



ההסתדרות הציונית העולמית  
World Zionist Organization

המחלקה לפעילות בתפוצות  
Department for Diaspora Activities

# Beit Ha'am

Z-Talks

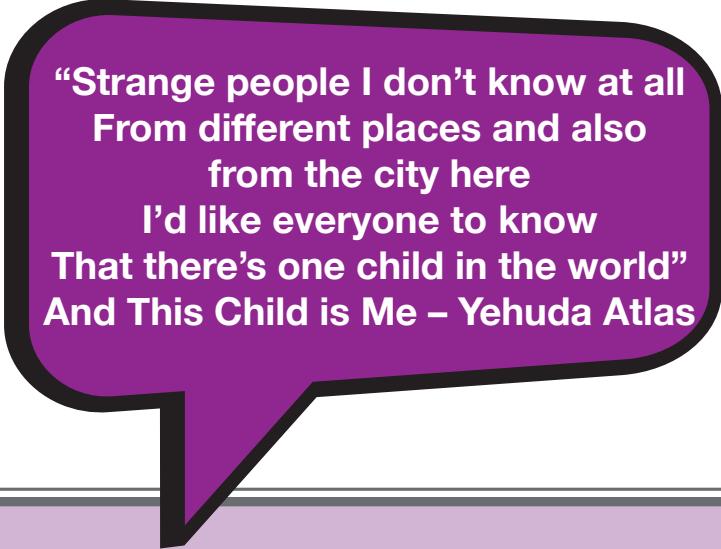
**בית העם**

שיג ושיח ציוני

**“This Object is Me” – Between  
the Individual and the Group**  
Examining Identity Issues  
with Hanoch Piven



Concept & Development: Department for Diaspora Activities, WZO 5772-2011  
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**“Strange people I don’t know at all  
From different places and also  
from the city here  
I’d like everyone to know  
That there’s one child in the world”  
And This Child is Me – Yehuda Atlas**

The *Beit Ha’am* program was developed by the Department for Diaspora Activities in the World Zionist Organization to encourage discussion on the subject of Zionist identity and attitudes to the State of Israel.

The program includes diverse traditional and modern texts on a range of subjects. Through encounter with these texts, we hope to encourage lively discussion of Zionist identity among Diaspora Jews in general, and the younger generation, in particular.

The discussion will address what binds the Jewish people, wherever they may be, as well as what divides and separates us.

We will consider the meaning of Jewish political independence of the people dwelling in Zion and the reciprocal relationships between Jews living in Israel and those who live in the Diaspora.

This represents an opportunity for everyone, irrespective of prior knowledge, to get to know and enhance their knowledge about the significance of Zionism in the 21st century, to engage in discussion, reflect on its substance and the extent of its relevance to our lives.

The *Beit Ha’am* program is currently available in Hebrew and English, and will be translated into other languages according to demand.

If you are interested in using the *Beit Ha’am* program, or would like to hear more about training counselors to work with the program, please contact the Department for Diaspora Activities at [noam@wzo.org.il](mailto:noam@wzo.org.il)

## INTRODUCTION

Hanoch Piven, who was born in Uruguay, came to Israel in 1975 and grew up in Ramat Gan and Kfar Saba. Following his studies at the School of Visual Arts in New York, he began developing his singular style of portraits which employs everyday objects to characterize images of well-known figures. For nearly two decades now, his works have appeared in periodicals worldwide, from Time and Newsweek in the U.S. to Der Spiegel and The London Times in Europe.

In 1994 he was awarded the New York Society of Illustrators Gold Medal, which is the most prestigious award in the U.S. illustration industry. In Israel, Piven won acclaim due to his portraits column in the Haaretz newspaper during the 1990s.

Piven has published a number of children's books, including the bestseller, The Perfect Purple Feather. He also created the Objects Joke Around program for the HOP TV channel.

In recent years Piven has conducted many workshops where participants experiment with the creative experience using his artistic technique. These workshops are attended by children and adults alike. By experimenting with creativity through objects, participants are able to articulate feelings, ideas and stories by means of an easily applied visual tool. Hanoch Piven divides his time between Barcelona and Tel Aviv.

