

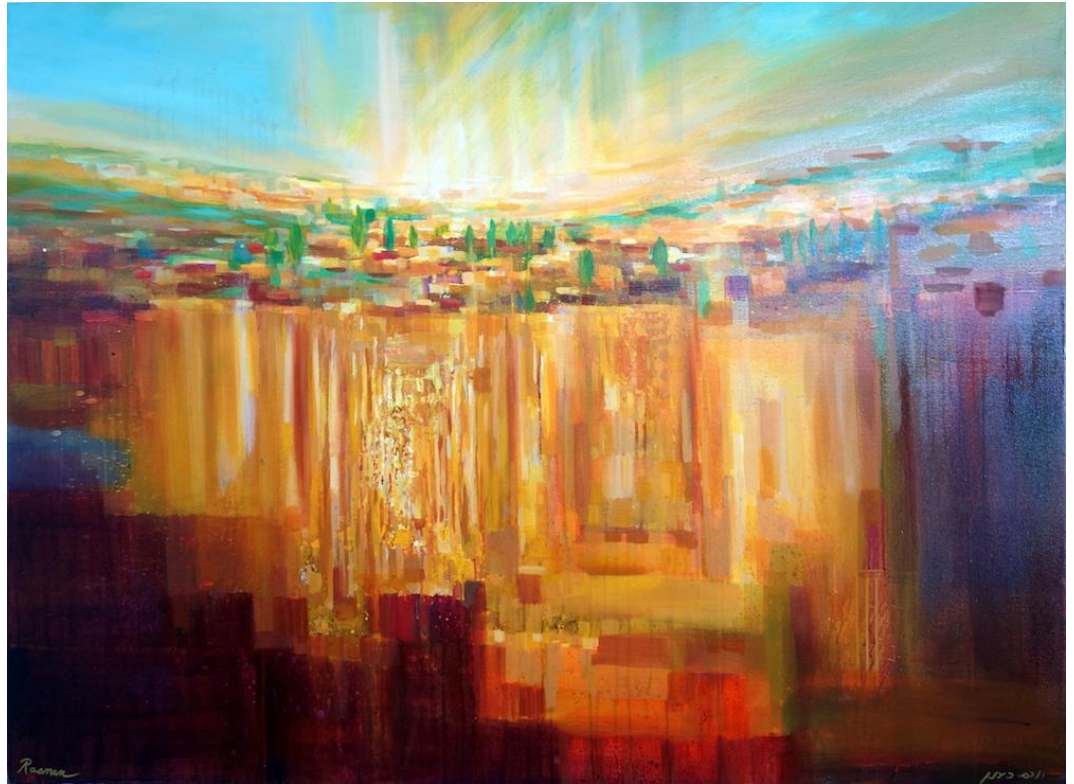
# The Deronda Review

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The painting captures the golden glow of warmth, hospitality, and spirit of Jerusalem, as we witness the rebuilding of the beloved place of our dreams. The Old City is surrounded by walls that invite us to come inside – into the innermost place of light. The walls look like Torah scrolls and ornaments, as the words of Torah echo once again from Zion. The candles in the sky, like sparks of holiness, ascend from Jerusalem but also descend from heaven. Jerusalem, our innermost sanctuary, is the gateway to heaven.

–Meira Raanan



Yoram Raanan, *Jerusalem Inside*, 201?, acrylic on canvas, 120 x 160 cm

*In this,  
THE UTOPIA ISSUE*

*I. Seasoned  
II. Waiting for  
Morning  
III. Panorama  
IV Seeing In  
V As Part of Something  
More  
VI New Places*

In the third millennium they will take ship:  
Millions of leaves  
And a great calm

And a peach will open its heart  
And its knobby kernel  
Will be a crystal of love  
A treasury of magnetic resonances  
From the great sphere

In the third millennium the cypresses will roam about  
An ocean floor of wheat will open up  
And a green stone into whose center  
The waters drip  
To be poured out around us  
From the place whence are waters without end.

–Ruth Netzer

## CONTRIBUTOR EXCHANGE

Below are titles of books (mainly poetry collections in English) by contributors, as well as URLs. \* indicates a page in the "Hexagon Forum" of [www.pointandcircumference.com](http://www.pointandcircumference.com). \*\* indicates a page in the "Kippat Binah" section of the same site.

Hayim Abramson, *ShiratHaNeshamah: Shira letzadmekorot* (Song of the Soul: Poetry with Sources), Beit El, 2016.

\*\*YakovAzriel is the author of *Threads from a Coat of Many Colors: Poems on Genesis* (2005); *In the Shadow of a Burning Bush: Poems on Exodus* (2008), *Beads for the Messiah's Bride: Poems on Leviticus* (2009), *Swimming in Moses' Well* (2011), all with Time Being Books.

Mindy Aber Barad, *The Land That Fills My Dreams* (Bitzaron 2013).

Anna Banasiak, *Duet of Waves* and *Duet of Tears* (in English and Japanese); *lull me lull* in English, Polish, Hebrew and Japanese, <https://pothi.com/pothi/book/ebook-anna-banasiak-lull-me-lull>.

Alan Basting, *Nothing Very Sudden Happens Here* (Lynx House Press and distributed by University of Washington Press), *Home and Away* (Finishing Line Press, forthcoming; for earlier collections see [www.alanbastingpoetry.com](http://www.alanbastingpoetry.com)).

Judy Belsky, *Thread of Blue* (Targum Press, 2003) (memoir); *Avraham and Sultana*, Of the Essence Press, 2018. *Who is Annie White* (Fish)? (fiction).

Elhanan ben-Avraham, *Poems Before & After*, ORACLE: *Poetry from the Realms of Life*, VOLCANO: *Don Quixote's Liturgy of Praise & Lamentation*, *Memory Beyond Words*; *The Jerusalem Illustrated Bible*.

Katherine H. Burkman, *April Cruel* (Outskirts Press, 2016), *a mystery: The Drama of the Double: Permeable Boundaries* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2016) [wildwomenwritingreadings.wordpress.com/](http://wildwomenwritingreadings.wordpress.com/)

\*\*Esther Cameron, *Fortitude...: Poems in Israel's Cause* (Bitsaron Books, 2009); *Western Art and Jewish Presence in the Work of Paul Celan* (Lexington Books, 2014); *Collected Works* (6 vols.), Of the Essence Press 2016; [www.pointandcircumference.com](http://www.pointandcircumference.com).

Amichai Chasson, <https://www.poetryinternationalweb.net/pi/site/poet/item/29459/Amichai-Chasson>

Roberta Chester, *Light Years* (Puckerbush Press, 1983).

Wendy Dickstein, <http://woodsingh.wordpress.com/author/woodsingh/>. Books include *The Balloon Lady* (2014), *Alexander Pope in India, and Other Poems* (2019), *Wanderings* (memoir) 2014, and *And a Time to Dance* (memoir), 2018.

Ruth Fogelman, <https://jerusalemilives.weebly.com/>, is the author of *Cradled in God's Arms*, *Jerusalem Lives*, and *Jerusalem Awakening* (Bitzaron Books), *Leaving the Garden* (2018), and *What Color Are Your Dreams* (2019).

Heather Gelb, *From Hilltop to Hilltop: My Path from Rwanda to Israel* (2015)

Reuven Goldfarb, [www.reuengoldfarb.com](http://www.reuengoldfarb.com), <http://soundcloud.com/reuven-goldfarb>. For books of poetry, essays and narrative see <http://reuengoldfarb.com/literary-biography/>

Admiel Kosman, *Approaching You in English: Selected Poems*, translated by Lisa Katz (Zephyr Press, 2011).

Ed Meek, *Spy Pond* (Prolific Press), *What We Love* (Blue Light Press). *Luck* (stories).

Ilene Millman, *Adjust Speed to Weather*, 2018.

Irene Mitchell, *Equal Parts Sun and Shade: An Almanac of Precarious Days* (Aldrich Press, 2017), *Minding the Spectrum's Business* (FutureCycle Press, 2015), *A Study of Extremes in Six Suites* (Cherry Grove Collections, 2012), *Sea Wind on the White Pillow* (2009).

James B. Nicola, *Manhattan Plaza & Stage to Page: Poems from the Theater* (Wordtech Communications, 2014 & 2016), *Wind in the Cave* (Finishing Line Press, 2017), *Out of Nothing: Poems of Art and Artists* (Shanti Arts, 2018).

Susan Oleferuk, *Circling for Home* (Finishing Line Press, 2011), *Those Who Come to the Garden* (Finishing Lines Press, 2013), *Days of Sun* (Finishing Line Press, 2017).

Yoram and Meira Raanan, [yoramraanan.com](http://yoramraanan.com). *Art of Revelation: A Visual Encounter with the Jewish Bible*. Paintings by Yoram Raanan, commentary & explorations by Meira Raanan. RaananArt Ltd., 2018.

Tony Reevy has three books, *Old North*, *Passage*, and *Socorro*, all published by Iris Press.

E.M. Schorb's latest is *Fiat Lux! Light Verse* (Kelsay Books). For his numerous other works see <http://www.emschorb.com>

Vera Schwarcz, *Ancestral Intelligence* (Antrim House, 2013), *Chisel of Remembrance* (Antrim House, 2009), and *A Scoop of Light* (March Street Press, 2000). Other works listed on her website, [between2walls.com](http://between2walls.com).

Ronny Someck's work is discussed and excerpted in Yair Mazor, *The Hebrew Poetry of Ronny Someck* (Henschelhaus, 2016) and *Poetic Acrobat: The poetry of Ronny Someck* (Goblin Fern Press, 2008).

Michael E. Stone, *Selected Poems* (Cyclamens and Swords Press, 2010), *Orange Light* (Cyclamens and Swords Pub./Amazon, 2016), *Adamgirk': The Adam Book of Arak'el of Siwnik'* (Oxford UP, 2007).

Wally Swist, *Huang Po and the Dimensions of Love* (Southern Illinois UP, 2012); *The Daodejing: A New Interpretation*, with David Breeden and Steven Schroeder (Lamar Univ. Literary Press, 2015); *Invocation* (same, 2015), *The View of the River* (Hemet, CA: Kelsay Books, 2017); *The Map of Eternity* (Brunswick, ME: Shanti Arts, LLC, 2018).

Yaacov David Shulman, <http://shulman-writer.com/>. *Little Psalms* (Wings of the Morning Press, 1987), *Airport Lights* (Createspace, 2017), other collections listed on [dotletterword.com](http://dotletterword.com),

Rumi Morkin (Miriam Webber), *The Ogdan Nasherei of Rumi Morkin*, privately published.

Florence Weinberger, *Ghost Tattoo* (Tebot Bach, 2018), *Sacred Graffiti* (Tebot Bach, 2010), *Carnal Fragrance* (Red Hen Press, 2004), *Breathing Like a Jew* (Chicory Blue Press, 1997), *The Invisible Telling Its Shape* (Fithin Press, 1997).

David Weiser, *Jerusalem Sonnets* (Targum Press, 2000)

Kelley Jean White MD, *Living in the Heart* (WordTech, 2006), *Toxic Environment* (Boston Poet Press) and *Two Birds in Flame* (Beech River Books, 2010).

Vera Zubarev, *Lunar Rhapsody* (Multicultural Books, 2007), *About Angels, About God, About Poetry: A Treatise*. Livingston Press, 2002; *The Song of Prince Igor's Campaign. A New Translation With a Commentary*. Moscow, 2018

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:

Wally Swist's "Hydrangea" was previously published in *The Woven Tale Press* and in his collection *The Map of Eternity*. Esther Cameron's "Conversation in a Neglected Garden" was first published in *Sasson Magazine* ([www.sassonmag.com](http://www.sassonmag.com)). Kelley Jean White's "Thirteen Bottles" was first published in her collection *Two Birds in Flame*.

**I. Seasoned**

## PEOPLE WALKING IN THE SNOW

People are walking in the snow  
 In Sacher Park,  
 In its snowy expanse.  
 In the face of the white vision  
 That dances before them  
 They smile at  
 The clumps of snow on the trees,  
 They smile at each other  
 As if for a minute  
 They were exiled from themselves  
 And had reached a different region,  
 The district of most dazzling white  
 Within them.

— Ruth Gilead  
 translated by Esther Cameron

## SEASONED

1.  
 The nature of spring  
 newly alive and spreading green—  
 grimy winter windows whitewashed

to May, a sunset-breasted robin  
 across the yard  
 holds me astonished.

2.  
*You're old,*  
 my grandson observes,  
 his short history sweet-scented curls

that fall over leaf veins  
 on the backs of my hands  
 he traces with a stubby thumb.

3.  
 It is often on the way down I think  
 the sun makes my day  
 light's great swill glazing hills

wild with the possibility  
 of even so—  
 of yet.

— Ilene Millman

## A GARDEN WHERE ONCE MY MOTHER WALKED

Bees burrowing deep into each flower  
 this late afternoon,  
 as if to make visible the world of things:  
 petal, sepal, leaf;  
 finely filamented anthers burdened  
 with hymnal hum;  
 a bee's hind tibia smothered in pollen.

Jubilation of manyness, a busy thrum,  
 as she walks among  
 the flowers. No threats, no stings. A few  
 fluttery encounters.  
 She longs for more. More murmurous bees  
 humming in her hair.  
 More warmth of flesh paired with flower –

less brevity, more hours.  
 The bees continue to work the garden,  
 sipping from quince  
 and plum, the purpling sage. She lingers  
 in the dusk.  
 The *coo, coo-coo* of a morning dove blues  
 the air like a sorrow.

— Constance Rowell Mastores

## WILD ANISE

A wild anise that grows on the slope  
 outside my window slowly merges  
 into a featureless forgetting,  
 a mythic world that does not hold  
 its shape. I close my eyes, drift  
 away, lose sight of leaf and flower.

