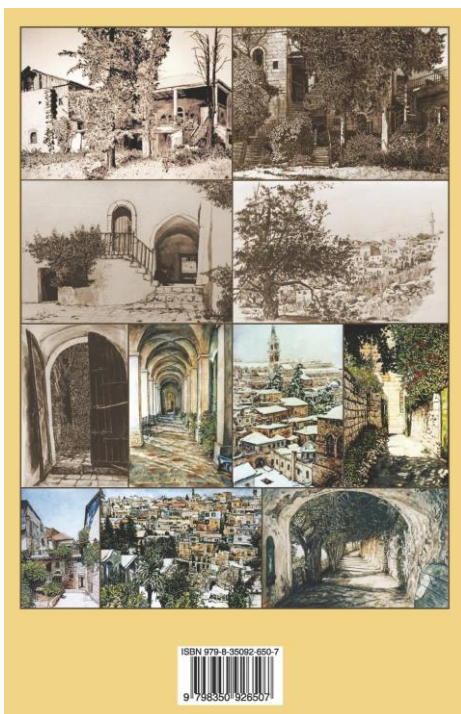
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CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR MEMBERS

To – Voices Israel members whose poems were published in the special “Poems for Israel, October 2023” section of *The Deronda Review* online: **Malka Kelter, Channah Moshe, Avril Meallem, and Judy Koren**, at www.derondareview.org/backingIsrael.htm.

To – **Pesach Rotem**, whose poem “Energy” was published in *Topical Poetry* at <https://topicalpoetry.com/energy/>.

SPIRIT CAPTIVE IS NOW AVAILABLE



Helen Bar-Lev's new book, *Spirit Captive: Jerusalem in Poetry, Prose and Paintings*, available for pre-order at Amazon and Barnes & Noble, and can now be ordered for real from BookBaby at <https://store.bookbaby.com/book/spirit-captive>. Here is what BookBaby has to say about it:

Spirit Captive is the title of Helen Bar-Lev's latest book and its culminating poem. It reveals her love affair with Jerusalem and captures the essence of her long, romantic journey to, in, and around the city. Through prose and poetry, she shares her fascination with its environment: the pinks of its stones, the greens of its trees, and the variety of its people. She describes her life as a painter and poet, introducing us to the places she loves, the people she cherishes, and the moments that terrify her. Her artwork adds immeasurably to the whole work, adding an important dimension to the overall composition by giving resonance to Helen's work and identity as a visual artist; her art concretizes visually the words she is writing. Spirit Captive is both personal and yet also universal. She has done much to redeem Jerusalem's splendor, magic, mystery and complexity. The mystical city lives in her words, her pictures and her memories. Her words and her artwork link her attraction to the Holy City with her fear of its perils. She captures our spirits, too, with her images, poetry, and prose.

VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

VOICES ANTHOLOGY REVIEW IN THE JERUSALEM REPORT

The Jerusalem Report has published a wonderful review of the Voices Israel Anthology 2023. The review, written by Neville Teller, praises the Anthology as a whole while singling out for special attention the poems of Leeor Margalit, Diane Ray, Yiskah Rosenfeld, Ricky Rapaport Friesem, Mark L. Levinson, Nikki Stiller, David Adès, Anne Whitehouse, Yocheved M. Zemel, Donna Bechar, and M.K. Punky. The review also gives due recognition to Iris Dan, winner of the Reuben Rose Poetry Competition, and to Reuth Katz, winner of the Bar Sagi Young Poets Prize. The review then concludes with these sparkling words of very high praise:



The *Voices Israel Anthology 2023* is guaranteed to afford enormous pleasure to anyone who loves the power of words and appreciates the ability of poetry to evoke emotions, paint images in the mind, capture a moment in time, conjure up past experiences, and make one think. It is highly recommended.

The review is available in the print edition of *The Jerusalem Report* dated November 6, 2023, and online at www.jpost.com/diaspora/antisemitism/article-771550.

THE BAR SAGI YOUNG POETS PRIZE

The Bar Sagi Young Poet's Prize opened for submissions on November 15 and will remain open until February 29, 2024. The competition is open to Israelis aged 12 to 18 when the poem was written. It is free to enter, and it awards three cash prizes (First Prize: 400 NIS; Second Prize: 250 NIS; Third Prize: 100 NIS) plus a variable number of Honorable Mentions. The winning poems, and Honorable Mention poems if any, will be published in the annual Voices Israel anthology.

