

SEEDS OF PEACE NEW VISIONS FOR PEACE

2015–2016 FELLOWS

YASER ABU DEYEH

Oral History Project



The son of Palestinian refugees, Yaser grew up in Syria and Jordan and teaches now at Palestinian schools in Jerusalem. In addition to teaching at both the high school and university levels, and pursuing his Ph.D., Yaser has an interest in oral history. He has been an active participant in Seeds of Peace Educator

Programs—as a Delegation Leader, graduate of the “Making History” Educators’ Course, and participant in countless regional programs.

Project Summary

Yaser is training high school students to use oral history as an educational tool and as part of a larger project focused on the collection of oral histories from Palestinians and Israelis, particularly around events in 1948. He intends to use the comparison of the two narratives as a pilot for a larger set of oral history initiatives. Yaser views this as a valuable method to explore one’s own narrative and that of the “other,” given that these are often not presented in textbooks.

ANKIT CHADHA

Project Agora



Ankit is an India-based writer and storyteller who brings together oral narrative performance, literature, and history. While earning his Bachelor’s in history at Hindu College, at the University of Delhi, he started scripting street plays and won accolades for the productions he wrote and directed. After work-

ing as a web marketing professional at digital startups, he quit his job and pursued storytelling as his full-time occupation. Ankit specializes in bringing new content

into Dastangoi, a traditional art of Urdu storytelling. His works range from biographical dastans on historical figures in the Indian heritage—Kabir, Amir Khusrau, and Dara Shikoh—to contemporary themes like corporate culture and the digital divide. The author of the national award-winning children’s book *My Gandhi Story*, he also works on history education through children’s literature. This includes research and conducting workshops at leading institutions across India. He has collaborated closely with leading global non-profits to tell stories of conflict between culture and development. Ankit has spoken about storytelling at various prestigious platforms including the Jaipur Literature Festival, the University of Toronto, TEDx, and the State Council of Educational Research and Training. He participated in the “Making History” Seeds of Peace Educators’ Course and a subsequent workshop held in Jordan in June 2014.

Project Summary

Ankit’s area of focus is the confluence of stories and history. Inspired by the Seeds of Peace “Making History” course, he began exploring multivocality in narratives and developed Project Agora. Project Agora is about the spaces where text (where we are) and context (where we come from) meet. The idea is to pursue the historical narratives within literary works and build on the literary aspects of scholarly writings on the past. To offer cross-cultural understanding, the project will include research on select children’s literature titles. Based on this, he will prepare a report analyzing approaches to teaching history through creative and critical thinking with narratives as a foundation. A resource book incorporating best practices, along with an online repository, are part of the project’s scope.

Given how rarely South Asian children’s literature deals with confronting historical narratives, Project Agora seeks to set benchmarks in terms of sensitivity towards local culture. The success of this project will be in enabling students to engage with the past to build an understanding towards a peaceful future. User-generated content around the project (reviews/resources added to the platform by users, shares/interactions on social media, and proven usage of repository) will be among the metrics for success.

LUBNA MAHER AL RAYYES

One Family



Lubna is the head of the elementary school division at the American International School in Gaza.

She was a delegate to the Seed of Peace Camp in 1994, the second year of the camp and the first year that girls participated.

She is also a graduate of the Seeds of Peace Educators' Course "Expressive Arts; Educational Transformations."

Project Summary

"One Family" is a series of activities Lubna is designing in her school to encourage learning of concepts such as freedom, respect, humanity, justice, cooperation, and peace. Lubna has long been passionate about connecting youth in Gaza with the outside world, particularly given travel constraints on Gazans. She developed the concept for "One Family" after the last war in Gaza, as she grew worried that young people were becoming more violent and angry. At the core of "One Family" is the concept of accepting the "other," especially by learning about other cultures through movement and dance. She views success as being able to create a peaceful learning environment and cohort of children who understand and accept the other—who can forgive and reach out to the world with open arms.

IRIS COHEN

Jaffa Youth Project



Iris works at the Israeli Ministry of Education as the head of the Tel Aviv district schools, working with educators teaching society and values in both formal and nonformal schools. Iris has been to the Seeds of Peace International Camp twice as a Delegation Leader.