Startled from a dream, I wake,  
 gaze upon a structured world  
 of cedar, redwood, pine.  
 The wild anise on the darkened  
 slope recomposes, comes alive:  
 Toothed leaves. Clusters of small  
 white flowers. Stark. Bright.  
 Particular. Never so white as now.

— Constance Rowell Mastores

## THIS HOUR IN SUMMER

White lilies lean over the soft dark grass of a summer  
 evening  
 glows and hums unsettling  
 in this hour, in this only hour  
 all whispering of love and loss and desire  
 swift and strange as fairy lights  
 translucent and vertiginous the milky swarm of stars  
 the purplish shadows of the past lurking through the trees  
 spilling like a dark hood  
 this hour gives one more moment with the moon  
 lending her light  
 and the ghostly forms of flowers close their mouths  
 and bend and pray  
 in the crying mists  
 and creatures fly their fantastic ways  
 and we leave to restless lives  
 such is this hour  
 if you follow it  
 in summer.

—Susan Oleferuk

## HYDRANGEA

These deciduous plants adorn  
 the lawns on which they lavish panicles,  
  
 large white flowerheads, growing  
 among spear-shaped evergreen leaves.

The bushes are as showy as their flowers  
 that are often thought

to resemble pom — poms.  
 Every spring and summer, I observe

their enormous blossoms bob among  
 their greenery as if noticing

someone one hasn't seen for however long  
 and whose name is momentarily gone,

as I forget their names every season.  
 The flowers bloom steadily through

midsummer into August lushness,  
 then begin their pink

blush in the late summer coolness  
 among the first harbingers

of the frosts of autumn.  
 Each year the flowers are dried and sold

on roadside stands to celebrate the turning  
 of the great wheel of summer.

And each year I finally remember, then forget  
 until next season, when the hydrangea

bloom so whitely, while my memory slips  
 away ever so much from year to year, until

it maybe lapses entirely:  
*Hydrangea, may I remember your name,*

*as I might inhale your spicy fragrance;  
 may I recall in winter*

*the murmur of your petals  
 whispering on the summer wind.*

—Wally Swist

## THE LAST WATER LILY

The last water lily  
 of the fall butters  
 a browning pond,

a single gold fish  
 fell asleep beneath  
 the shrinking sun spot,

two morning glories clamber  
 into the noon hour of this —  
 their last day,  
 and their first.

—Vera Schwarcz

## CASCADE

*Seen on a night in November*

How frail  
 above the bulk  
 of crashing water hangs,  
 autumnal, evanescent, wan,  
 the moon.

—Constance Rowell Mastores

## NOVEMBER

Dark comes earlier and earlier now;  
night sooner in a thick winter jacket.

From a nearby hillside drenched in shadow,  
wild turkeys, with a great flapping

of wings, head back to the same old  
redwood, the same old roosts. And I,

who only a month ago could sit outside  
with a glass of wine and marvel

at the turkeys' embrace of sky,  
now peer through a kitchen window,

see no more than my face mirrored  
by darkness, pale and odd, startled

by time. And I, who only wished to be  
looking out, must now keep looking in.

—Constance Rowell Mastores

## FOX ABANDON

Awakening to the motion  
detectors going off in the barnyard

is not anything new  
but detecting motion within those

parameters is, sensing  
there was something more to it

than the feral barn cat stalking  
rodents. Raising the shade,

the fox must have heard me, or  
seen my reflection in the window;

and it wasn't as if I didn't  
have to exercise patience, knowing

how long the lights stay on  
out there, aware that because they

stayed on, something slinked  
in the shadows of hedge or barn.

When she appeared  
in her regal red finery, not without

decorum, her tail nearly as long  
as she was; the whimsical,

wry smile; the ears perked;  
her exquisite gait that of a dancer,

her legs and feet propelling her  
smoothly across the ground

in more of a glide than a trot  
or a brisk bound, as she ran to

the peaked shadows  
and between them, darting from

one point to another, possibly  
running down a mouse, before

cavorting into the winter grass  
north of the barn, the brilliance of

her coat catching different tones  
of color, from a glistening blonde

to a wizened fox red, in the glare  
of the spotlights, as she

eventually sprinted into  
the darkness several hours before

the early spring dawn, which  
would break over the ridge

she must have tracked over  
by then, igniting the full palette

of her coat, as if she  
had dragged it behind her across

the hills, and it caught on  
the edge of the treeline, lighting up

the edge of the sky with a color  
as bright as her quickness.

—Wally Swist

## SEVEN STAGES OF DROUGHT

the drought was worse than any that came before it  
 or, does memory elongate it like summer shadows?  
 we do not speak of it  
 though between us words hang as heavy as over – ripe  
 fruits straining the vine  
 we step carefully around them  
 to acknowledge them might lend them validity  
 in the beginning, we recall the first condition of growth  
 the insistent refrain of the first cell  
 pushes and pulls its way toward water  
 we do not say so  
 to say so might prevent it  
 separately, as if in private grief,  
 we stand vigil over the dry, cracked earth  
 peer down on its mute lines  
 as if we could decipher a forgotten language  
 we do not share this hope aloud  
 we might extinguish it

we grow sullen as hot wind  
 we think of dead things  
 dried shells, limp wings, empty cases fill our minds  
 we do not refer to them  
 naming them might give them power  
 we identify ourselves as do orphans  
 by what we lack

when the drought finally ends we run for cover  
 we run from the cool rain scented with the fragrance  
 of blossoms it has drenched before it reached us  
 we distrust the rain  
 as if it threatens our identity  
     but in the night  
     we hear it throb against the pulse of fear  
     we listen until we distinguish one beat from the  
         other  
     when we recognize the heart of rain  
     we embrace like old friends

and we are careful to speak of it  
 as if that will make it last

— Judy Belsky

II. *Waiting for Morning*

TWO EIGHTEEN A.M.

A train intrudes into the open house of night,  
 spilling snatched miles on a track.

Just before city limits,  
 its long wail pierces the air. . .  
     *owl's sharp talons strike; will not let go . . .*

Perhaps the multitudes wake and hear this – or  
 maybe not.

I contemplate my own dream's unintended  
 stop, after which

my meandering journey of sleep  
 continues.

— Cynthia Weber Nankee

## THE OPPOSITE OF NIGHTTIME

Awakened by thunder, I lie in the dark  
 Yet here in the dark I cannot lie.  
 There was a dream but I can't recall  
 what I was doing there at all.  
 I was in a dream but lightning caught fire  
 on the hem of the dream and I awoke.  
 I tried to remember, but no longer tired,  
 forgot the dream as the thunder spoke:

"What are you doing? Where do you stand  
 among all the dreams that by day you planned?  
 There was a day but you can't recall  
 what you did yesterday at all.  
 Thousands of words in a drift of sand.  
 Thousands of deeds in a drift of sand."

The clock ticked its questions, the skies told time.  
 The stars behind clouds called my bluff, and this rhyme  
 got twisted up in my blankets. All asunder  
 went my plans for tomorrow.

Continued the thunder:

"Your dreams are but dreams, by day or by night.  
 How is your wrong all that different from right?  
 Wake up! Go to sleep! It's all the same thing.  
 You dream you're awake and awake when you dream.  
 Your days fly by on ego's wings,  
 Your days are filled with empty things  
 Thousands of thoughts in a drift of sand.  
 Thousands of moments in a drift of sand."

I switch on the lamp and Reader's Digest  
fills up my mind with American dreams.  
At last, determined to get my rest  
I turn it off.  
It's strange. It seems  
that what in the light is easily denied  
in the night's too bright for me to hide:  
The only kindness I do that's kind  
is the kindness I do with You in mind,  
my only words less false than true  
are those I know are heard by You,  
the only ground that does not slide  
away from my feet like sand on either side  
is the ground I walk in search of You.

The hours drag by, but at last – what's this?  
The darkness is blowing a goodbye kiss

and now at the window a tentative dawn  
is whispering greetings. The stars are gone.

As morning gropes softly with long pale gloves  
I linger back to the sleep my heart loves.  
and when I awake, curtains lifting on a breeze  
inform me the day has arrived.

Oh, what a tease  
that darkness! How heartless thunder's anger,  
scaring me like that  
when there was really no danger.

—Sarah Shapiro

#### DREAM

white horses jumped  
from the black thoughts  
closed  
in the open window  
they rush play  
grow in a dream  
sharp words  
fall into memory  
wound  
outside the existence

white horses  
run  
helpless  
in infinity

—Anna Banasiak

#### UTOPIA

Google: an imagined place or state of things in  
which *everything is perfect*.

I remember winter before we fled,  
my bed womb-warm and welcoming,  
soft and soothing – a comfortable cocoon  
that I snuggled into, wearing night clothes  
and thick, warm socks, eyes already closed.  
I imagine the quilt top tucked under my chin,  
in a room with a door and a window,  
a light bulb hanging from the ceiling.

I pull the thin blanket around me  
in our plastic tent surrounded by mud,  
our home in this horrible refugee camp  
so far from my home in Syria.  
I shiver, clutch my rag doll,  
huddle close to my mother,  
shut my ears to the pounding rain,  
tent walls flapping in the cold wind,  
try to sleep and dream  
of that remembered utopia.

—Rumi Morkin

#### RESETTLEMENT BLUES

I begin me days in Nobbin's Cove,  
Then Smallwood said no thanks.  
So I sold me house and moved to town,  
Takin' cod out on the Banks.

Till one day, it was all gone,  
And I end up sitting about.  
Feeling my days is numbered,  
That I'm just set out.

My old punt, no use no more,  
Laid up and rotting through.  
Spend my days with old ones,  
There's naught a drop to do.

Today, went back to Nobbin's Cove,  
And walked across the place.  
Nothing there but weeds,  
They'd nary left a trace.

Then, I's standing by the bay,  
A-listening to the sea's sound.  
A-thinking and a-wondering,  
How this all came round.

—Tony Reevey



## THE SLAVE GROUND

This field  
is not laded  
with Arlington's  
massed markers.

Hemmed in by forest,  
the little-used path  
waves with uncut grass.

A nest for chiggers.

At the end  
of the walk,  
matted wildrye,  
clover, periwinkle

cover the rocks  
marking each place  
of free-at-last  
rest.

— Tony Reevey

## WIRED

Trendy cafe, busy street corner  
Polished wood bar  
Leather bar stools  
Wicker tables  
Shelves of foreign liquor  
Glass cases of gourmet pastries  
Electric sockets between the tables  
Large screen high on a wall beside the bar

Middle age couple enter  
Holding hands  
Sit opposite one another  
Reflecting smiles  
Open laptops  
Disengage

— Mindy Aber Barad

## ESAU AND JACOB

Esau and Jacob,  
met after decades,  
grey streaking  
their beards,  
brothers embrace.

different,  
old hatred latent,  
pointless,  
a shadow  
yet indelible.

— Michael E. Stone  
2018

## ROOT-FIRE

The earth opened and he came to me in an iron  
chariot drawn by a team of stallions black  
as crude oil and breathing sulfur; at his heart  
a tiny golden arrow. He offered me a narcissus  
with a hundred dazzling petals that breathed  
a sweetness as cloying as decay. I went with him  
because he placed his hand on the small  
of my back and I felt the tread of honey bees.

The place he took me to—dark as my shut eyes,  
where I ate bitter seed and became ripe,  
and from which my mother could not take me  
wholly back, though she wept, walked the earth,  
made bearded ears of barley wither, the blasted  
flowers  
drop—is called by some men hell and others love.

— Constance Rowell Mastores

FROM THE WINDOW OF THE EXPECTATIONS,  
THE LONGINGS OF HUNGRY MOTHERS ARE SENT  
FORTH

Through the window of the expectations I look down  
Push them away from me to the wind  
The bars cut them into slices  
And they grow smaller.  
Only love even if you press it through the bars like a  
hard-boiled egg  
Does not get chopped or lopped  
Like an umbilical cord which the children don't want  
to be tied to anymore

— Tirtsa Posklinsky Shehory  
translated by Esther Cameron



## TWICE

Twice in her last week  
 my mother,  
 that screaming,  
 vindictive,  
 demanding  
 creature in my life  
 who drove me  
 more than once  
 to yearn for suicide,  
 moved her hand,  
 I did not know why,  
 towards me.  
 The hand that slapped,  
 which gave concussion,  
 and forced down vomit,  
 reached to me.  
 I watched wondering,  
 what would she do?  
 To my surprise  
 she held my hand  
 tenderly,  
 with more affection  
 than I'd ever known.  
 I cried.  
 Despite her actions  
 she did care —  
 then she died.

— Duane L. Herrmann

## THE MESSIAH SHOULD COME ALREADY

All those who are in pain are now shrinking  
 themselves  
 Closing themselves up against the storm outside  
 Inside the house they are alone  
 Trying to feel less pain  
 To pour out the ache  
 To squeeze one more drop of it out of themselves  
 As if there could be an end to it as if it could be  
 finished  
 All those struck by toxemia, scorched by panic  
 Are drawing the curtains  
 Depriving themselves of dawns  
 Wrapping themselves in darkness  
 Stammering and swallowing stuffing it down  
 As though if they fill themselves with enough of it  
 There would be an end  
 And maybe we'd finally have peace

And the moments of stillness in the eye of the storm  
 would get longer  
 All those in pain are waiting for morning  
 As if it'll be the Messiah coming at last  
 As if there is a Messiah

As if someone will bring them a bouquet at the end of  
 the show.

— Tirtsa Posklinsky  
 translated by Esther Cameron

## WITHOUT WORDS

Among the sharks that swim  
 In the ocean of language  
 Hides a little fish whose name is "love."  
 With his life he blocks from the world  
 The next deluge.

