

The Department of English Language & Literature University of Haifa Spring 2024 Newsletter



Greetings from the Department Chair



Our times seem to flow in disruptive spurts of motion and waiting, with the first semester taking forever to begin but over before we knew it. Now, still mid-exams, we've begun a second semester, only to stop for the long break and begin again. Nevertheless, as the world rages around us, I am delighted to offer welcome as we go back into the classroom to perform normality, to read together, and to think together.

This semester we have an exciting program of events scheduled. These include writing marathons, translation retreats, poetry readings, book launches, and more. So many of these activities have been made possible through the Cable Car Project

donation and I want to take this opportunity to thank Ms. Anne Germanocos for her very generous sponsorship that seeks to help us create new and more opportunities for shared endeavor over literature. Finally, I want to extend a warm welcome to our newest colleague in the department, Dr. Andrew Gorin, and wish him the best of luck making this his new home.

I wish us all a timeline that starts making sense, a manageable semester, and a very happy Spring.

Words from the Previous Department Chair

Throughout my five years as the Chair of the English Department, I always wanted to be asked one question, which would go something like this: "Ayelet, what is your secret? What is it that makes a good Department Chair?"

Since, during all this time, no-one came forth to ask this of me, I will use this opportunity to pose it to myself. In my mind, I would always lean back in my armchair, and say, "Well, it really is quite simple. All you need are three things:

(1) Brilliant and dedicated colleagues, who care about their students, who look out for each other, who laugh (and cry) together.
(2) Awesome students – who come to learn and to play, to write and to read; students



who ask good questions, and are never satisfied with an easy answer.
(3) Most importantly, superb administrators – I'm looking at you, Hila Heinemann, and before her Sharon Orenstien-Shahak – who were my partners in this common endeavor of ours."

Graced with far more than my fair share of all of those things, I can lean back into my armchair and thank you all for everything, I could not have made it through these years without you!

Nice to meet...

Dr. Andrew Gorin

We are excited to welcome Dr. Andrew Gorin to the department this spring. Dr. Gorin comes to us from Brooklyn, New York, where he's lived for the past fifteen years. His research focuses on twentieth- and twenty-first century American literature and culture, with interests in multi-ethnic and queer experimentalisms, poetry and poetics, new media, environmental humanities, and critical theory. He's completing a book on post-1945 North American poetry and the massification of the public sphere. He's also a creative writer, and would love to talk with you about the intersection of the humanities and social and environmental justice. When not at his desk, he enjoys running, climbing, swimming and a few other stationary forms of recreation, such as reading science fiction novels and eating very spicy food.

Dr. Bar Leshem

Hil I am Bar. I recently received my doctorate degree in art history from the Department of Arts at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev. I have two main research interests. The first is 16th-century Italian art, with an emphasis on gender, domestic art, and the intersection between art and science. My second research interest lies in Comics Studies, in which I am currently a Postdoc under the supervision of Dr. Keran Omry within the research group "Paradigms of Pop." I have a profound passion for almost everything related to geek culture - including sci-fi and fantasy books, TV, movies, comic books and much more. I host a podcast on the subject of comics (<https://podcasters.spotify.com/pod/show/underwear-comics>) where my podcast partner, Priel Cohanim, and I delve into everything related to comic books, comics studies, and comic book movies and tv. You can learn more about my research on my academia.edu page (<https://bgu.academia.edu/BarLeshem>). I am very interested in academic collaborations, so please feel free to reach out if my research interests align with yours!

Dr. Ya'ara Notea

Hi everyone! I'm a postdoctoral fellow in the department, working with the "Paradigms of Pop" research group. My work focuses on American literature, popular culture, literary form and genre, and gender. I recently completed my PhD in English and American Studies at King's College London, where my dissertation showed that popular American girls' books from the twentieth century—such as the Little House and Baby-Sitters Club series—mediate national crises, anxieties, and needs by creating contradictory temporalities and experiences of time. My postdoctoral project examines the books popularized by BookTok (TikTok's reading community) during the COVID-19 pandemic. I also teach at Tel Aviv University and work for two academic journals (*Journal of American Studies* and *Poetics Today*). I live in Kfar Saba with my partner, eight-month old son, and three lazy cats.

Congratulations

Congratulations to **Dr. Yosefa Raz** on publishing her book *The Poetics of Prophecy: Modern Afterlives of Biblical Tradition* (Cambridge University Press, 2023), and on getting tenure.

Congratulations to **Dr. Irina Rudiakov** for the successful completion of her PhD dissertation, "Fixt Fate, Free Will: John Milton's *Paradise Lost* in the Prism of Structural Approaches to Family," under Professor Noam Flinkler's supervision.

