



VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

JANUARY 2024 NEWSLETTER

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**Judih Weinstein and Gad Haggai
of blessed memory**



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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Poets,

Right at the end of December we received the tragic news that our Southern Group member, Judih Weinstein Haggai, and her husband Gad Haggai, were both murdered in the Hamas attack on October 7th. Previously they had been classified as “missing” but probably kidnapped to Gaza. Now their kibbutz, Nir Oz, has announced that this was not the case. We send our condolences to Judih and Gadi’s family, and also to the members of our Southern Group who were her friends. May their memory be for a blessing.

We’re planning a fitting memorial, such as a chapbook like the one Voices Israel issued a decade ago when our Upper Galilee member, Tom Berman, died in a hiking accident. I am currently in contact with Judih and Gadi’s family about permission to issue such a chapbook and to include some of Judih’s poems in it. If the family agrees, I’ll be in touch with you all with a call for poems in Judih’s memory for it. In addition, Dina has suggested dedicating the 2024 Anthology to Judih.

Looking forward to 2024, we welcome to our list of national officers our long-term Jerusalem member Bob Findysz, who will be taking over as our next secretary at the AGM, and our much newer Tiberias member, Julian Alper, who will be taking over as 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 the next two or three months.

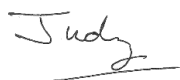
There’s been a slight delay in the judging of the Reuben Rose competition: our International Judge was unable for personal reasons to continue and we had to find a replacement. Mark and I are grateful to Yvonne O’Connor of Ireland, who accepted the challenge. Hopefully she’s nearly done: Mark will announce the results as soon as they’re known.

The submission period for the 2024 Anthology opened on schedule on December 17th. As usual it will run for three months. So we all have time to wait and see if any of the poems submitted to the Reuben Rose competition won a prize or Honourable Mention. Those that didn’t: submit the best three of them to the Anthology!

On December 4th we held another Zoom mini-workshop, “Broken Things,” led by last year’s Reuben Rose first-prize winner, Iris Dan. The date limit for sending me poems resulting from that workshop was the end of December, and after giving a grace period of a few days, I’ve started producing the chapbook from it. As usual for Zoom events, it will be an e-chapbook, distributed to participants as a PDF.

Meanwhile the submission period for the Bar Sagi Prize is ongoing, until the end of February. **Please everyone who has any connection to English teacher or to teenagers who might want to enter, get the word out!**

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 and the Voices Israel Anthology submission periods – in your Facebook pages, blogs, and other social media accounts. Spread the word!



Judy Koren,
President, Voices Israel.

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JANUARY 2024 MEETING DATES, TIMES AND PLACES

<p>SOUTHERN</p> <p>Meeting via Zoom Sunday, January 21 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, January 18 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 Thursday, January 25 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, January 24 at 19:00 at the home of Elana Dorfman</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, 29 January at 19:00</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, January 17 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 Tuesday, January 23 at 19:00 Israel time</p> <p>Coordinator: Shoshana Kent Mobile: 052-808-9365</p> <p>Y2nosh@netvision.net.il</p>

VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Voices Israel is pleased to extend a warm welcome to our new members:

- **Roberta Chester**, Jerusalem, Israel
- **Pessy Krausz**, Jerusalem, Israel
- **Gail Wasserman**, California, USA

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR MEMBERS

To – **David Adès**, whose poem “A Dead Child Is a Dead Child” was published in *Poets Reading the News* at www.poetsreadingthenews.com/2023/12/a-dead-child-is-a-dead-child/

To – **Ann Bar-Dov**, whose poem “The Cook” was published in *Topical Poetry* at <https://topicalpoetry.com/the-cook/>

To – **Isaac Cohen**, who received a *Menzione d’onore* (Honorable Mention) at the *Premio Internazionale Città di Arona 2023*.

To – **Michael E. Stone**, who had five poems published in *The Weekly Avocet*: *Apples of Granada*, *Ambert’s Soft Succor*, *The Child Still Lives*, *Autumn Afternoon*, and *Orange Light*.

To – Voices Israel members whose poems were published in the special “Poems for Israel, October 2023” section of *The Deronda Review* online: **Hayim Abramson**, **Pessy Krausz**, and **Pesach Rotem** at www.derondareview.org/backingIsrael.htm, joining other Voices members as noted in the November and December newsletters.