## USING THE KIT

The workbook contains detailed instructions for the facilitator, including a variety of topics for discussion, questions, and activities. It's important to note that the facilitator should take into account the nature of the group of participants and the time allotted to the activity. The workbook also includes a wide variety of educational ideas; don't hesitate to make use of anything that furthers your needs in the best way possible. It's not necessary to utilize all the materials contained in the workbook. Use can be made only of Piven's Objects Workshop, which is highlighted in purple, or just the portraits activity. We've added some other distinct portraits created by Hanoch to the kit in order to provide you, the facilitators, with more options. You'll be able to choose the components that meet your needs for the program and groups you're leading.

## TARGETS/GOALS

The purpose of the kit is to trigger discussion about issues related to Jewish and Zionist identity by means of works created by the artist, Hanoch Piven. Similar to an artist who makes a collage by locating objects and materials that come from different sources and assembling them together into a uniform language, thereby assigning new and special meaning to the total creation, we too assemble our lives. In the following kit we'll examine different and diverse topics using various components – Hanoch Piven's art, a creative exercise in which we'll attempt to compile a visual image that tells the story of our identity, made by employing the different meanings we attach to objects, and by way of Hanoch's own story. Each part of the kit can stand on its own and also be incorporated in a composite and enriching activity.



## THE PORTRAITS

Theodor Herzl

Shimon Peres

Dana International

Moses Our Forefather

David Ben Gurion

Golda Meir

We chose to develop an activity associated with the images of Herzl, Peres, and Dana because they symbolize individuals who pursued a special path while breaking with convention. They creatively and courageously paved the way for themselves and their leadership style was unique to them.

We added the images of Moses Our Forefather, David Ben Gurion and Golda Meir in order to offer you more options and more portraits, enabling you to create activities of your own as you see fit.

## MAKING USE OF THE PORTRAITS

**Below are some ideas for how to connect the participants to the different issues by means of the portraits:**

**“The Wandering Jew “:** let the participants wander around the different portraits (preferably in pairs) and discuss the questions emerging from each one of them, allotting a predetermined amount of time. After everyone has finished, convene the group and enable its members to express opinions and discuss the answers.

**My favorite poster:** let the participants wander around the different portraits and ask them to stand next to their favorite one. Ask each participant to explain his/her choice.

**A poster as a source of inspiration:** let the participants choose a poster whose topic or the theme it conveys they can identify with. Allot them a fixed amount of time to create a sign/poster that deals with the same topic (the materials should be prepared in advance).

**The portraits can be used as a means to subdivide the group. The participants can be divided into three groups based on the portraits:**

**By subject matter:** the participants choose a place next to the poster that most interests them.

**By poster:** the participants choose a place next to the poster they like the most.

**Facilitator’s choice:** the facilitator divides the group as he/she sees fit.



## PRELIMINARY ACTIVITY – GATHERING MATERIALS (objects workshop)

The first step is to gather materials. The collection process itself is actually the start of observing everyday objects in a new and different light, coupled with the process of observing our own lives. This stage should be utilized to create buzz and excitement about the activity.

A week or two before the activity. The participants should be involved in preparing for the activity. On the one hand, they can bring in objects which they no longer need at home. On the other hand, they should find examples of objects at home which have meaning in their lives.

### The collection campaign

You can design portraits and gain the group's cooperation by asking them to bring in objects from home. The latter will result in many different objects being brought in. Set up boxes for storing the objects. As soon as the collection process is over, the various objects should be categorized in order to organize the expected disarray. Furthermore, on the day of the workshop, the participants can also bring a small bag from home containing personal items they want to make use of.

Ask each participant to gather objects at home in advance for use during the workshop. The stage of collecting and organizing the materials is critical because it produces an array of associations. It's important to stress that the participants may not necessarily use the objects which they brought in when actually doing their own project. Rather, all the objects brought in by the entire group should be arranged on a uniform surface, and all the objects should be available to everyone. The latter process makes it possible to assign new meaning to an object and detach it from its original context.

### What's needed?

Examples of materials and objects: telephones, buttons, toys, cell phones, speakers, computer games. It's important to look beyond the usual realm of recycling (bottles, lids, corks, newspapers). It's also advisable to stay away from traditional arts & crafts materials found in craft supplies stores. It's crucial that there be numerous objects and considerable variety.



