

Hostage Square

Chicago



IAC invites you to

Hostage Square Chicago



TUESDAY, AUGUST 20, 2024
9:00AM - 5:00PM

Join us for an art exhibit by Israeli and American artists, celebrating the enduring bond between Israel and the US. This exhibit honors the victims of the October 7 massacre and raises awareness for the hostages still held by Hamas.

- View the most powerful art creations remembering October 7.
- Meet six of Israel's most talented artists and see their work.
- Walk through towering tributes to eight Americans held by Hamas.
- Show your solidarity with Israel and the Jewish people.

Near DNC, exact location to be disclosed privately

High-level private security and full coordination with our courageous law enforcement.

IN COLLABORATION WITH:



Artist: Neil Salti (Israel)

“The tree that saw too much”
(11ft x 18 ft)



If The Trees Could Talk

“Based on my emotions and personal experiences from the horrible attacks at the 7.10 and due to the fact I'm part of the festival scene, I lost more then 20 friends at nova festival and two are still kidnapped by Hamas.I had so many hard feelings about that story and felt a rush to go to were it all happened and look and feel what they been through. When I was traveled there I saw a tree that a part of it was still black due to the burning that happened there and there was a rope half tied to it... and then I realized it was one of the trees that the terrorist tied someone , raped and murdered .. so I decided to create this piece so the world will see and feel what I felt there ... don't think that words,photo or painting can describe and take out this feelings I felt , only a clear 3d visual view will take out this emotions like I experienced.The tree is going to be so emotional with every single detail.”

Neil Salti



Deep in the heart of Tel Aviv, Between skyscrapers and the industrial district, There is a very special place which I call my studio.

An Island of creativity and collaborative work between artists who devote their visionary minds daily. My passion for changing the gray vibe into colorful, full-of-life dreams, gathered the best artistic minds in the world – and together, we make dreams come true for thousands of people. There is no place for mediocrity – while the studio is being updated with constant innovation, using only high-end cutting technology and best quality materials – from the wood to the paint.

Every detail gets extreme attention, and each element is perfectly customized for the big picture. The tremendous experience I've managed to obtain in the global art world, Gives us all that we need when it comes to art installations, event and stage design,decorating both interior and exterior spaces – temporary or permanent – complex, breathtaking and mindful compositions.

Artist: Tomer Peretz (LA)

- 1) “They took her” 20ft sweatpants
- 2) “8 Campaign”: 8-10 Banners (each 5x8 - one for each American hostage) & 25 shirts



Tomer Peretz, a distinguished artist and survivor of trauma from his military service between 2000 and 2004, as well as his volunteer efforts on October 7th, assisting in clearing deceased individuals from kibbutz Beeri and its surroundings alongside the organization Zaka, has founded 8, an art therapy nonprofit offering a unique approach to healing. Having experienced personal transformations through art during his time as a special forces soldier and later as an artist, Tomer deeply understands the profound impact of artistic expression in processing and overcoming trauma. His organization provides a secure and nurturing environment for groups and survivors of terror attacks to explore their emotions and embark on their healing journey.

Tomer's upbringing in South East Jerusalem, amidst the Israeli-Arab conflict, exposed him to terrorist attacks from his early years in the 90s. Despite the turmoil, he found solace and self-expression through art. Even as a child, Tomer was drawn to drawing, painting murals, and channeling his creativity into the world around him.

His journey led him to join the IDF, where he served for four intense years in the special ground forces, enduring the loss of many comrades and engaging in numerous battles during the 2nd Intifada. Seeking respite and perspective, Tomer embarked on a voyage to South America after his military service, immersing himself in its rich tapestry of cultures.

In 2005, Tomer made Los Angeles his home, where he now resides and creates. His art continues to reflect his life experiences, addressing social challenges, the shadows of existence, and the harsh realities of conflict. Through his portraits, he endeavors to capture the essence of individuals' stories in a deeply immersive manner.

As a globally recognized artist, Tomer's projects have transcended borders, gracing exhibitions in numerous countries and leaving a profound impact on audiences worldwide.

8 Campaign

In the days immediately following the October 7th terrorist attacks in Israel, 8, a Tomer Peretz Initiative, came to be. 8 is the artistic home for people healing from mass trauma that serves as a secure and inspiring artistic environment for survivors of the October 7th terror attack, those impacted by the ongoing hostilities in Israel and the global struggle against antisemitism. The 8 model centers on art therapy and community building to create light and free-flowing expression out of pain and darkness.

Who Does 8 Help Survivors of: mass trauma, mass rape & sexual violence as weapons of war, terrorism, mass shootings. We also work directly with veterans who are often on the front lines of experiencing traumatic events.

