

or not—to keep shaping us, assimilating into the space to become part of the personal and collective narratives.

The lyrical space provided by the poems deepens and enriches the dialogue between the women, expanding the insight into nomadism, wandering, and the survey of different ways to experience change, search, and lingering. In her poem *Over There*, **Tamar Shine** unfolds on a journey of hopes that fulfill themselves, a voyage that fluctuates between wishes and reality, distant travels and intimate moments.

In the poem *Distances*, **Sabina Messeg**, a pioneer of eco-poetry in Israel, relates to the journey as a state of consciousness. Her travels on public transportation become a porthole through which she observes the passing world—image by image. Sometimes an insight emerges, sometimes a poem is born, but the essence of the experience lies in her surrender to movement, to daydreaming.

On February 15, 2024, at 8:05 AM Israeli time, **Lali Michaeli's** poem *My Mom* was launched to the moon as part of a joint project by NASA and SpaceX to preserve human cultural assets. The time capsule included over a hundred poems in various languages by poets worldwide. Michaeli described the launch as her spiritual DNA performing an act of intergalactic migration in a futuristic spacecraft, expanding her spiritual existence as a time traveler. In the poem, the mother, going to the movies, wanders from the world of reality into the realms of the imagination, leaving her daughter transitional objects—a spiraled chair and stars—vehicles to fulfill her own dreams along life's routes of wandering.

As the Road Reveals Itself, the Spirit Awaits

Photopoetics 14

28.3.25 – 16.5.25

Musrara Art Gallery

Canada House, 22 Shivtei Israel St., Jerusalem

Sunday–Thursday 10:00–17:00 | musrara.co.il



As the Road Reveals Itself, the Spirit Awaits

**Hadas Duchan, Inbal Hoffman, Dana Lev Levnat
Sabina Messeg, Lali Michaeli, Tamar Shine**

Curator: Tali Romem

Nomadism is a state of motion, where at times it is the body that traverses space, and at others, the soul, memory, or gaze embarks on a journey. Nomadism is not merely a geographical transition from one place to another, but also moments of longing and surrender to the spirit, which anticipates the next step. It is a sense of connection to the fleeting nature of human experience, where each step is both a search and a change, confronting the uncertainty of life's transience.

The exhibition brings together works by female artists and poets who experience nomadism and wandering not only as a physical reality but as a space of thought, identity, and desire. The artworks and poems offer a chronicle of a search—a path unknown in advance, evidence of ongoing progress. The spirit, moving ahead of them, symbolizes that which exists before the path is ever revealed. Each work offers a journey of discovery, in which not only the path itself is unveiled, but also the being shaped by experiences, insights, and emotions.

Nomadism carries intricate meanings, whether a movement by choice or necessity, driven by a longing for another place or the feeling that the journey itself is home. The nomad experiences the world through a double gaze: observing it, while simultaneously experiencing the world observing her. Boundaries blur, becoming dynamic, expanding between experiences of closeness and distance, between belonging and onlooking, perhaps even loneliness. The journey may appear adventurous, but at times, it is a constant state of instability, a search for an anchor point that will not always be found. But within movement lies freedom, the ability to change, to reinvent oneself, and transcend the place dictated to us in advance.

A woman's wanderings differ from a man's. While history is filled with tales of wandering men—explorers, soldiers, and seafarers—women's wanderings were often seen as deviations from the social order, with female wanderers labeled as eccentric or pitiable. Men wandered in search of power, conquest, or exploration, whereas women often wandered out of coercion, flight, or a longing for a space in which to live differently. Still, female wanderings are not movement born solely due to lack of choice, but rather out of conscious decision—a journey fueled by curiosity, freedom, and the desire to formulate a new language of movement. Some seek not just to escape the domestic sphere, but to define a new home—fluid, temporary, evolving through movement. The nomadic female body—visible, judged, and sometimes even threatened—distinguished her journey from that of a man, transforming it into a statement, a political act that challenges society's boundaries.