— Ronny Someck  
 Translated by Esther Cameron

## SOMETHING'S NOT RIGHT

You have the feeling that something's not right.  
 We made a wrong turn somewhere back there.  
 If we could step back we might see the light.

I guess you could say that we've lost sight  
 of what's important and who we are.  
 You have the feeling that something's not right.

Once we had dreams; we knew what was right.  
 We knew where to look for a guiding star.  
 If we could step back we might see the light.

The world's upside down: day's become night.  
 If there's a way forward, it's no longer clear.  
 You have the feeling that something's not right.

Some are determined to rely on might,  
 but endless wars won't clear the air.  
 If we could step back we might see the light.

We can't let ourselves get mired in spite.  
 We can't live our lives based on our fears.  
 You have the feeling that something's not right.  
 If we could step back we might see the light.

— Ed Meek

## WAITING FOR ORPHEUS

Loneliness smothers soft  
 a shawl, a shell of window glass  
 a few steps here and there  
 to the chair  
 and it grows in the night  
 mold leaving a dullness century old on shoes and eyes  
 in the afternoon hours  
 a hole

There are silhouettes of trees blackened on the hills  
                   under dark skies  
 skeletal buildings sagging over a tired river  
 cement plants holding out lost arms  
 I am patterned here, placed as firmly as the concrete  
                   blocks  
 molded in the clay and rubble where stunted sumac  
                   fights for its share  
 I am waiting for Orpheus  
 sleek and brown  
 I met him once  
 when I was young.

—Susan Oleferuk

## YELLOW ROSE

When I could see again  
 The rose  
 Beside the road  
 Flowering  
 Yellow,  
 I knew I had returned to myself,  
 And like a sorrowful bird  
 Which at the touch of the sun  
 Flaps its wings once more,  
 I strode along the path of the yellow rose  
 Once more ready to soar, to soar  
 Into the golden heart of life.

—Ruth Gilead  
 translated by Esther Cameron

## YOUTH ELIXIR

Saturday morning, cleaning house,  
 the sun streaming in.

I find it tucked away, in the back of  
 a shelf of dusty old books.

Slowly releasing it from its place,  
 it falls open to the precise page.

There lies the white rose pressed flat, now  
 browning from a time almost forgotten.

Memories flood back to that day, I can still  
 picture your face smiling at me with green eyes.

You surprised me with my favorite flower.  
 The first of many to come.

I carefully tucked it away to preserve  
 for forever, well, at least for today.

Too many years have passed, and the  
 young hand that first held that rose is  
 now wrinkled with age.

But with just a single touch of that token of  
 love, I am once again young and alive.

—Ann Christine Tabaka

[untitled]

Let's do an exercise  
 Let's speak, me and you,  
 About what shines  
 Just  
 Forget the exercise  
 Just about what shines  
 Just me and you  
 Without speaking  
 Just let it shine

—Shefi Rosenzweig  
 translated by Esther Cameron

## WATSU FOR TWO

The heart agrees  
 To put its fear to bed  
 To stroke it and lay it down to sleep outside  
 The heart agrees to make bubbles with its fear in the  
                   water  
 The heart believes that abundance is not limited.  
 You sing us to many tunes  
 You sing out of key with splendid authenticity  
 You change tones so often it's funny.  
 We two float at ease before the Creator  
 Diving transparent  
 You crack up  
 The good can go on for ever  
 We two are spoiled  
 And not at anyone's expense  
 And not bound in gratitude  
 We're a song of gratitude

—Shefi Rosenzweig  
 translated by Esther Cameron

## THE DANCE OF LIFE

Pointing fingers is the dance  
my child created when just three  
Scott Joplin was his inspiration  
Dave's dance of life delighted me

I talk to strangers all the time  
They dance their lives for me to see  
They laugh and cry as if old friends  
and then become a part of me

And every time I go to swim  
someone leaving passes by  
We always smile at one another  
I say hello, they say goodbye

Hello to life, goodbye to life  
It makes me feel that all is right

— Katherine H. Burkman

## FRAGRANT GARDEN OF MELANCHOLY

I was always the one who  
Encouraged perky persistence  
Of Joy,  
Pleading for all moods to  
Smile for the camera while I  
Handed out cheery dispositions  
With my collection of  
Utopic rose-colored glasses.

But one day I found a friend  
Who wore her disposition for gloom and doom  
Like a line from one of Keats's Odes.  
When I looked at her I ignored  
Smudgy rings around the moon  
And instead turned my head towards the sun  
While offering her my rosy lenses.  
She refused false perfection and  
Invited me to visit sadness seated  
On the cloudy charm of melancholy.  
I hesitated, tried to armor myself  
With fragrances of rainbows and sunny mornings,  
Then finally took the plunge into her inner world.  
I felt immense awe and respect walking through the  
Fragrant garden of melancholy,  
Open to the mingling scents of  
Wistfulness, reflection, and  
Windowsills sprinkled with  
Wilted roses and tears.

And I finally understood that it really is ok  
To experience sadness fully within Utopia  
In order to feel authentic joy and  
Just get on with life.

— Heather Gelb

## IT'S HERS

Sometimes on the calloused path  
She knows it's hers  
If she just makes a very little effort  
She'll crack the bindings of faces  
If she just unwinds the shroud of skin  
Perhaps the rules have changed

But it's hers:  
Firefly that bursts into light  
Nightingale that sings

Doe that stretches her neck over pure waters

She is everything  
She is everyone  
She is nothing  
No one sees  
But it is hers

— Yudit Shahar

## A LETTER TO SHOE

Botswana guide introduced you with a wink. I  
loved your name. Remember that fire-bright morning,  
Shoe? Can see full lips break over your white teeth.  
Hear language-clicks, your tongue flapping inside  
smiling mouth. Left eyelid scorched blue-grey closed  
on your dark-chocolate face. I wanted to put my head  
inside your mouth to catch every precious sound,  
every feeling.

Shoe clicks old story  
on terrace, dark face aglow  
savannah spills out

Last night we watched "The Gods Must be Crazy."  
The main character looks so much like you I began to  
believe in Bushman. That your people lived with  
*Nothing* like that which surrounds me.

But your abundant *Nothing*, Shoe. An African pink-  
yellow dawn feisty with animals. Nests swing from  
acacias like intricate baskets. Rhythms and  
incomprehensible sounds pulse in golden grasses. The  
river draws a great arch through your home. You drink  
rainwater caught in curl of leaves. Evening air releases  
acidic scents trapped by hot days. Your sunsets are  
night-blooming fauna in shades of rose and red.

Faint song of lone bird  
flutes from distant acacia  
does she have a mate?

I giggle now, remember as you pick your teeth with  
frightful thorn from Umbrella bush, sit on your

haunches, arms stretched over knobby knees, churning  
a stick into another, smell rises of smoke from rubbed  
dried grass. The beginnings of fire.

Everything you touch  
is a sacred miracle  
even the silence

I retrace our adventure yarn that early African  
morning. Mountains race like a tidal wave away from  
open plain. A light rain licks me muddy wet.  
Remember when the sun appears, the acrid smell of  
sage rushes into our faces? We listen to stinging song  
of grasshoppers. You hum as if you are related.

Wizened like a prophet you are, Shoe. I feel you  
were taking me back to first bright bone of  
consciousness, your earliest recollection, trying to  
teach me something that will take years to  
comprehend. I will remember your wrinkled bark face  
worn away by weather and patience, yet with a baby  
smile like an opened piano. I love your name, Shoe. I  
will repeat it like a mantra conjuring joy.

On some blessed days  
in those awakened moments  
I will sing your name

— Marianne Lyon

#### TO SAY DESERT for Yehuda Amichai

Your silent hand  
sketched for me  
a desert oasis  
green on green.  
As with communicating vessels  
hand touches hand  
through your eyes passed  
to me  
the greatness  
of the word  
and the wonder  
of the burning bush.

— Erez Biton

Translated by Felice Miryam Kahn Zisken

(On a ride with Yehuda Amichai, returning to Jerusalem  
from a joint reading in Arad, Erez Biton asked Amichai to  
describe the essence of the desert. Amichai held Biton's hand  
and was silent for a few minutes. Biton then said, "Now I  
understand. ")

### III. Panorama

#### ORCHID PARK

Kibbutz Bahan, Israel

Nature's a magic slate —  
sleight of hand  
now you see it, now you don't —  
desert frying the air  
and sand clouding light to the opacity  
of Roman glass — there cradled in the crook  
of this rock-strewn land  
a place they've named Utopia —  
curtains of monkey-faced orchids,  
skirts of succulent and rosebush,  
thrum of frog-song on a lotus-laced pond.  
Be still, some part of me at least —  
circle away from the puzzle of what it means to be me —  
to catch a leaf's purpose  
seeping up behind my eyes —  
honeybee brain, mouse mind —  
now I see it  
now I don't.

— Ilene Millman

#### RAINFOREST HYMNS

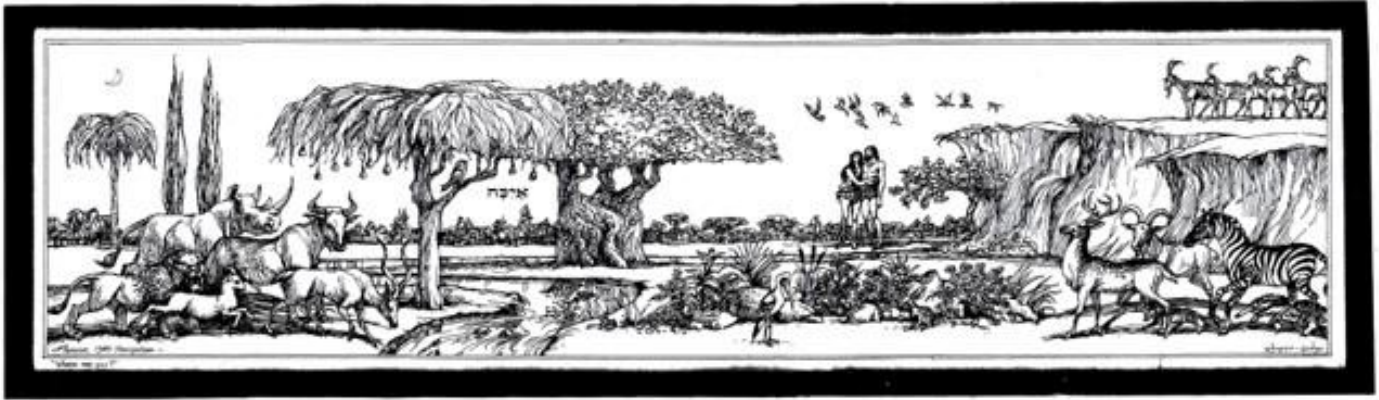
Looking over deep-green tree tops  
the clouds look silvery smooth  
like the gray and white  
of fish flesh.

A green kingfisher holds  
a small tilapia in its beak  
slaps it against a tree  
making it flexible enough  
to swallow whole.

Butterflies with their colorful wings  
are hard to see against  
red, orange, yellow flowers,  
their undersides pale as the sky  
They're like teenagers who want  
to both fit in and stand out.

Bananas and mangos  
hang from trees  
as they did in Eden —  
all sing to the One  
Who created such a world.

— Adam Fisher



Elhanan ben Avraham, "Ayeka," drawing for the 14m x 3.5m mural painted in 1989 at the YMHA, Jerusalem

## THE CREATION

1. Bursting forth from unbounded heights of Dominion  
and law above all form and precept,  
the dam of fire erupts and blazing bands of light  
explode symphonic scores expanding out on scrolls  
of verse,  
the glowing words unroll and stretch  
across the lonely barren fields of nothingness  
and time is born pervading all the fiery force,  
awakening every future gap,  
and words pronounce the core of wailing energy  
to spinning matter in whirling weightless tons  
aglean  
to plunge through pitch of lifeless empty night,  
and atoms search each the other out  
to form the searing stars in foundries of flame  
amalgamating matter for the potter's wheel,  
stars seeking sisters to dance the spiral minuets  
and join their flame to light the black expanse,  
the galaxies in whirling waltz and twist of dance  
ecstatic  
cast forth from wombs their children to the skies.
2. The planets whirl about their star like atoms in their  
course,  
majestic and magnetic in their order under law,  
the perfect precept charging every pulsing quark  
and ordinances ruling every atom in a spreading  
cosmic scheme,  
rhyme and rule conducting every turn  
of glowing Earth alight by a distant furnace sun at  
bay,  
its scorching fire sterilizing those too near  
and freezing those too far away,  
founded in the providence of perfect place and time,  
the waters form and cool the spinning sphere of  
Earth  
to mellow fertile fields of fairest green,

as divine desire's moving spark enthralls the stage,  
and living hosts come forth from seas of salt and  
tide,  
as life from Life and meadow grass and swamp  
and flowering fragrant fruitful tree  
await to feed the muscled pageantry,  
the fish and fowl and furry creature of the forest  
and camel in the parching wilderness oasis,  
a parade of beasts in furry coat and the feathered  
bird  
fixed to fly and cruise the bluing sky,  
a farfetched feast of fancy risen from the mud,  
its circulating blood astir with fire  
to pass the magic seed of life enrolled on scrolls  
with languages of wisdom,  
curled and cured in messages of memory,  
the song of pleasure hallowing the night,  
passing the baton to children's children's  
rolling dream genetic.