Full submission rules and guidelines are at <https://voicesisrael.com/bar-sagi-prize/bar-sagi-prize-rules-and-guidelines/>.

Please spread the word. If you know any English teachers, please tell them about the Bar Sagi Young Poets Prize. If you know any parents, grandparents, aunts, or uncles, tell them about it too. And of course, if you know any young poets, you absolutely must tell them about it.

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A “BROKEN THINGS” WORKSHOP WITH IRIS DAN



You're invited to a Voices Workshop
Facilitated by Iris Dan
Monday
December 4th, 2023
19:00- 20:40

Our workshop will be based on the poetry of Grace Schulman, a witness of 9/11, who experienced the disappearance of the known landscape and of seemingly eternal certitudes, as well as the failure of language in face of the catastrophe. Hope endures (or life goes on), sometimes in the form of sublimation of the loss through art.

Broken Things

The is a zoom workshop.
To register please follow the link below the flyer.

To register:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1QpEDBQYkfJkSnUI-R9tV6_BB4MnAQST9ow4mynKY5NM/prefill

A SPECIAL OFFER FROM JOHNMICHAEL SIMON

Johnmichael Simon is offering his chapbook design services to Voices Israel members and friends.

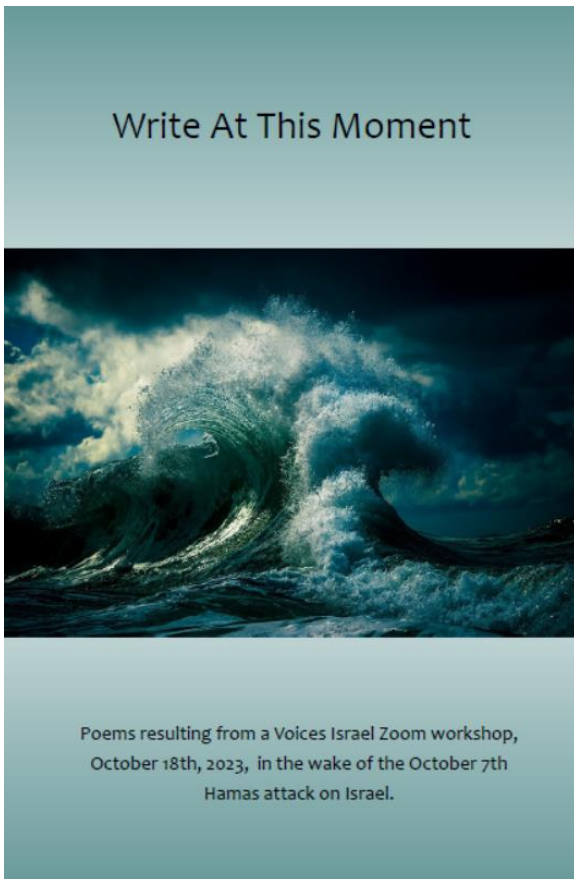
If you would like to possess a beautifully presented and published collection of your own favorite poems, please contact Johnmichael for details of this special offer at johnmichaelsimon@gmail.com.

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DERONDA REVIEW SEEKS YOUR WAR POEMS

THE DERONDA REVIEW (www.derondareview.org), continues to accept poems for its page “Poems for Israel, October 2023,” which now contains the work of some 40 poets. The page is being updated as new poems come in, so scroll down to find the latest! Poems for posting on this page may be sent to derondareview@gmail.com.

THE “WRITE AT THIS MOMENT” WORKSHOP AND CHAPBOOK



War is hell. And yet, for all its horrors, war has inspired some of the most sublime poetry in the world. Just look at *The Iliad*, or at David’s lament for Saul and Jonathan. And thus it was at the Voices Israel “Write at This Moment” workshop on October 18. Under the skillful guidance of workshop leaders Elana Dorfman and Dina Yehuda, nineteen participants worked through the range of emotions arising from the brutal Hamas attack on Israel and the ensuing war, and channeled them into poetry. After some tweaking and polishing by the poets, the final drafts – many of them quite excellent poems – were collected in a chapbook, expertly curated and beautifully designed by Judy Koren.


