



גענעזיס לאחמול, עיד בגשם, צילום של נינו הרמן

מבחר מאמרים על יצירתה של נטליה גינצבורג: יהודית קציר, דנה פריבך-חפץ, ציפי בידון-לויין
זיוה שמיר על האוהב שהיה לאויב, קנאות וקניינים ביחסי ביאליק ועגנון
תרגום חדש של שמעון לוי ל"הלב המלשן" מאת אדגר אלן פו, סיפור חדש מאת אשר רייך,
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ציפי שחרור, יערה בן דוד, צביקה שטרנפלד, אלישבע זוהר-רייך, אביב טלמוד, שרון הנוקד
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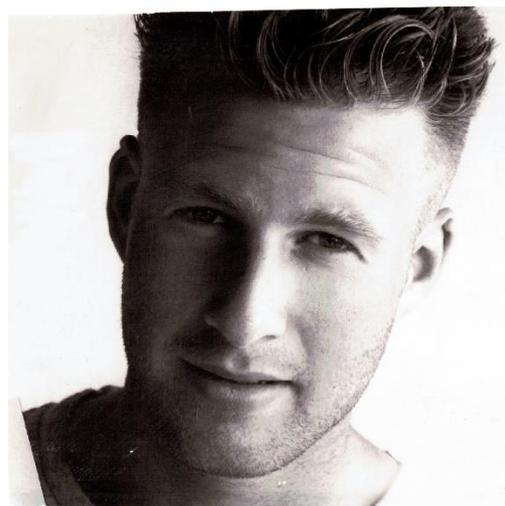
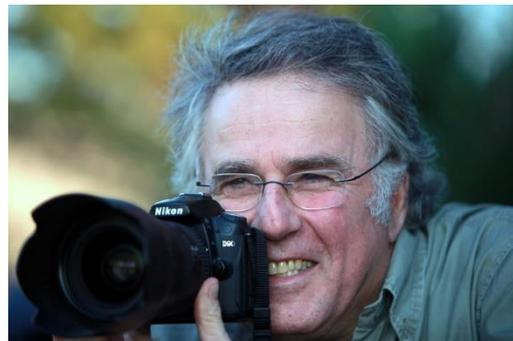
Behind the Cover

Marlyn Vinig

The cover of *Freestyle Panic* is an image taken by photographer Nino Herman. Behind the scenes of this photograph is a mysterious friendship connecting the living to the dead. The writer of the book, poet Marlyn Vinig, and cover photographer, Nino Herman, engaged in a touching conversation on the ties and spaces enabling creation, and how much they both miss Nino's son, Yair

"Every frame in Nino Herman's photographs is cinematographic, and the emerging image gives us a live story. The characters he chose to photograph, and the moments in which he captures them, have an air of youth and passion for life. Each picture has unique aesthetics and emotional power that compel you to look longer. Beauty is all around us, we are surrounded by it, all we need is artists like Nino to remind us of it", is how director and producer Danny Siton accurately describes the work of Nino (Hananya) Herman.

I discovered Nino as a person, rather than Yair's dad, in recent years. His son, Yair Herman, was in class with me at the Jerusalem Experimental (Nisui) High School until 10th grade, before