Project Summary

For her Fellowship, Iris is creating informal educa-

tional programs for youth in Jaffa. She is focused on providing civic engagement and leadership opportunities for Palestinian youth in the city, which are largely underserved when it comes to empowerment programs. She is partnering with key Palestinian leaders in Jaffa to develop and lead programs that will ultimately aim to create young leadership groups in Jaffa, enrich the social involvement of young Palestinian, nurture self-esteem of Palestinian youth at risk, and develop a sense of belonging to the community.

MEENAKSHI CHHABRA

Boundaries of Conflict



Meenakshi is Associate Professor at both the Interdisciplinary Studies Program and the International Higher Education Intercultural Relations Program at the Graduate School of Art and Social Sciences at Lesley University in Cambridge, Mass. She completed her PhD in Educational Studies at Lesley and

postdoctoral work at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Meenakshi is a scholar and practitioner in the field of Peace and Conflict studies. Her current research and practice focus on the teaching and learning of historical events of collective violence between conflicting countries. She has been awarded two Fulbright senior scholarships and a third Fulbright Specialist award to teach and conduct research in India related to the topic of History Education and Peace.

Meenakshi has published in national and international journals. In addition to teaching at Lesley, she has been engaged with Seeds of Peace since 2001, specifically with its South Asia and Educator Programs. Meenakshi lives in Lexington, Mass., with her husband and two kids, and enjoys long quiet walks, travelling, biking and reading.

Project Summary

In her research, Meenakshi has found that teaching history, particularly teaching about events of collective violence, has implications for the way young students perceive the enemy other. The teachers' enactment of these events in the classroom either supports the students to break the hegemonic discourse of the content, or perpetuate it. Hence, the role of the teacher is critical in any initiative that seeks to transform the discourse in the direction of peace. This project will aim to edu-

cate and support teachers from both India and Pakistan to build content and skills that support a peace-oriented pedagogy in the two countries.

Specifically, Meenakshi will extend her research related to the teaching and learning of historical events of collective violence between conflicting groups with a focus on the India-Pakistan conflict. The project will concentrate on developing 1) a framework for teaching and learning about boundaries of conflict starting with the 1947 Partition of British India; 2) a two-year proposal for a collaborative Teachers Training Workshop for India and Pakistan for teaching about differences, and boundaries and histories of conflict.

ASHRAF GHANDOUR

Socially Responsible Literature



Ashraf was born in Beersheva and currently resides in Haifa. He carries bachelor degrees in Psychology and International Relations, and is presently completing his Education degree while teaching English literature at the Reali Beit Biram High School in Haifa. Throughout his studies, Ashraf has helped found several

human rights organizations, including the Palestinian-Israeli Mediation and Peace Students Association. He was also the co-founder and vice president of Guaranteeing the Rights of Others World Wide (GROW Intl'), an organization founded to raise awareness about international conflicts among North American students.

Ashraf also works with Artsbridge Inc., an organization that brings people from different sides of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict together through dialogue and art therapy communication methods.

The more human rights work he has become involved in, the stronger his urge has become to work as an educator in Jewish schools to ensure students are exposed to a "different Arab" compared to what the Israeli media is willing to portray.

Project Summary

"Socially Responsible Literature" will be a series of textbooks that are meant to teach English as a foreign language in regions of conflict. The first textbook currently being written focuses mainly on the Middle East North Africa region. It uses typical English teaching curricula, but introduces new topics that deal with conflict resolution and conflict awareness. It introduces this con-

tent in ways that spark student curiosity and informs them about the cultures in the region, the conflict itself, and different concepts that arise from this conflict. This textbook will be accompanied by dialogue facilitation training for teachers, since it is imperative that teachers know how to lead difficult conversations in classes.

Given that so many people in Israel and Palestine are learning English, this project has the ability to tap into a wide market, since the textbook first and foremost offers a great method to studying the language. This is important because the switch to a different language brings an element of neutrality into studying about the "other." Students will potentially be exposed to material they have been shying away from for years because of singular narratives in their communities. However, through learning English as a foreign language, they will be able to access this kind of information while deconstructing their own singular narratives and being exposed to the other. Students will also be exposed to NGO work and peace work in their region through reading comprehension passages.

This project has the potential to grow to every region in conflict and bring people together as they learn a second or third language, immersing them in information about the culture they are in conflict with.