3. As cause and wonder green the land in harmony,  
the crashing falls of water lend their course of life  
from mountain to the plain,  
sweet molecule formations administering hope  
to all that would take breath,  
all astir with water and its gifts,  
await the crowning flight of fancy  
formed from mud beneath the sun,  
in patience squandered not in vain  
and efforts culminating all that rose before,  
charted ribbons of plan for leagues of cable  
laced and linked and conceived in complexity  
of finished form and purpose,  
a mirror of the cosmos tuned to stand upright  
and think and reign as servant—king  
and tender of the garden,  
unparalleled among the bounding beasts  
and birthed to exceed their every deed,  
to fly beyond the wildest dream of birds,  
and dam the river in envy of the beaver,

shaping cities finer than the hive  
 and electric skills of sonar sounding the bat,  
 all this sung on chorus grander than the birdsong,  
 the Man and Woman shaped in perfect complement  
 of pleased purpose  
 completing each the other's lack and need,  
 stirring in reflection of divinity  
 and clad in naked innocence,  
 only Heaven reigns supreme above them.

4. All thought and language quickly manifests  
 to each as partner to Dominion,  
 raised and freed above the soil,  
 crowned of honor to the heights of regency  
 and draped in garments of delight,  
 yet they gaze beyond the ordered squads  
 of flying fowl passing overhead  
 and yearn forbidden fairways for their own,  
 they clamber from their perch  
 above the spreading garden  
 where no fierce beast is there to fear  
 within their province and domain  
 of formulated harmony in rhythms of divinity,  
 and in their grasp the power of the seed  
 to raise the Earth to Heaven,  
 to bring forth men of image as their own,  
 nothing lay between them here,  
 no thing denied but one a single admonition,  
 and there they break the one forbidden law  
 to burst the fragile silver thread of trust,  
 both mired now in clay with haunted dreams,  
 veiled in perplexity.
- Elhanan ben-Avraham

#### GOATS AT ADYAR

at Adyar even the goats  
 slender as reed flutes  
 attain enlightenment  
 to the garden of meditation they go  
 an ancient gathering of trees  
 a cloud flock  
 patches of sunlight sieved through branches;  
 deliberate as measured monsoon rain  
 the quiet goats' souls enter;  
 watching them the mind empties and stills  
 as a large open—winged bird breaks flight  
 lifting its warm white throat  
 up into light.

— Wendy Dickstein

#### FIRST RAYS OF THE SUN

Splintered shadows give shape  
 to rock formations sprawling,  
 twisted cactus is revealed.

A lizard is inspired to run,  
 doesn't stop to measure malice.  
 Snake holes everywhere,  
 the true architects of sudden death.

Flowers I can't name are abundant.  
 Morning shivers gone,  
 I squint from the sun's glare,  
 my morning greeting.

Desert's cracked and listless.  
 The rain is welcome but absent.  
 Presently, heat prevails.  
 The terror of perfection rules.

— Joseph Brush

#### OH PRAYING MANTIS DO NOT PREY FOR ME

when I was but a child  
 I'd see you  
 in your green devotion on the farm  
 crawling up a stick  
 in blue ascent

I'd watch your monkish posture  
 transfixed upon the lithe divinity  
 of summer days  
 within the sacred branches  
 of a living elm you thinned  
 the edges of the dropping shade  
 like water cooling on the shadow darkened lawn

but with a closer look  
 I'd glimpse the exoskeleton  
 with hunger in its form  
 betraying the ravenous purpose  
 of your serrated jaw  
 that sawed away  
 the softly amber honey box  
 the sessile ambush or your kind  
 designed to make a ravenous crunch  
 that stilled the hapless drone

come friar bug  
 what's insect hagiography  
 among the katydids

the angel with his burning appetite  
 for flaming swords  
 brings fire to these aging bones  
 and though today

the evolutionary beauty  
of the dead leaf butterfly  
trace open heaven  
to the infinite glory of a single hand  
I trust my soul is both  
the dying oak of autumn  
and the glowing surface of an opening wing

— John B. Lee

#### SOJOURNER IN A MOUNTAINOUS LANDSCAPE

These thousands of tall, skinny spruces —  
tracing the mountains like wicked staircases —  
each enrobed in midnight green speckled  
with pale aqua when the full moon  
comes to rest atop her effulgent throne.  
The living waters — those many streams —  
are like veins under human flesh —  
their silvered scintillation like  
a half-hidden heartbeat.  
I wish I could pour myself into this land,  
or soar as metallic light above it,  
or become the high-hung, whorled branches —  
  
my needles forming a thousand spiral staircases.

— Bryan Nichols

#### PRAISE

"Praise the Lord for He is good  
His steadfast love is eternal."  
Psalms 118:1

your eight-week  
old  
smile

un-furrows  
winter  
brows

baby  
hands  
clapping  
at the sight  
of the sea  
sound  
of the waves

new  
to you  
and now  
new to us  
again.

— Felice Miryam Kahn Zisken

#### SOMETHING BITTER

Something bitter, some unexpected thought,  
Some collapsing glacier wall, some discovery  
Of excited gamma waves, some slip  
On El Capitan, recovery

At the end of a rope, don't be afraid,  
Cling to the wall itself, cling  
To molecules, cling to night  
Or wind or to an echoing,

The Brooks River roars in Katmai Park,  
The sunlight soaks closed eyelids,  
The passage through wind-softened rocks  
Contains the murmur of katydids.

— Yaacov David Shulman

#### NOT EVERYONE HAS LAWS

Not everyone has laws. They come  
From life, the crisp autumn comes  
With the wind, it comes down from  
The mountains, it shakes the geraniums.

The feral cats don't notice the fading  
Stars, the blur of orange-pink,  
And the quiet in the hollow of  
The day that speaks, their eyes blink,

They do not see the fantasy,  
The shocking wealth, the sap in the tree,  
They think it has always been here, the supple  
Wind, the cars and their ennui.

— Yaacov David Shulman

#### HE-WITH-THE-SUN-IN-HIS-MOUTH\*

The ravens have gone.  
The sky they once flew has been emptied.  
When I walk out the door, clearances —  
a pure change. No more the deep calls  
from on high like a bell sharply struck.  
No more the fanfare and bluster. The day  
is listless, the sun untroubled by wings.

The ravens have gone.  
No more the graceful loops and glides,  
the beauty they make of the sky and wind —  
my mind become beautiful by the sight  
of them. *Kloo-kok, kloo-kok*, I sing, hoping  
to lure them back... *How all things flash,*  
*how all things flare! Kloo-kok.*

— Constance Rowell Mastores

\*One of the names used by the Native Americans of the Northwest for a raven. The raven often flies so high that it appears to blot out the sun; or to hold it in its "mouth".



## PANORAMA: A FOUND POEM\*

Just three words

The pale clouds  
Created in China  
Just three words  
Far from home  
Local people know  
Believe in miracles  
Certain cult status

Beautiful underwater world  
Current art zone  
Layer of silt  
River between hills

Medium haul fleet  
Each measured brick  
Experiences bond together  
Quirky moving platforms

Most market vendors  
Follow this advice  
Long bike ride  
Drink for free

My childhood adults  
Stars, designers, stylists  
Actively support this  
Only in Madagascar  
Continuing the story

Availability of beer  
Time and possibility  
Funny things happen  
Follow our advice  
Confusing scientific principles

Advantage for transit  
Small brick houses  
Some healthy walking  
Modern high tides  
Residents fenced up  
Creaking floors, ceilings

Most impressive tickets  
Tribute to traditions  
American jazz legends  
Current special offers

An average person  
Of another sort  
Catch a breath  
Full smile design  
You can appreciate

—Mindy Aber Barad

\* with special thanks to Ukraine International Airlines  
magazine

from *LADDERS*

4.

I listen for a music  
Not played in concert halls  
Nor sung by human voices.

Its instruments are lives  
That resonate through time  
And modulate each day.

I hear a cosmic rhythm  
Guiding the stars in heaven  
And the pulsing of my blood.

9.

Unless the bike is moving  
You cannot sit on it;  
Momentum holds you straight.

Unless your mind is rolling  
You must fall behind  
The world's revolving wheels.

A vital spring keeps flowing  
Down the mountainside;  
You'll run with it or die.

15.

To anticipate the green  
Whose light impels us forward  
When we are stuck in lines;

To celebrate green leaves  
Bringing welcome comfort  
After a freezing season,

Something green within us  
Wakes the dormant soul:  
It's time to move again.

19.

All material things  
Vibrate with soft voices  
That murmur in our dreams.

Listen, trees are singing,  
And rivers recite a prayer  
That only you can hear.

Ocean waves are chanting  
Odes to their Creator,  
And cloudy skies grow clear.

—David Weiser

(More poems in this series may be found on our homepage'  
[www.derondareview.org](http://www.derondareview.org))

**universe**

lying side by side  
 my six-year-old daughter  
 and I  
 where the wavelets  
 of the sea ebb and flow  
 in the wonderful light  
 of that early morning hour  
 before anyone else arrives

the many billions  
 of stars born  
 billions of years before  
 burn without life  
 unseen  
 and billions of planets  
 swirl around them  
 also unseen

it matters not  
 my daughter's footprints  
 and mine  
 in the wet sand  
 are sufficient  
 to make our place  
 in the universe

—Larry Lefkowitz

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*IV. Seeing In*

**SIGHT, VISION, INSIGHT**

Insight, seeing in — into  
 the centre, to  
 the heavenly houses  
 built in the soul,  
 or in the heavens,  
 or both?

The gates open  
 as evening darkens,  
 angels carry flowers,  
 prayers inward,  
 upward.

The heavens open  
 in the Temple's heart.  
 The prophet looks up,  
 and the angels descend  
 the ladder of the spheres.

We descend the rungs  
 into ourselves, into  
 our heart's chambers  
 that pump life's blood.

—Michael E. Stone  
 24 June 2009 London

**THE HEIGHT OF THE EBB**

Even at the height of the ebb I live.  
 The moon is what draws the waves of my soul  
 back and forth  
 from ebb to flow.  
 Trash is revealed on the shore  
 when the water draws back.  
 Things I left on the bottom of the sea,  
 thinking their power  
 was gone,  
 their time over and done,  
 are suddenly revealed.  
 This is the moment to gather them up,  
 before the tide of pride returns.

—Imri Perel

translated by Esther Cameron and Sarita Perel

**BETWEEN POEMS**

You write a poem  
 when the poem lets you know it is ripe  
 ready to break off the branch  
 ready to separate from you

Between poems you wait

You write a poem in response to distant pressure  
 that starts in your veins  
 then translates itself into rhythm

Between poems you wait

You write a poem when a sudden light  
 streaks meteor against a dark mass of sky  
 and you wonder breathless if you saw it at all  
 if it will return  
 it returns a constellation  
 a choreography of light

Between poems you wait

You write a poem when you feel an arc  
 when you feel its upward tilt  
 when you feel an arc  
 from its half image you divine the whole

Between poems you wait

When you wait  
 not knowing if you are barren  
 or between births  
 set deep in stone gradients of silence  
 or merely between refrains  
 you are a poet waiting for the poem

—Judy Belsky

## YOU ARE NOT ALONE

*When writing, you are not alone, but face  
yourself. Like looking in a magic mirror  
with X-ray power, then a magic glass  
both telescopic – an explorer's wand  
that reaches distant times as well as places –  
and microscopic – like a scientist's  
which can reveal the smallest hidden spaces.  
Remote things are transformed to something nearer;  
thoughts that confused you last night now seem clearer,  
as objects freed by dissipated mists.*

The You in this case was a college class  
at SUNY-Delhi. I was not respond-  
ing to a question, but providing patter  
between the recitations from my book –  
which they had, mostly. Those without could look  
up at the screen or share their neighbor's.

When

I looked up, there, half-hidden by their hands,  
my name, on spines and jackets, blazoned through  
the drab fluorescence, as if it might matter.

This morning, as I dote on dreamscape lands  
and feelings' fardels as daft poets do,  
I'm dazzled by that deliquescent light,  
wrapped in the image of them rapt before  
me, and am not alone, for as I write  
I hold them as they held me, each made more,  
the oneness of us, mattering once again.

– James B. Nicola

## WINGS

If only the winged spirit would rest on me, if only  
The one with wings three times folded inward  
Whose wings are spotted with faded sparks  
For every fold a name is written  
On the fold line of the wings.

And the heretic spirit will come to me, if only,  
Pulverised and pressed in the spirit – mill whose wings  
are clipped  
And say to me: I am Zoharia  
And look how I survive  
And how I spread my wings  
On which the marks of folding can be seen  
And drink a whole barrelful of wine  
To life, if only.

And the names that mark the folds fly off  
One: Was  
Two: Unknown  
Three: If only

– Tirtsa Posklinsky Shehory  
translated by Esther Cameron

## BALLAD OF THE BURNT-OUT PROF

*... something ... eternally gained  
for the universe ...*  
– William James

Old Duracell, old Mazda-man  
you've got to keep the light –  
it's growing dim inside you  
but that's no time to hide you –  
there's just a chance you might  
say something shedding light.

Old Candle-wick, old Burnt-out Prof,  
(who calls himself the Bop)  
old hairy ears and snout,  
*Tochisafntish!*  
you gouty worn-out lout –  
oh, call yourself a name, old cuss –  
because you weren't the best,  
and yet you know it doesn't matter,  
no, not in the least.

Old geeze, don't lose your grip,  
don't fall and break your hip –  
you've got to keep the light, baldspot,  
you've got to keep the light,  
because there's just a chance  
if you keep the light, old souse,  
if you keep the light,  
there's still a chance, though mad,  
that there's something left to add.

You've got to keep the light, old piles,  
you've got to keep the light.  
You know you've been a dog,  
oh, you've acted like a *trayf* old hog,  
but somehow in your life  
you've had a loving wife,  
so there must be something good about you,  
you lousy lucky lout you –  
all I ask of you, old candle,  
is just to keep the Godblessed light,  
and show a flash of pluck, old duck,  
and with a bit of luck  
you might come up with something  
worthy of the world that you've surveyed.

