

IMAGERY OF BEAUTY AND PAIN

When pain and beauty go hand in hand: Can you see them both?



This resource offers an opportunity to look at the way beauty and pain can sit together. How can a symbol of beauty also become a symbol of pain? And how in the pain can we also see beauty?

We will use the symbol of Israel's national flower - the *kalanit* - and its use by artists in this particular moment of the Israel-Hamas war as our primary source for exploration.

THE NATIONAL FLOWER

The *kalanit* (anemone), is the national flower of Israel. It dots the landscape a bright, beautiful red every spring. In Southern Israel each year when the flowers start to bloom (usually late January) a month-long festival takes place called *Darom Adom*-The Red South, which includes hikes, tours, bike marathons, poetry readings, concerts, art exhibits, food festivals and communal celebrations, all somehow connected to the beauty of the *kalanit*. Many of the communities that were attacked on October 7 are ones that host festival activities and guests.

- ◆ Look at the image to the right of the *kalaniyot*, anemones.
- ◆ Close your eyes for a moment and imagine you are holding the flower in your hand.
- ◆ Rub your fingers together. How does it feel? Describe the sensation.



Shira Hecht-Koller

It feels _____ and _____.

Its scent reminds me of _____.

Its beauty is like a _____.



THE KALANIT IN POETRY AND SONG

“Kalaniyot” is an Israeli song that became popular in the days leading up to the establishment of the state of Israel and remains a classic in Israel. The lyrics, by poet Natan Alterman (1910-1970), describe a little girl who dreams she is gathering anemones in a basket and brings them to her mother.

Read the following lines from the song:

Though generations come and go unending
Each age must have its *kalanit* and song,
And happy is the man, through storms' descending,
Whose *kalanit* has bloomed for him, but once.

- ◆ What do you think the poet means by the line “each age must have its *kalanit* and song”?
- ◆ What is the source of happiness in this poem?

THE KALANIT AS IMAGERY FOR THE MOMENT WE ARE IN

As Jews all over the world grapple with the horrific attacks on Israel by Hamas, one subsection, Israeli artists, have used the *kalanit* as a symbol to express their pain.

- ◆ Look at the three different images below that were created by the artists Einat Tsarfati, Noa Moram and Noa Nizzani in recent weeks.
- ◆ Choose one image and give it a title. Why did you give it that title?
- ◆ Next, choose another image and fill in the blanks below.



7.10.2023

Einat Tsarfati

Title



Noa Moram

Title



Noa Nizzani

Title



When I look at this work of art, I see _____ and _____ .

The beauty of the red petals has become _____ .

There is pain in this image, especially in _____ .

But I also see beauty in the way _____ .

CLOSING PROMPT

- ◆ Spend a few minutes drawing your own image that combines both beauty and pain. Describe what you drew.