DOAA ADNAN EL JEDY

Shujaeya Community Project



Doaa is an experienced teacher and tutor, with a degree in early education. She is the Program Director of the Shujaeya Community Project which was established following the 2014 Gaza war to offer support to youth, educators, and parents in one of the most devastated communities of Gaza. She took part

in the Seeds of Peace workshop "Educational Leadership In Times of Crisis" in December 2014.

Project Summary

Doaa is interested in working with Palestinian children facing social and psychological challenges, particularly as a result of traumas from violence and war. This Fellowship will enable Doaa to expand the Shujaeya Community Project and provide children the chance to express themselves, heal from trauma, and learn life and study skills, as well as cooperation and empathy. She is working to create peaceful learning environ-

ments and build a sustainable and creative learning community.

IDDO FELSENTAL

Come to My Classroom



Iddo teaches civics, history and Arabic at a public Jewish high school in Jerusalem. He is a lecturer about Islam and the Arab-Israeli conflict in different institutions and is also involved in teachers' training with several institutes.

Iddo has participated in the Seeds of Peace Camp and regional programs since 1997 as a Seed and later as a facilitator and an educator. He has been politically active ever since he could remember, and he is trying to raise political awareness through his educational work. He is married and has a son.

Project Summary

"Come to my Classroom" is a mini-course for Arab and Jewish teachers in Jerusalem. The main objective of the course is to give teachers tools and experiences that can help them teach about the conflict. By using different methods of bringing the "other" into the classroom, through the transformative experience of meeting the other side and through skills from the discipline of dialogue facilitation, teachers who take the course will be equipped to teach the conflict in a more tolerant, open, and peaceful way.

SULAIMAN KHATIB

My Story



Sulaiman attended GATHER+962 and has been involved with Seeds of Peace activities in Israel and Palestine. He was imprisoned in Israeli jails for ten years and five months, starting at the age of 14, for his political activity. Today, he is the co-founder and co-director of Combatants for Peace. He has

spoken at many universities, schools, and public gatherings, telling his personal story of transformation from violent to nonviolent struggle.

Project Summary

Sulaiman is working to share his own story as a way of learning, teaching, and knowing the narrative/story of what we call "the other." He is collaborating with an author on a book of narrative nonfiction about his life and activism. The book will tell the story of his family history, time in prison, and the secret conversations that led him to cofound the Palestinian- and Israeli-led organization Combatants for Peace.

The book will also frame a conversation between himself and his biographer—a product of the American-Jewish community and its divisions around the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Finally, woven throughout his narrative, this book will explore and pose questions about social change strategy, the history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and the identity politics that inform it.

SANA KHALID

The History Project: Scaling Impact



Sana is the Manager of Delivery and Partnerships with The History Project, an organization that aims to help youth learn identify biases and stereotypes by juxtaposing contrasting textbook history narratives and by making history education fun. She is responsible for hiring and managing volunteers, identifying

delivery partners, social media, and conducting impact analysis.

Sana also has been working with an organization that promotes education, environment, and community health in South Punjab. Her first book of poetry collection is in the process of publication, and she is currently working on a series of short stories.

Sana was a Pakistani Delegation Leader at the Seeds of Peace Camp in 2014 and a GATHER+962 participant.

Project Summary

Sana's goals with The History Project are to reach out to a minimum of 1,000 students in India and Pakistan this year; develop lesson plans, and conduct teacher trainings with The History Project textbook; and hold interactive sessions with parents to raise awareness and gain visibility via social media.

EPPIE BAT-ILAN

Bint Hur Walmmha



Born in Jerusalem where she now lives and works, Eppie is a writer and artist engaged with the healing potential of the arts in Israel and Palestine, and in Jerusalem in particular.

Her work seeks to locate, highlight, and create shared metaphors, associations and transformational experiences in

both Arabic and Hebrew—to build and broaden the imaginative bridge between the two societies.

Working from a vision of the mirrored destinies of Palestinians and Israeli Jews, and from a rarely-voiced mutual need underlying conflict and injustice, Eppie has designed a number of structures to develop in-depth cultural bridges. One of these is a women's joint empowerment group that uses voice work and cultural learning in an empathic, echoing safe space. She is also active in the Women of Action group, founded by Israeli and Palestinian Seeds of Peace Educators.

