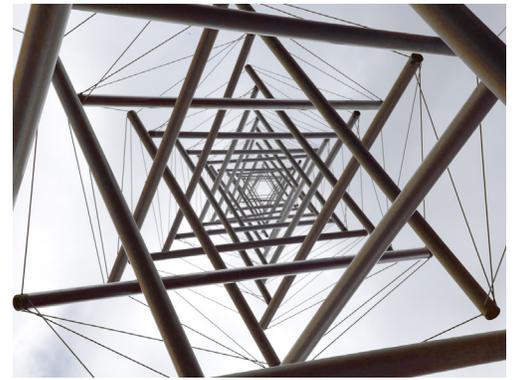


ISRAEL UP CLOSE



In this workshop, participants will engage with Hanoach Piven's new series of thematic portraits based on the likeness of Israel's first Prime Minister, David Ben-Gurion, and then create a variety of portraits using found objects that tell stories they want to share.

Through these portraits, participants can explore multiple aspects of Israeli society, culture, people, values, and history—including some that are sure to surprise them! [Piven created a video for you](#), recorded in his studio in Jaffa, Israel, describing his methodology and sharing stories. You may want to show it to participants; at the very least, the facilitator should watch it before leading any Piven Workshop activities. It's bursting with energy and ideas!

PREPARATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

In order to have a workshop based on found objects, you'll need to gather random objects. Lots of random objects. Everything from buttons, labels, packaging, and keys to stickers, stamps, and small toys will come in handy as participants create portraits. Preparation is key: gather copious amounts of "junk" to ensure that everyone finds what they need.

Begin by introducing Piven. In addition to the information on this sheet, you can refer to the [video by Piven](#), or to the "[Piven Workshop](#)" PDF for more about the artist. Help participants understand Piven's technique by showing them his new Ben-Gurion series and giving them time to explore the portraits in depth.

Encourage them to focus on the elements of each portrait:

- > What does each item represent?
- > How does each portrait make them feel?
- > What questions would they ask Piven if he made a surprise visit?
- > What questions would they ask of each of the Ben-Gurions?



Further exploration

Hanoach Piven is a leading contemporary Israeli artist whose whimsical portraits, using an array of seemingly random objects, tell stories with surprising depth and complexity. Originally from South America, Piven moved to Israel with his family when he was a child. He went to New York to study and pursue a career as an artist where he developed his creative style of portraiture. His colorful and witty illustrations have appeared in Time, Newsweek, Rolling Stone, and many Israeli and European publications. He conducts creative workshops in Israel and around the world. Look through the [Israel Resource Cards](#) for more information on many of the subjects covered in his portraits.



Tip

*This program can have even more impact if you connect it to Jewish and universal values that your participants may be exploring in other settings. Here are some that may work well: **Curiosity, Creativity, Social Responsibility, Leadership, Community Mindedness, Courage.***

If you want to pose questions as they get to know the portraits, consider these:

- > What images of Israel can you find in these portraits?
- > What is “Jewish” about each portrait?
- > What values do you see represented in each portrait?
- > Compare a specific feature in the five portraits (e.g., ears, nose, body)—what do you think of as you look at them?

READY? SET. CREATE!

It's time to get your hands dirty! Place a wide array of random objects on a table and invite participants to browse them, looking for objects they may want to use to create portraits of their own. You can choose what kind of portrait they will create, or you can let them choose. Working in small groups, let participants decide which items to include, based on their decisions about the stories they want their portraits to tell. Here are a few ideas for collaborative group art projects based on Piven's methodology that can give the group a chance to tell stories about things that matter to them:

- > Make a portrait of your school, camp, or community. What items will you include and how will you explain them to outsiders?
- > Create your own “portrait” of Israel that highlights aspects of the country that hold meaning for you or pose questions that intrigue you.
- > Create a portrait of a person—living or dead—who you see as a symbol of camp, your school, or another community with which you identify. What stories will you try to tell through your choice of objects?

WAYS TO USE AND ENHANCE

If you're looking for a short activity, consider using one or more of the portraits as a conversation starter. At camp, this would be perfect for a rainy day or for a bunk to do before bedtime. In a school setting (or any other), this could be a part of a larger program about Israel or many other topics.

Use some of the questions posed here (or create your own!) and facilitate a discussion based on what participants see in the image. A few more questions to consider:

- > How would you describe Piven's style if you were talking on the phone to someone who could not see the portraits?
- > If you were going to create a portrait of your class, school, bunk, or camp, what items would you want to include?
- > If you have Israelis participating, ask what they see that others didn't notice?
- > What surprises you about these portraits?
- > If you've been to Israel, how do these portraits connect to what you saw and experienced there?



Fun fact

Piven was born in Uruguay and named Ernesto. Hanoch was his Hebrew name in Jewish School in Montevideo. At the age of 11, when his family moved to Israel, Hanoch officially became his name; but, his parents and siblings still address him as Ernesto.