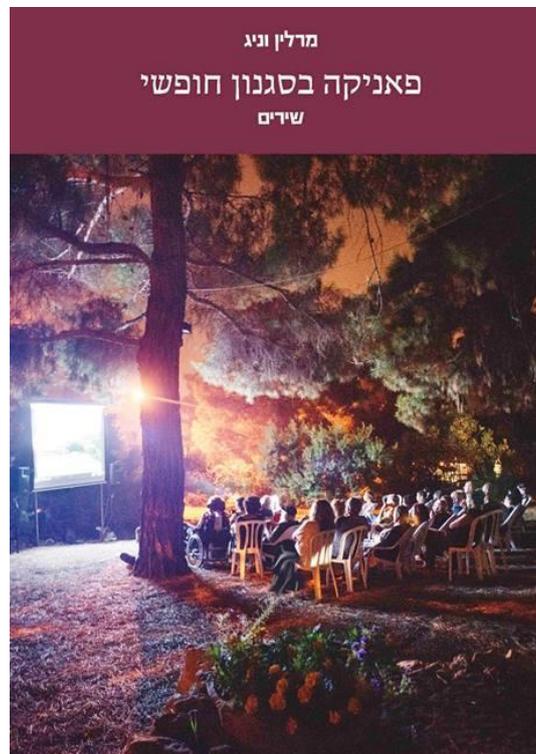


Above: Nino Herman

Below: Nino's late son, Yair

transferring to the Arts Academy. He was a beautiful boy wearing a constant smile, brimming with kindness, and nicknamed Clinton in jest by his friends due to his great resemblance to the former United States president. Yair was a cinema lover, friendly and fluent. There were indescribable beauty and naïveté about him. I will never forget the merry party held at his house where I met one of his friends, Erez, whom I had later married. I continued to meet Yair throughout my military service, when he served as a military photographer, and I as a reporter for the IDF newspaper, *HaMahane*. Yair Herman (1980–2000) lost his life in an unfortunate car accident in 2000. To this day, it seems that the anguish over his passing has trickled into every one of his father, Nino's, works.

In my early 20s I worked for Channel 2 News. It was a wonderful opportunity to visit Yair's parents, Nino and Tchiya, living in Nataf. We later lost touch. In recent years we got in touch once more, and I even had the privilege of visiting the family home, and attending Yair's memorial ceremony. Our shared passion for art, and love for Yair, have led Nino and me to consider working on several joint projects that never materialized.



A photograph by Nino Herman on the cover of Marlyn Vinig's book

It sometimes seems that, in a cosmic, inexplicable way, Yair is behind the scenes, making sure his father and I keep in touch.

The online friendship with Nino Herman on Facebook had introduced me once more to his vibrant work. Sometimes I think his images preserve some living part of Yair, creating a static space between life and death, or rather, dedicating living moments to Yair. It is no coincidence that tearful winters feature so prominently in his photographs, for Nino regards tears as part of nature: "On those days I go dancing with nature, a dance that's full of creation". He says: "We are fortunate, outside our front door is a space enveloped in nature. The rain persistently falls in waves, water trickles down windowpanes, creating its own image. It is hard for me to leave these displays alone – the camera cries out to me, as excited as I am. It is a fascinating experience, learning, looking into rainy frames, transforming them into visual poetry. To find that which I saw in my mind's eye, create a new space in a world that is so photographed, find natural beauty that connects to a profound desire to contribute another naïve angle to a complex world". This kind of work, delighting in nature's aches and daily routine, was named by Nino *The Yair Expanse*. "I feel that the rain and nature series stems from this place where Yair is everywhere", he explains. "Here at Nataf in particular – in nature I can connect to him even more; in the simplest sense – this is where he grew up, was killed, and is buried, where our home is; and there's the wind blowing and bringing him with it. Yair was killed at the foot of Wind Mountain, in an area that was formerly a war zone... So many symbols..."



A photograph of the sky at Nataf

"I also made a movie about Yair, you can also watch it on YouTube", adds Nino. "The movie, Yair Herman 1980–2000 is 50 minutes long split into episodes. On the cover of the DVD we placed a poem written by a dear friend of ours, Rusty Warhurst. Rusty, himself a kind of passerby, looked at the picture of yair in our living room, looked into his eyes, and returned to the house he was staying at in a very emotional state. The next morning he returned with a poem entitled If You Look Deep into my Eyes. It was a giftwrapped poem that empowers and moves us so much, and has the nuclear power of wisdom. It is as if Yair is speaking directly to us: "I am beside you, behind you, above you. Reach out your hand and heart, I want you to know, listen to the wind – it is my soul, the rain is my teardrop, the sun is my smiles".

"When Yair was killed, I was beside myself. I experienced intolerable anguish and pain. Yair was a loved, loving son, nature's boy, a dear person, a young man, full of joy and love of mankind. I was deeply broken. Rusty Warhurst wrote "I am still with you but you are unable to see [...] everywhere around you is the essence of life". I asked to be enveloped in love, I felt deep inside me that only love can heal me. The first year was absolutely devastating, and during it we studied wisdom with Ronit Galapo, who provided us with plenty of love, and valuable keys for the road, for life".