### **The objects required by each creativity group:**

1. Work surface – optimally, a hard surface that won't cave in under the weight of the objects. A quarter or half a sheet of cardboard will probably fulfill the purpose well.
2. Fasteners: a hot glue gun for the heavy objects; plastic glue can also be used for most of the lightweight paper and plastic objects. Objects can be fastened to one another using cable binders or metal wire.
3. Scissors or a cutting knife; pliers
4. Sheets of colored paper

## **OPENING YOUR MIND TO THE LANGUAGE OF CREATING WITH OBJECTS:** (recommended time: 10 minutes)

To introduce the participants to creative thinking as seen through Hanoch's eyes (the right side of the brain), show them the portraits he created.

What objects can you identify?

Has conventional use been made of those objects?

Why did Hanoch choose to use those objects in such a way?

## **WARM-UP EXERCISE** (recommended time: 15 minutes)

Each participant is requested to go to the 'objects bank' and select two objects:

One object they can relate to for whatever reason.

A second object which represents/symbolizes/is associated with their family.

A third object which in their view represents/symbolizes/is associated with Israel or the way they feel about Israel.

If the group is large (more than 10 members), it can be divided into smaller groups at any stage of the activity. Each participant should show the rest of the group which objects he/she chose and explain why they selected them.

You can explain to the group that the reason for using the objects is that they break through the barrier of logic.



## THEODOR HERZL

*"In a moment of truth, Herzl divulges a 'secret' to Nordau: his own nose – has a strange feature: one side is completely straight, whereas the other side – is somewhat hooked. In the past, before he became involved in the Jewish question, he would pose with the straight side of his nose facing the camera. But since devoting himself to the Jewish question – he makes sure to be photographed from his hooked side."*

### And This Child is Me – Yehuda Atlas

Strange people I don't know at all  
From different places and also from the city here  
I'd like everyone to know  
That there's one child in the world

And this child is me, this child  
This child is me  
And this child is me, this child  
This child is me

*"Here we were in Jaffa. Again poverty and misery, and heat in gay colors. Confusion in the streets, at the hotel, not a carriage to be found. I was already on a horse, in order to ride to Rishon Le-Zion, but dismounted again when Dr. Joffe procured a means of transport..."*

Herzl's Diaries, Jaffa, October 26, 1898

### Ideas for alternative materials to depict Herzl, suggested by Hanoch Piven:

Binoculars, compass, flashlight, flags, Lego, fan, charcoal, building tools, objects associated with Europe (an old newspaper, eyeglasses, typewriter, typewriter characters...)



## Questions for discussion:

1. According to Piven, the objects symbolize the contrast between Herzl's utopian vision about Israel and the reality. If you had to choose again, which objects do you think would convey that contrast? Do you think that it's at all necessary to emphasize the contrast? In your opinion, does any contrast even exist between the two things?

2. Hanoch Piven underscores the contrast between how Israel is perceived and its reality. Have you had a similar experience regarding Israel? Which differences can you point out between what you were told about Israel as opposed to what you encountered when you got there? Did the differences surprise you? Did the differences reinforce or weaken your sense of closeness to Israel?

3. From an educational standpoint, a decision is occasionally made to portray Israel in a positive light – What do you think about that? Does it strengthen or weaken your bond with Israel?

4. Herzl was a very special person. Even though he was a Jew born in the Diaspora, and lived and died outside Eretz Israel – he is perceived as a national symbol. In your view, what symbolizes Israel today? What symbolizes the way you feel about Israel?

5. In the poem *And This Child is Me*, the poet talks about “one child in the world.” During his lifetime, Herzl had to deal with many confrontational situations and differences of opinion, but he always remained loyal to himself. Is there an issue about which you feel you've had an experience similar to that of Herzl? What is your “one child”?



## EXERCISE: COMPILING OUR PERSONAL IDENTITY

(recommended time: 60 minutes)

**We start with the objects we selected and try to tell the story: which materials am I made of?**

It's not necessary to create a similar or exact self-portrait, but rather some kind of visual image or even an 'object map' that are meaningful in the context of locale, personal, family or national history. It can be taken to a metaphoric or concrete place, tangible or abstract.

When the assignment is completed, the facilitator should encourage the participants to share their self-portraits with others.



