

## School of the Arts at the University of Haifa

### *Promoting Intercultural Understanding and Strengthening Israel's Northern Periphery*



*A new spirit is energizing the School of the Arts at the University of Haifa. A spirit of cultural and creative expression as a means to affect deep and lasting social change. A spirit that reflects the power of art to bridge cultural gaps and strengthen Israeli society as a whole. A spirit that is seeking to impact the peripheral regions of northern Israel.*

Home to the newest School of the Arts in Israel, the University of Haifa is breaking ground with its **vision of integrating artistic disciplines and culture**. The University of Haifa proudly mirrors Israeli society, reflecting its diverse populations: Jews, Arabs; Druze; Ethiopians; new immigrants and veteran residents; from the city; suburbs; kibbutz and development towns; secular and religious; and individuals with a range of political views and outlooks.

**The School sees art as a multi-cultural meeting space that nurtures artistic expression and offers a springboard for academic excellence, inspiring new perspectives, and building mutual respect.**

## *A Culture of Shared Space*

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The University of Haifa's School of the Arts is guided by a vision that embraces an integrative approach to arts education within a multi-cultural setting. The School offers academic degree programs **in three artistic disciplines – arts, theater and music** – with meaningful opportunities for students to explore and extend the natural interconnections found within these departments.

Of equal importance to our educational philosophy is the recognition of the role arts play in respecting the multiplicity of cultures and languages while serving as a **unifying social force in a multi-cultural society**. The School of the Arts is an artistic meeting space where the diverse voices of our students are expressed in various public venues—visual arts exhibitions and theatrical and music performances.

As part of its core philosophy, the School of the Arts also promotes social projects that strengthen the fabric of local communities and raise arts awareness in Israel's northern region. These projects enable our students to experience community involvement and learn first-hand how the arts can act as a catalyst for social change.

The School currently has more than 360 students enrolled, among them Jews, Christians, Arabs and Druze. Our graduates have successfully taken part in founding new musical ensembles, planning art shows and exhibitions, establishing theater groups, and participating in formal and informal teaching frameworks.

The School of the Arts is privileged to boast a faculty that comprises the best artists and researchers who are driven to develop new creative approaches and research methods, while offering the students intensive and sensitive guidance. Our award-winning faculty includes Israel Prize winners Prof. Yaacov Dorchin of the Department of Fine Arts and Prof. Arik Shapira of the Department of Music. Prof. Eitan Steinberg is recipient of the Landau Prize (2010) and the Prime Minister's Composition Award (2007).

## *The Department of Fine Arts*

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As *the* center for artistic activity in northern Israel, the Department of Fine Arts brings together people of different ethnic, religious and cultural backgrounds to participate in creative projects, helping to bridge gaps and contribute to coexistence.



The Department offers tracks in art history and fine arts, offering a range of workshops, painting in different media, sculpture, drawing, ceramics, print artistic photography, studio photography, broadcast arts, video and computer graphics.

### **Language, Culture and Identity**

A new course being offered for the first time this semester, "*Language, Culture and Identity*" examines various aspects of identity and differences in a multicultural society through the study of photography and different artistic mediums. Addressing key issues of culture, conflict and stereotypes, the workshop encourages students to engage in shared artistic experiences that will lead to in-depth learning in an atmosphere of mutual respect and collaboration. A unique feature of the course is its instruction in Hebrew and Arabic.

The purpose of the workshop is to create a common meeting ground and dialogue between students of different backgrounds and languages, building tools for greater understanding. The dialogue will shed new light on how students view themselves and the other in Israeli society. Students participating in the course work on a final project that will be displayed at the University and serves as a model for dialogue, learning and coexistence.

## ***The Department of Theater***

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The mission of the Department of Theater is to promote drama and theater as a unifying force of change within Israeli society. Students in the Department of Theater are able to choose from theoretical and practical tracks, including theater theory and history, acting, directing, storytelling, theater design, puppetry, theater-in-education and community theater.

The curriculum in community theater studies is designed to enhance students' understanding of radical and critical theories and practices that foster commitment to serving and advocating for the well-being of those who are vulnerable, marginalized, and oppressed.

The Department's theater productions integrate both Hebrew and Arabic dialogues and promote opportunities for theater to become a meeting space for different languages, identities and storytelling. The productions afford students a unique opportunity to work and learn alongside theater professionals and to acquire skills, learn their craft and observe methodologies in practice.

## **Taking Theater to the Streets**

**The Neve Yosef Community Theater Project** is a unique initiative in which University theater students lead community groups in planning, producing, and performing in a year end theater festival in Haifa's multi-cultural Neve Yosef neighborhood. The program is led by Dr. Dorit Yerushalmi and Dr. Atay Citron.



Putting social justice into action, students work in disadvantaged communities to empower participants and promote create engagement in the neighborhood. Participants in the productions learn important decision making and conflict resolution skills and how to work together cooperatively toward an end goal, thus enhancing their inter- and intrapersonal development and improving their ability to succeed in society.