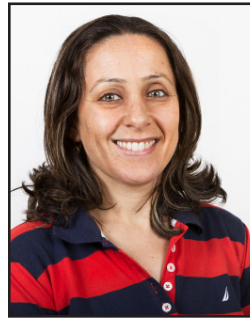
Project Summary

Bint Hur Walmmha is a project of transformative theater: a richly musical, dramatic performance that addresses the realities of the Jewish-Palestinian conflict by building from a shared world of associations and reaching out to both Hebrew- and Arabic-speaking audiences. Based on the mother and sister's story from the well-known film *Ben-Hur*, the performance—set to be staged at Jerusalem's old Lepers' Asylum—focuses on women's roles, voices, and experiences as a fresh prism for both conflict and healing. By connecting the history of the asylum, the Ben-Hur legend, and contemporary Israel and Palestine, the project seeks to offer audiences a magnetic narrative and an experience of understanding beyond and through differences. Planned to be time-specific as well as site-specific, the performances will be staged at key national and religious dates that amplify the narrative and ritual power of the story.

The performance focuses on women's voice, experience and emerging narrative as a source of healing for individuals, families, and the two conflicting societies. Success will be in the numbers of joint audiences that are attracted to the performances, as well as critical response. In the long-run, this project can also move beyond Jerusalem, which would obviously be a sign of its broad impact.

NADIA MIARI

You Know My Name, Not My Story



Nadia is an English teacher at one of the biggest junior high schools for Palestinian students in Israel and is responsible for twelve 9th grade classes. She has taught at the Sakhnin school since 1998 and been a member of the school leadership since 2005.

Nadia has experience with Arab-Jewish meetings with youth movements that work for pluralism within Israel, and speaks Arabic, Hebrew, and English fluently.

Project Summary

"You Know My Name, Not My Story" aims to bridge the gaps between Arabs and Jews in Israel. Nadia plans to bring youth together through sports, arts, and other hobbies so as to create non-political ways for them to relate to each other. She views this as critical to peace in the region, as the conflict with Palestinians cannot be separated from the internal conflicts in Israel.

ISMAIL MUKBIL

Arroub Community Center



Ismail is a peace activist and was a teacher of English language and a school principal for private and UNRWA schools for more than 40 years. He worked in a number of local organizations in the fields of peace education, communication, nonviolence, human rights, and conducted a course on

respecting the other and empowering children and women in Palestinian society.

He works on best practices in regulatory work by building and developing an advanced network of relationships with professionals at the local and international levels for the empowerment of Palestinian society in marginal areas, particularly Palestinian children in Arroub Refugee Camp.

Ismail holds a high diploma in School Administration from the Education Institute in Amman, Jordan, and a Bachelors degree in English Language and its Literature from Bethlehem University.

He led the Palestinian delegation to the Seeds of Peace Camp several times and was a participant in the first Educators' Course, "Narratives; Moral Imagination; Educational Action."

Ismail was one of the core educators in the Seeds of Peace Model Schools Initiative and Peaceful Learning Environment workshops that engaged Palestinian educators from 2007-2009.

Project Summary

Over the past two decades, Palestinian society has gone through significant economic, social and political changes. These changes have directly affected its composition, as well as its participation and production systems, values, and the relationships between different groups in society and between individuals and governing bodies and institutions.

These changes have had a pronounced effect on Palestinians in refugee camps, particularly children who lack access to opportunity.

The Arroub Community Center will strive to empower youth in the Arroub Refugee Camp through a variety of activities that will help them live peacefully and have equal opportunities alongside other groups in their community. The Center will also aim to enhance their abilities to play a role in public life.

AJAY NORONHA

Hold Everything Dear



Ajay is a cinematographer, documentary filmmaker, and director based in Mumbai with over 20 years of experience in the film industry.

His passion for telling a story visually has taken him across the world in diverse contexts—television shows, documentaries, feature films, music videos and

video art installations.

A geology graduate from St Xavier's, Ajay has been a copywriter and worked at CRY – Child Rights and You before going on to study film at the MCRC, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi.

