

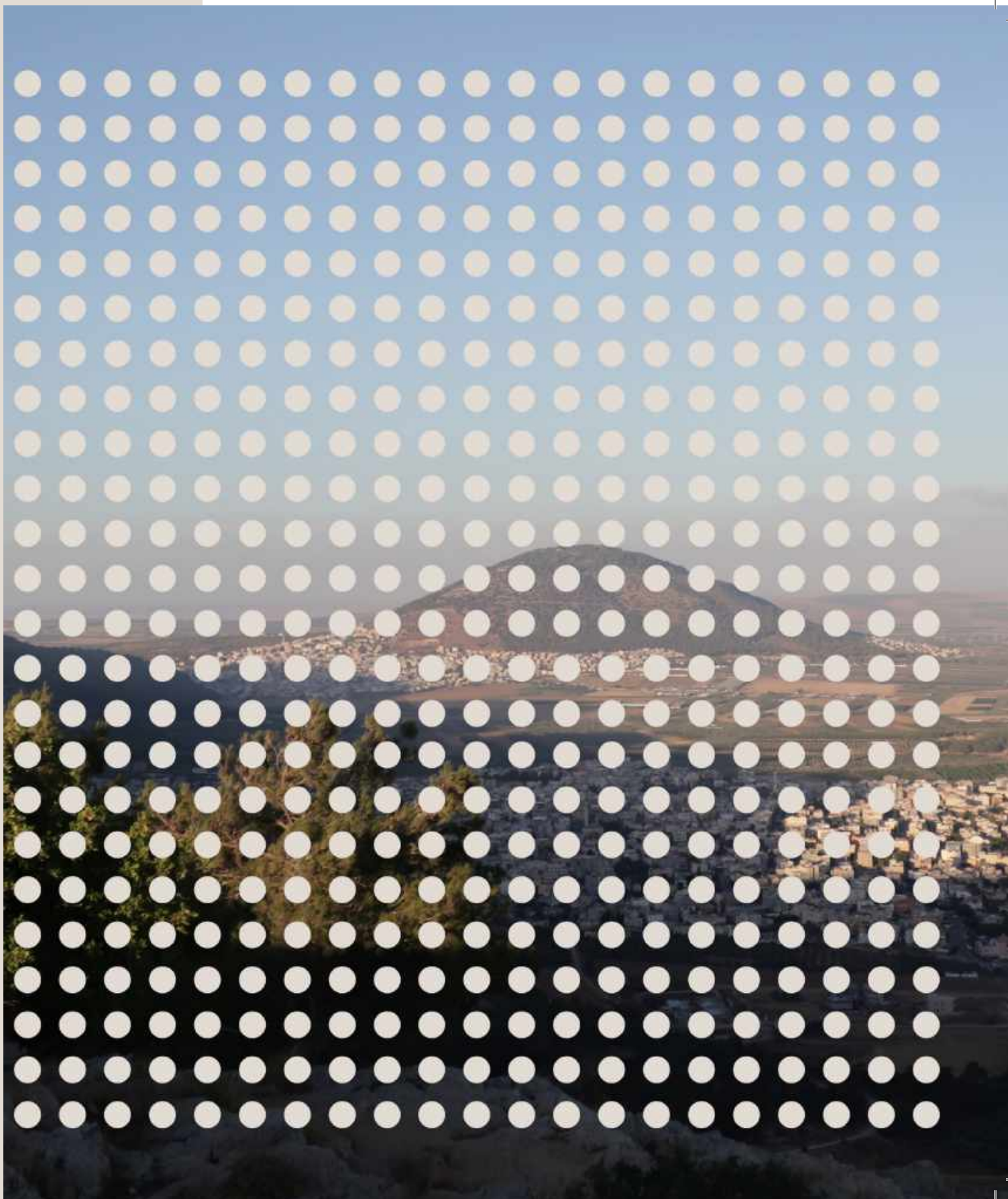
A

Distant

Place

Poems by
Images by

Dave Harrity
Michael Winters



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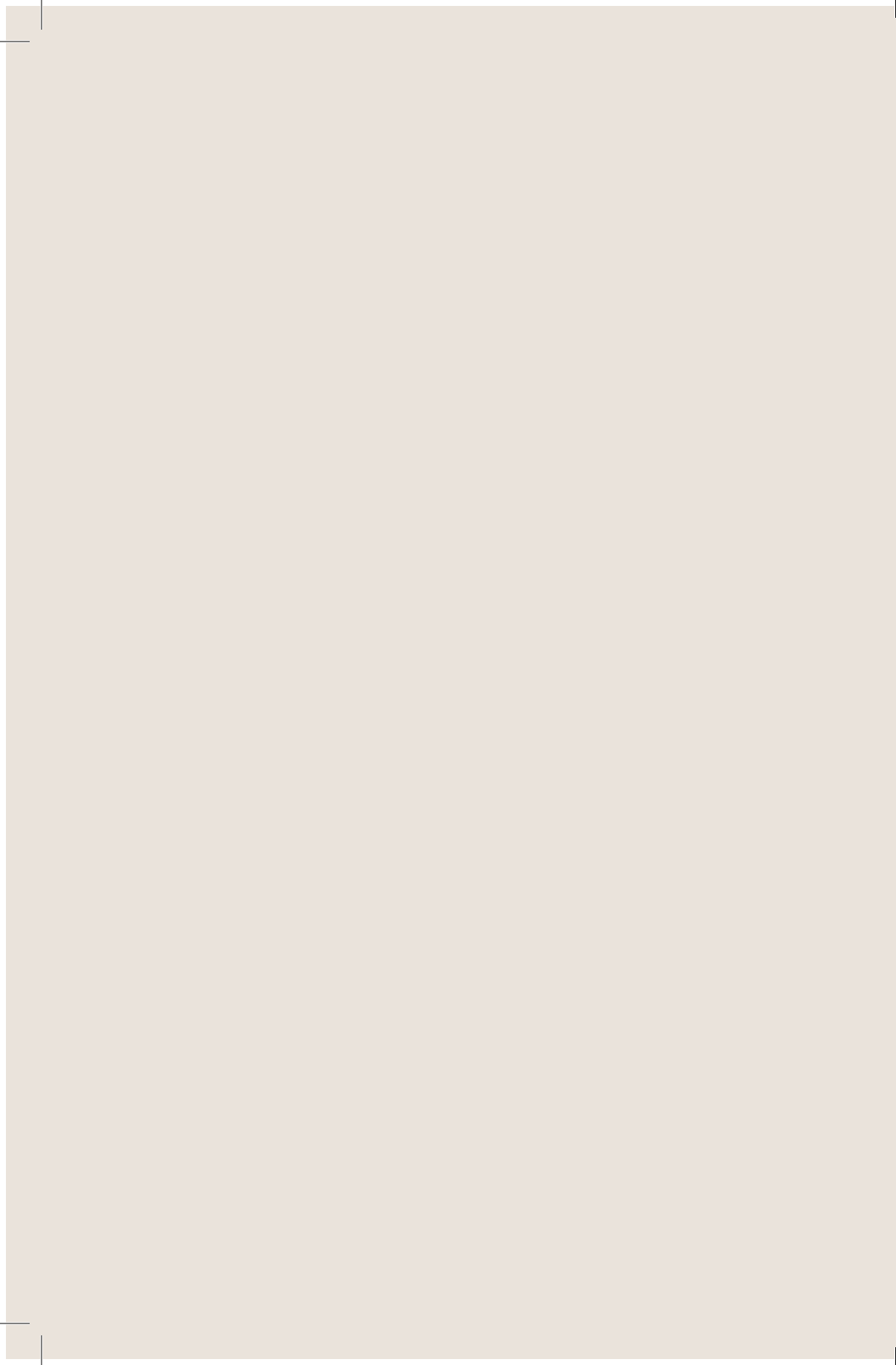
Each time I look to the horizon, I lose
my sight on the sea's sparkling—

one grain on an unfamiliar shore, a salt pillar
hidden in me washes away:

What stays the same? I hear
fishers in a boat letting down nets.

What will I believe when the ropes come up?
There are more fish than we can count

& not even one knows
it is being called from the water.





Broken cedar, shelled out car. The sun goes up
over the heights. Where does your help come from?

The valley is burning—blue & silent. Birds glide up,
unafraid. A pillar of smoke: see it, hear nothing. Sun

goes, is gone. In the dark, a man tallies the lost
children—whose names become a list

to click online. Drives west to chase down the sun,
another day counts down—tears into a flask.



Doves take the wind on their backs, the ground
drinks its light. Over a wall, one future

fires from a gun, another rests in a chamber.
The world ends in ashes; tomorrow

will be better. Infinite futures in a finite world.
There is enough dew on the ground come morning

for each of us—no matter how many bullets rain down.







Growing up with ghosts, who stays alive
among the one true God? Past the gate, past
the bullet holes & muscled shadow, there is
no place to ignore what you cannot explain:
an excavation, a parking lot where a history
is being lifted from the ground, layer after
layer. Stay innocent, stay a blind & reckless
animal, sucker for the widow, the beggar.
There is no shortage of broken things. Stay
still, let each bright stone cry out, ruin you.



