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متحف إسرائيل، أورشليم القدس

Department for Development  
and International Relations

## **Ruth Youth Wing for Art Education**

### **Bridging the gap**

### **Interim report**

**November 2017**

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Dear Sonja

I am pleased to update you about the successful launch of the 2017-18 “Bridging the Gap” program, overseen by Senior Youth Wing Curator Eldad Shaltiel, and directed by a teaching staff that includes established and emerging artists, and Bezalel Art Academy graduates.

The program kick-off assembly for parents and their children took place on November 1–2, 2017, as planned. The program curriculum was presented, as well as a brief presentation of last year's activities. Participants were invited to ask questions and raise subjects they wished to bring to our attention or discuss. This was followed by a visit to the Museum's galleries and a joint activity in which all participants cooperated on a creative task.



The second meeting was attended by the children on their own. They were invited to enjoy refreshments and then worked together on the creation of a large-scale painting. Working side-by-side on a cooperative artistic project began a process of becoming familiar and trusting one another.



This year's weekly meetings will take place on Wednesdays and Thursdays. Nineteen fifth-grade Arabic-speaking students from the Silwan elementary school, and 24 Hebrew-speaking fifth-graders from the Agron and Yafeh Nof Jewish schools, take part in the Wednesday sessions. On Thursdays, we welcome mixed groups of fifth and sixth graders: 19 from an Arabic-speaking school in the Beit Tzafafa neighborhood, and 10 from the Keshet and Paula Ben Gurion Jewish schools. In total, 73 students are participating in this year's program: 35 Jewish students, and 38 Arab students.



The date has already been set for the final event that will take place at the end of April, shortly before the beginning of the Ramadan fast.

Although the relatively stable security situation at the beginning of the year helped make our recruitment process easier, we still have more Arab than Jewish children

participating in the Wednesday classes. We have therefore kept registration open for now.

The schools that participated in last year's program chose to continue this year as well. We see this as a positive indicator of participants' satisfaction with the program and its content.

Oral feedback from teachers and pupils also demonstrated the program's success and has strengthened our determination to continue with, and even expand, the program, should funding become available.



This year's main theme is **Jerusalem**, inspired by the *Jerusalem in Detail* exhibition, currently on show at the Israel Museum. The exhibition reveals the hidden design and architectural elements in the city's Muslim, Jewish, Christian, and Modernist architecture. This exhibition offers a unique opportunity to discuss and examine the identity of the participants as Jewish and Arab Jerusalemites, think about their connection to this special city and the significance of living in a place that is sacred and important to many religions and ethnic groups. As the year progresses, the students will work together to create architectural artworks inspired by the exhibition.

During the year, we plan to create two large-scale group projects. The first will be a mural composed of ceramic tiles, inspired by traditional Armenian tiles, which will be prepared, glazed, and fired in a special kiln. The second will explore the subject of windows, inspired by the *mashrabiya*, a type of window characteristic of Muslim architecture in Jerusalem and in Arab countries. Upon completion, the artworks will be displayed at the students' schools.

We would like to express our deepest gratitude to the German Friends of the Israel Museum for their ongoing and dedicated support of this important and pioneering initiative.

Kind regards,

Eli