

VISIT TO THE EXHIBITION *DRIFTING WITH MAGRITTE: CASTLES IN THE AIR*

The children visited the Israel Museum exhibition and learned about Magritte's iconic painting *Castle of the Pyrenees*. For most of them, it was their first encounter with the artist's surrealist works and learning about his groundbreaking approach. The experience spurred dialogue about imagination and reality, following which the children were invited to draw pictures inspired by Magritte's works.



SPRING VACATION

The collaborative group drawing completed in the initial sessions was displayed in the Youth Wing in an exhibition of children's drawings.



Upon returning from the spring holidays (Passover and Ramadan), the children recommenced their exploration of the theme **Home** and worked on their final project pertaining to it.

The children worked in groups of four, comprising two Arab participants and two Jewish participants. Each group received a segment of cardboard in the form of a corner with cutout shapes, and was asked to imagine and design the nature of their group's home. The task required the children to put their heads together and work toward a shared goal based on mutual communication of ideas. The task proved successful in leading to a personal and creative connection among the participants.

Model structure



Initial painting of cardboard structure



Participants decorated their cardboard cutouts which were later added to the structure as an architectural element reminiscent of a shelf below a window. Each “shelf” contained a participant’s dream sculpted in playdough.





ANNUAL CLOSING EVENT

The program concluded with a festive final session, held on June 2 in the Youth Wing, in the presence of the participants and their parents. The event included a presentation of the activities conducted throughout the program, a photography workshop, and an exhibition of the children's final projects.





For the final part of the session, participants and their parents joined discussion groups surveying the program and its outcome.



CHALLENGES

Covid-19 accompanied our program throughout the year. As soon as the first meeting, we discovered that one of our participants had contracted the virus and a number of children were later found to have caught it due to exposure. As a result, ten students from the Agron school left the program and we were unable to replace them with additional students. With the spread of the virus, a recurring challenge was holding sessions with fewer participants, as most of them were found positive or in quarantine due to exposure. Despite the limiting circumstances concerning the pandemic, we were able to hold almost all of the sessions in person, except for two that had to be canceled.

An unexpected surprise was having to miss a session in January on a day when Jerusalem was covered in snow!

As we feared, tension regarding the security situation in Israel became heightened during the month of Ramadan. An unfortunate series of terror attacks and tension were mostly felt around the Al Aqsa Mosque, and for a time there was reasonable concern for potential deterioration of the situation, despite which we were able to recommence activity in May. For the Passover and Ramadan holidays, the program

took a six-week break, and following the tense period in Jerusalem, a significant number of students left the program.

STAFF

The program is conducted by artists and teachers from the Ruth Youth Wing: Nassar Hattab, Lina Al Halaseh, Aluma Meishar, Orly Nir, and Ruth Eliav.

Our staff was accompanied by psychologist Hadas Levy, with whom six meetings were held during the year. The meetings allowed staff to discuss personal and professional issues that surfaced during the program, and provided them with tools to cope with challenges they faced, such as the cultural gaps among the students and the sensitive relationships between them.

In the final staff meeting to summarize and survey the activities, the teachers conveyed great satisfaction with the program and it was defined a success in light of the challenging year they had experienced. All staff members have willingly agreed to continue teaching in the program next year. According to Hadas, the psychologist, the program's success is greatly due to the staff's dedication to the program and their collaborative spirit, which served as an excellent example for the children.

EVALUATION

Participants were asked to fill out two written surveys, one in March before the spring break, and one in June at the end of the program.

March 2022 Survey

Thank you very much for your help!

Where do you live?

Pick one box

Please pick the answer (yes/no) to the following questions

Yes	East-Jerusalem BLUE 8
Yes	West-Jerusalem RED 16

Please mark the emoji which best represents your feeling about the following sentences

 2 1	 1 1	 2 6	 3 7	I enjoyed the project
 2	 3	 7 8	 1 1	I learned new things
 3 2	 6	 6	 5 2	I felt good with the other kids
 2	 1	 3 6	 4 7	The teachers related to me personally and supported me
 	 3	 6 4	 1 9	The Israel Museum is a good place to invite children to come together for art projects
 2	 1 5	 1 5	 6 4	I would like to join the project again
 2 12	 	 2 2	 4 2	I made a friend that I talk to from the other group

Please pick the answer (yes/no) to the following questions

Yes 15	No	Have you been in the Israel Museum before you joined the project?
Yes 9	No 2	Have you been visiting any other art classes before you joined the project?