You've been around so long now  
you've got to hold some light,  
whether hell or heaven  
is waiting with its leaven  
to galvanize you new again  
for better or for worse,  
old man of steel, who once pumped iron,  
don't listen to that deathly siren,  
you've got to keep the light a while,

you've got to keep that gap-toothed smile,  
 you've got to keep the light alive  
 inside your horrible old hide,  
 because you still might do a thing  
 that's worthy of its doing,  
 you've got to keep the light, old pipe,  
 you've got to keep the light.

You've written many a poem, old bard,  
 and published many too,  
 but I've got news for you, old prof,  
 I've got news for you —  
 you haven't any right, old cough,  
 not to keep the light.  
 You don't get off like that, old shakes  
 fall off the roof like that —  
 there's plenty time to die, old guy,  
 plenty time to die,  
 so keep on pumping light, old Bop,  
 pumping students light!

— E.M. Schorb

#### KAFKA

Are we on trial, Mister K.? It's late —  
 Too late, you claim — to go out looking for  
 A lawyer to defend us beggars, poor  
 And trembling in the dusk as we all wait  
 In pouring rain outside the castle gate  
 And hope in vain to see it open or  
 To hear the porter's steps. It seems no door  
 Will soon unlatch to save us from our fate.

What is the metamorphosis we'll find  
 Upon our death? You've warned us, Mister K.,  
 We'll be a cockroach, for neither wraith  
 Nor ghost survive the twilight of the mind.  
 Yet in that night, the worm of Jacob may  
 Become the monarch butterfly of faith.

— YakovAzriel

#### THE MONARCH BUTTERFLY OF FAITH

The monarch butterfly of faith once reigned  
 As queen when all our fields were fragrant-green;  
 When purple orchids bloomed and streams flowed  
     clean,  
 Her sovereignty appeared to be ordained.  
 And we, her subjects, gazed in awe, unfeigned  
 In homage and devotion to our queen  
 Whose wings of topaz-ruby-aquamarine  
 Proclaimed her reign a paradise regained.

Now exiled from that realm like fugitives,  
 We and our dethroned queen reside in gutters,  
 Where the stench of fetid sewage never dies.

Yet look — the butterfly of faith still lives;  
 Despite defeat, despite despair — she flutters;  
 Despite all doubts, despite all fears — she flies.

— YakovAzriel

#### THE WINGS OF A FALCON

With a glance I devoured a piece of sky,  
 Liberated from between the clouds,

Impaling feathers in my flesh  
 Which I had been gathering with great pain,  
 Towards the time when the wind will rise  
 And I will take off  
 And crash.

And again the beating  
 Of wings  
 Dwells between my shoulder blades.  
 Not the wings of a raven,  
 Not the wings of a dove,  
 The wings of a falcon  
 Whose claws grasp the last serpent —  
 The wings of an angel of God.

And even those shall be shed  
 On the day I will fly  
 With the force of life alone.

— Imri Perel

translated by Esther Cameron and Sarita Perel

#### REACHING TO THE HEAVENS

I throw my ring up high  
 attached to a golden chain,  
 to heaven I want to fly  
 to reach a higher plane.

Bound to earth, grounded,  
 I reach above, beyond the bar  
 to where love is boundless  
 to where the meanings are.

I throw my golden chain  
 above the clouds and dreams,  
 to reach the realm of the soul  
 to where things are what they seem.

Bound to horizons limited,  
 I yearn to stretch afar,  
 to reach the world of the spirits,  
 to catch my guiding star.

— Yocheved Miriam Zemel

## TWO DAYS BEFORE

"O Lord, open my lips  
And my mouth shall declare Your praise."  
Psalms 2:17

Two days before  
the new moon  
of the month  
of miracles  
I hear  
you

breathe

close to  
the music  
beyond the  
open  
window

—Felice Miryam Kahn Zisken

## THE SONG OF SHMONEH ESREH\*

dedicated to the *Melech b'Sadeh*\*\*

Sometime the song wells up  
through a chamber of my heart,  
sometimes through a vibrato  
in your soul,  
sometimes it tickles through  
the toes of my grandson  
while he is scaling a wall  
of Jerusalem stone.

Last night I heard it  
without words,  
all eighteen daily blessings  
seeking a mouth  
to sound them,  
not like an ancient aire  
floating by on winds of night,  
rather akin to a clump  
of winged earth  
eager to take root  
in our so human flesh.

Beneath that canopy of loam  
I glimpsed you, owner  
of all fields, less of a lord  
than a true friend  
in feckless times.

—Vera Schwarcz

\*\*"Eighteen" (Hebrew), one of the terms for the standing prayer (Amidah) which some Jews say 3 times a day, others of us once or twice each day—it contains 18 (actually now 19) blessings

\*\* "The King in the field": according, to Kabbalah, during the month of Elul before Rosh HaShanah, we find Hashem closer to us than at other times of the year, not the mighty Ruler ensconced in the Castle of Judgment, but wandering among us in the field, eager and ready to hear our needs, complaints & repentance.

## THE WORLD WILL BE FILLED WITH LIGHT

"A society must ask, seek and demand that each individual give something of him/herself...If all of us light the candle of our souls, the world will be filled with light."

R. Adin Even Israel Steinsaltz

Lighting a candle

in the passage to the house

in the seam between day and night.

Lighting candles on the windowsill

for the miracles, for the Sabbath.

A place in the heart always prays.

*When the soul shines  
even skies wrapped in fog  
shed a beautiful light.*

Olive trees, cypress, young and old

reach for threads of gold

and our eyes see in one phial of oil

what cannot be seen.

—Felice Miryam Kahn Zisken

## WORD SONNET\*

Human  
spark  
ignites  
divine  
flame  
in  
Jewish  
hearts  
  
to  
scatter  
light  
in  
His  
world.

— Esther Halpern

\*first written as a prose sentence, turned into a word sonnet  
at the suggestion of Ruth Fogelman

### V. *As Part of Something More*

[untitled]

As in a peaceful orchard  
Alone  
In infinite silence  
To touch the crown of the blue  
To tread the transparent path

— Ruth Gilead  
translated by Esther Cameron

*quick glance*

Crimson and gold leaves  
cling to branches  
and autumn arrives  
with color. How could  
evil exist in such a  
beautiful setting?  
Did Eden's garden  
glow? While the  
Almighty suppresses  
tears for man's free  
choice to continue to  
harm fellow humans,  
we are given streaks  
of setting sun, snowflakes,  
spring buds to show us  
a glimpse of Utopia  
so we may better bear  
much darkness in daily  
life.

— Lois Greene Stone

### UTOPIAS

Salty sea  
intimate space,  
darkness wrapping  
in warm embrace,  
heartbeats rocking me  
cradled, safe:  
that was my first  
Utopia — of place.

Summer vacation  
sunrise, sea,  
childhood elation —  
at long last free!  
Time to wander  
along the shore,  
time to ponder,  
time to explore  
rock-pools, reaching  
for shells through brine:  
that was my second  
Utopia — of time.

And now — in a wood, say,  
sunslant through leaves,  
blackbirds trilling  
filling the breeze,  
time standing still  
the world suddenly whole,  
I glimpse for an instant  
a Utopia of soul.

— Judy Koren

## GENESIS

Suddenly it's Genesis

and I appoint myself

care-taker

of a piece of earth's crust

Plowing Planting Watering Pruning  
Picking Kindling Burning Building  
Feeding

Getting rid of poisonous insects

All those occupations

that

If you give them

an instant

Grab your  
Whole Life

—Sabina Messeg  
translated by the author

## THERE IS NO HOUSE OPPOSITE MY HOUSE

There is no house opposite my house, no window  
opposite my window,  
no door opposite my door, no strife opposite my song

— — I am neighbor  
to a body of mountains  
that stands erect  
above the supine bodies of the valley

Their love  
is more pleasant to me than the love of humans

Their love exempts me from duties  
of the heart, it lets my soul go  
free

I no longer need loves—  
just one more day, and another... and another ,

just days that rush forth shorter and shorter  
just time, just  
the light tremor  
of the pen  
ballpoint or fountain

into whose nostrils has risen  
from under  
the scorched crust of earth

— — *the scent of water*

—Sabina Messeg  
translated by Esther Cameron and the author

## SUBWAY CITY

It was a social painting  
society moving  
a tradition of going  
and places achieved  
the divide of space  
sacrificed for destination  
remarkable for determination  
embroidered hearts  
safe from strangers  
each a star  
without a shine  
a name hidden within  
rivers of shoulders  
a universe of faces  
each with a history  
like waves under a  
ship.

— Roger Singer

## SUBWAY FLOOR WITH PAINTED PATTERN

Someone made this subway floor  
of variegated flecks,  
each a part of something more  
against a base of black.

Look down—the variegated flecks  
come in hues of human skin  
against a base of night sky black:  
off-white, off-red, yellow, brown, tan. . . .

So many hues like human skin,  
sized, shaped, placed like confetti,  
off-white, red, yellow, brown, taupe, tan,  
as if every fleck were ready,



festive-flung like fun confetti,  
to go as Someone's subway floor  
of mixed society — ready  
to ride as part of something more.

—James B. Nicola

#### SONG OF THE PEACEFUL HEART

What lasted was the Lord's, his fingers  
Busy with creation, sunny weather

And the sound of roosters laughing.  
Later, the music of bulls

Dancing around a campfire  
Waiting for the females to arrive.

Sitting on a mossy log  
with a banjo plinking

*Oh Susanna*  
A raccoon hums & smiles.

Children touched  
By the finger of God

Skip like monkeys, pure happiness,  
No witnesses required.

— Alan Basting

#### FAMILY COLORS

In my family  
now  
are many colors,  
and backgrounds:  
European, Hispanic,  
African, Asian, and  
Native American too.  
One family:  
children, spouses  
and grandchildren.  
Ours is just one  
of many thousands  
across the globe  
building  
a new future,  
and new vision,  
of inclusion  
for us all.

—Duane L Herrmann

#### "LE LIVING"\*

The living.  
Compromise of the living.

We are not like the heroic dead.  
Graceless, scrofulous

with scrupulosity,  
I saw our desire to mirror ourselves....

Lo! We are proud performers in a little  
rock and shrub enclosed circle.

We have the dignity of the rays of the sun,  
the step of the expectation of the onlooker —

What if our dance is a prance?  
Join us.

— Reuven Goldfarb

\*The "Le" refers to The Living Theatre, a radical theatre formed in New York in the '60's by Judith Malina and Julian Beck, whose premise was that the audience was as much a part of the play as the actors, and that the play (and your part in the play) began as soon as you entered the building or the space where the performance was to be held. Extend this aesthetic further out, and we are all actors in the play of life.

#### THE FOREST PATH

I want to go to you  
where the kudzu darkens a space like a secret door  
to a grand foreign place  
so I can slip into where I belong. where I began  
merge with dirt, earth, and leaf all belief before me  
and hold in my hand cool mystery like water from the  
stream

This dull day I can only catch a chance glance  
at the deer on the roadside eating sweet grass  
the hawk on a long branch at rest  
as I sit uneasy, a stranger in a crowd that forgets  
the meaning of many words

The past means little to me, cast out a fair price for the  
delight  
of falling and rising up  
for a choice that means so much  
I don't like prim talks, neat walks, teacup lawns and  
arduous laws  
yet I cast myself out  
somewhere a long time ago I got very lost  
I'm heading now to find my way back  
to the pine shadowed forest path.

—Susan Oleferuk

## WHERE TO?

How cunningly the hours are spent roaming the  
                   boxwood grove  
 alongside the river.

Thoughts come astride of each footfall, fleeting  
 but recaptured within moments, thereafter to be  
                   counted  
 if, in fact, fleeting occurrences count in the daily  
                   climbing  
 of each precipice.

It is altogether useless to complain. Just look to the sky  
 for comfort, as if stars could be seen in daylight before  
                   sun  
 begins to meddle.

Where should she start, knowing that starting points  
 are arbitrary and inconsiderate of any urge to get  
                   immediately  
 into motion. However, thoughts will do no lasting  
                   damage.

She is prepared to comport with whatever is required  
 in the field and to claim innocence if anyone objects.  
 She will commence with a general scurrying in friendly  
                   territory  
 and will plan to reach the outpost in due course.

— Irene Mitchell

## TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

By the consent of the Omnipresent, weary of  
                   supplications,  
 And by the consent of the audience held captive in  
                   auditoriums  
 By the assembly on the top floors of high rises  
 And by the assembly of the ground floor, the dwellers  
                   in streets

We permit you everything

And the court repeats the formula three times:  
 All things are permitted to you All things are forgiven  
                   you All things help you  
 And the light is sweet and good to the eyes and it is  
                   permitted to love

Go forth

— Amichai Chasson

## SWOLLEN AND SWELLING

Now all the earth is swollen and swelling,  
 the fields and the furrows are swollen and swelling,  
                   swelling and swollen,  
 the ditches and rivers, the fatbergs and graves,  
 are swollen and swelling, swelling and swollen,  
 the longings of children buried in prisons are flowing  
                   and swelling,  
 foaming and swollen, the hands of the migrants,  
                   imprisoned for being,  
 are lifeless and broken, hallowed and aching,  
 we have suffered from generals riding stone horses  
 we have suffered from flags waved in our faces  
 we have suffered our congress of mansplaining con men,  
 we rise with the women we rise over churches, we rise  
                   over armies,  
 battered unbroken, believing and seeing, buoyed by  
                   the zeitgeist,  
 the flux and the flooding.  
 Shall I say goodbye to the ruined land where will I go  
 clutching my iPhone, wearing a watch that counts all  
                   my footsteps,  
 where will the GPS lead? What will I find that restores  
                   the lost forests,  
 turns loose the walled rivers. My virtual reality is  
                   chock full of diversion,  
 friends laughing on Facebook, family on Facetime.  
 Yet I long for an animal to caress, for the cry of the fox,  
                   song  
 of the loon over calm evening water, the splash of a  
                   frog that is not  
 threatened, the glimpse of a wolf that is not tagged and  
                   tracked,  
 the scent of mossy stones where a sweet sea laps the  
                   shore.