## SHIMON PERES

*"I believe that the Jews' greatest contribution to history is dissatisfaction"* – Shimon Peres, 2010

*"I did not dream of becoming president; my dream was to be a shepherd or a poet of stars"* –  
at the presidential inauguration ceremony, July 15, 2007

*"You have to be someone who's forever engaged in something, and I maintain that you're always as great as the size of the matter you're serving, and that you become small if you serve only yourself"* – Ynet, July 2005

*"People think that I fantasize. I don't fantasize about anything. And if I do, I have a license to fantasize because everything I've fantasized about has turned into reality."* – Yedioth Ahronoth, March 9, 2012

*"The GGA Laboratory wants to research the 'Shimon Peres Gene'"*  
[http://www.president.gov.il/Presidential\\_Activities/Press\\_Releases/Pages/News\\_170412\\_01.aspx](http://www.president.gov.il/Presidential_Activities/Press_Releases/Pages/News_170412_01.aspx)



SUCSESSES	FAILURES
Elected to Mapai's secretariat, and together with Moshe Dayan was chosen to be a young delegate of the Mapai faction to the Zionist Congress in Basel in 1946	1974 – lost his bid to head the Labor Party to Yitzhak Rabin.
1949 – appointed head of the Marine Services	
Appointed head of the Ministry of Defense delegation in the U.S.	1977 – lost his bid to be Prime Minister to Menachem Begin (The “Upheaval”)
At the age of 29, appointed Director-General of the Ministry of Defense by David Ben Gurion	
Founded Rafael	
Was in charge of setting up Israel's nuclear power plants	1988 - the Labor Party under his leadership won second place in the Knesset elections
1959 – first elected to Israel's Knesset where he served continuously for 48 years (serving as the Minister of: Absorption, Transportation, Communications, Information, Interior, Defense, Religion, Foreign Affairs, Finance, Regional Cooperation, Negev and Galilee Development, and Deputy Prime Minister)	
1977 – was the head of the Labor Party	1996 - the labor party lost the elections
Initiated Operation Entebbe	
Was Prime Minister Rabin's partner in achieving an interim agreement with Egypt	2000 – lost his bid for the presidency to Moshe Katzav
1984 – served as Prime Minister in a national unity government under a rotation arrangement with Yitzhak Shamir	
1994 – received the Nobel Peace Prize together with Yitzhak Rabin and Yasser Arafat	
1995-1997 – elected to replace Rabin as chairman of the Labor Party and Prime Minister	2005 – lost his bid to head the Labor Party to Amir Peretz
2003-2005 – elected party chairman	
2005 – founded the Negev and Galilee Development Ministry	
2007 – was sworn in as the State of Israel's ninth president	



## Questions for discussion:

1. From your perspective, which object in the poster stands out the most? What does it symbolize to you? What is your most conspicuous object/trait?

2. Hanoch Piven underscored the contrast between Peres's optimism and exuberance, depicted by the smile made of flowers, and his string of failures in the political arena, represented by the bandaged eyebrows. These two sides of Peres can be viewed as a mirror of Israel. What are Israel's flowers? What are Israel's adhesive bandages? In your community, is there more focus on Israel's bandages or its flowers?

3. If you examine the table above, you'll see that Peres has had an impressive string of successes as opposed to a limited list of political failures. Nonetheless, Peres has the image of being a 'loser.' What do you think about that? Why do we, both as individuals and as a group, focus on the negative rather than the positive? The feeling in Israel is as follows: no matter how many successes we have, we are always perceived by the media and the global community in a negative light. They will always focus on the negative rather than the positive. Is that justified? In your opinion, is that just

human nature or something specifically related to Israel? How do you examine Israel – through the smile of made flowers or through the adhesive bandages?

4. Peres is loved the world over, but in the eyes of some groups in Israel he continues to represent the Diaspora Jew with the non-Israeli accent. Nevertheless, he found his own way of leading. Do you have a special statement to make about your connection to Jewish identity? Your connection to Israel?



## GROUP EXERCISE

(recommended time: 60 minutes)

**Creating together using the objects makes it possible to bring various issues to the surface and discuss them. Working in a group setting offers an entertaining and creative framework for addressing different and diverse topics.**

Every group should examine the personal materials that each participant chose for himself/herself, and then answer the question presented to them when receiving instructions for the exercise.

Sample questions:

Compile your community's identity as you deem fit

Compile your family's identity as you deem fit – what is family?

What does the group/community feel about Israel?

What does the group/community feel about Zionism?

What is Jewish about the group/community?

What is an educator/facilitator?

What is a leader?

What is a vision?

What's your Israel?