What Does 8 Do We bring together people who have experienced traumatic events, both with individuals and groups, to ensure access to mentorship, therapy and counseling. Participants will have the opportunity to meet and work with world-renowned painter Tomer Peretz, as well as a host of professionals to safely and methodically revisit their trauma, process it and find ways to move through it. The 8 model centers on art therapy and community building to create light and beauty from pain and darkness.



Sweatpants

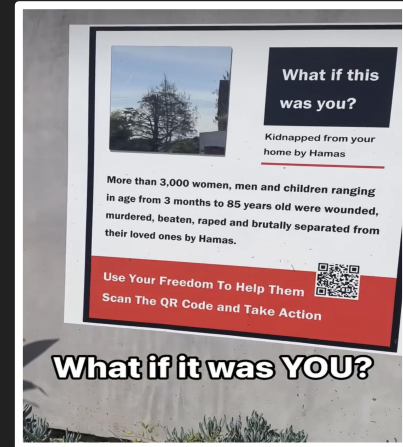
<https://www.artists4israel.org/theytookher>



NAAMA LEVY, A 19 YEAR OLD ISRAELI GIRL, WAS KIDNAPPED BY HAMAS TERRORISTS ON OCTOBER 7, 2023. VIDEOS AND PHOTOS OF HER SHOW HER BLOODIED SWEATPANTS, CUT ANKLES AND HER BEING PULLED BY HER HAIR INTO A TERRORIST JEEP. NAAMA IS STILL BEING HELD CAPTIVE BY HAMAS AND SUFFERS WHO KNOWS WHAT TORTURES EACH DAY

Artist: A4I

- **Vision:** Kidnapped Mirror Home"- 8 Banners double sided posted on pop up display stands
- **Size:** 6.5ft height x 3ft length (banner)
- **Mirror:** full body mirror



Kidnapped

By making the Kidnapped posters life-size and putting a mirror in place of the captive's image, this exhibit forces the viewer to stop and interact with the idea that there are people still held hostage by Hamas. We want the viewer to consider themselves in the fate of kidnapped and “reflect” on what they would do if it was them or their family being held against their will.

Craig Dershowitz

Craig Dershowitz is the Chief Executive Officer of Artists 4 Israel and President of The Healing Arts Kits and Healing Ink.

Mr. Dershowitz has worked with over 3,000 artists representing more than 35 different countries with projects on 4 continents using art as a tool for social change and humanitarian relief. He was presented the Defender of Israel award, been honored by Prime Minister Netanyahu in a public ceremony, been named “36 under 36” and one of the 100 most influential Jewish minds. Most important to Craig is that he received the Key to the City of Sderot for his work there during wartime.

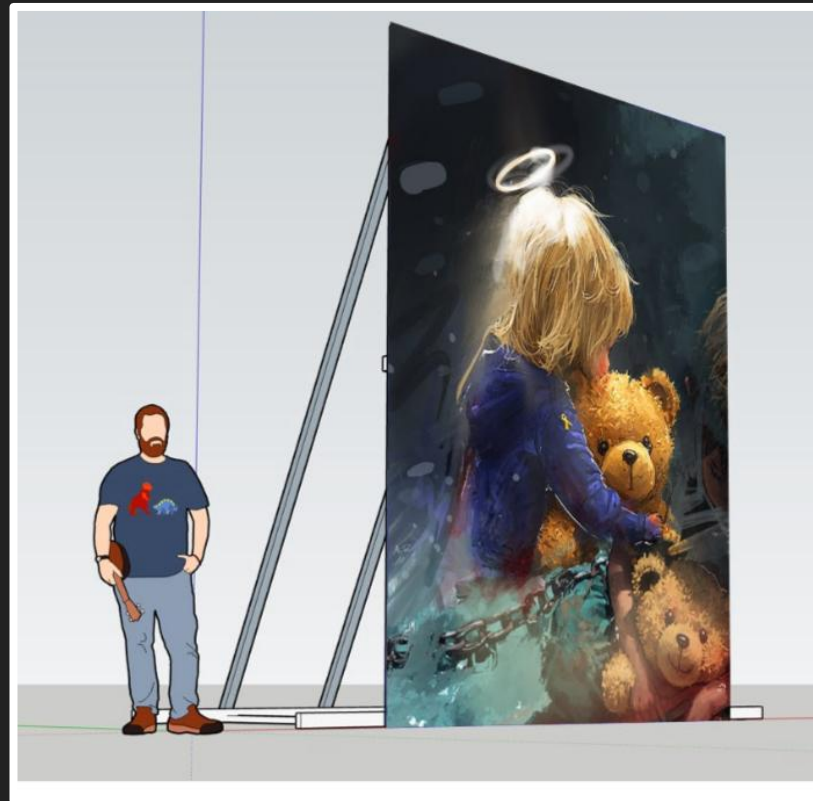
In the private sector, Mr. Dershowitz was a Special Projects Manager for Morgan Stanley in the Anti-Money Laundering Department immediately after 9/11 seeking to close terrorist access to funding. He edited a Holocaust survivor’s memoirs for publishing and has also written for Vice Magazine. He sold an internationally distributed boutique graffiti publication to fund the first year of Artists 4 Israel’s activity.



