

Newsletter

Spring 2025

Words from the Chair

It's has been far too long since the last newsletter so buckle your seatbelts, a lot has happened! To say that last semester was *complicated* is to understate the madness of our day-to-day. The semester began with a fizzle as it was postponed and then cautiously opened on zoom, moved to hybrid, and until finally entering the classroom. Many in our community are still reeling from loss or are displaced, and dealing with the reality of war in innumerable ways. Alongside this, however, the past few months have strengthened my conviction that what we do here on the 16th floor matters. Thinking critically, challenging one another with new ideas, recognizing beauty, and exercising language; these practices build community across difference and through literature. This community would be forever lost at sea were it not for our administrative anchor and I want to take this opportunity to thank Sharon Klein and Ora Vogach who stepped up and to welcome Or-El Aroshas who has now stepped in and is taking charge. I am hopeful for the new semester and wish us all better, safer, easier days. In the meantime, wishing each and all Ramadan Mubarak, a blessed Lent, and happy Purim.



Nice to meet...

Ms. Or-El Aroshas



Hi everyone! I am Or-El, the new department administrator. For the last few years, before joining the English Department, I worked in the Dean of Students' office within the Academic Excellence unit as an academic counselor for students from diverse population groups. I also coordinated unique scholarship programs for students and supervised a team of private and group tutors within the unit's academic support program. I Graduated from the University of Haifa, majored in Psychology & Learning, Instruction and Teacher Education and later on completed my B.Ed. in Psychology instruction. In my spare time, aside from resting, I enjoy writing and reading (with a soft spot for poetry!), spending time in nature and traveling, and getting to know different cultures and learning new languages.

Dr. Inna Kizhner

Hello, I am Inna Kizhner and I am a postdoc at the department, with Dr. Zoe Beenstock, doing work on the concepts of antiquarianism, colonialism and the reception of the Biblical East in British newspapers from the 18th-early 19th centuries. My research is data-driven, and it is focused on the limitations of analysis at scale applied to digitized collections of cultural heritage from memory institutions. I am also interested in the history of Digital Humanities. I edited a translated volume of seminal papers in the field, used as a textbook for undergraduate



programmes, and I published a co-authored chapter on the history of Digital Humanities in Russia. I focused on the traditions of formalism and structuralism stemming from the Moscow Linguistic Circle and disseminated by Roman Jakobson in Europe and the United States. The chapter also looks at the traditions of studying complexity and coping with uncertainty in Russian sciences at the end of the 20th century as a possible inspiration for Digital Humanities. I like listening to classical music, such as Mozart, Shubert, and Mahler, spending time with my family, and enjoying trips to nature.

Congratulations

Congratulations to **Ms. Reem Mansour** for being awarded the *Science Fiction Research Association's* Support a New Scholar Fellowship.

Congratulations to **Ms. Simone Altounian** and **Ms. Marah Deeb** for being awarded the prestigious Council for Higher Learning (*vatat*) scholarship for excellence in MA students from the Arab community.

Congratulations to the essay prize winners for 2023-24:

Mr. Moe Shaheen (BA): " 'I say God is Dead!': Mastering Nihilism in Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*."

Ms. Shorug Mhamed (MA): "Being Human: Ashtar's *Richard II* at The Globe."

Hot off the presses...

Ben-Yishai, Ayelet. "Against Inevitability: Genre and Crisis in Palestine/Israel." *Cultural Politics* 1 November 2024; 20 (3): 472–484. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1215/17432197-11321317>

----- Interview with Amir Ziv. *Calcalist*. 9 May 2024. <https://newmedia.calcalist.co.il/magazine-09-05-24/m02.html>

Feldman, Alex. "The Beatitude of the Berrigans: Jurisprudential Drama and the Poetics of Martyrdom". In: Mukherji, S., Roberts, D. (eds) *Literature and the Legal Imaginary. Crossroads of Knowledge in Early Modern Literature*, vol 4. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham. 2025. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-74093-0_14

Gorin, Andrew. "Of Lyric Proportions: Poetry and the Genres of Climate-Change Communications." *Textual Practice*, vol. 39, no. 1, 2025, pp. 1–22.

Lewin, Jennifer. "Dreaming and Sleeping in the Children's Poetry of Laura E. Richards," *European Journal of American Studies*, vol. 19, no. 4, 2024. <https://doi.org/10.4000/12was>

Luzon, Danny. "[Vibrant Matter Writing: Ecology and Ethics in the Writings of Shimon Adaf and Ralph Waldo Emerson](#)." *OT: A Journal of Literary Criticism and Theory* 12, October 2024. [Hebrew]

Omry, Keren. "Allotropes and Speculative Obligation: SF in Southern Africa." *Science-Fiction Studies*. Vol. 51, pp. 400-415. 2024. <https://doi.org/10.1353/sfs.2024.a938531> .