He teaches cinematography at the Sophia Polytechnic, Mumbai and conducts workshops at other film schools. An Indian Delegation Leader at the Seeds of Peace Camp and participant in the "Expressive Arts; Educational Transformations" Course, Ajay has also conducted filmmaking workshops for educators and

youth in India and the West Bank.

Project Summary

Hold Everything Dear is the working title for a film that will inquire into the idea of home—about longing and belonging. The documentary will be situated in Israel and Palestine and delve into what "home" really means to us today and uncover previously untold stories under the premise that more than losing our home and our land, the ultimate loss is that of losing our story.

HANOCH PIVEN

Pivenworld



Hanoch creates colorful collage portraits which have appeared in many major American publications, including *Time Magazine*, *Newsweek*, and *Rolling Stone*, as well as in many European publications, like the *The Times of London*. He gained great visibility in Israel due to his collaboration with

Ha'aretz newspaper, his children's books, and his TV program on Israeli Educational TV.

Hanoch has received multiple professional awards, most notably a Gold Medal from the Society of Illustrators of New York, and a Parents' Choice Gold Award for his iPad App, *Faces iMake*.

His book for children, *What Presidents Are Made Of*, was selected by *Time* as one of the 10 Best Children's Books of 2004.

Hanoch's art, made with everyday found objects, stimulates us to look at our world in a playful new way, engaging the viewer in active participation. Many schools in Israel and the USA use his collage method in the classroom.

Hanoch is also a sought-after speaker, encouraging creativity and communication amongst children, educators, executives, and leaders in general. A variety of audiences, ranging from migrant children in Guatemala City to Jewish and Muslim educators in Israel, to CEOs of high-tech companies, have participated over the years in his workshops.

Project Summary

In his own art and in his workshops, Hanoch works with everyday objects to spark the imagination and to stimulate new ways to look at the world beyond the status quo. He will create an arts education curricu-

lum and teacher training course based on the artistic method he developed and on the extensive educational experience he gained over the years conducting workshops around the world. Themes that will be explored and expressed include composed identity, history, dreams, community, and 'the other.'

This curriculum will ideally provide a road map for educators to engage children into using this easily-applied visual language to communicate both internally and with their respective communities. The implementation of this project will hopefully be accompanied by a series of workshops conducted with educators throughout the region in which they will be trained to use this method in their communities. These educators will then produce documentation of the implementation in their own communities which will be showcased on a dedicated webpage. Thus, a collection of self portraits of children from diverse parts of the world will slowly emerge.

In the future, Hanoch aims to create a traveling art center to reach local children, families, teachers, and the broader communities.

HAYA SHAPIRA

From Melting Pot to Salad Bowl: Bringing People Together in Israeli Society to be Active and Engaged Citizens



Haya recently retired from her position as Director of the Social Education Department in the Israeli Ministry of Education. She was responsible for various subjects, including the creation of programs for teaching students values, leadership, and community service and training teachers in the field of informal education skills.

She is now a full time social activist and tireless advocate for cross-cultural understanding, civic engagement, and leadership.

Haya holds a Bachelor's degree in International Relations and Political Science from Hebrew University, and a Masters degree in Public Administration with a concentration in Education Systems.

After receiving her teaching certificate, she worked for many years teaching history and citizenship to junior high and high school students before being promoted to vice principal of a public school and counselor in the district. She has been involved in Seeds of Peace for many years.

Married happily for 42 years, she has four children and four grandchildren. She is a very curious person who never stops learning, and believes that people have the talent and the influence to make a change. She therefore continues to be a big believer in education.

Project Summary

Haya's project will expand her efforts to grow a strong network of Jewish and Arab educators and citizens in Israel devoted to cross-cultural understanding, leadership, and civic engagement. Haya works with diverse populations within Israel to build bridges between the Jewish and Arab, and religious and secular, communities. She works with non-profit organizations to create various activities that develop meaningful relationships between these communities through meetings and dialogue groups.

She also plans to conduct language courses in which Jewish and Arab Israelis learn each other's language and culture; film discussions and "listening tours" for citizens to learn about marginalized communities; outreach workshops for marginalized groups in Israel; and meetings in Jaffa for Jewish and Palestinian Israeli women. She is also involved with efforts to create strong women leadership (both Jewish and Arab) in several municipalities that focuses on dialogue and living together in a shared society.