Artist: Avi Tal (Israel)

- Large Graffiti Mural
- Size: 16ft x 11.8ft
- Artist is building a wooden stand and then placing a canvas on top of it to paint

(Note: There will be no Halo in the final piece)



Artwork Description

This modern yet timeless design features a poignant scene of a young child, symbolizing the deep emotional and societal impact of the events of October 7th. The child, whose face remains hidden to represent the countless kidnapped children, wears a blue jacket embodying the colors of the Israeli flag. He clutches his teddy bear, with the bear shedding a tear to signify the destruction of childhood.

The boy is shackled in a dark room, further emphasizing his captivity and the loss of freedom. The brutal actions of Hamas have left a deep scar on the child, encapsulating feelings of fear, helplessness, and loss. The composition simplicity and emotional depth create a powerful narrative, making it a striking tribute to resilience and the enduring human spirit, while also highlighting the severe impact of such traumatic experiences on a child's emotional and psychological well-being.

Avi Tal (SPINE B7) Bio

Avi Tal (SPINE B7), born in Beersheba, Israel in 1986 to immigrant parents who escaped as hunted Jews from the collapsing Soviet Union, began his artistic journey in 2002 with spray cans. Growing up in a poor and challenging environment, he found refuge in graffiti and BMX, which provided him an escape and deepened his understanding of street culture.

In addition to his graffiti work, Avi spent ten years building airplane models, studying aerodynamics, and structural integrity. This technical expertise has informed his art, allowing him to create works that combine material knowledge with creative expression. He also works with oil paint, mixed media, creating statues, graphic designs, and more, aspiring to eventually create large-scale statues.

After a pivotal moment in Be'er Sheva, where he turned a legal setback into an opportunity to paint murals, Avi's passion for large-scale art grew. From 2009 to 2012, he lived in the Netherlands, where his artistic perspective expanded, leading him to experiment with even more ambitious projects.

In 2014, Avi collaborated with the Neot Hovav Regional Council, transforming the industrial landscape of the Negev with over 2,500 sq.m of vibrant murals. He pursued a lifelong dream by attempting to set a Guinness World Record, painting the entire exterior of Dimona's soccer stadium, a 2,038 sq.m endeavor

Avi curated several successful street art events throughout Israel, including a street art gallery at the Be'er Sheva Youth Center in 2016 and a series of rotating murals at Pub 40 in 2017. His work was further showcased in 2019 at the POP-UP MUSEUM TLV, where he covered a four-story building's facade with his signature style.

In 2024, Avi made history by designing and painting a Sky-Van airplane, becoming the first artist in Israel to do so with spray cans. He has also contributed significantly to the community by designing and creating over ten memorial spaces for the Ethiopian community.

Avi's lifelong goal is to create powerful murals that not only transform public spaces but also positively impact the environment. He hopes his work will inspire the next generation, particularly youth who come from challenging backgrounds similar to his own. His contributions have been central to bringing street art into the mainstream in Israel, where he continues to be commissioned for some of the country's most prominent projects.

Avi Tal (SPINE B7) Connection to Israel/Oct 7

My connection to Israel is deeply personal, shaped by my family's history and my own experiences growing up in the south. I am the grandson of Holocaust survivors, whose stories of survival and loss were a constant part of my upbringing. My parents fled their homeland as Jews were being hunted, seeking refuge in Israel.

I was born in southern Israel, in a city where cultures mix, but the threat of violence is always present. From a young age, I knew what it was like to run for cover, to live with the fear that a rocket could strike at any moment. This fear became a part of my daily life, especially after witnessing the aftermath of a terror attack in 2004, where two buses exploded, leaving behind a scene of devastation that I will never forget. These experiences have profoundly influenced my art, as I try to process and express the weight of living under such constant threats.

On October 7th, I was in my studio in the old city of Be'er Sheva with my wife and daughter when we were awakened by a siren at around six in the morning. With no shelter to turn to, we lay down, covering our daughter for safety. The sirens kept going off, and messages began pouring in. It wasn't until hours later that we started to grasp the horrific events unfolding just a 20-minute drive from where we were. Watching uncensored videos being uploaded in real-time filled us with an unimaginable sense of helplessness and sorrow.