I have always known your name. All my life
I learned one bright story after the next. Now,
these rooftops. This morning, smoke & pigeons
from behind the wall. Cobble together a new
life, a new silence where I can put the names
of those I love on paper pushed into a crack
in a wall, my forehead on warm stone. The eye
of God goes down, the moon is gray as always.
Hours later, from this rooftop, I see it now: a city
of a million prayers & I can't say a single one.





Statement

The images and poems in this small book represent the journey of two friends experiencing a world that is at once familiar and strange. In June 2017, Michael Winters and Dave Harrity traveled to Israel, joined by their spouses and several other artist friends.

They found that the contrasts and complexities of Israel were simultaneously illuminating and inspiring, startling and disturbing. In this work, they hope to array these tensions in a pastiche of images that reckon with vivid spirituality, rich landscapes, intricate politics, and vibrant people.

Gratitude

Michael and Dave thank their patrons, the Philos Project, whose mission is to foster "...a pluralistic Near East based on freedom and the rule of law where nations, tribes, and religious communities can love beside each other as neighbors." Additionally, they are grateful to their trip's organizers: The Israel Seminar, Or Rein, Ilana Gindis Zoarezz, and Yossi Levi.

The artists would also like to express gratitude for their travel companions, specifically: Amanda, Bret, Eric, Gina, Lachlan, Mako, Sandra, Sarah, and Shanaka. Lastly, thank you to Mike Cospers and Luke Moon, whose invitation to travel changed how they saw the world.

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