Up from our humblebrag leaders, up from the binge—  
                   watching flock,  
 up from the talk shows and scorn of the foreign we rise  
                   with the women,  
 we gather together in gardens and farm fields, growing  
                   and plowing, in the  
 season of seeding, when all the earth is swollen and  
                   swelling,  
 when a torrent of blackbirds will come down and  
                   remake us, skirling and screeching,  
 wailing and whirling over the wetlands, the cattails  
                   and rushes, our home and beginning.

— Douglas Macdonald

## AXIS MUNDI

When that's done you will again be a Messiah  
 I will again be a dove  
 Together we'll be the leading sheep ringing in the  
     fields of the bodies  
 Whatever she knows is most correct  
 We'll hover between the heavenly and earthly  
     Jerusalem  
 In this gentle motion this path straight as an arrow  
 Skewered like Cozbi and Zimri  
 (Yes, I know  
 Despite and despite)  
 On the axis mundi  
 Precisely above the foundation stone

— Tirtsa Posklinsky Shehory  
 translated by Esther Cameron

## WHAT I'LL MISS

1.  
 Swimming with you in a glacial pond in Wellfleet  
 — water warmer than air in September —  
 so clear you can see twenty feet down,  
 perch flitting in between — miniature  
 submarines. It takes us all summer  
 to get to where we can swim  
 across and back Dyer Pond.

We need to relearn to relax and breathe,  
 turning heads to capture air,  
 returning to a fluid world  
 our bodies seem to remember  
 somewhere beyond thought — our arms extend  
 to pull and push the water behind  
 where legs scissor and feet paddle.  
 We slice through — — smooth as seals.

2.  
 Maybe this is the world we'll return to —  
 the one we were baptized in,  
 the one where we spent most of our first year,  
 hooked up, enveloped, floating  
 in viscous warmth  
 until we grew too big to carry  
 and had to emerge  
 into the light of this world.

Could it be like that? Not heaven  
 but the murky dusk of our subconscious  
 where now we nightly float  
 and where we will return to remember  
 how to breathe and swim and see.

— Ed Meek

## UTOPIA AMONG PEOPLE

Whirlpools of clouds in a dream cradle  
 White clusters, black-grey clusters  
 Riding on the wind, with human sighs  
 Rising to the embroidered skies  
 Memorializing like a flash in the eye's lens  
 Blazing Vancouver at burning sundown  
 And frozen Baker Mountain in its  
 Snow white gown.  
 Its neighbors are silent at its feet at the lake shore  
 The soul longs  
 To shelter under other souls' humble wings.  
 Words from the soul's lake tear the net  
 The strands of thought  
 Like the quacking of mallards  
 Spreading the depths of the soul in a net of words  
 Shortening the distance  
 To touch, to feel, to breathe, to see  
 To look down on the valley from the summit  
 To look into the valley of others' dreams  
 To dance with them like elves in fairytales  
 Spirit with spirit  
 Word with word  
 Mesh in gentle accord  
 To prolong the generous moment  
 Like a sustained chord

And the secret of the body and its outburst  
 Like a corset  
 Will be removed

— Rachelly Abraham-Eitan

## PUTTING ON TEFILLIN

"And you shall put these, My words, on your  
 heart and on your soul, and you shall bind them as  
 a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets  
 between your eyes. " (Deuteronomy 11:18)

Every morning the prophet Ezekiel put on  
 Tefillin of a chariot,  
 And when he wound the straps around his arm,  
 He would see the tracks of wheels  
 And a storm wind; and a cloud; and a fire ablaze.

Every morning King David put on  
 Tefillin of a harp,  
 And when he wound the straps around his arm,  
 He would see musical notes  
 Quavering on a seven — lined stave.

Every morning Joseph put on  
 Tefillin of dreams,  
 And when he wound the straps around his arm,  
 He would see stars binding sheaves  
 As the sun and the moon whispered: 'Amen'.

Every morning Jacob put on  
Tefillin of a ladder,  
And when he wound the straps around his arm,  
He would see angels ascending  
Rung by rung.

But I — every morning I put on  
Tefillin of sand,  
And when I wind the straps around my arm,  
They break apart, disintegrate and disperse  
Like grains in the desert of routine.

When will I put on  
Not the tefillin of Rashi,  
Nor the tefillin of Rabbeinu Tam,  
But rather  
The tefillin of Rabbi Nachman,  
Tefillin of Shabbat?

—Yakov Azriel

#### REVELATORY VISTAS

Religion having lost its cutting edge  
in western realms, we need a new conceit  
that realistically can put a wedge  
between man's arrogance and the elite  
presumptions most religious realms afford.  
We need to open up the roof that hides  
galactic mysteries which checkerboard  
the universe with cosmic regicides.  
Perhaps their subjects need to be less smug  
and with the ever after less secure.  
We'd better probe past gilt-edged books that plug  
up holes in reason's rusty armature  
and give up sailing from a spirit realm.  
But then we need to stand fast at the helm.

—Frank De Canio

#### EX NIHILO

I  
In Cordova  
Pure and refined  
They created  
And re — created  
Worlds of knowledges  
Of fathers and mothers  
Creating together

Hearts in love with G-d  
Knowledges of worlds  
Beyond good and evil  
In need of darkness  
In order to discern the light  
Neither inside nor outside

Joined together  
Empty and full in the study hall  
The doing of the Universe  
Through their extended vision

II  
Born in the balance  
mothers and fathers  
higher and higher intelligences  
mold themselves  
By stages  
From nothing —  
A crown

Desire to create  
Inside out  
In order to receive

I sink deep inside  
To that place of twinkling growth  
And pull, gasp, push.  
We Parents  
Participate in the  
Crowning

III  
into the emptiness  
He poured the rules  
created safe borders  
to find peace  
for the rumbling and tumbling  
in the Hidden Place  
yet to be revealed

I close my eyes  
count the months  
lean against the wall  
that separates me from  
annihilation  
in perfect belief  
that all will remain as it was  
when I awaken

IV  
I perceive  
a world that exists  
in a balance of pure light  
reality fractured by distinctions

In the paradox...  
Paradise  
And Supernal reality  
Both too much with too little light  
Blind,  
Blur the differences  
Between day and night  
To co-exist in contradiction

—Mindy Aber Barad

## WHEN RABBI AKIVA DIED A MARTYR'S DEATH

"Hear O Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is One. And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might." (Deuteronomy 6:4-5)  
 "'with all your soul' — Rabbi Akiva taught, even when your soul is being taken away" (The Talmud)

When Rabbi Akiva died a martyr's death,  
 Tortured with iron combs as he was slain,  
 His soul untainted, his body raked by pain —  
 What did he see as he gasped his final breath?  
 Chimneys with human smoke from the twentieth  
 Century? Fires from autos-da-fe in Spain?  
 How decades after Abel's murder, Cain  
 Still schemed to slaughter all the sons of Seth?

Or as he said the Shma and died, did he  
 Behold the Temple rise above the sand  
 And dust of death, enveloped by an aura?  
 For there, inside the Temple's court, Rashi  
 And the Rambam, the Gra, the Besht, all stand,  
 Nodding as the Messiah teaches Torah.

— Yakov Azriel

## HUNGER

They left me in the forest.  
 My sister who is me and me  
 Got lost and lost.  
 I doubled myself because loneliness is  
 The real beast.  
 And in the thick of the forest no one speaks my  
 language  
 (Out of the meagre mouth pours darkness.  
 From the clenched lap to the uttering lips).

Memory shrinks to a sentence:  
 The hunger was very severe (description)  
 I ate and ate and was not satisfied (cause)  
 They left me in the forest (effect)  
 They left me in the forest (repetition)  
 They left me in the forest (compulsive repetition).

I dream of a burning gingerbread house  
 Deep in the forest  
 And inside the house a broad woman  
 Whose eyes are tender.

— Natalie Braun  
 translated by Esther Cameron with the author

## TO THE SHEKHINAH IN TEVET

Upon this day of darkness, Mother, may  
 Your image rise and shine in many minds  
 As the one metaphor of all our caring,  
 Sign of the being in which we must live.

Your image rises, shines in many minds.  
 Your light shines forth from one face to another.  
 Sign of the being in which we must live,  
 In your presence things fall into place.

Your light shines forth from one face to another.  
 Under your glance the ways of help appear.  
 In your presence things fall into place.  
 You organize our issues and concerns.

Under your glance the ways of help appear.  
 In your hands the things we do add up.  
 You organize our issues and concerns.  
 You are the map, the blueprint of our temple.

In your hands the things we do add up.  
 You are memory, storehouse of our good.  
 You are the map, the blueprint of our temple.  
 You are the meeting-place, the standing-ground.

You are memory, storehouse of our good.  
 You are mind's integrity and purpose.  
 You are the meeting-place, the standing-ground,  
 Talisman of the freedom of the upright.

You are mind's integrity and purpose.  
 You show us how to sift the laws and customs.  
 Talisman of the freedom of the upright,  
 Through you we know what we must hold inviolate.

You show us how to sift the laws and customs.  
 As the one metaphor of all our caring,  
 Soul of creation, our inviolate House,  
 Upon this day of darkness, Mother, rise.

— Esther Cameron

## I'LL TELL YOU HOW HAPPY THEY WERE

We were sitting in Sheshet's bar near the streets of the  
 river  
 Mixing cocktails of being and nothingness in tall  
 Colorful glasses that almost shattered in our hands,  
 drinking and swimming  
 From the mouth of the river to the end of the last sea,  
 swimming and drinking  
 Not listening to the heavenly voice whispering: water,  
 water.

— Amichai Chasson  
 translated by Esther Cameron

## YOU HOPE TO BE

You hope to be a discoverer  
Of the spark of life which links  
Person to person –  
Soul to soul.

You hope to illuminate  
This world of darkness,  
Seeing past the warpedness  
The woundedness  
Weaving together  
Neshama, neshama,  
Until all neshamas are one.

Do not undertake this lightly  
Lest you are the sole light  
Left out of the great gathering,  
Exiled from the utopia  
You hope to create.

—Sara DeBeer

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## VI. New Places

## THE ARCHEOLOGIST, STILL AN INTERN, PAUSES

Beneath stacked societies and the slow creep  
of evolution, she finds a knife hacked from stone,  
honed by flint and use. Shards of bowls  
next to it, chips in the ashes.

This was the kitchen of a home. Most likely  
the knife once cut flesh from the hide  
of antelope, and maybe something like bread.  
She sees no spears,

no feathered crowns, no trace of shattered skulls.  
Her colleagues test its ancient stains:  
no smudge of human blood found at the edge.  
There might have been a peaceful time.

—Florence Weinberger

## ON UTOPIA

Oh! Another quixotic utopia  
with the wonders of a perfect place!  
But why not Arcadia beyond the corner,  
the one society where one's actions can help?

On the extremes, there are no faults  
without reproach in body and in soul.  
Let Shangri-La give its concert,  
played by the beautiful immortal lady.

Come across time to the golden age  
when, without effort, you did much.  
You are invited to a gilded lifestyle  
of philosophers with servants on hand.

Then go over the *Sambatyon* River  
to meet the warriors of the ten tribes.  
Behold their age-old customs  
and work in harmony with the land.

Come and watch Hollywood,  
with unmatched creativity  
of otherworldly adventures,  
inhabited by incomparable heroes.

Visit Israel as the land  
of flowing milk and honey.  
Over five thousand books written  
about her by starry-eyed travelers!

Utopia means a way of life  
where back-breaking work becomes easy.  
Leaders in every age, for every age, proclaim it  
And they come and go, like the air we breathe.  
—Hayim Abramson

*From TWO BIRDS IN FLAME: POEMS INSPIRED BY  
SHAKER THEMES*

**238. Thirteen Bottles**

*amber glass, embossed, labels, "Shaker Tin Restorer," 7 3/4"  
h; "Shaker Pickles," 7" h; "Shaker Digestive Cordial," 6" h;  
"Shaker Cherry Pectoral Syrup," Canterbury, NH, No. 1.  
Circa 1847 \$1, 140*

We are seldom ill. We receive long lives  
and splendid health. Perhaps it is our clear  
country air or our sturdy diet, home  
grown fruits and vegetables, canned in our  
own kitchen by our busy strong hands. More  
it seems than we can preserve. It becomes  
an ever-bounteous table round the year,  
but our produce is best eaten in season.  
Six pies a day. Each! We work with great energy  
in our fields and at our daily tasks. Haying,  
threshing, churning, even laundry is heavy  
labor, hefting baskets, full sixty pounds each,  
and each must be carried to the top floors  
of the dwelling. Thus we stay strong.  
And our tables blessed also by little strife.  
Yet we know the ills of the world, the pang  
of the mother in labor, the twisting spasm  
of gall bladder and kidney stone, shock of  
angina, and the wheezing hunger for air,  
so we make our little gifts to the men and women  
outside, without insisting they join us, our remedies  
offered to all.

—Kelley Jean White MD

## AN INNOCENT STROLL

From this point on there is only silence. From my  
house to the beach I've cleared away  
everything.  
Hired musclemen worked from night to morning  
clearing away what was left of the city.  
From here to the sea there is only a long junkyard lying  
motionless and voiceless.

So at dawn I put on my coat and walked out the door  
At such an hour. Not to rebel. Not to repair. And not  
as a prophet wrapped  
In a mantle. I went to inspect my kingdom, an  
innocent stroll  
And to see it suddenly in a different light.