The exhibition was inspired by the book *The Wandering of a Daughter of Israel: Memories, Travels, and Encounters* (1935) and its author, **Schlomith Frieda Flaum**—a pioneer, educator, journalist, author, and adventurer. Born in the late 19th century, Flaum defied the expectations of women in her time. For nearly twenty years, between the two World Wars, she traveled alone across the globe, forging connections at every stop, offering the world a portrait of a unique female nomad. In her book *The Forgotten Traveler: Schlomith Flaum—Her Life and Work* (2005), **Prof. Nurit Govrin**, who researched Flaum's life and work, described her as the first Hebrew traveler to write a travelogue in Hebrew—likely the first autobiography of a woman in Hebrew.

In her writing, Flaum not only documented the road; she sought to assimilate into it, turning wandering into a language all her own. Her daring, curiosity, and willingness to cross physical and social boundaries spark the imagination and curiosity about the figure of the nomadic woman who pushes boundaries. The book holds illustrations by Flaum herself alongside vivid descriptions of her travels and human encounters, some with prominent, influential figures. At the same time, both her book and Prof. Govrin's research reveal the painful personal story of a woman who felt at home in her wanderings but was labeled eccentric and rejected in Israel. Despite her contributions to Hebrew education in Israel, Flaum was unappreciated in her lifetime. She died lonely, and her figure was forgotten. In 2019, a new edition of her book was published (under the *Poetic Justice* series by Ra'av Publishing), but Flaum still remained largely anonymous.

Since 2013, **Dana Lev Levnat** has been living as a nomad, traveling the world with only personal belongings and cameras. She began her photography project *Permanent Vacation*, shared on social media, and recently launched *At Least I Saw the World*, a sub-project showcasing her analog photographs. In contrast to the relative immediacy of publishing digital photography, her film rolls are

carried throughout her travels in her backpack, and are only developed and scanned when she returns to Israel. In a reality of constant nomadism, without a permanent home or many possessions, the films become tangible objects, akin to "mobile treasures," layered with memories. Her photographs in *What I Have Seen is Mine* accumulate into a personal map, documenting places around the world, yet remaining unfixed in time and space. Some capture distant, open landscapes, while others offer glimpses into private homes and domestic interiors, where intimacy and a sense of a more prolonged stay are discernible. Some are damaged, wet, or worn, bearing the traces of the journey. Through photography, Levnat's wanderings transcend a mere lifestyle, becoming an existential state. Her movement becomes charged with meaning, sensitivity, and continuous search, where reality often feels dreamlike, almost surreal.

Hadas Duchan's work explores nomadism as an ongoing movement between times, places, memories, and identities. Through objects, materials, and impressions collected between 2014 and 2021—stones originating in the Andes, drawings from Prague, dried plants from Peru, and embroidery learned in the Amazon—she creates a space where memory is neither fixed nor linear, but fluctuating, shuffled and rewoven. Much like a journey, the work too outlines a process of discovery, blurring the lines between the familiar and the unknown. Duchan delves into the interrelations between body and mind while in motion, probing the objects, memories, and insights we collect along the way, as well as those we leave behind. Her work *The Fluctuation of Memory, The Movement of Time* is not only a documentation of a journey, but a material and emotional exploration of being in motion—a process of erasure, connection, and surrender to the fleeting moments that leave their mark and reshape the path.

For **Inbal Hoffman**, home is a space where the lines between reality and imagination blur. It is a place of stability and routine, but also a space that invites exploration, a search for unknown possibilities. Home is not merely a place of daily commitments, but an arena for imagination and fantasy, where routine and adventure intersect. Within the everyday, the ability to see the world anew emerges—to view the familiar as foreign and transform the mundane into the fantastic; a place where every object can become part of a new imaginary adventure. Hoffman's work is not a call to escape, but a means of re-examining the domestic space itself—regarding it not only as an anchor but as a site of changing possibilities, discovery, and adventure in the daily routine. The exhibition presents excerpts from the exhibition *Flash Drive* (2018), where Hoffman created imaginary landscapes from household objects. These installations reappear in *Flashback Drive* as traces of an unrealized journey, which endure through the images and objects that survived. Just as we hang pictures of our travels at home, these images are more than records of fleeting moments—they are part of an ongoing process of memory-building, blurring the line between past and present, reality and fantasy. They allow the journey—whether it happened