The Community Theater Project serves as a neighborhood enrichment program that is designed to empower participants and contribute to their feelings of community ownership, promoting dialogue and opportunities for growth.

Students also work with special populations using drama and acting modalities, including cancer survivors, patients in the Enosh Mental Health Center, recovering addicts, senior citizens, and teenage girls at risk.

## ***The Department of Music***

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The Music Department is devoted to the study and practice of music and offers students skills essential to 21<sup>st</sup> century musicians, musicologists, music educators and agents of musical culture. The Department provides a range of instruction in western, Mediterranean, popular and jazz music; music and computer technologies; music composition and theory; music production; multimedia works and performance.





Beyond the classroom, The Music Department hosts a thriving performance program, encompassing concert series of ethnic, contemporary and organ music and special concerts by guest artists featuring students, faculty members and outstanding musicians. It also produces an annual event at the University, "Jewish Music Days," and organizes conferences and workshops devoted to related topics.

All concerts, lectures, workshops and events are free of charge for students and open to the general public. The goal is to enhance the position of music within campus life and to bring it to the community at large.

### **A Musical Tribute to the City of Haifa**

Students at **The Department of Music** are currently producing a special musical tribute that celebrates poems and songs about the city of Haifa, creating a musical portrait of the city, including songs from different periods of Israel's history. Students are collaborating on all aspects of the production – selecting the poems and songs, arranging existing melodies, setting poems to music, and performing and recording the tracks. The Department has already produced several CDs, including "Deep Night", a compilation of rare songs by Sasha Argov and the history of Israel through music; a CD featuring compositions by faculty members; and a double CD of Judeo-Spanish songs of the Thessalonikian tradition.



## *Academic Leadership*

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**Professor Yuval Shaked** was recently appointed Head of the **School of Arts at the University of Haifa**. Prof. Shaked received his training from leading musicians in Israel and West Germany. He has served in a variety of leadership positions in Israel including, the Israel Music Institute, the Feher Jewish Music Center in Beit Hatfuztot (Diaspora Museum), and the Department of Music at the University of Haifa. In addition to teaching and writing about composition, music theory and musical analysis, Prof. Shaked is an accomplished musician in his own right, is a regular presenter at international conferences, and serves on the editorial board of the journal *MusikTexte*.



## How One Graduate is Changing the Perception of Women and Art in the Arab Community

**Maha Abu Hussein was born in an Arab village in the Galilee.** She was engaged at 13 and married at 18. Today the mother of two children and a graduate student in the Department of Fine Arts, she sees herself as a role model for art teachers in the Arab community and committed to promoting the power of art within her local community.



Maha had a very difficult childhood. Physically abused from a young age, she was forced to leave her home and live with her sister in an orphanage. At age 30, Maha was the first woman from her village to enroll in a higher education degree program. Although she did not speak, read or write Hebrew at the time, she completed her bachelor's degree in interdisciplinary studies and her BA in Fine Arts, graduating with honors.

For Maha, art has become her therapy, a form of release. "The ability to express myself gives me strength and motivation," she explains. "Art helped me break free and become a free woman not afraid to face the difficulties of life."

Maha is now studying toward her MA in Fine Arts. "I started working in sculpture and now, thanks to the School, I work in all types of fine arts – painting, photography and print."

Today Maha works as an art teacher in the school in her Galilee village. She sees herself as an agent of change, teaching art and using projects to introduce the importance of recycling and the environment. "I want to give children what was missing in my childhood," says Maha.

Maha credits the School of Arts with providing her with a warm and supportive environment in which to grow. "The University of Haifa gave me the opportunity in which to develop personally and professionally – a chance I didn't receive anywhere else."

## *Please Support*

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The School of Arts offers a unique program that serves as a focal point for artistic and cultural activity and research in the Haifa and the northern region of Israel. Our students return to their home communities as agents of change and as entrepreneurs investing in creating local communities of art and culture.

We invite you to take part in a naming opportunity for the newly established School of the Arts at the University of Haifa. Your generosity will link your name in perpetuity to this most innovative School, which is inspiring a new generation of young Israeli students and instilling in them a love and dedication to the arts.

- ▶ **A gift of \$500,000** will establish a **scholarship endowment** and will provide **five annual scholarships** in perpetuity for MFA students.
- ▶ **An annual gift of \$100,000** will provide scholarship support to **15 BA and 10 MFA students**.
- ▶ **Naming opportunities are available for the School's classrooms, galleries, music laboratories, art studios, and theater for gifts ranging from \$50,000 to \$5,000,000.**

## *Donor Recognition*

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The University of Haifa prominently recognizes its donors and will be honored to pay tribute to your generosity in the following ways:

- ❖ A prominent plaque with the name of choice will be affixed to the entrance the respective Department.
- ❖ You will be honored at a special dedication ceremony. These joyous occasions are often attended by family members and guests.
- ❖ You will receive periodic updates regarding new programs and academic developments.
- ❖ You will be acknowledged in academic publications and University media publications wherever possible.

*Thank you for your kind consideration of this request.*