Congratulations to **Dr. Zoe Beenstock** for being awarded the ISF workshop grant for her project, "Levant Antiquarianism in European History and Literature."

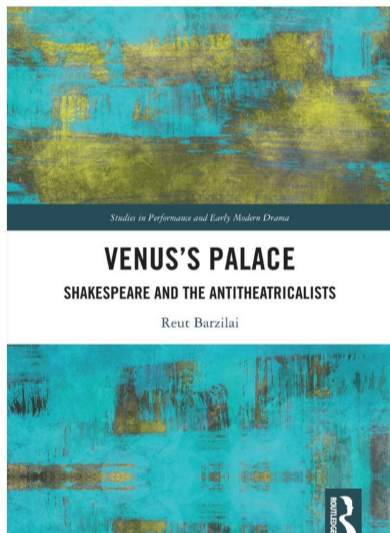
Department Events

Haifa Reads Plays ... A Midsummer Night's Dream

In honor of the 400th anniversary of the publication of Shakespeare's First Folio, the 6th Annual Haifa Reads event, held on January 29, 2024, underwent a unique transformation, becoming Haifa Plays.

Over 150 students and faculty members congregated for a celebration of theater focused on *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. We began with a talk on Shakespeare's First Folio, and then brought Shakespeare's text to life in a professional acting workshop designed specifically for students. Following a break for pizza, the second part of the event marked the publication of Dr. Barzilai's *Venus's Palace* and concluded with a faculty production of "Pyramus and Thisbe".

Preparations for our 7th Annual Haifa Reads event are already underway. We look forward to seeing you there.



Our Poetry Events

We had a number of different events this year for poetry/creative writing. We held a zoom workshop called "Singing in Dark Times" where we wrote together about our new and strange reality during October and November, and kept each other company through it all. Some of the beautiful poems written in the workshop were sent in a 'zine to all of the English department's students, together with some other treats. Later on we held two in-person events at "Poetry Place" in the Talpiyot market which included creative writing led by Dr. Yosefa Raz, reading workshops read by Reem Mansour and Marianna Akawi, movement, and yummy snacks. Gabriel Levine read his poetry and talked about translation in an intimate and special event to our first year class, and we are looking forward to resuming student open mics in June.

SKILL: Storing Knowledge in Language and Literature

On February 28, Dr. Lewin held a national conference in Eshkol Tower on bridging the gap between English instruction at the secondary and higher education levels. Titled SKILL: Storing Knowledge in Language and Literature, its sessions focused on teaching English and American literature, oral skills, writing, and vocabulary. The event was attended by over 100 teachers, Ministry of Education officials, faculty members, and many English and education students and featured several speakers from our department (Dr. Feldman, Professor Emerita Batia Laufer, and Ms. Jenny Wale) as well as others such as keynote Ilana Blumberg (Bar Ilan), Dr. Roseanne Kheir Farraj (PhD '19; Max Stern Yezreel Valley College), and Dr. Dara Barnat (TAU). [The program page is here.](#) The conference was cosponsored by the Faculty of Humanities and CJP's Haifa-Boston Partnership.



From the Press

In an article for *Calcalist*, Prof. Ayelet Ben-Yishai delves into the way literature and the study of literature can help us deal with emergency situations. In the article, Prof. Ben-Yishai explains, among other things, how literary genres and works of literature can influence the way we view the real world, how we respond to it, and how we react in emergency situations and crises.

[Click here to read the full article](#)

Future Events... Save the Date!

Save the date for these upcoming departmental events:

- Join us on **May 28th** in celebrating the publication of Dr. Yosefa Raz's book *The Poetics of Prophecy: Modern Afterlives of Biblical Tradition*. See poster below for further details.

The Department of English Language and Literature

Please join us in celebrating the publication of **Yosefa Raz's**

The Poetics of Prophecy
Modern Afterlives of Biblical Tradition
Cambridge University Press 2023

Tuesday, May 28th, 14:15 - 15:45
Beit HaStudent, Lecture Hall 101, University of Haifa

Panel Discussion
Zoe Beenstock
University of Haifa
Ed Greenstein
Bar-Ilan University
Yael Fisch
Hebrew University
Respondent: **Yosefa Raz**
University of Haifa

Poetry Reading
Neomi Hashmonai
Yosefa Raz

Reception

- Join us for the department's annual Colloquium, which will be held on **June 20th**, 12:00-17:00, in Hall 0 - Student Building.

- A departmental seminar is coming up, and will be held over Zoom on **June 25th**. Prof. Adam Potkay will speak on "Concordia Discors at World's End: Pope, Voltaire, Wordsworthy".