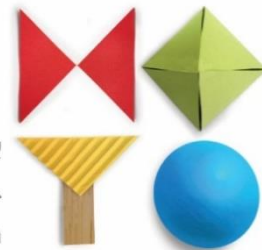


אגף הנוער והחינוך לאמנות ע"ש רות, מוזיאון ישראל, ירושלים
جناح الشبيبة والتربية للفن على اسم روت. متحف إسرائيل القدس
The Ruth Youth Wing for Art Education, The Israel Museum, Jerusalem



March 23, 2021

Mid-term Report to the Israel Museum German Friend Organization

January-March 2021

The program "Bridging the Gap" for the school year, 2020/2021 faced many challenges this year due to the Covid19 pandemic. As a result of this new reality the Ruth Youth Wing for Art Education at the Israel Museum made significant organizational alterations in order to prepare for a new manner of operating the program this year.

The artists teaching in the program this year are Nasser Hatab (taught in the previous years) and Daniel Cohen a recent graduate from the Bezalel academy in Animation. Both of them shared with us how much they are enjoying working with each other. This in itself brings a hopeful and significant note to the project since together they have to face many challenges and yet both of them model to the participants and to us an inspirational and resourceful educational process.

We are pleased with the choice to operate the program this year through distant learning and focus on animation. Currently the reality of the pandemic in Israel means that normal life starts to reappear thanks to the high numbers of vaccines available to in Israel, but the Covid-19 virus and its mutations have not dispread.

Adult and youth up to 16 are vaccinated but the **kids** in the project are not vaccinated. Especially in East Jerusalem where many of the kids live, the pandemic is still a harsh reality. This means that the students in the program face restrictions and physical meetings is out of the question. Moreover, because of the kids learning within their own capsules in their classes and schools it is not an option to invite students from different areas to meet or mix in any way.

The teachers started to expose the student to photography as a base to the animation and reported that many of the students showed enthusiasm, photographed their surrounding and shred the results with their fellow group members. After this introduction they started to explore the more technical aspect of animation and currently they are working on the artistic part of the exercise. Both teachers have shared with us honestly the pros and cons of the new digital format and new curriculum. The kids are excited about the technological part and the creative part of the project. It turns out that the ZOOM platform actually encourages a more patient manner of listening. The quiet manner in which zoom sessions occur, serves as a huge value to this co-existence program.

The smooth and cooperative role modeling of Nasser & Daniel as two individuals working together is apparent to the kids. Both of them are active artists but in this context, they serve as role models of coexistence. Together they are a significant informal educational figures, and their connection lingers and builds the right tone and example for the group, first to them as teachers and then hopefully to each other. Daniel & Nasser have been working very hard to give each student the instructions and help they need. They have also made great effort to record sessions in order to facilitate the technical instructions more clear and accessible. This enabled them to clear time and space for individual and personal learning at the first stage to make sure everyone feels safe and at ease.

However, the teachers were also very authentic and honest with us about the unique covid related challenges the program and the students face. These challenges actually reflect and stress the importance of this project during these times. The age group that the projects is based on is 6th and 8th grade, these elementary school and junior high student - these are the grades that stayed the most at home. While the high school students got a vaccine and the younger kids were too young to stay home un supervised these young adult suffered from isolation and solitude, the most. The teachers have shared that some of them are super excited and “on board” while others feel a certain “zoom fatigue”. Daniel and Nasser shared that they are not being judgmental and will welcome the kids positively at any time- understanding how stressful and emotionally challenging these times can be for them socially and personally at school or at home.

The program for the 6th graders started with 36 Arab speaking participants and 10 Hebrew speaking students. After 6 sessions the group has stabilized with 24 Arab speaking students and 7 Hebrew speaking students. The teachers shared with us their intuition that this panel feels like a stable and organic group.

The group of the 9th graders started off as a much smaller group consisting with 13 Hebrew speaking young adults and 5 Arab speaking young adults, that joined the group a bit later. So far this group only met twice so in our opinion this group still requires an effort in order to make sure it is a stable and organic ensemble.

We would like to share with you some photographs that were taken during the sessions. It is quite hard to share the “making of “an animated film. Part of the magic of the “stop motion” technique is exactly its creation from what seems like “nothing “at first- hopefully these images will merely illustrate the hard work involved....



Since the session occur from home we will be able to continue them through the Ramadan month.

I would like to take the opportunity again to thank you deeply for your support in the project during these difficult times. As this report illustrates the pandemic has caused more than ever a need for art education projects of any kind for this age group who's social and emotional development was really impaired.

All the best,

Eldad Shaaltiel

Acting Chief Curator

The Ruth Youth Wing for Art Education