The shock of that day still lingers. Friends were killed in horrific ways, and I find myself operating on auto-pilot, trying to cope with the overwhelming changes that have taken place since. In January, I moved to a small town about 10 miles from Gaza, where the war was a constant presence. I now have to explain to my 4-year-old daughter what those loud bangs are—the ones that sometimes are so close and powerful that they shake our home, even opening our backdoor from the force of the blast.

The state of fear and uncertainty is something I carry with me every day, and it's what drives my art. My work is my way of channeling these experiences, of trying to make sense of the senseless, and of connecting with others who have lived through similar horrors. Everything changed on October 7th, and my art is a reflection of that change—an attempt to find meaning and perhaps some solace in a world that often feels beyond understanding.

Artist: Shmutz (FL)

- Live 5-15 min sketches of every hostage
- **Size: 11x14 sketches**



Shmutz Art

Shmutz is an artist who spent twelve transformative years living in Tel Aviv-Jaffa, from 2010 to 2022. During this time, Israel became much more than just a place to live; it became a profound part of Shmutz's identity. "My friends in Israel are my family," Shmutz explains, "We built lasting relationships through all the hardships and good times that took place." This deep connection, coupled with a cultural link to Israel, forms the core of Shmutz's work—art that questions, connects, and reflects the complexities of feeling both a part of and apart from a community.

Living in Israel offered a unique perspective on a country that outsiders often reduce to its conflicts. "People always want to bring up the war or the wars in the past as if this is the only thing that occurs in Israel, but in reality, because of the unity of the country, it's hard not to feel a part of the everyday life," Shmutz shares. This unity, despite its current vulnerabilities, allowed Shmutz to express and explore identity in ways never possible before. The diverse fabric of Israeli society, its encouragement of self-expression, and the shared experiences of both joy and tragedy deeply influenced Shmutz's art.

The events of October 7, 2023, marked a significant and painful moment in Shmutz's life. From Miami, Shmutz received distressing messages and videos from friends in Israel, including a friend who was kidnapped from the Nova Music festival but has since been released. "All of this still continues today," Shmutz reflects, "because even though I don't know the other hostages personally, they are part of my family and our family as Jews and Israelis."

This deep sense of connection and urgency drives Shmutz's latest project: drawing loose portraits of the remaining hostages to ensure their stories and faces remain in the public eye. "I want the attendees at the DNC to remember that there are still hostages being held in Gaza for almost a year," Shmutz says. The goal is to evoke empathy and awareness, particularly as political leaders convene to define their future campaigns. "[My work] is about awareness and advocating for their release on their behalf."

For Shmutz, art is more than a medium—it's a means of coping, storytelling, and preserving the memories of those who can no longer speak for themselves. This project, with its sheer scale and urgency, is a departure from Shmutz's past work, symbolizing the critical nature of time as the hostages remain in captivity. "There really is no more time left," Shmutz emphasizes, "The world lost sympathy for these poor souls who have endured so much. No human should suffer like this."

In this poignant and urgent series of portraits, Shmutz calls upon the world to remember, to act, and to never forget those who are still waiting to come home.

Artist: Noah Elder

- Large scale painting of healing ink tattoo
- 4x5 ft canvas

Elyse Story

Elyse is a survivor of the 10/7 attacks that occurred at Kibutz Re'im. She wanted a tattoo of an Enzo circle and also something that represents the Pisces. I drew up a Koi fish bursting through an Enzo circle as the fish represents not only the Pisces but in Japanese tattooing it represents resilience as the koi fish always keeps swimming, no matter the tide. This was a beautiful way to reclaim her trauma as I think the message of resilience was very important to her story.





KIDNNAPED MILK CARTONS

The art piece features a milk carton adorned with photos of hostages, evoking the familiar "missing person" imagery from the 1980s and 90s. This poignant visual connects the plight of the hostages to a deeply ingrained American memory, where milk cartons once served as a daily reminder of lost children. By drawing on this powerful symbol, the piece resonates with American viewers, highlighting the urgency and human impact of the situation. It serves as a compelling metaphor for the need to bring the hostages home, much like the lost children who once graced these cartons.

KIDNAPPED		KIDNAPPED	
			
HAMAS KIDNAPPED U.S. CITIZENS	HAMAS KIDNAPPED U.S. CITIZENS	HAMAS KIDNAPPED U.S. CITIZENS	HAMAS KIDNAPPED U.S. CITIZENS
			
Hersh Goldberg-Polin 23 Years Old	Hersh Goldberg-Polin 23 Years Old	Hersh Goldberg-Polin 23 Years Old	Hersh Goldberg-Polin 23 Years Old
			
HAMAS IS STILL HOLDING AMERICAN HOSTAGES	HAMAS IS STILL HOLDING AMERICAN HOSTAGES	HAMAS IS STILL HOLDING AMERICAN HOSTAGES	HAMAS IS STILL HOLDING AMERICAN HOSTAGES
			