Tip

To spark further creativity, you can encourage participants to find objects that represent:

- > *Their hometown, their family*
- > *A memory, a dream*
- > *A personal quality they are proud of*
- > *Something that challenges them*
- > *Something they like about Israel*

DETAILS

Materials: Poster board, glue guns, glue, tape, and lots and lots of random objects

Age: All ages

Size of group: Ideal for 8–15 participants

Duration: 1 hour





- > If you have not yet been to Israel, what do these portraits tell you about life in Israel?
- > If you are planning on going to Israel, what are you excited about after exploring these portraits?

As participants share their reactions to the portraits, use this information as a guide to help them dig deep into the messages of each image:

Pioneering. As they worked to achieve independence in the decades preceding 1948, Jews from around the world returned to the Land of Israel to work the land and make it green. They dreamt of creating a democracy where Jews and all other citizens would be free to express themselves, able to live in safety and security. This portrait captures the pioneering ethos of the founders of Israel. In one hand, Ben-Gurion holds a **shovel**, and in the other, **Israel's Declaration of Independence**. His hat is a typical "**kova tembel**" (literally: fool's cap, the simple standard-issue hats worn by many pioneers in Israel's early years), and his clothing is adorned by **stamps** and **symbols of the State**.

- > What resonates for you in this portrait?
- > What would you like to know more about?
- > How do you think this portrait relates to Israel today?

Leadership. Being a leader involves making difficult choices and decisions. It means taking risks and asking others to support your moves. It means motivating people to follow your example. Here we see Ben-Gurion made of many objects that symbolize leadership and the difficult choices that leaders must make. The **IDF symbol** hints at the role of the military in securing Israel, while the outstretched hands made of traditional **hamsas** reflect the importance of pursuing peace. The **compass**, the **doves**—even the **mezuzah**—everything carries meaning.

- > What resonates for you in this portrait?
- > What would you like to know more about?
- > What kind of leader are you?
- > Which of these symbols would you include in your own portrait?

Diversity. Israel is home to Jews who came from more than 100 countries around the world. Whether they came because they were fleeing persecution or because they wanted to be a part of the Zionist dream, they all brought with them their own traditions, stories, hopes, and memories. Add to the mix the traditions and values of those people who already lived there—Jews, Arabs,

Druze, Bedouin—and you begin to see just how diverse Israel is! This East-meets-West reality helps explain the vibrant mix of cultures, values, and traditions in Israel. This portrait is packed with so many symbols and meanings that your head will spin—but it's really nothing more than a depiction of the diversity of Israeli life. Look for **religious symbols, LGBTQ pride, Middle Eastern coffee and tea, a backgammon board**, and more.

- > What resonates for you in this portrait?
- > What questions arise as you look at this portrait?
- > What symbols might you add to the portrait?
- > Find two symbols that might be in conflict with each other. How might you reconcile them?
- > How is diversity expressed in your community?

Innovation. Visitors to pre-State Israel back in the late 19th and early 20th centuries described it as a harsh, inhospitable place. Mark Twain called it “sorrowful and despondent” and predicted it was unlikely to change. Ben-Gurion dreamt of making the desert bloom and being a “light unto the nations.” Today, of course, Israel has evolved into a global technological powerhouse, and many aspects of that trajectory are captured here—from the **circuit board** and the **cherry tomato** (invented in Israel!) to the symbols of **leading tech and social welfare** trendsetters. And it all takes place along the beach with the Tel Aviv skyline in the background.

- > What resonates for you in this portrait?
- > What do you want to learn more about?
- > What Israeli innovation impacts your life today?
- > What innovative things do you want to try over the next year?

Culture. The Israeli food scene is incredibly creative and exciting. In 2017, Israeli chef Michael Solomonov won the prestigious James Beard award for best cookbook of the year. The book reflects an incredible amalgamation of multiple cultures and cuisines that have merged to create a uniquely Israeli kitchen. Look for classic local foods here—from **Bamba** to **Mekupelet**, from **Crembo** to **falafel**. It's all anchored in the Israeli passion for mixed nuts and the seminal book by Theodor Herzl, *The Jewish State*. So much of Israeli life is based on Jewish tradition and values, which explains Ben-Gurion's nose, made of one of the **seven species**. Of course, there's much more to culture than food, and it is worth noting that Israel publishes more books per capita than any other country in the world.

- > What resonates for you in this portrait?
- > Do you have a favorite Israeli food?
- > What foods would you include in your own self-portrait?
- > What object(s) would you choose to symbolize the culture in your country? In Israel?



Tip

Bring campers (and co-staff) into the process of collecting “random objects.” Give them some time at the beginning of the activity to roam throughout camp looking for random objects to use. Encourage campers to gather as much (clean and safe) junk/stuff as possible. Natural materials such as leaves and twigs are good as well. Collecting and sorting materials allows participants to imagine different uses for the objects they find.



Taking it home

Facilitate discussion on the activity by helping campers reflect on the objects they used and the meaning behind them. The takeaways from this activity should include the tangible pride that comes from seeing one's work on display. Encourage campers to snap photos of their portraits and share with their friends and family at home, or let them put their portraits up in different areas all around camp for others to see!





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