SUBMIT TO THE 2024 VOICES ISRAEL ANTHOLOGY

The Voices Israel annual anthology will open for submissions on Sunday, December 17, and will remain open until March 15, 2024. Submit up to three poems. Submission is free of charge. All the details are on our website at <https://voicesisrael.com/anthology/submitting-to-the-anthology/>.

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IAWE PRESENTS THE POETRY OF HOPE

The Poetry of Hope



Larry Sagen - Day Break Nov. 2023

The Israel Association of Writers in English invites you to an online sharing of poems, either yours or others, on the theme of Hope. All welcome. Please register.

Sunday December 3rd
8:00pm Israel Time

Registration:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScdd9mS4Trjr8v3F1Ads1EEIb31bSGAtEcBNStj_j-b7-akiQ/viewform

PETITION TO EXPOSE UN WOMEN'S HYPOCRISY

#MeToo_Unless_Ur_A_Jew invites you to read the facts and explanations on their website and to sign the petition. The initiative was started by relatives of kidnapped and murdered women to expose the hypocrisy of the UN:

UN Women - I will not stay silent. Every woman's life is equally precious.

This is-

UNbelievable

UNjustified

UNforgivable

Sign the petition and be the voice of the women who were brutally raped, abused, burned alive, murdered, and kidnapped. Information and petition: www.metoo-unlessurajew.com

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CALLS FOR SUBMISSIONS

Poetica Review is an international online quarterly journal based in Huddersfield, England. Its motto is “for the many, not the few.” *Poetica Review stands in contradistinction to those values that promote the ‘good’ as esoteric, whilst excluding the vast majority from participation.* It is always open for submissions, and there is no fee. Submit up to five poems at a time, maximum 40 lines per poem. Complete guidelines are at <https://irp.cdn-website.com/45fb31cc/files/uploaded/Submissions%20and%20Guidelines.pdf>.

Goatshed is a new English literary magazine that recently published its first issue and is now accepting submissions for Goatshed Two. It publishes in both print and ebook format. *We aim to deliver exciting, unpretentious content, while discovering and uplifting a new generation of writers and artists.* There is no fee to submit, and they pay £25 for poems. Details at www.goatshedpress.co.uk/submito.

Workers Write! is an annual print journal published in Plano, Texas. The next issue *will contain fiction and poems from the office worker's point of view – we're especially interested to see how the home office has taken on a new meaning because of Covid and what it's been like for those of us who have returned to the annoying commutes and communal bathrooms.* There is no fee to submit. They do consider previously published material. They pay \$5 to \$50. Deadline is December 31, 2023. More information at www.workerswritejournal.com/.

Ninth Letter is published semi-annually in print at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. *We are interested in prose and poetry that experiment with form, narrative, and nontraditional subject matter, as well as more traditional literary work.* Submit three to five poems, maximum eight pages total. Deadline is February 28, 2024. They pay \$25 per poem plus two complementary copies of the journal. There is a \$3 submission fee, but the fee is waived during the month of December. Full guidelines are at www.ninthletter.com/journal/submit.

Arc Poetry Magazine is a print journal published three times per year in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. *We feature poetry that is woozy, cunning, shearing and wildlike.* Submit up to three poems. They pay \$50 per page of poetry. There is a \$2 submission fee for poets in the U.S.A., no submission fee for Canada and the rest of the world. The deadline for submissions is December 31. Guidelines are at <https://arcpoetry.ca/resources/general-submissions/>. (Please note that this Arc Poetry Magazine has no connection with the arc published by the Israel Association of Writers in English (IAWE)).

The Wild Umbrella is a new Irish literary journal that just got started in October. It is online only for now, but hopes to publish a print issue some time in the spring or summer of 2024. *We're an ambitious new journal, eager to publish compelling prose and poetry from Ireland and the world.* Submit one to six poems of any length. Submissions are free, but a donation of €10 will entitle you to an expedited response within 10 working days. Contributors will receive €10 per poem. Submission deadline is January 1, 2024. Complete guidelines are at www.thewildumbrella.com/submissions.

Table/Feast Literary Magazine is an annual online journal of poetry, fiction, and creative nonfiction. *We are not a food magazine or recipe outlet.* Submit up to five poems. There is no submission fee. Submission period closes on January 3, 2024. They pay \$18 for each accepted poem. Guidelines are at <https://tablefeastlitmag.com/trypartakesubmissionsguidelines>.

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