— Admiel Kosman  
Translated by Esther Cameron

## THIS NEW PLACE

I waited for the heat to break  
to walk out into this mauve evening.  
Convex rows of lights distantly gleam  
as the hills layer broadly down to the sea.  
Lupines grow here amidst the thistles  
and just beyond, thickening stands of trees appear.  
I move into a sudden scent of pine  
carried eastward by the breeze. Here and there  
cypress stand erect against the deepening sky.  
In this new place my eyes don't leave the path  
although they want to watch the stars emerge  
and add their glitter from afar.  
The silence of this high open space sings,  
pristine, peaceful, full of promise.

— Erika Zeisel

## THE CENTRAL GOD

This is the central God who is now passing through  
our neighborhood.  
He heals and fixes everything, and he has time in  
abundance, no one  
Pushes any more. Yesterday, today, tomorrow, he  
smiles.  
Now he is the central God who comes as a glazier.

A glazier. A new glazier for repairs. From every  
balcony, all  
Members of the family and the neighbors, they all see  
him now,  
Lean and thin as he is, almost transparent, passing by,  
With complete tranquillity repairing and setting in  
order, oh

You have nothing to worry about, ma'am, everything  
shines  
Now, the windows and the lights, everything  
New and polished, thus the business  
Of life is turning out well,  
For my central God is passing  
As a glazier through our neighborhood.

This is the central, the supreme, the exalted God, and  
he is now passing  
Through our neighborhood as a gardener. With a rake  
and a spade and one broken pail. He  
Weeds and cultivates, on the garden of the neighbor on  
the left he scatters  
An eternal dust of radiance, on the burn-scar of the  
future, of the past, what  
Is there to be afraid of here he smiles

To the old man and the old woman, nothing is  
Too late, you see I have  
Counsel, I have insight, I have  
Forgiveness, I have understanding, and again  
God smiles, this is the central God,  
Of glory, of mists, of angels and the Shekhinah,  
For my people in my neighborhood, who are so tired,  
Yesterday, today, tomorrow.

This is the central God, the highest, the supreme, the  
exalted God,  
Now passing through our neighborhood with a  
wheelbarrow, this is the professional  
God, the plasterer, the molder of grace, the painter  
Of abundance, on the wheelbarrow between the paper-  
rolls and the tiles  
He's also carrying the plasterboard of knowing  
And choice, while this God, thin as he is, the central  
God, the God who fixes, who many  
Years ago poured the foundations of this universe,  
pure and clear, seated  
Upon the cherubim, mighty and dazzling, Lord,  
Creator, Maker, and his voice  
Speaks equity, wrapping himself in light as a cloak,  
this  
God is now passing through my home in complete  
tranquillity,  
Fixing up and setting in good order  
Whatever came by way of transgression.

— Admiel Kosman  
Translated by Esther Cameron



## RESPONSIBLE ADULT

Everybody's looking for that Responsible Adult;  
and when that Responsible Adult  
walks into the room, everyone will know it –  
even the nervous dogs that shy when you make a  
move.

They slink, so you have to sit quietly, minding your  
own business,  
concentrating very gently on your time-consuming  
nemesis.

Then they'll come up to you and check your scent.  
They're like the subdued men in laundromats,  
standing quietly by themselves,  
with their own personal habits and grimaces,  
when a sudden thought or disappointment  
will inflame them; they start up  
in impotent fury, impotent because defused.  
Their anger flares up and dies away.

Everyone is looking for that Responsible Adult,  
and when that One comes,  
even the dogs and old men will know it –  
they most of all –  
and they'll laugh and say,  
"Now we're all really going to get fed!"

– Reuven Goldfarb

[untitled]

How many miracles happened to us in this house:  
That the slippers were always at hand to be put on  
At the threshold, the entrance to the living room.  
That the heap of dirty laundry  
Would whiten, get worn, and return to its heap,  
That the dishes piled themselves in the sink by  
themselves,  
The work of goblins reveling at night.  
The bears still sleep in the beds  
Whenever the children are absent,  
The toothbrushes gossip together,  
The creaking of doors murmurs a heavy song,  
And in all this there is man and there is wife  
There are clothes and there is blessing  
There is overflow and there is sipping  
There is blood and there is a tear  
And a tongue of crimson cloth that whitens every  
evening  
After midnight.

– Efrat Bigman  
translated by Esther Cameron

## MISSILES AND MOLOTOV COCKTAILS

Missiles and Molotov cocktails  
fly across our Gaza border.  
Fire crosses our Syrian border  
while within our borders, terrorists  
set our land aflame  
and maim and kill our daughters and sons.

And yet, doves fly at the Western Wall  
and pigeons coo on our window ledge  
as we mourn and celebrate  
as if we have two hearts.

We love, have babies  
as if we have no battles,  
build families  
as if we have no wars  
and with the hope  
that charges our vision  
we live each day to the full.

– Ruth Fogelman

"HOW GOODLY ARE THY TENTS, O JACOB"  
from Bat Ayin

By October, before the biting winter wind,  
starlings weave twigs  
and leaves in the crook of a tree,  
while the people of Bat Ayin  
are nesting in the distant hills.

From my perch I look through  
the morning mist to the speck of a man  
adding another white slat to his sloping roof,  
leaving an opening for the pipe of the stove  
that will warm them against the cold.

From here I can see the wings  
of his son's white shirt, his daughter's  
pink dress and can hear their laughter  
in harmony with the birdsong  
not far above my head.

Suddenly, a bird flies by me  
with a red thread in his beak,  
so pleased to pleasure his mate  
for something bright to feather her nest.  
I imagine the man has put aside

his hammer and nails, his struggle to make  
the roof secure and tight, to surprise his wife  
with a bouquet of wildflowers from their newly cleared  
front yard. In the midst of sawdust and splinters  
she will improvise a vase in that lovely sunlit space  
and smile.

Meanwhile, high on a mountain in a green tent  
tucked between the cypress, acacia and pine,  
a young soldier, struggling to keep awake,  
was up all night, listening to the jackals howl  
and guarding us, and this rain-sweetened earth.

Weeks ago we lived in makeshift huts.  
Open to the stars, reminding us of what is transient  
and what endures. If, heaven forbid, forces  
stronger than winter winds prevail  
we may be knocked down, but never erased.

Knowing we have enemies beyond these hills  
Who wait for us to assume we are safe, to knock  
these houses down from their stilts, we have named  
this place\* to remind our God, "guard us like the  
precious  
pupil of an eye and shelter us in the shadow of your  
wings."

. . .

I am only looking in and soon  
I will be gone, while you read these lines  
not knowing why I have come,  
what I have tried, and why I am moving on  
before the work is done.  
— Roberta Chester

\*The name "Bat Ayin" means "pupil of the eye."

## HOUSE MEETING

In two high-rise buildings, meetings of residents were  
scheduled  
At the same hour.  
In Building A:  
Do not walk on the grass.  
Do not place bags of garbage beside the dumpsters.  
Do not make noise.  
Do not scratch the elevator with your bicycle.  
Please pay your fees to the house committee.  
In Building B:  
Thank you for the welcome cake delivered to the new  
resident.  
Thank you for the hot meals cooked for the neighbor  
who gave birth.  
Thanks to the neighbor who brings a glass of water to  
the person cleaning the hall.  
Thanks for agreeing to the Shabbat elevator.  
Thanks to all who care.

— Nitsa Dori

## TO DATE

I crossed seven rivers of fire  
Seven Sabbaths and another Sabbath of weeping  
And in my mouth is a taste of rest that was taken away  
at twilight  
And the holy day prayer and the hubbub of children in  
the courtyards  
And there is no breach nor outburst nor wailing in our  
streets.

— Amichai Chasson  
translated by Esther Cameron

from *THE LAND ISEBUTE*: Excerpts Concerning the  
Origin, Location, and Customs of the Land and Its  
Inhabitants

### *How To Reach The Land Isebute*

In the midst of tangled, wintry roads, there is a  
country. Who built the country and when that country  
was built is now forgotten, but one thing has been  
remembered forever: it appeared owing to one's  
imagination and since then it has never ceased to  
develop. The country was generated from a matter that  
has constantly produced new forms, and if you look at  
it from above you would get an impression of a living  
kaleidoscope . . .

. . . If you place yourself closer to the windowpane in  
which wintry ornaments gleam on nightly canvas  
you'll distinguish numerous winding paths leading to  
the Land Isebute. But please, be patient! Don't ask  
which path will bring you faster to Isebute: the way  
itself matters, and in each case this way must be  
unique.

Isebute is a country that cannot be found on the  
regular map. So, if in a wintry night you examine your  
windowpane you may find on its surface a glossy road  
map that shows you the way to this country. Only you  
know how many days and nights you've spent,  
searching for this map and blaming everybody for its  
disappearance . . .

### *The Geography . . . And Requirements For Citizenship*

Another very strange thing about Isebute is that its  
visitors cannot agree on how it looks, and they give  
very conflicting descriptions of its landscape,  
architecture, and even climate. Thus, some of them  
state that Isebute is a mountainous area with harsh  
climate and gothic architecture — a perfect place for  
philosophers and poets. Others insist that this is a land  
of lakes with a landscape of plains and a nice, mild  
weather suitable for dreamers of all kinds. I,  
personally, heard that Isebute was located under a  
special sphere that was created to maintain an artificial  
climate and, thus, increase engineering creativity of its  
citizens.

However, if you really want to know about this country you must refer to poetry. Only in poetry can one find some traces of Isebute, but who takes poetry for a serious source of knowledge? Indeed, if you seek a detailed *information* about this country, you'd better find another source because poetry may only deliver you a *message* and the ability to accept it depends exclusively on you. If you only knew how many readers turned those pages – but nothing happened! They thoroughly read rhymes and words. But in vain! They didn't get the message and they wondered if there was any . . .

. . . To become an Isebuter one must be born with certain qualities, not on a certain territory. One becomes an Isebuter only on condition that he possesses the Isebuter's mentality. Only then he will learn successfully how to speak Isebutish and will be finally considered a native speaker. Otherwise, his heavy accent will give him away. No matter how far from this country you are, if you are born to be an Isebuter you will sooner or later become its citizen: your inner compass is pointed at this country and there is no chance that you'd miss it.

### *The Book Of Isebute*

Have you ever read a book that was written exclusively for you and has been waiting for you for ages? Haven't you? Oh, I see – you doubt that such a book exists. I know. Nevertheless, it does. Ask any Isebuter and he will point at the Bibute – the Book of Isebute, an ancient collection of thoughts written especially for you. Everybody knows this book, but nobody knows what's in there for you because this is what only you should know. And if you don't read it then the lives of generations are wasted . . .

. . . In its preface it states: "This book has been waiting for you for a long, long time. Generations have touched these pages before leaving for their eternal journey, but there has been always an anticipation of You. And now You have come, the Reader of the Bibute. Talk to me. "

### *From The Bibute*

If you think that it is only your place that is capable of generating life, you are wrong. Life is life, and no one could tell you what life is not, because even a divine creature that is supposed to live forever cannot permeate the forbidden zone of non-existence. Otherwise, it wouldn't be the non-existence. Thus, life is everywhere, and it is only a matter of one's definition whether to call it life or something else. Everything starts with definitions. If they claim to be universal, they may one day fail, for one can always elaborate conditions in which general rules don't work.

– Vera Zubarev

### THE FALL

I had been too long in the garden  
an eternity of days stretched before me  
I was ready to be tempted  
to taste the sweetness before the first bite  
I'd often imagined it, seen the fruit  
as if already fallen on the lush grass  
so that the eating itself seemed a lesser evil  
inevitable, almost preordained  
Otherwise, I reasoned, why had the tree  
been placed just so, in the middle of the garden  
if not to delight the eye and mind?  
It was only later, after the storm  
had felled the proud trees  
that I saw the serpent coiled in my heart.

– Dina Yehuda

### CONVERSATION IN A NEGLECTED GARDEN; OR SOCIALISM FROM THE TORAH

The homeowner went down into the garden and sat by the pool.

The garden – it was quite spacious, and the pool could be called a lake or even an ocean – – was not visible from the street; you would not guess its presence behind the modest, slightly neglected house that resembled the other houses in the row. The homeowner was not noticed either when he left the house and walked about the city. No one knew him and no one thought about the fact that they did not know him. They just did not focus on him.

The homeowner sat on the bench and looked around. The place was beautiful. All the plants and bushes and trees were flourishing; and on the lawn and among the trees and in the air the beasts and insects and the birds crept and crawled and flew, for they did not devour each other. There was no trace of the ugliness out there, in the city built on the cursed earth – it looked worse every time he left the house. But here something was missing. Everything was beautiful, just a bit disorganized. There was no one to work the land, plant flowerbeds and orchards. He had no one to talk to. That was why he'd created them; it is not good to be alone.

Deep in thought, he felt a hand on his shoulder and did not have to turn his head to know who the hand belonged to. The one he had created at the beginning of his way, the one who used to play before him. She had left the house long ago, probably wandering around town; he preferred not to think about her doings. But now he did not have the heart to scold her.

"You have to write something," she said without preamble.

Without turning his head, he said, "I already tried that. I gave them what I wrote with my own finger, I gave myself to them, but they preferred their own work."

He heard a slight sigh. "Yes, the old conflict. Even at the start they did not listen to you. They wanted to know for themselves, you gave them free will ..."

"Yes, I gave in to them and let them build the world they wanted ... although it's hard for me to think they really wanted that world ..."

"They lost control," she said. "Their competitiveness ..."

"... starting with Cain and Abel ..." he growled.

"... Their will became divided ... And I think they took some seeds from the tree of knowledge when they left here, they have gone on eating of its fruits ... One invention leads to another, and they have to adapt, and whoever controls the inventions controls the people ..."

"Strange," he mused. "When I told man he would have to earn his bread by the sweat of his brow, I meant it as a curse, but when man is replaced by his machines, the ability to earn his bread becomes a blessing hard to come by."