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IN MEMORIAM: JUDIH WEINSTEIN

It has been confirmed that Judih Weinstein and her husband Gad Haggai were murdered by Hamas on October 7. Their bodies are still held by the barbaric Hamas terrorists. We join Judih and Gad's families, friends, and loved ones in their sorrow. May their memories be for a blessing.

www.jpost.com/breaking-news/article-779885

www.timesofisrael.com/american-israeli-judith-weinstein-confirmed-murdered-on-oct-7-body-held-in-gaza/

www.ynetnews.com/article/bka4zfop6

www.nytimes.com/2023/12/28/world/middleeast/hostage-israel-hamas-judih-weinstein-haggai.html

www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2023/12/28/statement-from-president-joe-biden-on-judith-weinstein/



DECEMBER 28, 2023

Statement from President Joe Biden on Judy Weinstein



► BRIEFING ROOM

► STATEMENTS AND RELEASES

Jill and I are devastated to learn that American Judy Weinstein is also believed to have been killed by Hamas on October 7. This tragic development cuts deep, coming on the heels of last week's news that Judy's beloved husband, Gad Haggai, is believed to have been killed by Hamas. We are holding Judy and Gad's four children, seven grandchildren, and other loved ones close to our hearts. I will never forget what their daughter, and the family members of other Americans held hostage in Gaza, have shared with me. They have been living through hell for weeks. No family should have to endure such an ordeal. And I reaffirm the pledge we have made to all the families of those still held hostage: we will not stop working to bring them home.

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VOICES ISRAEL GROUP OF POETS IN ENGLISH

HAIKUS AND OTHER POEMS BY JUDIH WEINSTEIN Z" L

life so delicate
days of war, peace, sorrow, joy
let's choose love

voices on paths
children run across lawns
kibbutz life returns

days pile on days
what is different this year?
lost belief, new hope

after pandemic
obsessive Father Death Blues*
grim reaper motif
*(“Father Death Blues” by Allen Ginsburg)

tripod set to go
subject without focus
no selfie today

watch from a distance
shrivel of ancient mothers
beyond time and space

waves crash overhead
body emerges to breathe
daily resilience

heartbeat metronome
from nineteen sixties to now
music diary

suddenly her name
memories and smiles
hugs from the past

hours of nighttime
paint pours down the cliffside
the artist in awe

a moment to feel
the power of butterflies
silken transport

soft zippered sweatshirt
sing-alongs under blue skies
crisp morning walk

Toe to Earth

as earth shuffles through the air
a dog's paw
a thread-worn hope
a longing
mumbling of youth
an old-age myth
and a sock

dig?
why not
as roots up
and dreams melt
new thoughts
tickle the fields
sprouting riddles of words

Stream poem mind

once upon a time
i belonged
i clicked in
my friends were poets
we spoke poetry
we jammed we thrived
one fed the other
my friends were painters
we spoke images
we painted our minds
collective creation
my friends were funny
we giggled at absurdities
in the middle of life
vibrations of laughter
once upon a time
real life friends
sitting side by side
strolling shade-strewn paths
we offered secrets
and bonded over pledges
this nostalgic sigh
as screens populate my day
video chatting as if
a leap through the distance
from mind to mind
is perfectly fine

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MORE POEMS BY JUDIH

Notes on How to Go On

one breath
one small step
a little dusting, a polish, a broom
a sudden cookie sheet
the magimix to get me through this minute
a chocolate bar to chop into chips
one stir
one mix
one short flick of a switch
I cry
I sing to the whirl of the batter
I am
I do
This I can continue

I am a giver of joy
I pledge this joy to you
Every happy face will be yours
in cookie mode
You will live in every crunch
of every delicious mouthful
of every mouth that crunches
This I can do
This I can do
My love I give to you
I will always give

Do You Love?

do you love
do
you give love in ample plentitude?
do you love to love
the word
the enchantment
the magus magic montage of magnamitude attitude
love
do you love out loud when you look at life
is love a flying Oh zone that auras over all?

do you love
this love
of glorious boisterous lilt etude?

Still Remembering

out of nowhere
you appeared
and kissed me

the entire moral world
watched
as i enjoyed every molecule
of your lips

such a kiss
after all the kisses
taken by default

your forbidden smile
in lightning and thunder
attached to my skin

my clothes tied
yours fully buttoned
from any future bed.

years of walking,
to neutralize the blush
of further fantasy

This, too

I rise,
the chair begs me to return
but I can't
it's just impossible.

I hear the sounds of figs falling
and I fly through windswept branches
swirling swooping energy within

I drink wayward wafts of cool
and my kayak spirit paddles the streams,
furry scampering things along the bank

all one, forest land and hill
me amongst them
large and small, all

not to turn back
till the trumpet sounds

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THE BAR SAGI YOUNG POETS PRIZE

The Bar Sagi Young Poet's Prize opened for submissions on November 15, 2023, 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.

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 more than 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.

SUBMIT TO THE 2024 VOICES ISRAEL ANTHOLOGY

The Voices Israel annual anthology opened for submissions on December 17, 2023, 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/>.