Raz, Yosefa. "Ahad Ha'am's Cultural Zionism: Moses in the Shadow of Jeremiah and Muhammad." *TheTorah.com* <https://www.thetorah.com/article/ahad-haams-cultural-zionism-moses-in-the-shadow-of-jeremiah-and-muhammad>. Accessed March 9th, 2025.

----- "Trump fever" [in Hebrew]. *Hazman Hazeh*, November 2024, https://hazmanhazeh.org.il/trump_fever/ Accessed March 9th, 2025.

Events to Remember:

Haifa Reads: *Parable of the Sower* by Octavia Butler

This year our annual Haifa Reads event, held January 8, 2025, focused on Octavia Butler's *Parable of the Sower*. Over 100 students, faculty members, and alumni gathered to imagine utopia together. We began with a talk that contextualized the novel, tracing the trajectory from dystopia to hope. We then saw the novel recontextualized in its adaptation to a graphic novel, thinking about narrative, art, and adaptation. This was followed by a dynamic faculty-roundtable that demonstrated an array of approaches. Finally, after a concluding talk that situated *Parable* within Afrofuturism, we ended the event with a delectable buffet lunch, with thanks to the generosity of Ms. Anne Germanacos and the Cable Car Project donation.



Poster design by Jonathan Wasserman

Poetry Evenings

The department's annual Poetry Reading Series, now in its sixth year, held two exciting and successful events this past semester. On December 11, 2024, we welcomed Charles Bernstein, Regan Professor Emeritus at the University of Pennsylvania, and Jen Jabaily Blackburn, award-winning poet, who read and discussed their poetry on zoom to over seventy students, faculty, and guests. They were joined by several student readers in the second half of the evening, which was also student-led. We were fortunate to host the second poetry reading of the year, on January 22, 2025, in person, with invited guest poets Annie Kantar and Lily Shehady, whose numerous publications include the recent work they shared on the theme of translation in relation to Hebrew and Arabic; student poets again presented their poems afterward in a session capably and energetically organized by our new student committee. Both readings were generously sponsored by Anne Germanacos through the Cable Car Project.

Study Hall

On February 6th, as students were preparing for the first semester's exams and starting work on their proseminar and seminar papers, the English Department held its second Study Hall in the Rabin Observatory. Under the guidance of our exceptionally talented and generous graduate students—Jenny Wale, Reem Mansour, Tom Cohen and Sara Badran—roughly forty BA students, from across the year-groups, attended, studied, worked collaboratively, ate heartily, and benefited from the expertise of their more advanced peers. The department was also fortunate to benefit from oversight of faculty members, Ayelet Ben-Yishai, Keren Omry, Yosefa Raz, and Ayelet Langer, from Tom Cohen's inestimably valuable efforts in coordinating the event, and Or-El's expert administration. The Study Hall fostered a spirit of studious enquiry and of sociability, to the credit of our students who participated. We look forward to the next one!



National Library



A small group of students and faculty went to Jerusalem to meet Anne Germanacos, who is generously sponsoring the Cable Car Project in our department. Anne is also a donor to the Israel National Library, and invited us to participate in a dedication ceremony of a new, multi-faith prayer room. From the students: "The opening of the Anne Hymes Germanacos Prayer Room was an experience beyond words. As we and our professors read poetry in Arabic, English, Hebrew,

Italian, and more, the essence of prayer transcended linguistic barriers. In that sacred space, language was no obstacle — each voice, each word carried the same essence, reminding us that the divine listens not to language but to intention, echoing across all tongues, all hearts, in a universal harmony beyond speech." In addition to new and wonderful poems read by Reemy Shehadah, Areen Knany, Amit Ben Ami, and Hadeel Majdoub, we also read from a collaborative translation project, which combined fragments of translations with images designed by Anne. Come check out the poetry translation tapestry, which will be hung on the 16th floor very soon!



Future Events... Save the Date!

Look out for emails with details on the upcoming departmental events:

- ❖ **Departmental Seminars:**
 - April** Noam Reisner, Tel-Aviv University
 - June** Marta Usiekiewicz, University of Warsaw
 - Eitan Bar-Yosef, Ben-Gurion University
- ❖ **Annual Colloquium: May 6**
- ❖ **Poetry Reading: June 25**

Check it out!

We are delighted to invite you to our new book nook on the 16th floor. With warm thanks to the generous donations of Professor Daphna Erdinast-Vulcan and Professor Bill Freedman, you are invited to visit the nook, to sit and read quietly, to peruse and borrow from the collections of our emeriti.