"You must intervene!"

"But I tried to intervene! I gave them the Sabbath, so that they could recover once a week from the rat – race ... I asked them for sacrifices, I told them over and over that the earth is mine ... I gave them the Sabbatical year to restore a bit of equality. It was supposed to be a mechanism for correcting the tendency toward increasing inequality that's inherent in the economic process. But the mechanism never worked well, and now it is not functioning at all."

"That mechanism was intended to function in an agricultural society ..."

"Yes, to a technological society it no longer seems that relevant. The problem is that they can't take a hint, they don't know how to apply the principles to the new situation, their brains are hostage to that cursed process. They distort the human character by advertising and entertainment, until I no longer recognize My image in them."

There was a long silence. Finally she said, "You know what? You need to write a novel."

"A novel?!"

"Yes, a novel. You have already given them laws, but at present the laws are not being obeyed, or are being distorted. Now you have to tell them a story in which they behave the right way and repair the world. You'll write it so brilliantly, and make the happy end so appealing, that they'll imitate your characters of their own free will."

"You mean a Utopian novel. How many Utopian novels have been written, do you think? They've helped even less than my Torah. And since when have I been a novelist?"

"First of all: shall the Creator be less persistent than the inventors He created?! They persist until they

do the impossible. For hundreds of years they dreamed of a flying machine, until someone managed to invent it. The novel that will show the right way to repair the world has not yet been written. And, of course, you won't write under Your own name. You'll dictate it to me, and I'll give it to some person who will think it's his idea."

"Yes," he said bitterly, "and everyone will be jealous of him."

"If they catch the vision, they will not be jealous."

After another silence, he sighed and said, "Well, let's give it a try. At this point there isn't much to lose." After a few minutes he began to speak in a firm voice, and she took out a notepad and began to write.

"I will take for my hero a genius who has made a fortune in computers. He came from a pious Jewish background, of course he no longer keeps the mitzvot, but before he got off the straight path he learned something. I'll have him do teshuvah."

"How will you get him to do teshuvah?"

"Somehow or other. Maybe his son will commit suicide because he sees no meaning in existence. Maybe he will be diagnosed with a terminal illness and think he does not have much time left to live ... And maybe he will just see the possibility of an amazing work that will be possible if he can correct the distortion, and that will bring him back of his own free will. One fine morning he will wake up with the thought that if mankind has reached a state where almost everything defined as work can be done by a machine, then there is no need for man to work at all, but only to play and take care of his soul. Everything ought to be play!

"Armed with this insight, he starts picking up the hints that I have dropped throughout the tradition. For instance, he is reminded of the eight levels of charity that Maimonides recognized, the higher one is to help a person find work so that he can make a decent living. It turns out that in the present situation, an even higher level is needed: the invention of an economic system that will enable every honest person to make a decent living without needing gifts or exploiting others. He remembers that the whole earth belongs to Me, I created the laws of nature which they are exploiting, and which give the economic process its momentum, and no one has the right to take all the fruits of this process for himself. He thinks about all those games where there are winners and losers, but there are also rules that prevent them from really harming each other, and he thinks: now we need to set rules that will allow people to play the economic game without mutual damage."

"A kind of socialism, is not it?"

"Yes, the socialists have grasped part of my intention ... But the socialism of my hero – I shall call him Yosef, of course – will be improved, sophisticated. The first socialists had a saying: to each

according to his ability, from each according to his need. But for some reason they didn't try to gather information, to find out what the abilities and needs of all the individuals really were. Yosef understands that this is the main task, and it is precisely computers that can help with it — that can store information and match resources and needs.

"He also understands that he can't invent such a system alone. Many minds have to be connected, somewhat the way computers are connected on the Internet, so he decides to fund a huge research institute and recruit people with knowledge and good middot — people who will recognize one other, because that's indispensable to the formation of connections."

"Don't forget to give him a wife," she remarked. "A little extra understanding will come in handy, and every novel needs a love interest."

"And what will she do, his 'woman of valor'?"

"For one thing she will recruit other women — "bnot binah" — to help with the task. And don't forget the poets, they have a holistic sense that could be very useful. Also an eye for the significant detail. \*

"And what about my Torah?"

"What a question! Of course, the first thing your hero will do will be to go back to his old teacher, and perhaps the teacher will find him a wife, or recommend that he remarry the one he divorced before he became religious, and the teacher will also find scholars who will advise the group so they won't recommend anything that goes against the Torah."

He gave a short laugh: "And what shall I do with the wicked?"

For a moment her face fell. "Listen, sometimes I think you should not leave so much up to free will. If you were, for example, to add — or create some mad scientist who would add to the atmosphere some kind of gas that would moderate the hormones a bit...."

"You know what happened when I allowed the sages to slay the evil inclination?! "

"All right, all right, forget I said that." Then, sounding as hopeful as she could: "But even without that, there is strength in the spirit. 'Not by might and not by power but by My spirit.' You had a prophet say that once."

"Yes, I had almost forgotten ... Well, let's say that my Yosef initiates a process, and people understand that it is a great thing that restores meaning to life, and more and more join until the wicked find themselves isolated. Yes, like with the lower waters — if there is enough fresh water the salt water doesn't come in. In the end I made the creative power stronger than the destructive power."

He was silent until she finished writing. "Well," he said, "I think that's it, you can take it."

She took a deep breath. "Now I have to find a writer who can describe all this, in fresh colors and with characters that come to life."

"And don't forget to find readers for the book ... "

"Actually it will be enough if just one person reads it. But you know, you will have to help them a lot. They'll need many miracles."

"Revealed miracles? "

"The hidden ones will be enough, I think."

He gazed around him for a moment and then rose to accompany her. "Who knows, maybe someday I'll have some company here again. And then you'll come back too?"

"Of course."

— Esther Cameron

\*For a "Utopia of poets," see "The Hexagon" and "The Hexagon Foundation," [www.pointandcircumference.com](http://www.pointandcircumference.com). Also see the epic poem *The Consciousness of Earth* (available on Amazon).

## WHO WILL BUILD ME A HOUSE IN JERUSALEM?

### Who will build the house in Jerusalem?

We, the architects, in whose desk drawers  
Are blueprints for column, gate and crown of glory.  
We will draft courtyards from the Tractate of  
Measurements

A palace the eye will never be sated with seeing.

### Who will build the house in Jerusalem?

We, the sages, the teachers of teachings,  
Who sit in study halls toiling in Torah,  
We shall meditate on the laws of the sanctuary  
To gain for the people the treasure of purity.

### Who will build the house in Jerusalem?

We, who come up to rejoice on the holy mountain,  
Barefoot as beggars on three pilgrim feasts,  
And with the groans and hot tears of our prayers  
(Disguised, out of fear, as friendly conversation)  
We're digging foundations in earth unforgotten

### Who will build the house in Jerusalem?

We who live in two-thousand-year exile  
Mourning the loss of the house on stone pavements  
Praying to see Your return in compassion  
We will gather the memory of those years  
And build it into the dwelling of delight

### Who will build the house in Jerusalem?

We, the youth who give gladness  
To your special children, encourage them  
And comfort their pain. From the stocks of suffering  
We'll make the scaffolding for the construction.

### Who will build the house in Jerusalem?

We, who embroider the curtains with threads,  
Who grind flour for offerings and spices for incense,  
Who act as guides on the path to the mount,  
From the beauty and might of our faith and trust  
We'll pour the foundations for the building.

**Who will build the house in Jerusalem?**

We, the little children  
 Who lend a hand to their fathers and brothers  
 By singing Psalms in mighty chorus.  
 The breath of our mouths and the echo of our skipping  
 Raise walls and hoist banners for the garden of God.

**Who will build the house in Jerusalem?**

We who spin dreams with innocent mind,  
 Who write poems with pure intention,  
 Who depict the city in radiant sunlight,  
 We will restore the spirit in splendor  
 To the cynic soul so wrinkled and lightless

**Who will build the house in Jerusalem?**

We, the pioneers of high-tech,  
 Who formulate algorithms from the valley of chips  
 We'll set up virtualeality on the mountains  
 And in vehicles driven by no careless driver  
 We'll bring to You all who desire to ascend

**Who will build the house in Jerusalem?**

We, the young leaders  
 Who believe in "Jerusalem light to the nations, "  
 Who after exile stand straight and proud  
 We'll bring the prophets' words to fruition

**Who will build the house in Jerusalem?**

We, the women who make the homes of beauty.  
 Who sing cradle songs for temple and holiness,  
 Who raise sons to fight for the land,  
 We'll catch in vessels the tears of parenthood  
 And ignite them as incense in the inmost place.

**Who will build the house in Jerusalem?**

We, the soldiers crowned with courage and humility,  
 Who guard Your walls and fight in Your name,  
 Who swear loyalty to Your people at the Wall,  
 In Your holiest name we will doff our uniforms  
 And don the robes of Levite and priest

**Who will build the house in Jerusalem?**

I'll build the house, My children,  
 For your thought is most pleasing in My sight,  
 I will take your words for bricks  
 And your children for priests.  
 Behold thus says the Lord, the living God  
 From the words of my twelve tribes  
 In the city of the redeemed I will build My palace.

— Ricky Yuval  
 translated by Esther Cameron

**DESERT SPELL**

The magic of it all —  
 from the goat's hair and sweet scent,  
 two cherubs fashioned from one ball,  
 flapping their wings as we repent  
 by the desert tabernacle tent.

We've come in silent stealth  
 to catch a glimpse, to be uplifted  
 by an interior overlaid with wealth,  
 gathered in Egypt while none resisted  
 the holiness for which it existed.

The gold rimmed ark  
 with its blue purple veil,  
 brass corner horns iridescent in the dark,  
 so brazen in their appeal  
 for the Lord of Hosts' seal.

But we must not lose sight  
 of the cause of so much wonder —  
 the six branched menorah light  
 that illuminates every blunder  
 so we won't be led asunder...

'til the House of All Peoples can emerge,  
 'til the pathways of peace converge.

— Leah Gottesman

**TOMORROW**

It's another country upon a map  
 I draw upon a page in the future,  
 take a pencil let the lines reach. There,  
 carefully draft the outlines, wrap

each place with imaginary scenes,  
 anything at all that comes to mind,  
 sometimes. Perhaps a dream to remind  
 me of what I thought that redeems

the days that got lost. Make up for the past,  
 for the errors that I made. Recoup  
 the moments that fell away. Out of the loop  
 onto surer shores, to be free. At last,

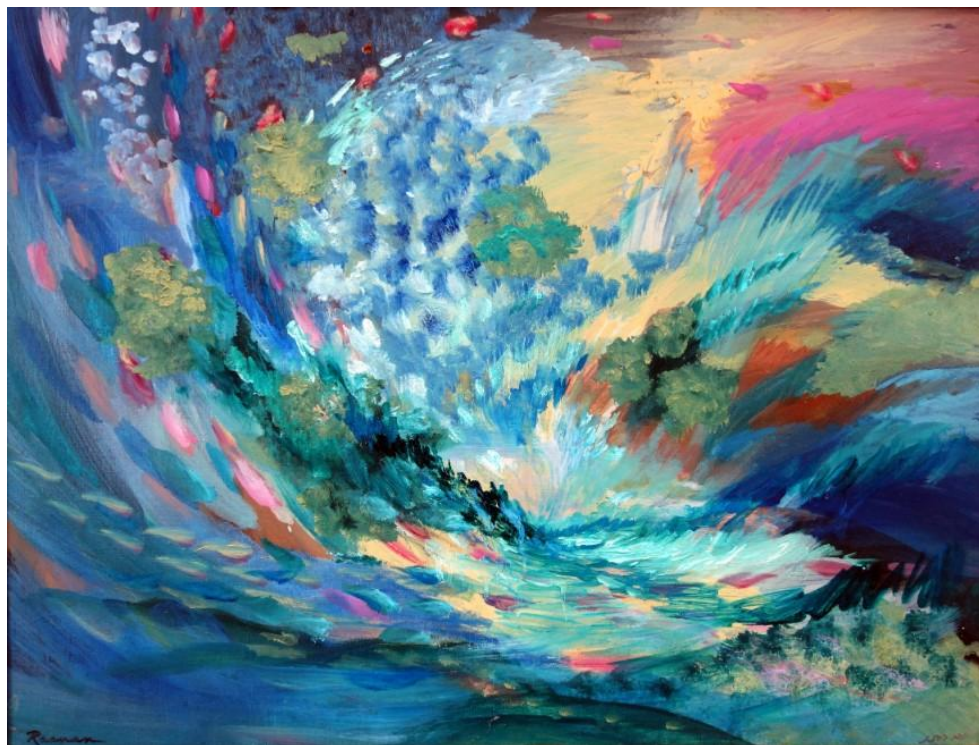
maybe, in a place, reorganize. Regroup  
 for a while, though I know it's not the first stop.

— Zev Davis



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Yoram Raanan, *Gan Eden Lyrical*, 2017, oil on board, 60 x 80 cm

*Cool, soothing blues and greens, contrasting with creamy yellows and pink, convey a sense of purity and simplicity, energy and vitality, and hint at a luscious verdant garden with life-giving water, a place of perception and enjoyment of light. —Meira Raanan*

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### IN THE GARDEN OF EDEN

In the Garden of Eden  
 time stands still.  
 The realm of the external blends  
 into the realm of the internal  
 with ease.  
 All is calm in the Universe  
 All is One.

In the Garden of Eden  
 time stands still.  
 The domain of the transient merges  
 into the domain of the permanent  
 with harmony.  
 All is tranquil in the Universe  
 All is one with G-d.

In the Garden of Eden  
 time stands still.  
 The world of the material unites  
 into the world of the spiritual  
 with peace.  
 All is serene in the Universe  
 All is one with G-d Who is One.  
 —Simcha Angel