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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THE NEW DERONDA REVIEW IS OUT

The 2023 edition of *The Deronda Review* — Vol. 10, No. 1 — has been published. Beautifully edited and produced by **Esther Cameron** and **Mindy Aber Barad**, it is available in print or online (www.derondareview.org/vol10no1.pdf) and features poems by these Voices Israel members:

Simcha Angel – Are You With Me?

Mindy Aber Barad – There’s Never Been a More Beautiful Prison; Tears

Judy Belsky – After; I scratch at the layers; Acceptance Speech

Esther Cameron – Shore Rocks at Corea; Visitation in Autumn;
And as we were singing

Roberta Chester – Buoyancy

Ruth Fogelman – Precious City; Light; A Prayer; The House of Love

Judy Koren – Rain Riders

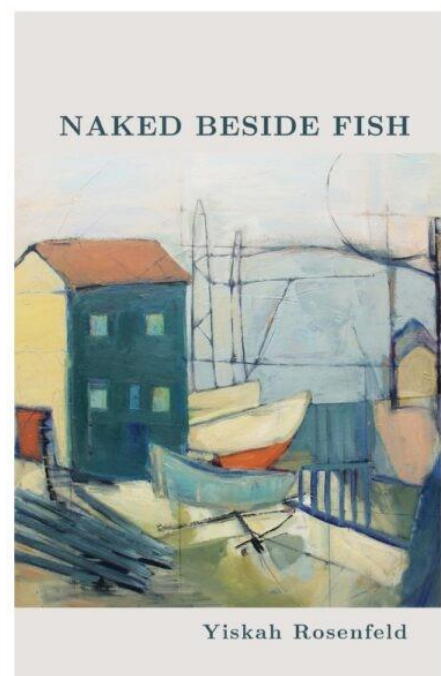
Amos Neufeld – To Live Again; To Give the Breath of Life



YISKAH ROSENFELD’S NAKED BESIDE FISH TO BE RELEASED

Yiskah Rosenfeld’s new book of ekphrastic poetry, *Naked Beside Fish*, is due to be released on March 15. You can pre-order at a reduced price until January 19 at www.finishinglinepress.com/product/naked-beside-fish-by-yiskah-rosenfeld/.

Naked Beside Fish locates itself firmly in the mystery of what lies between: between poetry and art, words and silence, the minutia of daily life and the infinite expansion of the cosmos. In this surreal space, inner and outer landscapes mirror and converge in surprising ways. Playfully structured around a museum exhibit, this ekphrastic chapbook takes us from art studios to camping under stars, from making mud soup at a children’s museum to picking out paint colors in the kitchen. There is even an imagined art gallery translated into words, featuring paintings by Matisse, Picasso, and Chagall, as well as a “gift shop” appendix. With exquisite use of metaphor, color, and imagery, these poems pierce the heart, tunneling beneath the surface of life’s canvas to name the emotions lurking beneath. The poet’s background as a feminist scholar is evident here, daring to confront the challenges of solo parenting while exploring the complexities of the female body as simultaneous subject and object of a painter’s gaze.



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CALLS FOR SUBMISSIONS

Palette Poetry

“Submissions for our Featured Poetry category are open year-round to poets at any stage of their careers. Featured poems are published online only and will spotlight a number of poems from new authors each month. We highly encourage emerging authors to submit.” They have other categories listed on their Submittable page.

Deadline: Ongoing (none)

Length: Up to 5 poems, 10 pages (see guidelines)

Pay: \$50/poem, up to \$150

Details at www.palettepoetry.com/submit/.

Lowestoft Chronicle

A long-running electronic literary journal. They publish a wide variety of genres but state, “Preference will be given to humorous submissions with an emphasis on travel.” They publish “shorter” poetry and prose but they do prefer poetry to be over 100 words in length.

Deadline: Feb. 24, 2024. Submit via email, “one or two poems per submission window,” including a brief bio. Simultaneous submissions accepted. Submission guidelines are at <https://lowestoftchronicle.com/submissions/>.

Terrain.org

They welcome submissions on place, climate, and justice – fiction (short story, flash fiction series, novel excerpt, radio play, or other fiction piece), nonfiction, **and poetry**. They also accept translations, and art. Payment is a minimum of \$50. And, “All accepted submissions by writers of color, members of the LGBTQ+ community, **women**, and/or other marginalized communities whose contributions explore place particularly in the context of social, environmental, or climate justice are considered for our annual Editor’s Prize of \$500 per genre.” Certain sections, like Letter to America and ArTerrain, are open year-round, and other sections have submission periods, or are open periodically.

Deadline: 31 January for poetry Length: 2-6 poems Pay: Minimum of \$50

Details at www.terrain.org/

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