"In 2009 I started writing a blog that, to me, is a life journal, and contains everything I have photographed and written over many years. It has Yair in it. Yair is with me in everything: in Tel Aviv, in New York encounters, at the exhibition, in my heart, in photographs, in speech. He is just as powerfully present in the blog. The Yair Expanse is a space born after his death. The expanse of a chamber in my heart I had not been aware of, a room that Yair has, in effect, prompted me to choose to enter. A chamber I may have circled around, perhaps for fear of encountering power and love I was unable to contain. It is as if Yair's death, his soul, our soul, urged us to cast aside the survival mode. And then, we opened onto an expanse of unconditional love. These words are familiar, but when they go down from one's head to one's heart, it is certainly a process of change and growth. And that is when the transformation began – and something inside me today can contain the emotional helplessness that I could not contain in the past. Behind this helplessness, if I can weather it, I discover another tiny shred of a human heart, and it is infinite, and there is certainly more room for growth. I wish that I, that we all, will grow, not through devastation, but through beneficial choice, without drama; that we continue to connect to life. The Yair Expanse is the space that chooses life".

"It's been 17 years since he died, and I really am experiencing myself, daring to connect to my power and love more and more, to my love for mankind, and Yair is with me in my heart all the time in so many ways. I begin every lecture with the story of the road to Nataf, the choices we make each day on the way, with the open question that we grapple with – why did his soul choose to leave this earth here, on the way to our house? Why did his soul, our soul, choose to cross the point where my son left life every single day and night for 17 years?"



Weeping heavens: A city in the rain – photographed through a car window

Nino's images are diverse, displaying a broad landscape of nature and people. They indicate the wanderings of both body and soul. "As an artist I am constantly outdoors, impacted by the environment and human interactions", explains Nino. "Out of that I create something that is relevant to me. I started the blog in order to share, to leave my work in a certain space, so that I could be free to move on, and be impacted again. I find people fascinating: portraits, landscapes, relations, I am constantly affected, and translate this effect into art, which, in turn, obviously affects others".

"People look for templates, trying to place me in the 'Peres' Photographer' drawer, or that of the Florentine Photographer, Press Photographer, Street Photographer, 'take one topic and go for it', like the voices of schoolteachers trying to label me. And maybe this

series of mine is a wandering that always has this wonderful thing – following my heart".

"It is as if I am asking the world to present me with my next piece of work. I have no doubt that the artistic world, or any framework, ultimately seeks some form of definition in its own language. And at this point I am managing to stay true to my intention, to be faithful to my heart, rather than adapting myself to what is 'acceptable' or 'right', and I believe I will reach my intended destination. Because the heart, desire, and love, are nuclear forces".

He says his tendency to photograph female portraits is linked to his feminine side, from which he derives his ability as an artist to reflect emotional worlds. "As a photographer I know how to become nothing – make room for others, like a parent setting aside their own goals to help their child accomplish theirs", explains Nino. "I believe the encounter with women stems from the same yearning I have to communicate with the more sensitive parts of me. It is part of my developmental journey, my growth process. Yair's death has prompted me to develop emotional resilience, the kind that allows me to connect to a very strong inner power".

In celebration of my second book of poetry, *Freestyle Panic*, that touches upon the nexus between poetry and cinema, secular and sacred, day and night, living and dead, I knew the opportunity had come to express something together. Nino was thrilled. "To me, the connection between us is also part of the Yair Expanse", he relates happily, "we met through him". We found one of Nino's photographs to print on the cover of my new book, *Freestyle Panic*. Nino was moved by the gesture, "For my birthday, some 17 years after he died", he told me, "you have given me a huge gift – you dedicated my photograph, *Cinema Nataf*, which appears on the cover of your new poetry book, to Yair".

"In the current connection I was struck by another insight", adds Nino, "that it is possible to rush through the day a little less without being afraid of losing something. on the contrary, this is an example of a reality created , a breathtaking artistic connection, that was unplanned, as if I had made room for the universe to bring its own script along, and Yair is well-positioned within this screenplay, always reminding us that despite his departure, he shows up here and there in various shapes and forms".



A coffee shop on Lilienblum Street