

Cyclamens and Swords, December 2013.

Michael E. Stone



Michael Stone was born in England in 1938. His family moved to Australia in 1941, where he received his schooling, up to the completion of his BA (Hons.) degree in 1960.

He lives in Jerusalem with his family.

He has published poems in numerous literary journals as well as translations of medieval Armenian poetry. His poetry has also been anthologized in a number of collections.

A book of his, *Selected Poems*, was published by Cyclamens and Swords Press in 2010.

A poetic translation of *Adamgirk'*, a medieval Armenian epic about Adam and Eve in 6,000 lines, appeared with Oxford University Press in 2007.

Stone's academic activities have been devoted to two different disciplines, Jewish literature and thought in the period of the Second Temple, including the Dead Sea Scrolls, and Armenian Studies. His research and academic publications have been divided between these two fields.

He holds the degrees of PhD (Harvard) and DLitt. (Melbourne). He was appointed to the Hebrew University of Jerusalem in 1966 and became Gail Levin de Nur Professor of Religious Studies and Professor of Armenian Studies in 1980. He is now retired.

He holds an Honourary DHL (Hebrew Union College), Honourary Doctor (Armenian National Academy of Sciences). He is recipient of the Landau Prize for Contribution to the Humanities (Israel).

A Fragrance in the Air

The tail end of sunset
yellow-reds the sky,
the trees silhouette
on the ridge.

In the quiet house
the ceiling fan hums,
and the shutter
bars the bright lamp outside

and I am alone now
as I talk to the Apple,
write, write, write,
and the world's without.

It's empty here,
it's void, voided,
and the tail end
of her life

barely lingers
as memory of
a fragrance
in the air.

New Blank Document

New blank document
that's what it says.
on screen.

She is
newly blanked out.

She was.

What am I?
not a blank document,
not new,
overwritten for more
than three score
and ten.

Now,
I alone can read
the writing that
we wrote both
together and alone.
Now I read it alone.

I keep writing this poem,
over and over,
and my memory goes over
those last five minutes,
over and over.

One day, it will start to go over
the years before those minutes.

A lonely rehearsal
before an empty hall
peopled by insubstantial.