**Feel free to add other ideas based on your needs – nearly every question will provide food for thought and creativity.**



## DANA INTERNATIONAL

“Last year the Lonely Planet travel guide ranked Tel Aviv as one of the 10 top cities for 2011, surpassed only by New York and Tangiers, an honor) and literally placed it on the map. Admit that this announcement by one of the leading travel guides in the world [is fantastic], designating the city a place permanently on vacation – ‘after a few days you may start to wonder if it’s the weekend or a weekday. The city is on permanent holiday and you can always find crowded cafes, sunbathers, joggers and dog walkers, at any time of the day or night.’” – Achbar Ha’lr website, May 2009 – [http://www.mouse.co.il/world/CM.world\\_articles\\_item,1559,209,60580,.aspx](http://www.mouse.co.il/world/CM.world_articles_item,1559,209,60580,.aspx)

*“In a global competition conducted by GayCities.com in cooperation with American Airlines, our Tel Aviv was declared the world’s best gay city. Tel Aviv landed 43% of the vote, topping New York (14%), Toronto (7%), Sao Paulo, Brazil (6%) and Madrid (5%).”* – Achbar Ha’lr website, January 2012 – [http://www.mouse.co.il/world/CM.world\\_articles\\_item,1559,209,65671,.aspx](http://www.mouse.co.il/world/CM.world_articles_item,1559,209,65671,.aspx)

*“The selection of Dana International...to represent Israel at the Eurovision Song Contest – elicited indignant reactions from religious groups as soon as the decision was announced. But it turns out that the angry reactions towards Dana led the singer and her song to receive a lot of attention in Europe and around the world.”*

<http://www.news1.co.il/Archive/001-D-238054-00.html>

*“I went in the direction of the coastal plain  
What a shock I’m about to get  
And now that I’m finally in Tel Aviv  
Blending in with the scenery, everything’s fresh and that’s good  
Wow, so many breasts, my eyes are burning  
After two years of Sodom and Gomorrah  
I don’t recognize myself in the mirror...”  
From: “Hine Ani Ba” (Here I Come) - Hadag Nahash*



*"The Batsheva Dance Company heard about the protest from the news broadcasts: the Deputy Minister of Construction and Housing, Meir Porush, demands that Batsheva not participate in the show "Pa'amonei Yovel" honoring the State of Israel's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary – or alternatively, that the "Ehad Mi Yodea" piece in "Anafaza," in which the dancers are supposed to appear on the stage wearing only undergarments, be revised. 'It's inconceivable that such an abominable performance be put on with public funds,' lashed out the religious Deputy Minister at Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu."*

**Haaretz, May 3, 1998**

### **Questions for discussion:**

The fact that Dana was chosen to represent Israel at the Eurovision Song Contest in 1998 was highly provocative – Why so in your opinion? Was it appropriate for Dana to represent the State of Israel at an international event? What was appropriate and what was inappropriate?

How does the poster make you feel? Dana is a person who clings to her beliefs – who sets an example and leads in her own way. Dana is known for the faith she has in herself, for challenging norms and prejudices, and for her courage to follow her own path, even though the conservative establishment doesn't accept her. What do you think that says about Dana? What does it say about Israel? How do you feel about it in the context of what happened to the Batsheva Dance Company that same year?

In recent years Israel has received global recognition as a tourist destination. Tel Aviv, in particular, was voted the most appealing and friendly city to the LGBT community. Does that recognition put a stain on the State of Israel's reputation, or is it a source of pride? Is it compatible or does it clash with the religious image projected by Israel and Jerusalem? In your opinion, can Israel contain both these ways of thinking at the same time?

The song "Hine Ani Ba" (Here I Come) by Hadag Nahash takes the contrast between Jerusalem and Tel Aviv to an extreme, including the contrast between Israel's conservative elements and its pluralistic, liberal elements. One can distinguish the development of two conflicting directions in Israel which are mutually influenced: on the one hand, globalization and renewal, and on the other hand, introversion and isolationism. In your view, which direction is right for Israel's continued existence? Are you experiencing a similar process in your community? In your country? How does it express itself?

## WRAP-UP

How was the experience? What was easy for you? What was difficult for you?

If it's a group whose members know each other well, you can ask each pair to examine the work done by his/her partner, thereby assigning new meaning to things which the person who created them didn't necessarily have in mind.

What are you taking away from this experience? Did the creative exercise help you answer complex questions, such as: In what way are you Jewish? What's your connection to Israel? Repeat the warm-up exercise and see if the participants offer new/different answers. Why?

