

## World Renowned Children's Art Exhibit to Visit Charlotte

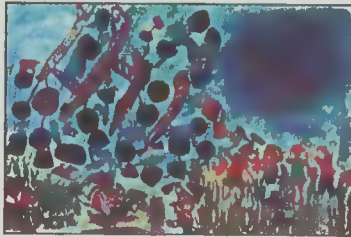
### Children of Jerusalem: Painting Pain, Dreaming Peace

If a picture says a thousand words, then this powerful new art exhibit debuting March 9 at *ImaginOn: The Joe & Joan Martin Center*, could fill volumes.

This collection of 61 paintings is a culmination of a three-year multicultural project initiated by child Holocaust survivor Kitty O. Cohen, chair of the Institute for the Study of Religions and Communities in Israel.

Cohen initiated the collaborative arts program in the wake of the Second Intifada, a Palestinian uprising largely centered in Jerusalem, where children were exposed to almost daily violence and bloodshed. Cohen organized workshops for 50 elementary-school children ages 9-12 with Israeli and Palestinian art teachers in West and East Jerusalem, respectively. At first the children were encouraged to express their fears through art. In the second stage, they invited the children to work together to imagine a better future, a place where peace would become an everyday part of life. Exhibited chronologically, "Children of Jerusalem" maps a journey from alienation and fear to friendship and hope for peace.

This remarkable display of art by Israeli and Palestinian children was launched to international acclaim in Jerusalem before travelling to Geneva, London's House of Commons, San Francisco, Savannah GA, and now Charlotte. Initiated by Temple Beth El in honor of Israel's 60th anniversary, bring-



*Chocolate Bullets, Michal Patlas, ten years old (Israeli)*

ing the exhibit to Charlotte soon became a groundbreaking collaboration of many cultural and religious institutions, including Mecklenburg Ministries, Charlotte Coalition for Social Justice, Temple Beth El, Israel at 60, Temple Israel, Palestinian Advisors to the Project, *ImaginOn: The Joe & Joan Martin Center*, Children's Theatre of Charlotte, and The Public Library of Charlotte &



*Freedom, Firas Al-Halawani, eleven years old (Palestinian)*

Mecklenburg County. Funding provided by the Knight Foundation.

This collaboration clearly demonstrates how the model used in the "Children of Jerusalem" art exhibit can apply to our own Charlotte interfaith community. Lectures and community conversations will spark

learning, inspire reflection and create dialogue between the different faiths. Our first community lecture on March 9 will focus on the sharing and understanding of painful experiences of the other by listening to the personal stories of parents who have lost children in the conflict. We will then partner with Mecklenburg Ministries to reflect on religious issues in Charlotte. Religious leaders

from the three Abrahamic faiths of Charlotte will address: "What is the Status in Our Community: Religious Antagonism, Religious Acceptance, or Religious Appreciation?"

The exhibit "Children of Jerusalem" brings forth the children's message: "No to violence, yes to peace." May it be heard loud and clear, in Israel and in our own Charlotte community. You are invited to see the children of Jerusalem's work and listen to their voices.

The exhibit will be free and open to the public March 9-May 15 at *ImaginOn: The Joe & Joan Martin Center*, 300 East 7th street.

For more information go to [www.imaginon.org/index.asp](http://www.imaginon.org/index.asp) or [www.Jewishcharlotte.org](http://www.Jewishcharlotte.org). ✪

## Letter from Zeev Bielski

(Continued from page 3)

between your community and the Jewish Agency. I would like to thank you especially for your activity in P2K with the city of Hadera which includes cooperation in different activities such as education projects, absorption of Ethiopian Jews, strengthening the city, camp "Tikkun Olam," the joint women delegation to Poland, the joint bike trip, the visit of the teachers delegation from Hadera and the establishment of the business women's forum.

Your important contribution to Maxam in Hadera has great importance as it gives children of *olim* from Ethiopia the

opportunity to make the most of their talents and capabilities, strengthen their self confidence and enables them to find their place in society.

Your partnership with the City of Hadera has great value to the residents of Hadera and to the Jewish community of Charlotte. I hope that the effort to establish an alliance between the two cities will bear fruit and strengthen the relationship.

I thank you for your cooperation and send my warm wishes and deep appreciation to the leaders of the community, its donors and members for the commitment and devotion to the Jewish People and the State of Israel.

Sincerely,  
Zeev Bielski

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### Children of Jerusalem: Painting Pain, Dreaming Peace

An exhibit created by Palestinian and Israeli children divided by beliefs, conflicts and wars, but drawn together by their fear of violence and their longing to see a peaceful future together.

Opening Night Lecture featuring  
The Parent Circle Family Forum:  
Renowned Families supporting Peace,  
Reconciliation and Tolerance.

Join us as Israeli and Palestinian parents, both of whom have lost children in the conflict, share their stories of pain and hope for the future. Facilitated by Bonnie English, Executive Director of Charlotte's Community Building Initiative.

Sunday, March 9, 2008

7:30 pm

McColl Theatre

at *ImaginOn: The Joe & Joan Martin Center*  
Free and open to the community



Collaborative Partners: Mecklenburg Ministries, Charlotte Coalition for Social Justice, Temple Beth El, Israel at 60, Temple Israel, Palestinian Advisors to the Project, *ImaginOn: The Joe & Joan Martin Center*, Children's Theatre of Charlotte, and The Public Library of Charlotte & Mecklenburg County. Funding provided by the Knight Foundation.

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